HOW DOES THE UNIVERSITY SPEAK FOR ITSELF ON SOCIAL MEDIA? –

A CASE STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA'S FACEBOOK AND

WEIBO PAGES

by

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Abstract

International student recruitment is of central importance to universities who aspire to maintain or improve their status in university rankings. A key strategy to garner the attention of prospective students is the use of social media. This study takes University of British Columbia (UBC), a public research university, which has the second-largest number of international students in Canada, as a case study to compare the messaging strategies applied in its two social media platforms, Facebook and Weibo. By arguing that the mediatization of higher education needs to be seen within the broader context of internationalization and marketization of universities, this study examines what school images/identities being presented to audiences on social media platforms and to identify the rationales of messaging strategies UBC employed. Methodologically, this study combines qualitative case study with multimodal critical discourse analysis of UBC Facebook and AskUBC 大学 Weibo pages. Notably, this study found that compared to UBC's Facebook page, messaging strategies on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page were more focused on marketing to prospective students. By analyzing what is present and absent on UBC's social media platforms, this study found discourses re/produce on UBC Facebook and Weibo pages perpetuate epistemic violence of a global imaginary, which foreground the ideology of White/Western supremacy and have been instrumental in the continuous colonization and dispossession of non-Western, non-English speaking countries and other equity-seeking groups in Canada.

Lay Summary

In this thesis, I have explored who and what is present or absent on the UBC Facebook and the Weibo page. Particularly, my study examined what messaging strategies and cues are used by the university to reinforce UBC's school brand on both social media platforms. The primary objective of this study was to analyze the role mediatization in how UBC represents internationalization of higher education through its Facebook and Weibo pages. My findings show that the discursive practices and visual strategies that this study explored on Facebook and Weibo have provided evidence to argue that the mediatization of higher education can be recognized as an essential vehicle of university marketization. Ultimately, this thesis challenged and critiqued the dominant Anglo-American models of neoliberal internationalization, which reinforces through global university rankings, international partnerships with higher education institutions in the Global North, and the market-driven trajectory of university management strategies and practices.

Preface

This dissertation is an original, unpublished, independent work of the author, Jingwun Liang.

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List of Abbreviations

ACDE   Association of Canadian Deans of Education

AUCC   Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

BCCAT   BC Council on Admissions and Transfer

CCPA   Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

CIPS   Canadian Information Processing Society

CMEC   Ministers of Education in Canada

DFATD   Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development

GUR   Global University Rankings

QS   Quacquarelli Symonds

SCI   Sciences Citation Index

SSCI   Social Sciences Citation Index

STEM   Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

THE   Times Higher Education

UBC   University of British Columbia

UNESCO   United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNIVCAN   Universities Canada

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Dedication

To all international students and their families

in Canada and beyond

Chapter 1 Introduction

Declining government funding for higher education has transformed the trajectories of national higher education policies and university management strategies in many Western countries. The increasing financial pressures have pushed Canadian universities toward marketization and competition during the past decades (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Guo & Guo, 2017; Knight, 1995; Stein, 2018). The reduced federal and provincial funding of Canadian universities and the competitive globalized higher education market have facilitated the market-driven economic rationales of university management imperatives. Notably, promoting international education has become more prominent at the federal and provincial levels. For instance, the Council of Ministers of Education in Canada (CMEC) released a report "Learn Canada 2020" in 2008 to identify three primary international education goals. Firstly, the CMEC advocated to promote the "representation" (i.e., branding) of Canadian education. Secondly, the report highlighted the importance of international education in the dissemination of Canadian education, research, and culture. Thirdly, it stated that the strategic plans for supporting international learning assessment and performance indicators are necessary (CMEC, 2008).

Student mobility is regarded as one of the most important elements of internationalization at Canadian universities. Notably, based on the business rationale, International students are more likely to be treated as "cash cows" (Guo & Guo, 2017; Stein & Andreotti, 2016). This dynamic manifests in the much higher tuition fees that international students pay as compared to domestic students (Adams et al., 2012; Stein & Andreotti, 2016), the living expenditures they spend during the study period (Enslin & Hedge, 2008; Guo & Guo, 2017; Marginson, 2007), and

their potential high-skill labor force contribution to Canada after graduation (Pusser & Marginson, 2013; Sá & Sabzalieva, 2018).

In view of the prevalent trend of international student mobility worldwide, countries in the Global North, particularly the traditional Western, English-speaking countries such as The United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and The United Kingdom, are popular host countries for students of Global South, non-Western regions to migrate (Estra & Shahjahan, 2018; Johnstone & Lee, 2014). The destination of international study is widely discussed by scholars in the field of higher education studies (Brux et al., 2010; Lee, 2014; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Generally, there are two level of analysis in this area: the choice of host country and the selection of institution (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). On the level of choosing a host country for international study, the discussions are more likely to relate to the push-pull model, which explored the push factors of the sending countries and the pull factors of the host countries for student to make the decision (Chirkov et al., 2007; Lee, 2014). On the level of selecting institutions for higher learning, the conversations tend to refer to the global imaginary of the Western higher education model (Stein & Andreotti, 2016;2017), which unfold the "pro-Western discourses" in the Global South and other non-Western countries in East Asia.

1.1 Research Background

As a researcher in the field of higher education studies, my personal experience as an international student at the University of British Columbia (UBC), one of the selective post-secondary institutions (PSIs) in Canada, has led me to rethink and reflect on my relationship with the university I attend and the host country I live. What brought me here to fly over the Pacific Ocean from my homeland, to leave my family and come to the continent on the other end of the Earth with a time difference of fifteen hours? What encouraged me and my parents to make such

a significant commitment of study-abroad in a Western higher education institution, investing tremendous educational and financial resources to support my future career?

I never thought that I would study abroad until I attended college. I was born and raised in a middle-class family in Taiwan, in which English is not the official language; however, the majority of Taiwanese believe that learning English is a crucial for everyone. Although English is already a required subject in the K-12 compulsory education system, there are still many parents who invest substantial funds for their children to learn English. in extracurricular language training programs.

Growing up in such social context, I started to learn English when I was a toddler and never doubted the importance of English competency. When I was an undergraduate student, I joined a research team to conduct an exciting project about the impacts of Global University Rankings (GURs) towards non-Western, non-English-speaking higher education institutions and the emerging consequences to the long-term development of national academia in Taiwan and other Asia Pacific countries, such as China and Japan. This experience inspired me to further explore related issues in through graduate studies and hopefully make some contributions for my country in the future. With such ambition, I started to actively talk with many faculty members in my department to ask for suggestions. Most of them are senior and respected persons in the university, and the majority of them have overseas degrees or credentials. I was given a variety of suggestions, but on one matter they all agreed. All the faculty I spoke with suggested to me that I should pursue an overseas graduate degree, particularly from a European or North American institution. Having a degree or credential from a Western institution is one of the "unspoken rules" of getting the admission ticket to work at universities in Taiwan, although we do have our own graduate programs to cultivate doctoral students. "In most circumstances, we

will not consider those without overseas learning experience to be our colleagues since there are so many candidates with impressive overseas credentials. It is crucial for you to study abroad if you want to join us," said a senior professor in my department.

I was not surprised by these comments which highlighted the significance of pursuing an overseas degree. There's an old idiom in Asia, "the moon is better-looking abroad," which has a similar meaning to the saying that "the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." It seems an entrenched social discourse not only in Taiwan but also in the broader Asian regions to believe that "the West is the best." Even the domestic academic communities in Taiwan also believe that only overseas institutions can cultivate outstanding academic new-blood for our country in the long-run. I targeted UBC as my preferred institution due to its "world-class" university image. First, it ranked on the top 50 on the global university ranking league table, which indicates its selective status among other higher education institutions worldwide. Besides, it seemed that the UBC is an "international" university that welcomes diverse student groups. For example, the composition of the student body is racially diverse, and there are various campus events or student services for international students. Finally, the school reputation is mainly positive on social media and on the school website, including the reputation of faculty members, the quality of the programs it provides, and the high employment rate of school alumni. These narratives constructed my understanding of the university before I became a student here.

Despite having done thorough research about UBC before arriving here, I was surprised by several observations. First was the unique emphasis on Indigeneity and advocacy for Indigenization not only on campus but also among the broader Canadian society. Additionally, the care regarding issues related to immigrants and racial/cultural marginalized groups is also noteworthy in the Canadian social context yet not getting enough attention on the media platform.

Nevertheless, despite the social discourses that advocate promoting the well-being and interests of Indigenous communities and the racial/cultural marginalized groups, the systemic oppression of Indigenous people and racialized groups is continued nowadays and has been widely discussed in Canada. On the one hand, there are many advocates of Indigenizing the curriculum and promoting the significance of anti-racism, yet on the other hand, those statements among public opinions seem have more tokenistic meanings rather than substantive practices given that many Indigenous and racialized faculty continued bringing lights to the issues of racism. These are the missing fragments on the school media platform for not only me but also many international students to understand before we came to Canada and attended UBC. With these contradictions in mind, I started to question the discrepancy between my actual experiences and my imagined study abroad life. I wondered why I cannot acquire a comprehensive understanding of UBC through the information in the media, and why the university considered the discussions about racism less important to be presented on the social media platform, and why the university decided to exclude the debates of racism and white supremacy as part of the school identity.

Based on what I have perceived and observed from the personal experiences as an international student from an Asian country, my positionality brought me to the area of interest to explore how Canadian universities use media to construct or communicate the school identity (i.e., the "school brand") through the presented information and announcements on media platforms. Given my experiences of receiving helpful information from the university-operated social media sites to improve my understanding about the campus, I am particularly interested in exploring what narratives the university presents on social media and what might be excluded from the institutional images. Based on such motivation and research interest, my proposed research will compare posts on two social media platforms used by UBC: Facebook and Weibo.

Facebook is a popular social media platform throughout much of the world with over 2.7 billion active users[1]. Weibo is a popular Chinese microblogging social networking site with more than 445 million active users. Given that most Chinese people cannot access or use foreign social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube inside Mainland China due to the political and information security considerations, Weibo is considered as one of the largest social media platforms worldwide with Chinese people as the primary users. The official language of Weibo is Chinese, and the messages delivered, including the local or international news, are mainly focused on countries in the Asia-Pacific regions. Although some Chinese people, particularly the well-educated younger generation who knows how to access foreign media through the virtual private network (VPN), may use social media or websites, Weibo is undoubtedly one of the dominant mass media in China. In this case, Weibo can be seen as an effective approach for the Western university, such as UBC, to reach and interact with a larger number of Chinese audiences, including the prospective international students and their families. By exploring these two social media sites which target different groups of audience with different languages, socio-cultural contexts, and ethnicity, this study aims at examining what school image was presented to its prospective students and to identify the potential implied audience purposes.

1.2 Important Concepts

The University of British Columbia has official Facebook and Weibo pages to interact with students, alumni, and prospective students. Both pages include information about current campus activities, remarks by faculty members, and concerning the high research productivity of

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[1] The number of Facebook users refers to the second quarter of 2020 statistics, which retrieved from the statistical report of Statista website: https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/#:~:text=How%20many%20users%20does%20Facebook,the%20biggest%20social%20network%20worldwide.

UBC based on rankings, graduates' employment rate and, of course, annually released GURs performance. One of the primary goals of this study is to explore the presented information on the UBC managed social media platform and to examine how these narratives shape and frame the school images. The purpose of this analysis is to identify evidence of the mediatization of higher education (Rawolle & Lingard, 2010; Stack, 2016), as well as to explore whether or how the process of mediatization has facilitated the marketization of university on an international scale. In other words, this study aims at examining the rationales and strategies that UBC employs through the media logic to communicate and display the institutional identity, (i.e., the brand value of the university) on Facebook and Weibo pages toward audiences. Ultimately, I argue that the mediatization of higher education needs to be seen within the broader context of the internationalization of higher education and the complexity, ideologies, and capital accorded to higher education credentials as a "product" under the prevailing neoliberal ideology. This section intends to shed light on some key concepts of this study, as well as provide brief discussions of each concept and explain how they come together to frame the issue.

1.2.1 Mediatization of higher education

Mediatization of higher education can be defined as a process through which the important role media plays and the impacts of media on stakeholders (i.e., students, faculty, administrators, and school leaders) has increased in terms of the operation of higher education institutions. Given the compelling neoliberal framework in terms of institutional management strategies, mediatization can be regarded as a "reaction" (Blumler & Esser, 2019, p.856) of university stakeholders to respond to the increased competition of the globalized higher education market. For example, this is evident in the expansion of international student affairs, such as admission units and advising service, and the efforts of promoting the reputation and

global visibility of the institution on various media approaches, such as university websites, social media platforms, and the higher positions among global university rankings league tables. Notably, the process of mediatization of higher education institution is not primarily related to how the media itself influences the transformative management strategies of university. Instead, it is related to how the institution perceives the power of media and adapts to media logics (Stack, 2016) across its operations including branding, selecting students and faculty, tenure and promotion and branding.

Higher education institutions are dependent on media to compete with other universities. For instance, the university may consider presenting the safe and friendly campus environment, the excellence of education quality, and the university's prestige or reputation are significant to represent the university's "brand identity" and are something worthwhile to promote on the social media platforms.

1.2.2 Internationalization of higher education in Canada

McCarthy's (2016) study points to an increased interest in admitting international students to Canadian universities since 1940s. Noteworthy, was the early interest and rationale of recruiting international student coming to Canada was driven by political and ethical discourses to promote world peace and mutual understanding between countries (de Wit et al, 2015; Guo & Guo, 2017), as well as the political consideration in relation to ensuring the global hegemony of capitalism (as opposed to communism) and the power of particularly North American and Western European countries (McCartney, 2016). This historical context also provides some cues for unpacking the narratives of Western superiority, which relates to the ideology that Western capitalist countries, like Canada, are most "developed" while other "less developed" countries should learn from them.

During the period from 1945 to late 1970s, the internationalization of higher education in Canada emphasized more on the charitable concerns for enhancing the quality of life of people from "under/developing" countries who suffered from the disadvantaged social and educational resources. However, since the 1980s, Canada's federal policy on internationalization has a noticeable transformation to recognize international students as a "market" for the nation (DFATD, 2014). Since then, the increasing number of Canadian universities, which suffered from the financial shortfall given the declined federal/provincial budget, have been utilizing the revenue from international student tuition. In the early 1990s, the Minister of International Trade of Canada declared that education was an important industry given that "international students in Canada provide immediate and significant economic benefits to Canadian in every region of the country" (DFATD, 2014, p.7). Canada is a popular host country for international students worldwide to pursue higher learning and degrees. According to the international student mobility report from UNESCO, there was a triple growth of the number of international undergraduate and graduate students who pursued post-secondary degrees in Canada during the period from 2000 to 2014 (UNESCO, 2014).

Given the prevalent neoliberal ideology which strongly influences the university management practices and strategies, recent Canadian higher education policies tend to be shaped by the neoliberal emphasis to push Canadian universities towards marketization (Guo & Guo, 2017; Johnstone & Lee, 2014). This "internationalization as marketization model" critiqued by Luke (2010, p.49) has also been critiqued in recent studies of Canadian higher education (Stein & Andreotti, 2016; Stein, 2018). Based on such context, the increasing demands of international education as well as international student recruitment during the past three decades

had demonstrated the ambition that Canada has seen internationalization as an important economic facilitator in the country as a whole (Rhoades et al., 2019).

According to the report "internationalization survey of Canadian universities" published by AUCC in 2014, which was frequently cited by scholars of internationalization in Canada (Guo & Guo, 2017; Stein & Andreotti, 2016; Stein, 2018), the economic significance of international education as a source of university revenue has led to the profit-seeking policies and strategies of internationalization in higher education (Guo & Guo, 2017; Johnstone & Lee, 2014) The 2014 survey reported that 95 % of participating institutions recognize internationalization as one of university management strategic plans, and 82% of them highlight the importance of university internationalization among one of their top five priorities (UNIVCAN, 2014, as cited by Stein & Andreotti, 2016).

1.2.3 Higher education internationalization and student mobility

By the end of 2018, there were 572,400 international students studying in Canada with more than 50% of them coming from India and the People's Republic of China (Global Affair Canada, 2019). Although there are some voices demanding diversification of the sources of international students, particular countries like India and China, which are recognized as the popular "recruiting grounds" for international students, still led in the proportion of international students studying in Canada since 2001 (Stein & Andreotti, 2016).

Take the province of British Columbia (BC), which is the province with the second largest number of international students[2] in Canada, as instance. As one of the flagship public universities in BC province, University of British Columbia enrolled 63,370 undergraduate and

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[2] Province of Ontario and British Columbia are the two most popular international study destinations among other provinces in Canada. According to the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, there were 315,915 and 155,455 international students in Ontario and British Columbia relatively in 2017.

graduate students in total, and approximately 26% of them (16,322) were international students in the 2017/18 academic year. Notably, international Chinese students accounted for the largest proportion (about 30%) among the entire international student body on campus (UBC News, 2017). The reliance on international tuition fees from international students from China and elsewhere have led UBC to transform from a provincial public university into an "entrepreneurial university" (Clark, 1998; Rhoades et al, 2019). This helps to explain why the recent conflict between Mainland China and North America have led to strong concerns from some university leaders (Quan, 2019). Chinese international students comprise more than one-third of the international student population in UBC. Over the 2018-2019 school year there were 5,715 Chinese students studying at UBC Vancouver. Given that such high proportion of Chinese students and the considerable amount of research investment from Chinese corporation, such as Huawei, a UBC official once publicly responded to the recent conflict between Canada and China[3] by stated that the university have no intention of ending their relationship with Huawei given that company sponsors $9.5 million in research agreements with UBC (Quan, 2019). Considered the potential "crisis" of losing international Chinese students could result in the risk of revenue shortfall as well as losing funding from Chinese companies, some Canadian universities like UBC may try to avoid harm to the university's interests caused by the deterioration of Canada-China relations.

The importance of internationalization provides some implications regarding the economic rationale that Canadian government and higher education institutions emphasized during the past decades. The transformation of higher education policies, which shed light on the marketing

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[3] The conflict between Canada and China originated from the arrest of Meng Wanzhou, the vice chairman and chief financial officer of Huawei, a Chinese multinational technology company, was arrested by the police while crossing the border in Vancouver in 2018. This incident has triggered judicial, political, and diplomatic incidents involving China, the United States, and Canada.

strategies of international student recruitment and the significance of the long-term economic/socio-cultural benefits that international education brings to the nation, demonstrated the ambition of Canada to attract and educate talents worldwide and recruit the potential high-quality future residents and citizens. From this perspective, universities are regarded as a transitional agency, capitalizing on the talents and money of international students to raise the national profile as well as the global reputation and visibility (Brunner, 2017; Trilokekar & El Masri, 2017).

1.2.4 Uneven international student flow and the risks

With the increasing number of international students migrating to Western host countries for higher learning, nevertheless, the sending countries might encounter the challenge of brain drain and gradually lose skilled labors and professionals from future generations (Stein & Andreotti, 2016). Others point to the uneven international flow of students, noting the relatively small number Canadian university students that study abroad, and the limited number of countries where they tend to study. The report "Global Education for Canadians" released in 2017 on the Go Global Canada website raised the concern about the lack of diversity of host countries for Canadian students to study abroad. While most Canadian students prefer going to regions with similar cultural and linguistic background like Europe, the U.S., and Australia (CIPS, 2017), there are few students study in the Global South[4] like Mexico, China, or India due to the cultural differences, language barriers, or the concern of safety issues (CIPS, 2017). This finding raises the awareness of the unequal flow of student mobility between the West and the

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[4] Global South is an emerging term that relate to the idea of "developing countries" and the "third world". The term was originally used by World Bank and other international organization to describe countries as newly industrialized or in the process of industrializing, particularly the countries featured in lower-quality democracies, and frequently have a history of colonialism by Northern countries (especially European states). Countries that commonly represent the Global South are China, Brazil, India, Mexico, and other African and Latin American countries.

East, the North and the South. While there is an increasing number of students from Asian countries and the Global South who study in Western institutions, very few of their mobile Western counterpart study in Asia, Africa, or Latin America (Estera & Shahjahan, 2018; Johnstone & Lee, 2014). Without the multicultural communications, the connotation of internationalization will become limited and perpetuate Western-supremacist as well as Western-centric geopolitics of knowledge production in universities.

1.2.5 University and social media

Social media is regarded as one of the effective approaches for the university to communicate its brand to target audiences (Hossain & Sakib, 2016; Marwick, 2013; Peruta & Shields, 2017). According to Peruta & Shields's (2017) study, more than 90% of post-secondary institutions admission offices in the U.S. have considered social media as one of the crucial strategies for recruiting prospective students.

Managing social media channels has been regarded as one of the most significant marketing strategies for many institutions recently. For one thing, it helps to communicate identity and school pride of alumni; for another, it also creates the connection between prospective students and the school events. More and more universities and colleges acknowledge that the social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, are imperative for making their school visible, building trust and reputation, as well as recruiting either domestic or international students (Peruta & Shields, 2017). Because of this, it is crucial for us to examine what narratives are presented or absent on the university managed social media platform, and what might be the implied audience purposes of the presented and/or absent stories. Analyzing the social media management strategies of post-secondary institutions provide us an

opportunity to unpack the hidden social norms and institutional discourses that are constructed by the various types of posts presented on the social media.

1.2.6 Western cultural hegemony and Epistemic violence

Seeing education as a market good enforces Western-centric geopolitics of knowledge in universities by privileging certain higher education institutions to maintain the Western cultural and economic hegemony among the global community (Johnstone & Lee, 2014; Yang, 2002).

The concept of epistemic violence is derived from the post-colonial and decolonial perspectives that raise questions for critically examining the social and political effects of knowledge production and dissemination (Andreotti, 2015). Mignolo's (2005) theory of coloniality also provides some ideas for this study to conceptualize the connotation of epistemic violence. The notion of coloniality refers to the sustainable logic and system of domination which facilitates the enduring colonial and imperial powers of certain countries to maintain the central-peripheral relationship (Shahjahan, 2013). In view of the privileged status of the university as the space of knowledge production, the concern of epistemic violence indicates how the Western-supremacist geopolitics of knowledge production has led to the entrenched onto-epistemology of Western modernity which denies the truth of colonialism while legitimizing the systemic production of inequalities, exploitation, and discrimination toward other cultures, languages, and ethnic groups (Andreotti, 2015).

Take the currently prevailing Global University Rankings for instance. The popular "Big Three" rankings[5] release their respective world university ranking tables annually. Nevertheless, the rankings are contested being the means to sustain the ends of privileging certain language,

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[5] The Big Three rankings indicate the QS World University Rankings, the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities, which is also known as Shanghai ranking.

culture, groups of people, and fields of study via this seemingly objective, fair, and compelling evaluation system (Chou, 2014; Chou & Cherry, 2017; Estera & Shahjahan, 2018; Ishikawa, 2014). Without the awareness of how rankings work to dominate and perpetuate the existing hegemony, we will gradually lose influential rankers. Higher-ranking Western institutions have power to dominate the global consensus in terms of the criteria of a prestigious university. In this case, lower-ranking institutions which are struggling to improve the ranking performance may start to learn from those highly ranked Western institutions, including the reform of university management strategies and education policies. As a consequence, rankings not only impact the university development direction worldwide, but also help to perpetuate Western supremacy by promoting and constructing the model of global higher education that foregrounded on Western neoliberalism and capitalism.

Given the power of media which not only disseminate information but are also influential in shaping and framing public opinions, the process of the mediatization of higher education can be powerful to construct and reproduce social norms, to frame the dominant and legitimate discourses, and to present "selective messages" toward audiences. This process can be dangerous and problematic if we take such constructed norms and discourses for granted and fail to engage in the critical and nuanced conversations to clarify our understanding of the internationalization of higher education. For instance, university rankings can be viewed as a socially constructed evaluation mechanism that reflect certain social norm, such as the understanding of "prestige" or "excellence" that foreground on the ideology of Western neoliberalism and capitalism. In this case, general public tends to regard rankings as the indicator of evaluating universities yet underestimates the complexity, controversy, and the problematic social norm it reflected, of this

evaluation mechanism (Estera & Shahjahan, 2018; Hazelkorn et al., 2017; Shahjahan et al., 2017).

In short, it is particularly significant for us to rethink and re-examine how the currently dominant ideology and practice of Western-supremacist, neoliberal internationalization has shaped our onto-epistemological framework of "world-class" and "prestigious" image of higher education institutions which perpetuates the global imaginary to privilege the West, while marginalized the non-Western others. (Johnstone & Lee, 2014; Stein & Andreotti, 2016; 2017)

1.3 Methodology and Research Questions

Given that UBC is recognized as the flagship university in the province of British Columbia (BC), which has the second-highest proportion of international students among the student body at the post-secondary level in Canada, this study explores who and what is present and absent in the social media strategies used by UBC to communicate with international students, particularly international students from China. I integrated my experiences as an audience of UBC Facebook and the AskUBC 大学 Weibo pages to compared and contrasted UBC's Facebook and Weibo.

This study focuses on the following research questions:

1. Is there evidence of mediatization based on the analysis of the UBC Facebook and Weibo pages in how the UBC represents and responds to the internationalization of higher education to communicate its purposes on the Facebook and Weibo pages?

2. Who and what is present or absent on the UBC Facebook fan page, as compared and contrasted to the UBC Weibo pages?

3. What visual strategies and cues are used by the university to reinforce UBC's school brand on the Facebook and Weibo pages?

With the visualization of the institution has become one of the significant strategies of school branding, the mediatization of universities can be problematic if we overlook the dominant global imaginary, which privileges a certain model of higher education institutions and maintains the Western cultural and economic hegemony. Based on such concern toward the issue, this study proposes to draw on Pauwels' (2012) framework to employ the Multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) as a research inquiry (Ledin & Machin, 2019; Stack, 2016). Given the power of media which not only disseminate information but are also influential in shaping and framing public opinions, the process of the mediatization of higher education is powerful to construct social norms, to frame the discourses, and using particular messaging strategies to communicate the purposes of message producers. This process can be dangerous if we take such constructed norms and discourses for granted and fail to engage in the critical and nuanced conversations to clarify our understanding of the rationales for and impacts of the internationalization of higher education.

The advantage of MCDA as an analytic tool is the focus on understanding and re-examining the presented information on the social media platform, including the written textual content, graphic text (e.g., photos or pictures), and any types of visual and audio (e.g., video, music, etc.). The practice of discourse analysis will help to critically identify what is viewed as essential and to present, and what ought to be given more attention but is not. The process is also helpful in exploring how the university works to perpetuate the epistemic violence of the dominant global imaginary by framing the "world-class university" discourse to prospective international students.

1.4 Chapter Breakdown

Following this chapter, I offer a review of the scholarly resources related to the discussions of internationalization of higher education, the phenomenon of the mediatization of post-secondary institutions, and debates and concerns related to Western cultural hegemony and the risk of epistemic violence. One of the primary purposes in the literature review is to conceptualize the connection between these key concepts, examining whether or how the trend of internationalization has facilitated the mediatization of universities and results in the risk of Western cultural hegemony and epistemic violence that perpetuate the global imaginary as well as maintains the privileged status of certain language, culture, and groups of people. Chapter two focusses on methodology. I will describe my paradigmatic stance, theoretical framework, research design, and specific methods used for data collection and analysis. Followed up with Chapter three, I analyze my data from UBC's Facebook and Weibo pages, employing MCDA to analyze the textual, visual, graphic, and audio elements on the UBC Facebook fan page. This chapter will contribute to further discussions of the three key concepts of this study. The conclusion of this study will summarize my research finding and discuss their implications for future studies.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Globalization has blurred the traditional geographical boundaries between countries and facilitated the "increasingly integrated systems and relationships beyond the nation" (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Maschmann, 2018, p.19). Notably, such integrated cross-national systems and relationships operate at more than just the economic level but also involve sociocultural, political, and technological dimensions (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). Particularly, entrenched neoliberal ideologies have played a dominant role in recent conceptions and operations of higher education (Maschmann, 2018). The neoliberal ideology emphasizes people's right to make choices and regards students as consumers of educational products and services. Based on this perspective, the global and national neoliberal positioning of higher education is regarded as a potential market for the domestic economy and institutional revenue. In the field of higher education studies, this shift toward marketization has prompted an increased consideration of economic and political interests regarding the current trend of neoliberal internationalization (Stack, 2016; Trahar, 2013).

In the context of globalization, higher education internationalization has been given more attention by governments and stakeholders, including school leaders, faculties, students and parents in Canada (Yang, 2002). Notably, significant reduction in government funding since the 1990s and a transformation to a neoliberal framing of higher education promoting the idea of competition have led to the growing perception of education as a personal and private good (Maschmann, 2018). The increasing competition within the globalized higher education market is one of the best examples to unpack this phenomenon. There is an increasing number of Canadian higher education institutions starting to strategize ways to seek revenues from private

resources. Particularly, international student recruitment has become a significant measure for universities to replace limited or declining government funding (Rhoades et al., 2019). In line with the dominant neoliberal discourses, embedded in current higher education policies, the huge economic benefits international students bring to Canadian universities, such as higher tuition fees, in-campus accommodation fees, and other living expenses, have promoted stronger competition between public post-secondary institutions to attract and recruit international students (Enslin & Hedge, 2008; Guo & Guo, 2017). In this context, Canadian institutions started to initiate proactive strategies to recruit international students including through international admission expos, university websites, study-abroad agencies, and more recently, social media platforms (Maschmann, 2018).

The entrenched neoliberal discourse among the Canadian higher education system is used to justify the declining government funding and increasing reliance on the financial benefits international student bring to higher education institutions and the broader economy. It has also become one of the dominant ideologies for promoting the market-driven rationales in Canadian federal, provincial, and institutional levels of internationalization strategies (Guo & Guo, 2017; Maschmann, 2018).

There are multiple forces which have reinforced the impacts of internationalization among Canadian universities including marketization and mediatization. It is particularly critical to explore whether or how the growing reliance on media logics will impact shifting university operation and management strategies. For instance, Stack's (2016) study demonstrates the impacts of global university rankings as evidence of university mediatization, in which she argues that the popularity of rankings has become influential in guiding higher education stakeholders, particularly students and parents, to favor certain types of institutions.

The process of university mediatization can be problematic, promoting a dominant global imaginary (Stein & Andreotti, 2017) that shapes and frames what a "world-class," "selected," and "prestigious" university is in ways that over-value particular characteristics by university management and operations. In this case, the process of university mediatization may help to perpetuate the Western-centric geopolitics of knowledge production in universities and permits certain higher education institutions to maintain Western cultural and economic hegemony among the global community (Johnstone & Lee, 2014; Yang, 2002).

This chapter engages with the concepts of internationalization, mediatization and epistemic violence. The literature review will provide the background and rationale for this study. By reviewing the existing studies and scholarly literature, this chapter recognizes contributions of previous research and examines gaps between existing studies and my study, by unpacking the unanswered research questions.

The following are some preliminary thoughts and questions that help to frame the structure of this chapter. What might be the importance, meaning, and elements of internationalization? How are Canadian higher education institutions affected by the trend towards internationalization, and how do they contribute to this shift? What efforts do universities make to be represented as an internationalized university? What are the critical concerns regarding the current trend towards internationalization as well as the emerging phenomenon of the mediatization of Canadian higher education? Ultimately, what benefits or risks may prevalent neoliberal internationalization and Western supremacy bring to universities and higher education stakeholders? These questions help to frame the rationale of the literature review section in this study.

2.2 Meaning and Elements of Internationalization

Scholars in the study of higher education internationalization have provided different rationales and agendas to conceptualize the definition of internationalization. Based on de Wit et al.'s (2015) study, there are four key rationales for internationalization: political, social-cultural, academic, and economic. The political rationale stemmed from the post-World War II era, which advocated peace and mutual understandings between countries. The social-cultural rationale echoed the political one, which conceptualized the agenda of internationalization based on the belief that international mobility or cultural exchange could improve multiculturalism and enhance mutual understanding. The academic rationale perceived internationalization as a strategy to promote cross-national collaboration, as well as improve the quality of teaching, learning, and research. Notably, the economic rationale of internationalization has become the dominant discourse, which highlights the market-driven rationale of internationalization within capitalist ideology, including fostering national economic performance and international competitiveness (Ghosh, 2004; Johnstone & Lee, 2014). However, other scholars also explore discourses of charity that focus on improving the education quality of developing countries, assisting those who suffer from the consequences of global inequality (Enslin & Hedge, 2008; Guo & Guo, 2017).

Given the fact that universities play a role, not only as educational institutions but also have a social responsibility to produce knowledge and serve communities by studying university internationalization and examining the rationales and importance of internationalization within the particular context in which it occurs (Yang, 2002). As an educational institution, university internationalization can be referred to the "operation of interaction within and between cultures through its teaching, research and service functions," (Yang, 2002, p.83), while as a social

institution, university internationalization cannot be delinked with the prevalent trend of economic globalization which influenced "universities world-wide through market competition and radically changing the face of the university as an institution" (Yang, 2002, p.82).

Internationalization can be perceived differently in different social and cultural contexts. Notably, practices and strategies of making universities "international" is nothing new. Yet, the dominant rationale of university internationalization has shifted from political and socio-cultural to focusing on economic reasoning, since at least the 1980s (Guo & Guo, 2017). Half a century ago, internationalization was hardly recognized as an area of university management that required leadership (Trahar, 2013). Nevertheless, with the marriage of economic globalization and neoliberal ideas, the gradually globalized higher education contexts have shifted from a focus on education as a public good to education as a commodity among countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada (Johnstone & Lee, 2014; Trahar, 2013). For instance, in Canada, there has been a transformation of higher education policies from regarding the Canadian education system as part of the social welfare system to the current neoliberal ideology in which education is viewed as a national industry (Johnstone & Lee, 2014).

The brief elaboration about the transforming rationale of higher education internationalization from political and social-cultural discourses to the current market-driven discourse, and the risks that neoliberal internationalization has brought to universities, are not the only concerns explored in this study. The meaning and connotation of internationalization itself can be problematic. Critical scholarship, and previous studies, brought to light an awareness that internationalization is often linked to westernization and modernization, which has been assigned an ideological meaning of Western/White supremacy. This reinforces the idea that White equals better, superior, and more worthy to learn from than other ethnicity groups (Saad 2020 see on

Opini, 2020) in non-Western, less-developed countries (Yang, 2002; Marginson, 2006). Altbach (2014) once argued that the ideology of internationalization of higher education could "lead to homogenizing knowledge worldwide" and will have the risk to "decrease diversity of themes and methodologies" (Altbach, 2014, p.6, as cited by Stack, 2016, p.2). Indeed, the majority of studies about globalization and internationalization are published by Western writers to produce and disseminate knowledge or particular ways of thinking about internationalization and about the world (Guo & Guo, 2017).

Based on this perspective and awareness, it is significant to keep in mind that much of the literature about internationalization depicts a rosy view, including the political, social-cultural, and academic rationale of internationalization, which advocate ideas of "mutual-understanding between countries" or "charitable concerns" for "less-developed countries" (Guo & Guo, 2017, p.852). Nevertheless, the concept of internationalization itself has been assigned ideological meanings that foreground a colonial/imperial view that legitimize which countries/cultures are more "advanced" or "developed" while others are "less-advanced" or "under-developed" (Stein & de Andreotti, 2016; 2017).

This chapter provides a more in-depth analysis and exploration of the discussion above, in Section 2.4. All in all, when exploring the impacts of internationalization on universities, it is critical to be aware that internationalization in universities is dominated by the global advantage of English-speaking institutions and Anglo-American culture (Guo & Guo, 2017). Our understanding of university internationalization has overlooked and systemically denied Western hegemony and the Western-dominated knowledge economy hierarchy.

2.2.1 Internationalization of higher education in Canada

When it comes to the shift towards internationalization, in the Canadian context, Knight's (1995) study provided a solid discussion of the meaning and elements of internationalization of Canadian higher education. Knight conducted a nation-wide survey of 65 Canadian higher education institutions, which were members of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC, now known as Universities Canada), aimed at identifying perceptions and attitudes of senior administrators regarding the meaning, rationale, and institutional practices toward internationalization. Knight then put forth a definition to conceptualize the meaning and elements of internationalization at Canadian universities:

> internationalization of higher education is the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching/learning, research and service functions of a university. An international/ intercultural/ global outlook into the major functions of an institution of higher learning. (Knight, 1995, p.28)

In 2014, the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) published the report "Accord on the Internationalization of Education," which brought light to elements of internationalization in the Canadian education system. This report referred to multiple manifestations and educational practices to frame the agenda of internationalization of Canadian education, including post-secondary education: (1) experiences of international mobility, (2) international teaching partnerships, (3) international research partnerships (4) the internationalization of Canadian curriculum, and (5) the preparation of educators and leaders for schools, post-secondary educational systems, and other locations of educational practice (ACDE, 2014, p. 4).

In view of initiatives which frame the agenda of internationalization, compared to Knight's 1995 survey study, both the ACDE report and Knight's survey highlighted the

academic related rationales (i.e., related to internationalization of curriculum development and internationalization in research), and the economic or competitive related rationales (i.e., related to student mobility or international student recruitment), and university rankings (ACDE, 2014; Bamberger et al., 2019) to legitimize the importance of internationalization at Canadian universities. Remarkably, student mobility and international student recruitment were increasingly identified as institutional imperatives for promoting internationalization by most of the Canadian institutions (Deborah et al., 2011; Guo & Guo, 2017; Johnstone & Lee, 2014).

2.2.2 Importance of internationalization in Canadian universities

The discussion of internationalization is often related to physical mobility, namely the cross-national mobility of students or faculty members (Rhoades et al., 2019). On the one hand, the political and socio-cultural ideology in the post-Second World War period, student mobility and cultivation, as elements of internationalization, were important to facilitate a harmonious global community and to promote a mutual understanding between countries. On the other hand, the dominant economic and competitive rationales, since the late 1980s, resulted in a focus on increasing the number of international students on Canadian campuses (Johnstone & Lee, 2014) to ameliorate revenue shortfall due to declining governmental funding for national higher education (DFATD, 2013; Knight, 1995).

Drawing on Stein and de Andreotti's (2016) study, the political/social-cultural rationale of internationalization is the means to portray a "charitable" imaginary of the host countries, whereby the host countries and universities communicate their identity as "helpers" to support international students from "less-developed" countries. However, such ethically driven discourse is rooted in a central-peripheral ideology that perpetuates a colonial/imperial view that certain countries/regimes as superior to others. Also, the economic/competitive rationale of

internationalization can be considered a means to treat international students as "cash" for not only the income they brought to the host countries and universities, but also the intellectual capital (i.e., well-educated workers) that support nation-building in the host countries. For instance, several studies pointed out that international students have been regarded as a market for universities which utilize the revenue from the much higher tuition fees international students pay (Enslin & Hedge, 2008; Guo & Guo, 2017; Johnstone & Lee, 2014; Stein & Andreotti, 2016). As well, the living expenses they bring to the nation "provide immediate and significant economic benefits to Canadians in every region of the country." (DFATD, 2014, p.7)

The latest international education strategy 2019-2024, which was published by Global Affairs Canada (2019), underlined the social and economic benefits that international students have brought to Canada. In 2018, international students contributed an estimated $21.6 billion to the national GDP and created nearly 170,000 jobs for Canada since 2016 (Global Affairs Canada, 2019). In view of the increasing competitiveness between Canada and competitor countries which "recognize the long-term benefits of international education" and "have upped their game to remain competitive," the government of Canada published a report, *Building on Success: International Education Strategy 2019-2024,* which regards internationalization as business opportunities and market strategies for national education to support the ambition of Canada becoming "the world's top destinations for learning" (Carr, Minister of International Trade Diversification, see on Global Affair Canada, 2019). In British Columbia (BC), the province with the second largest number of international students, according to the statistics published by Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA)[6] in 2017, an increasing number of public post-secondary institutions rely on international students as a revenue stream. For example, according

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[6] Statistics result retrieved from CCPA Website: https://www.policyalternatives.ca/afb2017

to the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT)[7], the number of international students attending public post-secondary institutions increased by 85 % between 2008 to 2014.

Scholars who advocate for international education focused on mutual understanding and culture/knowledge exchange have critiqued the move towards economically focused international education (Guo & Guo, 2017). For instance, a collaborative report which was published in 2017 by Centre for International Policy Studies in the University of Ottawa, Munk School of Global Affairs, and University of Toronto, critique the lack of diversity of study-abroad destinations chosen by Canadian students (CIPS, 2017). The uneven global flow of student mobility may bring a risk of perpetuating the Western-dominated global order. Emphases on the market-driven international education strategy have framed and shaped education to be commodified as a lucrative product, whereas the related policies, such as working visa and immigration policies, have become the "side meal" of such education migration packages.

2.3 Mediatization of Canadian Higher Education

Given that international student tuition fees have become a crucial resource for a growing proportion of Canadian post-secondary institutions to balance their institutional revenue, universities face challenges in distinguishing themselves to stand out in the globalized higher education market, in order to attract potential international students. In this context, universities have targeted improvements of their school's reputation and global visibility as imperative for marketing purposes.

Nevertheless, given that media communications work to frame and shape certain discourses, which can be influential in constructing and reproducing norms, ideologies, or imagery (McCombs, 2004; Hjarvard, 2008), the process of mediatization can be explored and

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[7] Statistics result retrieved from BCCAT Website: https://bccat.ca/

discussed from multiple dimensions. On the one hand, Hjarvard (2008) conceptualized the notion of mediatization as a "double-sided process of high modernity" (p.105) in which the media emerge both as independent, with its logic, and simultaneously become an integrated part of other social institutions like politics, education, and religion. On the other hand, media works to construct a bridge between the public and the latest events, in the larger society beyond immediate personal experience, which can both reflect and influence our perceptions or attitudes toward particular public issues and social events (McCombs, 2004).

2.3.1 Meaning, elements, and the importance of the mediatization of higher education

University mediatization has been regarded as one of the critical processes for higher education institutions to increase their efforts and reliance on distributing self-promotional discourses through media platforms, communicating the school identities to stakeholders and the broader masses (Rawolle & Lingard, 2010; Stack, 2016). Previous studies have recognized the important role university websites play, as one crucial media approach, for bridging the institution and audiences (Carnevale, 2005; Grove, 2011; Rhoades et al., 2019). University websites provide a public site for the university to make self-presentations. The websites also help their audiences to access information about and connect with the university. For example, Carnevale's (2005) and Grove's (2011) studies mentioned that U.S. students and parents mainly rely on university websites to gain information about the institutions. Remarkably, with the prevalent trend of university internationalization, as well as increased competition among the globalized higher education market, mediatization of universities has been widely viewed as a school management imperative for branding themselves and recruiting international students, which can refer to the idea of "university commercialization" (Rhoades et al., 2019) or "university commodification" (Stack, 2016; 2019).

University websites are being used to not only present information about the school but also to communicate the public and/or private purposes of the institutions (Rhoades et al., 2019). The public purposes of universities refer to their responsibilities as an educational and social institution to serve the broader society, the nation-states, and the global communities. The universities' private purposes and consumptions benefits, (which are gradually over-highlighted by universities themselves compared to the public purposes), including the revenue-seeking approaches and the market-based conceptions of knowledge and learning (also can be conceptualized as academic capitalism, which I will elaborate on later in this chapter), are related to school branding and marketing in terms of international student recruitment (Bass et al., 2012; Gray et al., 2003; Rhoades et al, 2019). University websites represent a significant public face of universities, in which the images and messages they present on the sites can influence how the prospective students perceive and understand the university, which may affect their choice of institutions (Rhoades et al., 2019).

Recent studies illuminate the importance of mediatization from different dimensions. Politically, universities represent themselves as selective, prestigious and world-class through telling stories based on media logics that promote their global visibility and enhance their competitive position. Socio-culturally, universities utilize media approaches as public stages to present themselves as committed and contributing to the public good as well as communicate their institutions identities and culture toward audiences, including prospective students and their parents (Rhoades et al., 2019). Economically, mediatization of universities can be regarded as a means for presenting themselves to prospective students, particularly to full-fee paying international students, in terms of marketing school brand and other attractive features (e.g.,

friendly and safe learning environment, quality of teaching and research performance, and diverse campus events or student activities) to influence their choice of institutions.

2.3.2 University mediatization and academic capitalism

As media plays an increasingly important role in university management, the mediatization of higher education facilitates the transforming practices in the operations of institutions (Rawolle & Lingard, 2010). One of the notable impacts that the process of higher education mediatization brings to the recent neoliberal model of university operation is how it impacts academic workers in higher education institutions. The market-driven operations of university management have "prioritized higher education's private, consumption benefits over its public purposes and benefits," (Rhoades et al., 2019, p.521) which follows the trend of academic capitalism to a great extent (Cantwell & Kauppinen, 2014; Metcalfe, 2010; Slaughter, 2014).

Slaughter and Leslie (1997) conceptualizes the notion of academic capitalism to indicate the phenomenon that universities capitalize their academic capital through engagement in "institutional and professorial market or market-like efforts to secure external moneys." (p.8) Those market-like behaviors refer to the idea of competition, including competition for external, private financial sources, competitive governmental grants, endowment funds, university-industry partnerships, and the differential tuition fees from international students (Metcalfe, 2010, p.493).

In other words, given the compelling neoliberal rationales, which dominate the current practices in terms of university operations, knowledge, and productivity of academic workers have become elements of academic capital which can be capitalized and regarded as "products" or "services" as business, for-profit activities, by universities (Metcalfe, 2010). In this case, some

scholars have recognized the process of "marketization" and "commodification" (Gould, 2003; Meek, 2000) of higher education that has emerged in North America since the late 1980s (Chan & Fisher, 2008; Stein, 2018). Notably, the process of university mediatization is understood to be intertwined with the phenomenon of academic capitalism, to some extent, given that media itself is widely used as a branding and marketing tool.

Metcalfe (2010) puts forth evidence through a Statistics Canada dataset and shifting federal/provincial higher education policy initiatives. She argues that Canada is deeply implicated in the trend of academic capitalism, particularly, with its increased interest and demand to respond to, and capitalize on, the trend of internationalization.

Provincial governance of higher education in Canada has led to the development of unique provincial and territorial autonomous higher education systems. Nevertheless, there is a similarity, in terms of the phenomenon of marketization of academic activities, which may result in the reduction of institution/faculty autonomy, academic freedom, as well as the quality and quantity of "curiosity-driven" research in the long-run (Metcalfe, 2010). In this context, an increasing reliance on media for marketing purposes has led to the transformation of university management strategies and practices and further impacts the academic freedom and professional autonomy of faculty members to a great extent (Chou, 2014; Chou & Chan, 2016; 2017).

All in all, the process of university mediatization cannot be delinked with the discussion of academic capitalism and the impacts it brought to Canadian higher education. With the entrenched neoliberal discourses embedded into the current market-driven rationales, in policy design and university management, universities have largely become "knowledge factories" to compete with each other through the productivity and quality of their knowledge workers (i.e., faculty members) (Oleksiyenko, 2018, p. 194). Under this context, faculty members, particularly

young scholars and non-tenured faculty members, are coerced to participate in a "race of publishing" to gain job security and promotion opportunities. Universities become a place in which the entire higher education system, using neoliberal, merit-based soft power, limits academic freedom and professional autonomy of faculty members (Deem et al., 2008; Oleksiyenko, 2018).

2.4 Global University Rankings and the Globalized Higher Education Context

While the trend of globalization and internationalization has promoted competition between countries politically, economically, and socially (Bennell & Pearce, 2003; Dakowska, 2017), increased competition among the globalized higher education context has promoted market-based conceptions of knowledge and learning. Universities utilize internationalization as a means by which to improve the global status and competitiveness of their institutions (Rhoades et al., 2019).

International education has been identified as a significant export in many Western countries since 1980's (Marginson, 2016). An Australian report once estimated that the number of students seeking overseas education would have increased from 1.8 million to 7.2 million by 2025 (CMEC, 2011, see on Johnstone & Lee, 2014). The global demand for international education, as well as the intense competition for international student recruitment, has promoted the economic rationale of internationalization, which facilitates the market-driven strategic plans in terms of university management (Johnstone & Lee, 2014). Given the public function of universities (i.e., serving community and other social interests to identify higher education as public good) are gradually eroded by the promotion of the universities' private purposes, the idea of "entrepreneurial university" (Clark, 1998; Rhoades et al., 2019) is used to explain the neoliberal discourses entrenched in recent university management strategies or practices which

highlight the universities' consumption benefits (i.e., business) as imperatives. The shift from the "public good knowledge/learning regime' to the 'academic capitalist knowledge/learning regime'" (Rhoades et al., 2019, p.524) prompts universities to pay less attention to contributing to the infrastructures of social welfare and instead puts more effort into business considerations.

The rationale of the mediatization of higher education cannot be delinked with the predicted intensification of competition in terms of the global demand for international education. Some scholars have shed light on the increased competition in the international student marketplace, which has been viewed as a significant part of the global economy (Enslin & Hedge, 2008). Notably, several studies have explored university ranking as a significant factor that impacts the decision making of students and parents in terms of school choice (Chao, 2013; Marginson, 2016; Stack, 2016; Yudkevich et al., 2016). Given that rankings themselves can be recognized as a media approach for audiences to refer to the "global order" of higher education institutions, the increasing popularity of global university rankings needs to be considered as a powerful epistemic tool for the mediatization of higher education (Ishikawa, 2014; Stack, 2013; 2016;2019).

As a currently compelling globalized university evaluation system, university rankings work to communicate the prestige and the global status of individual universities for policymakers, school leaders, and prospective international students. Ranking universities, according to the rankings websites, are designed for higher education institutions and national policymakers to identify the global status of universities, as well as the quality and competitiveness of national higher education systems through international comparisons, some scholars have recognized that the market-based rationales of rankings is "a mechanism of

agenda-setting in the global knowledge economy" (Lo, 2011, p.216) in terms of university branding and marketing (Gruber, 2014; Stack, 2016).

The increasing importance of rankings provided implications of how universities consider rankings as a powerful media to present and communicate the prestige of institutions toward prospective international students, which reflects the mediatization of higher education as imperative, given the intense competition regarding international education as a lucrative export (Marginson, 2007;2016; Pusser & Marginson, 2013).

Given the impacts of global university rankings, which play a significant role in the mediatization of higher education, some scholars identify rankings as an epistemic tool that embodies the influence of a Western global imagery for perpetuating the privileged status of certain institutions and/or higher education models in the Global North (Ishikawa, 2014; Rhoades et al., 2019; Stein & Andreotti, 2016;). Analyzing the entanglement between university rankings and the mediatization of higher education points to how university marketing to international students "reflects global prominent, Anglo-American models of higher education and internationalization" (Rhoades et al., 2019, p.521). However, there are emerging voices that advocate challenging the Western-centered epistemology of globalization and internationalization (Maringe, 2010; Stein, 2018).

2.5 Social Media and the University Management Strategies

While the university website is one of the crucial media approaches for an audience to gain more information about the university, increasingly popularity of social media also plays an active role in promoting the visibility of institutions. With technological development, as well as the popularization of digital devices/products, social media (i.e., social networking sites) has become an easily-accessed and managed space for people to engage in social interactions

(Dahlgren, 2009, see on KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014). Lupton (2015) once put forth the notion of "cyborg" to describe the phenomenon that digital devices have turned become an extension of a human being's physical body. For instance, the wearable and portable digital devices, as well as the wide accessibility of the wireless Internet, allows the general public to participate in online activities at any time and any place. Lupton's argument might relate to the experiences of many of us in terms of using smartphones and the Internet. The increasing popularity of social media has become a new space of power to impact or alter patterns of social interaction and information distribution (KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014; Rambe, 2012).

The increasing popularity of social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, is targeted and promoted by various types of organizations and institutions (Marwick, 2013). In the context of higher education, Peruta and Shields (2017) conducted a content analysis, in their study, to examine the post types and formats of Facebook by exploring the marketing strategies that U.S. post-secondary institutions employ through the social media platform. Their study identified that specific content topics, such as athletics, notably increased users' engagement on Facebook. Additionally, Hossain and Sakib's (2016) study helped to identify factors in social media marketing strategies that influence school brand loyalty in university students. Research findings, in their study, points out significant impacts in the content of social media on student school brand loyalty, arguing that the institution must identify the key features of the content, in social media, to gain and maintain the "brand loyalty" of university students.

Previous studies have identified the importance of social media on university branding and marketing (Hossain & Sakib, 2016; Meseguer-Martinez et al., 2019; Peruta & Shields, 2017). There are some studies that use critical discourse analysis to study university websites (Cohen, 2010; Fairclough, 2001; Maschmann, 2018; Saichaie, 2011; Stack, 2016; Svendsen & Svendsen,

2018; Wilson & Carlsen, 2016). However, there are relatively few critical studies that bring light to the role social media plays in how universities use social media to represent themselves. Social media has the potential power to communicate specific intentions or ideologies to coordinate collective actions (Valenzuela et al., 2008). For instance, Facebook provides platforms for common interest groups (i.e., Fan pages) and reinforces the ideologies of the group (Rambe, 2012, p.298).

However, Rambe's (2012) case study of a single university's Facebook study group, also suggests that some features of social networking sites, such as information sharing, networking, and relationship building, may allow for the production and reproduction of hierarchical power relations between authorities and other interactants through their control of discourse. In this case, a critical discourse analysis is essential to uncover the process of power that manifests through discourses by legitimizing certain language formats or ways of presentation. It also helps to expose and denaturalize implicit intentions and ideologies behind discursive practices in the social media context (Fairclough, 2001).

Based on these concerns, this study proposes to explore the messaging strategies and discursive practices of the university in a social media context. For instance, whether or not the university presents messages relating to the university's historical positionality (e.g., as a White settlers' institution that occupied Indigenous lands) to international audiences. The university's social responsibilities and commitments to work with local/global communities is another example. A focus of university communications becomes communicating their ranking status, prestige, or partnerships with other top-ranked institutions in the Global North, to promote the excellence of the university on social media platforms (Rhoades et al., 2019).

2.6 Western Cultural Hegemony and the Risk of Epistemic Violence

With the formal end of European imperialism and colonialism, after the World War II, the basis of Western hegemony has largely transformed from a hard power (i.e., military power) toward a soft power (i.e., political, socio-cultural, and economic power) dimension. However, this does not mean that the Western military interventions, especially the U.S., and other coercive efforts or violence have gradually ceased. Instead, the military power becomes the confidence of Western countries to naturalize the means of using political and economic power to oppress and sanction other countries. Based on this context, the global power relations between countries have not disappeared, but are reproduced through the "coloniality of power" (Shahjahan, 2013, p.680) that interconnect "imperial labor exploitation, land appropriation, and control of finance, authority, and knowledge" (Mignolo in Shahjahan 2013, p.680), which helps to strengthen the political socio-cultural, and economic power of Western countries.

The conception of coloniality, drawing on Walter Mignolo's (2005) study, has moved beyond the notion of post-colonialism, which refers to the ongoing dominant status of the former colonial regimes among temporary global orders (King, 2016). Coloniality refers to an "enduring logic of domination" (Shahjahan, 2013, p.679) that "enforces control, domination, and exploitation disguised in the language of salvation" (Mignolo, 2005, p.6). Drawing on the coloniality perspective to analyze the geopolitics of knowledge, it presumes that knowledge production involves geopolitical analysis, given that the "knowledge system" should be considered as "a systematic way of knowing derived from a particular social-political-historical-philosophical context, which could include cultural knowledge, language, and embodied experiences" (Shahjahan, 2013, p,680).

A coloniality perspective can also help to problematize the currently Western-dominated knowledge economy. It provides an illusion that the primary violence of Western-centric internationalization and Western supremacy stems from the "weakness" of the political economy and knowledge system in other non-Western countries. This framing can be problematic, given that it naturalizes the hegemony of neoliberal capitalism and the supposed universalism of Western knowledge. The primary problem of Western hegemony is not because of the weakness or disadvantages of non-Western countries. Instead, it is the coloniality of neoliberal capitalism power that favors and privileges countries and political, economic systems of Western Europe and North America. In this case, the struggle of so-called "less-developed" countries does not lie in political and economic "underdevelopment" (which is based on criteria designed by the West), but in the difficulty of competing with globally entrenched neoliberal capitalism ideology/discourse that is dominated by Western onto-epistemic hegemony.

Spivak (1999) drew on Foucault's conception of discourse to conceptualize the notion of epistemic violence. Discourses are more than ways of thinking or producing meaning but also a way of constructing authenticity and value of knowledge. The formation of discourses involves a particular process of social practices, which embedded the power of dominant values, beliefs, or ideologies to construct and legitimize certain knowledge.

The mediatization of higher education facilitates the formation and reproduction of particular discourses which are "ideological, reflective of power relationships and have implications for social practice" (Fairclough, 1992; Maschmann, 2018, p. 14). Given that universities present particular information through the integration of language, visual elements, and other multimodal materials on media to produce and reproduce certain identities, university-operated multimedia platforms, such as websites and social media pages, can be seen as the

products of institutional discourses (Maschmann, 2018; Van Dijk, 2008). For instance, the increasing competitiveness of the globalized higher education market, which foregrounds the impacts of Western dominated neoliberal internationalization, works to shape and frame "world-class" discourses and imagery of global higher education (Deem et al., 2008). Notably, the impacts of university rankings toward countries or regions, with lower-ranked institutions, may result in a risk of onto-epistemological hegemony which works to reinforce the unbalanced power relationship between the West and other parts of the world, as well as maintain an imperial and colonial ideology to legitimize the privileged status of Western countries (Deem et al., 2008).

Several previous studies have explored how "world-class" university discourses are part of enforcing Western hegemony in non-Western academia. Lo (2014) conducted a qualitative study to critically analyzed this issue from an academics' perspective, arguing that the current higher education policies in many Asian Pacific countries have re-oriented the priority of faculty members, through coercion, to pay more attention to research work while devaluing the importance of their teaching duties. Moreover, the school/faculty evaluation and reward policies have paid exaggerated attention to meet the ranking indicators in order to encourage universities to pursue a "world-class" status.

Chou and Chan's (2016) study explored how recent practices of improving the competitiveness and global visibility of Taiwanese universities have affected the research performance and school evaluation/reward systems. Their study found that current higher education policies have facilitated a changing scholarly, culture and research practices, in the social sciences and humanities-related disciplines in Taiwan. For example, scholars are encouraged to and rewarded by publishing their research papers in English, increasing the

visibility and reputation of their studies in well-known international journals (e.g., SCI, SSCI). Faculty members are required to teach in English and the quantitative-oriented evaluation systems facilitated the formation of a discipline hierarchy, which favored the STEM[8]-related areas and disadvantaged fields of social science and humanities due to their differing research productivity.

National Chengchi University (NCCU), for example, one of the select national universities in Taiwan, to improve the ranking performance and compete for special government grants reduced the required teaching hours of faculty members and increased the pressure on faculty members to publish and do research.

Much of the knowledge that is produced and circulated in higher education is produced by scholars and writers who are overwhelmingly from a white, Western background. In response to this phenomenon, critical scholars suggest the need to empower marginalized scholars (Trahar, 2013) as well as integrate non-Western ways of knowing and being into the currently Western-centered onto-epistemological frameworks (Guo & Guo, 2017).

By exploring the issue of Western cultural hegemony and epistemic violence in the field of higher education studies, previous studies identified that the hierarchy of globalized international industry had duplicated central-peripheral models that naturalize and reproduce political and economic inequities of former colonial relations between Western and non-Western peoples (Johnstone & Lee, 2014). In view of the demand of internationalizing universities to leverage international students, in an intense global competition for prestige and revenues (Rhoades et al., 2019), competitors from Western economies targeted prospective international students from Asian, Middle Eastern and African countries to "purchase" Western education and simultaneously capitalized on the talents of international students as skilled laborers or "high-

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[8] STEM refers to the field of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

quality" potential future citizens. Such a dynamic "contributes to Western nation-building and hegemony while reducing the capacity of the sending countries to build their knowledge economy" (Johnstone & Lee, 2014, p.219).

Additionally, given the competition of a globalized higher education market that promotes the phenomenon of mediatization of universities as a school management imperative, critical scholarship calls into question whether or how the internationalization and mediatization of higher education helps to promote colonial discourses and the dominant Anglo-American global imagery in the current global context (Rhoades et al., 2019, p.544). Particularly, it is essential to embed such critical perspectives into the discussions about ranking discourse, given the rankings are recognized as a significant indicator of "world-class" ideology for higher education institutions worldwide (Chou & Chan, 2016; Song & Tai, 2007; Stack, 2019). For instance, previous studies brought to light debates regarding the neutrality and equality of rankings, particularly their controversial indicators, such as the quantity of publications, citation rates, and institutional reputation surveys. These indicators tend to reflect and reproduce the kinds of Western-supremacist hierarchies that have been instrumental in the colonization and dispossession of non-English speaking, non-Anglo-American dominated nations in Asia, Africa, and other parts of the world – as well as in the colonization and dispossession of Indigenous peoples in settler colonial contexts.

2.6.1 Geopolitics of knowledge in higher education

The notion of "geopolitics", from the field of international relations, usually refers to the political power that links geographic spaces and political, economic and cultural advancement gained by inherent geographical advantages, such as natural resources, climate conditions, and location of territories. The concept of geopolitics of knowledge is being used, in this study, to

conceptualize the imperial/colonial politics of knowledge production and dissemination in higher education. The geopolitics of knowledge in higher education is linked to a phenomenon of academic capitalism, by which most of the Western universities are no longer relying on government funding but on private capital in terms of endowments and donations from university alumni or affiliated companies. In this case, countries like the U.S. and the U.K, which have stronger political/economic power and more prestigious, internationally known higher education institutions, are more likely to develop world-class academic centers and occupy a dominant position in global knowledge production.

As a consequence, the hierarchy of knowledge production would exclude some participants in "less-developed countries" from the "accepted network of knowledge production" (Yang, 2002, p.90).   These universities may be marginalized from the core of knowledge production and have no choice but to follow rules designed by those "world-class" leaders. In this case, one of the critical problems for most developing countries, which have ambitions to build world-class institutions, is a concern of not dealing with local needs effectively in their countries (Yang, 2002).

The promotion of university internationalization is linked to the geopolitical positioning of universities to some extent (Rhoades et al., 2019). The ways universities present their positions or status in the global context as "world-class," by which they widely communicate their ranking performances or partnership with prestigious institutions, in the Global North, reflects their dominant Anglo-American models of internationalization and a prevailing global imagery of Western higher education (Rhoades et al., 2019, p.521).

Limitation of the university curriculum and teaching materials, which are overwhelmingly focused on the Western context, also demonstrate the Western-centric

geopolitics of knowledge at universities. Guo and Guo's (2017) study, which explored the discrepancies between international student experiences and politics in Canada, found that the internationalization of the curriculum is limited. They interviewed students and found that international students rarely encountered teaching or learning materials that reflected the experiences of their home countries. Universities often focuses on visually representing demographic diversity (i.e., international student recruitment), but they often fail to substantively integrate knowledge and perspectives from diverse contexts (Haigh, 2009; Leask, 2015).

2.6.2 Uneven international student mobility and globalized whiteness of higher education

The competition of recruiting international students from all countries around the globe is not equal. Studies explore the mobility flow of international students, including the directions of mobility, the most popular sending countries, and the most popular destinations for international students to study abroad (Brux et al., 2010; Lee, 2014; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Not surprisingly, there is a remarkable East-West weighting, in terms of the global demand for competing for international students. Western countries continue to be regarded as host countries, while the Eastern countries (and most of the Global South countries) are the primary source areas for sending international students (Johnstone & Lee, 2014).

Some scholars applied the push-pull model to explain the phenomenon of uneven international student mobility, which favors the West as a popular destination. Mazzarol and Soutar's (2002) examined the factors that influence Asian international students' choice of host countries to study abroad. On the level of host country decision-making, the survey demonstrates the demands and motivation of international students from Asian countries (i.e., China, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Thailand) to study at politically and economically "developed" countries, particularly the English-speaking Western countries. In

addition to Mazzarol and Soutar's survey study, scholars from Asia also explored the study-abroad trend in Asian countries in which an increasing number of Asian students decide to study abroad (Lee, 2014). Reviewing those previous studies, which employ the push-pull model to investigate factors and motivations influencing international students, who choose to study in the West, these studies widely identified the push factors of home countries, including job opportunities, low or under-developed quality of higher education, racial discrimination, and unstable political environments, as well as the pull factors of host countries. These include a friendly/diverse social environment, stronger economic power, better career opportunities, and a sophisticated political structure of democracy.

On the level of institution selection, researchers employed Australian samples from the survey result to do an data analysis, which demonstrated that factors influencing institution selection includes three main dimensions of consideration: school/faculty reputation (e.g., reputation for quality and expertise of its staff), student diversity (e.g., a large number of international students enroll), and quality of financial/ educational resources (e.g., a reputation for being responsive to student needs and is financially stable). The understanding of potential factors influencing a student's choice of overseas institutions, helps universities to identify their strengths and weaknesses when appealing to international students, allowing them to review and reflect on existing policies and potential trajectories to reform school management strategies.

Given that education is a significant means of transmitting socio-cultural ideas and traditions, which would imperceptibly influence students' ways of knowing, thinking, and being, the uneven and polarized international student mobility flow, which maintains the monopoly of Western higher education, helps the West (including English, culture, and knowledge production) retain a hegemonic position globally (Johnstone & Lee, 2014). Such a critical perspective can

also relate to Stein and Andreotti's (2016; 2017) conception of the modern/colonial global imaginary, which explained and framed the connections between competitive international student recruitment and their experiences with racism.

The Global imaginary naturalizes the hierarchy of global power relations, which positions Western higher education on a more privileged status over other model. Notably, such hierarchy is based on legitimizing the systemic nature of racism and Western/White supremacy, by which the modern/colonial global imagery has perpetuated the uneven international student mobility and the globalized whiteness of higher education (Estera & Shahjahan, 2018). The concept of "whiteness" is not only referring to the privileges and power that people who appear white receive but is also used to indicate the privileged status of Western (i.e., white people's) ways of knowing, thinking, and behaving. In other words, the concept of "whiteness" should not be limited to explain that white people can benefit from skin color or the appearance of race. The "whiteness" has also become a metaphor of a "habit of being" (Coloma, 2013; Shotwell, 2016) to indicate the privileged self-perception and identification that people of color who performed or behaved "whitely".

Based on this interpretation, to frame the idea of the globalized whiteness of higher education, universities that behave Westernized or White are more likely to be recognized as prestigious and to achieve the world-class status over other institutions. As a consequence, the entrenched global imaginary and the globalized whiteness of higher education contributes to Western nation-building while reducing the capacity of non-Western source countries (of international students) to develop their knowledge economy with research and education based on their human capital, economic and political power.

2.7 Conclusion

On the institutional level, the university is not only an institution of knowledge production for educational purposes but also involves political economic interests in the service of nation-states. Economic and political interests of higher education institutions under the neoliberal framework have manifested in the form of academic capitalism (Slaughter, 2014), field hierarchy (Chou, 2014), and institution stratification (Chou & Chan, 2016) which might jeopardize the academic freedom and autonomy of universities and faculty members.

On the national level, along with the reduced public funding as well as increased competition among the globalized higher education players, higher education has gradually been regarded as a lucrative domestic industry in certain Western countries (including Canada). Notably, the popularity of global university rankings often leads to a transformation of national higher education policies, as well as university management priorities, which has facilitated the emerging phenomenon of commodification (Gould, 2003; Stack, 2016; 2019) and marketization (Meek, 2000) of higher education to some extent. On a global level, given entrenched neoliberal ideologies impacts on university management strategies, worldwide, discussions of how the globalization and internationalization has impacted higher education and stakeholders, including students, parents, and faculty members, deserves further exploration and study. In particular, the discourse of pursuing world-class status is problematic without considering the enduring colonial geopolitics of knowledge, which helps retain Western epistemic, political, and economic hegemony and perpetuates the Anglo-American-dominated academic coloniality.

While exploring how (predominantly Western) universities market internationalization as a means to improve their competitive global positions, one of the primary purposes of this study, the emerging phenomenon of the mediatization of higher education, also raises questions.

Universities perform and present themselves to communicate the prestige and brand value towards particular audiences, which raises questions as to what is being sold and to what end. How universities' performances are pitched to certain institutional imperatives provides some hints for us to examine whether and how Anglo-America models of academic capitalism are found in the marketing messages of universities social media.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter will detail the methodology to be employed to answer the research questions of this study. Specifically, how can multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) of the University of British Columbia (UBC) Facebook and Weibo social networking sites (SNS) help illustrate how UBC, a provincial flagship public research university, conceptualizes internationalization and its institutional identities, and how can the case study of two UBC social networking sites (i.e., Facebook and Weibo pages) provide a deeper understanding of the mediatization of higher education in Canada.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

This research draws on two strands of qualitative approach as the conceptual framework: case study and critical discourse analysis (CDA). A qualitative approach to exploring the context and content of UBC social networking sites is useful as it seeks to understand the formation of institutional discourses and the process of building meaning, which may result in a form of action (Shirzai, 2012). Yin (1994) and Stake (1995) once pointed out the paradigm of employing a case study is appropriate and useful for understanding one thing well, as well as "investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (Yin, 1994, as cited by Maschmann, 2018, p. 46). For instance, Rambe (2012) and KhosraviNik and Zia (2014) have combined case study and CDA when studying the formation of discourses in the SNS contexts. Drawing on a case study approach offers a close examination of the data within a specific context to give a more nuanced understanding of how UBC represents the internationalization of higher education to communicate its purposes and its institutional 'brand' on social networking sites (i.e., Facebook and Weibo pages in this study).

3.1.1 Conceptions of Discourse

Drawing on Foucault's (1972) conception of discourse, discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning but ways of constructing the authenticity and power of knowledge (Graham, 2011). The formation of discourses involves a certain process of social practice, which embed the power of dominant values, beliefs, or ideologies to construct and legitimize certain knowledge and perspectives. Both Van Dijk (1990), Lyytinen and Hirschheim (1998)'s studies argued that discourse is a form of "communicative action" (as cited by Shirazi, 2012, p.32) which involved social interaction through the means of language or other semiotic systems in the process of meaning-making (Shirazi, 2012).

As one of the most significant sociocultural elements, language is not only a tool for communication but also a "symbolic heritage" for constructing specific social identities, social relations, and systems of knowledge, value, and belief (Fairclough, 1993, p. 134) in a particular sociocultural context. Given that language use goes beyond the surface meaning of the message, which involves the presentation and interpretation of the broader sociocultural context, Fairclough (1993) argued that language use ought to be considered as a kind of "social practice" that is "always a socially and historically situated mode of action" (p.135). To be more precise, language itself and the meanings that it produces, reproduces, or interrupts are socially shaped or constituted rather than shaped in monolithic ways. Meanings are shaped and produced within diverse "discursive events" (Fairclough, 1993, p.138; Molina, 2009), which refers to specific instances or circumstances of language usage. The terminology of "discourse" is widely used by not only linguists but many social analysts to indicate the ideological dimension of meanings produced by language within a variety of discursive events and social practices (Fairclough, 1993).

Discourses can be seen as the "systems of thought" (Shan, 2017, p.193) or the "semiotic vehicle" (Fairclough, 1993, p.141) for different groups of social actors to communicate ideologies, values, and beliefs across the order of discourse. One of the significant contributions of discourse analysis is to explore as well as identify the power relations which are constituted by the order of discourse and "particular power techniques" (Alvesson & Deetz, 1999, p.200) which provide "the conjunction between power and knowledge" to "shape what can be said and known in particular field" (Shan, 2017, p.193).

Given that the formation and circulation of discourses is the process of naturalizing and normalizing particular social practices and discursive events for the continuity and reproduction of relations of power (Fairclough, 1993, p.139), it is important to become more aware of language and discourse from a critical perspective. With increased awareness of the fact that much of the discursive environment is characterized by certain ideological intents, to some extent (Fairclough, 1993, p.142), critical awareness of language and discourse provides opportunities to unpack taken-for-granted "common-sense" and improve the agency of individuals as critical thinkers. Saichaie's (2011) comparative study examines 13 colleges and universities in the United States, exploring the contents and structures of school websites to identify the "promotional discourse" by which the institutions use certain language to establish prestige through highlighting particular actors, choosing what to present, emphasize, and exclude in their websites, to fulfill the purposes of school marketing.

Other studies demonstrated the potential of (multimodal) critical discourse analysis as a research approach for achieving a nuanced understanding of the social function of school websites (Stack, 2016; Svendsen & Svendsen, 2018; Wilson & Carlsen, 2016). Shirazi (2012), Rambe (2012), and KhosraviNik and Zia (2014) employed CDA to understand how discursive

types and discourses inform the construction of social power in interactional social networking sites. These studies have inspired the research design and the analyzing framework for my study (see the section 3.3 Research Design and Methods).

3.1.2 Discourses and Mediatization of Higher Education

The concept of mediatization brings light to a perception that the power of media not only presents and communicates information or messages but also to works to manufacture public debates and opinions by directing audiences to adopt specific perspectives (Cohen, 2010; Blumler & Esser, 2019). Based on this premise and relating to the focus on university social media in this study, the university Facebook and Weibo pages can be recognized as "heteroglossic discursive sites" (Cohen, 2010, p.105) that work to produce and reproduce certain ideologies, shaping and framing the public discourses (Hall, 1997, see on Cohen, 2010).

There are various media approaches for universities to present themselves on public sites, and communicate their institutional identity, through indicators of prestige, reputation, and educational quality of the school. This study explored how information the university posts on the social media pages has been mediatized in ways that shape particular discourses and images of the university by directing audiences, i.e., prospective students and their parents, to adopt certain perspectives or ideological dimensions to identify their preference of institutions. In other words, one of the critical imperatives in this study is to unveil the power inherent in the media management strategies for university branding and marketing.

Considering the importance of power and the broader socio-cultural structure embedded into the analysis process (Molina, 2009), as well as the multiple methods of presenting information on the university social media sites, this study uses Multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) to unpack the meanings produced by various messaging strategies in the university

social networking sites and to identify the implied audience purposes. Kress (2004) once put forth a profound observation that the new forms of dissemination and production methods, particularly the popularity of screens and other digital approaches, have "increased the dependence on images and other non-linguistic semiotic devices to mediate or even replace linguistic text" (Kress, 2004, as cited by Maschmann, 2018, p.52). Given the blurring lines between writing and visual materials in terms of the pattern of messaging, the communication of discourse has always had a multimodal nature (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001; KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014). Based on this awareness, using MCDA as the methodological framework in this study of social media will help to deepen understanding about the role of different forms of discourse in the mediatization of higher education. In this study, then, the analysis of university social networking sites (i.e., Facebook and Weibo pages) will help to clarify whose interests are being served and legitimized by current discourses of neoliberal globalization and internationalization in higher education – and whose are not.

3.1.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Leonardo (2004) points out that critical study is "a multidisciplinary framework with the implicit goal of advancing the emancipatory function of knowledge" (Leonardo, 2004, as cited by Shirazi, 2012, p. 29). In view of the goal of conducting a critical study of multimodal discourse analysis in the social networking sites, it is crucial to draw on the characteristics and elements of CDA as a conceptual framework. Being considered as a theory and a research method, CDA resides within the critical paradigm and is focused on the relationship between language, sociocultural context, and the potential discursive power embedded in discourses which involved social interaction for the process of meaning-making (Cohen, 2010; Saichaie, 2011; Shirazi, 2012; KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014; Van Dijk, 1990). Based on the premise that

language does not passively reflect experiences but instead, is a "primary semiotic tool" by which those "discourse practices" work to constitute "social action" for "organizing social relationships in the construction of a 'shared world,'" (Cohen, 2010, p.108), using CDA as an approach to analyze the implicit language pattern (i.e., the "politics of representation") (Cohen, 2010, p.109) helps researchers to identify and uncover the constructed social norms, meaning, or perspectives (i.e., the "social language") (Cohen, 2010, p.108) within a particular sociocultural context which influence or situate our identities or perceptions of identities of others (Gee, 1999).

The CDA methodology helps researchers to examine the "social languages" (Gee, 1999) which are included in the public sites (i.e., university websites), as well as to identify the potential discursive power which facilitates the formation of institutional discourses. Cohen (2010) conceptualized the idea of "constructed subjectivities" (Cohen, 2010, p.108) to indicate the process of how audiences' perception, in terms of the way universities communicate the school identities through media, will impact their interpretation of messages. With the interest of unpacking the process of constructed subjectivities in the university-operated media platforms and exploring the evidence of mediatization of higher education, the CDA methodology provides possibilities for researchers to uncover discursive power through the discourses that are formed and presented in not only the university websites but also other media platforms.

Drawing on Foucault's conceptualization of discourse, Van Dijk (2003) explored the ways discourse "structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society" (p.33). He noted that discourses can be manipulative when recipients are "unable to understand the manipulator's real intentions or the consequences of the manipulator's beliefs or actions" (Van Dijk, 2006, as cited by Rambe, 2012, p.310). Discourses

are formed and disseminated through the promotion or attention of particular messages in the university SN sites for audiences to make sense of the school identities. Given that the message recipients (i.e., audience) might lack specific knowledge or critical frames that might be used to question dominant discourses and resist manipulation of discursive power (Rambe, 2012, p.310), particular messages, such as the ranking of performance and the academic productivity of faculty members, can be naturalized by audiences as neutral evidence of the prestige and reputations of the institution (Cohen, 2010). In this case, the constructed institutional discourses become the "shared social knowledge" (Cohen, 2010, p.109) among message recipients.

To uncover the discursive power in the university-operated media platforms, CDA helps to capture the implicit links between what is directly presented in the sites and the range of possible meanings that can be attributed to it by the audiences (Cohen, 2010; Van Dijk, 2003). Given that the core elements of MCDA are built based on CDA as a conceptual framework, the following sections provide a brief literature review of the development of this methodological paradigm, as well as contributions from previous studies that employ (M)CDA as methodology.

3.1.3.1 Literature review of critical discourse analysis

This section provided a brief literature review of the development and application of CDA as a theoretical framework and a research method in previous studies.

Critical discourse analysis is premised on the notion that power is opaque but exists in the arguments or discourses used by legitimizing certain ideologies and perspectives while marginalizing others (Piazza, 2014). Given that discourse is an important element of social practice (Fairclough, 1993), CDA aims to systematically explore implicit relationships between diverse discursive events and practices as well as the broader sociocultural context, by which Fairclough (1993) uses the term "interdiscursivity" (p.138) to conceptualize such relationship.

This viewpoint relates to Kress's (2004) argument which states that CDA theoretically sees the linguistics as within the social and methodologically aims at investigating how the discursive practices are ideologically constructed by and struggled over power relations, exploring how such unclear relations between discourse, ideology, and power may itself as a factor of producing or sustaining hegemony (Fairclough, 1993, p.135; Molina, 2009). Hegemony is produced and reproduced by the unstable struggle of power over orders of discourses (Fairclough, 2001). The order of discourse, which indicates what discourses gain authority in relation to others and how the preferred discourses gain dominant status among the order of discourses, can also be seen as a domain of potential cultural hegemony (Cohen, 2010; Fairclough, 1993). Based on this standpoint, hegemony can be regarded as the power of dominant discourses that are entrenched to construct certain ideologies, values, and beliefs. Critical discourse analysis, in this case, can help us unpack and understand social practices through the systematic study of the genre (ways of interacting), discourse (ways of representing), and style (ways of being) from various texts. (Piazza, 2014; Rogers, 2004)

Cohen's (2010) study uses CDA to analyze education news published in the Chicago *Tribune* newspaper to explore and examine how language use and grammar patterns in news discourse situate teacher identity in relation to knowledge and authority in the U.S. Her study identified how a particular discourse gains authority over others by which the news media facilitates the formation of a certain order of discourses to favor some discourses while marginalized others. One of the profound implications Cohen's study provides is that educators and education scholars need to consider discursive problems within the broader social contexts. In the case of critical discourse analysis of education news, published in the Chicago *Tribune* newspaper, one of the largest and most dominant media companies in the U.S.,

debates, and opinions presented in the newspaper have been shown to result in editorial bias in favor of the interests of private good over the public good (Cohen, 2010). The dominant discourses in the news stories analyzed in this study situate education in a neo-liberal economic model that highlights the importance of capitalist notions of accountability. This echoes broader capitalist discourse that has regarded schools as corporations in the free-market and teachers as laborers who are replaceable based on their working performance (Oleksiyenko, 2018).

Critical discourse analysis is considered an effective tool for looking at socially constructed norms, such as class, gender, and race, which have been assigned certain ideological meanings that are embedded within texts and messages (Fairclough, 1993; Saichaie, 2011). My study takes critical discourse analysis as the conceptual framework that draws on Fairclough's approach of the three dimensions of analysis (Fairclough, 1993). In the dimension of textual analysis, this step aims at making a thorough description of the texts as the object of analysis. It requires researchers to describe the properties of the textual and visual elements, as well as identify "the repetition signals which validate certain prototypes and stereotypes in the discourses" (Cohen, 2010; Molina, 2009, p.186). For instance, if a university website repeatedly uses a term like "top" and "distinguished," then this might indicate the intention of the institution to strengthen the reputation and prestige of the university (Saichaie, 2011).

The second dimension of Fairclough's (1993) framework of CDA is to conduct a process analysis, which unpacks messages through examining the "functional parts" of the analyzing objects (i.e., textual or visual elements) to understand the relationship between the message and its producers. Researchers focus on the interactions among different elements of the analyzed objects, making interpretations based on the evidence found in the first step (i.e., textual analysis) to identify what discourse practices speak to the broader sociocultural context (Fairclough, 2001;

Saichaie, 2011: Vellos, 2009). Ultimately, the last dimension, and also the final step of this conceptual framework, is to make inferences and interpretations regarding the entrenched discourses embedded in the broader cultural, historical, political, and social context in relation to the analyzed objects (Fairclough, 2001; Saichaie, 2011). This final process aims at delineating a deep analysis through surfacing the complexities and determinants of discourse to better explain the rationale of the construction of discourses.

Fairclough's framework provides a practical agenda for using CDA as a research method. Notably, the diverse and creative media approaches and objects of analysis are not limited to linguistic material but ought to be extended to the "multimodality" of the textual analysis (Fairclough, 1993; Hall, 1997). Consistent with Foucault (1972) and Fairclough (1993, 2001), my study identifies discourse as the "themes" that establish relationships between various elements of the text. Additionally, discourse can be seen as an "anonymous dispersion" (Piazza, 2014, p.7) of ideologies through the diverse medium, which is formed by the combination of themes, topics, perspectives that present in the text. These CDA scholars' (Fairclough, 1993, 2001; Molina, 2009; Piazza, 2014) interpretations help to conceptualize the connotation of "discourse" and the framework of the stages of discourse development (Shirazi, 2012, see on section 3.2.1 Stages of discourse development on University Social Networking sites) in my study which aim to explore the discourses in the university-operated social media platforms.

3.1.3.2 Limitations and critiques of critical discourse analysis

Given that CDA tends to rely on the observation, inference, and interpretation of researchers, some researchers discussed the challenges and questions faced by CDA as a research method (Breeze, 2011; Saichaie, 2011). A common question that the CDA studies encounter is the "rigor" of this methodological approach given its qualitative paradigm. As a theoretically and

methodologically flexible analytical approach. Some scholars (Molina, 2009) question the balance between objective, scientific-based analysis, and subjective interpretations or discussion of data. To what extent researchers are upfront about their beliefs and may have a "bias" when they interpret the data to highlight what they intend to find (Rogers, 2004; Saichaie, 2011). This might be a challenge and question that inevitable for researchers who apply CDA as an analytical approach. A suggestion provided by CDA scholars (Fairclough, 2001; Rogers, 2004) noted that it is important for researchers to properly delineate their position in relation to the research they commit to. Researchers need to be more conscious of their role as an intentional agent in a qualitative study (Xiao et al., 2015). In this case, it is crucial for a researcher to articulate his or her positionality, bringing light to the position which may influence the study, including the data collection and analysis, and the ways or perspectives of inference and interpretation (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). In other words, what researchers extrapolate from their data depends on researchers' position in relation to the social and political context of the study. It is also critical to consider what specialized or integrated knowledge and skills researchers bring to the study (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Pauwels, 2012). Based on such awareness, CDA itself as an analytical tool can be problematic without considering the power and authority of the researchers who also bring certain perspectives and beliefs into the process of analysis and interpretation (Pauwels, 2012).

Molina's (2009) study regarding the challenges and shortcomings of discourse and media studies in Latin America provides a profound example and insights for the challenges and critiques of CDA. His study suggested that the news media in Latin America can be seen as a "cultural industry" (p.186) in which a considerable number of CDA works discover the presence of racism or sexism in the discourse of Latin America's media which is owned and operated by

the middle-class White minority (Molina, 2009, p.186). Given the unique historical, social, and political context of Latin America, Molina suggests that the existing CDA works have contributed to the accumulation of empirical information and data of analysis which are located in the context of Latin America, yet the conceptual and theoretical frameworks are still dominated by models that come from the Global North. Molina's reflections provide some implications for future CDA studies. His study sheds light on Fairclough's conception of "interdiscursivity," which highlights the connection between discourse and the broader social context. He also reflects on the overall development and contributions of existing CDA works in Latin America, suggesting that the analytical approach itself is inherently embedded with certain power and authority given the fact that the models being widely used have predominantly come from Global North.

This section provided a brief review of the development of CDA as a theory and research method, as well as identifying the critiques and challenges of CDA from scholars and previous studies. Moreover, reviewing literature about CDA also helps me to reflect on my positionality as a researcher who proposes to apply CDA in my study. Based on the brief statement I have made on the background of the research section (also see Chapter 1), my personal experience as an international student from an Asian country inspired me to pay more attention to the impacts of globalization and internationalization in non-English-speaking countries in the Asia Pacific region, especially to explore the benefits or risks that neoliberal internationalization and Western supremacy have brought to international students worldwide. I am particularly interested in exploring how the mediatization of English-speaking, Western institutions like UBC, have been instrumental in the colonization and dispossession of non-English speaking, non-Anglo-American dominated nations in Asia and other parts of the world. Based on these interests and

concerns, I propose integrating the knowledge and academic training I acquired in North America with my cultural background as a Taiwanese, to explore the contents of two UBC social media platforms and provide my insights. Ultimately, in this study, I hope to challenge Western models, which are foregrounded in our understanding of internationalization and globalization, seeking the possibilities to go beyond the dominant modern/colonial global imaginary of higher education internationalization.

In short, on the basis of CDA as a conceptual framework, the next section will start from conceptualizing the notion of "multimodality" and provides a review of the rationale and development of MCDA as the methodology for my study. Ultimately, this study draws on Pauwels' (2012) six-phase analysis step to frame the research design for data collection and analysis.

3.2 Social Media and Critical Discourse Analysis

Considering the structure of the existing well-known social networking sites, social media has the potential power to communicate specific intentions or ideologies to coordinate collective actions (Valenzuela et al., 2008). The characteristic of social networking sites can be seen as a double-sided blade. On the one hand, the social networking sites provide ordinary citizens opportunities to engage in participatory politics or democracy through easily access interactional virtual spaces. Shirazi's (2012) study investigated the role social media played in the widespread social movements that took place in the Middle East and North Africa, which demonstrated evidence of the emancipatory power and potentiality of information and communication technologies regarding the promotion of human rights and democracy (Shirazi, 2012, p.29). In other words, the characteristics of social media allow social actors, who have different views then the authorities, to present themselves openly in the social networking sites.

Additionally, their presentations may have the power to facilitate certain social actions to alter the current socio-political contexts. On the other hand, it is also notable for researchers to pay more attention to the phenomenon of the mediatization of politics, which indicates the process that authorities and political actors perceive their power in not only traditional media (e.g., newspaper and news media) but also extended their power and presence into the digital world, particularly social media (Shirazi, 2012, p.31). Through the process of communicating specific intentions and ideologies which favor certain groups of people, social network participants may make sense of events or issues, in the offline environment, based on their interactions online (Taylor et al., 2014). This process can be dangerous and problematic if we take such constructed norms and discourses for granted and fail to engage in the critical and nuanced conversations to clarify our understanding.

The CDA method helps to uncover assumptions about power which manifests behind discourses, and the implicit intentions or ideologies behind the discursive practices in social networking sites (Fairclough, 1993; Rambe, 2012). Discursive power manifests behind discourses via efforts to naturalize particular "hidden norms" (Garfinkel, 1964), such as the language formats or specific ways of "impression management" (Goffman, 1967) which limits who is allowed to speak, to be heard, and about what (Fairclough, 1993; Rambe, 2012). Rambe's (2012) study employs CDA method to analyze a university Facebook study group and expose the exercise of relational power between educators and learners in a South African university. By examining the text messages and other discursive practices between authorities (i.e., educator and administrators) and recipients (i.e., students), his study argues that Facebook is "an instrument for articulating power" (p.296) given that university and audiences can take advantage of the feature of Facebook (e.g., post wall and discussion forums) to "direct their

interactants' actions and mental dispositions towards their intentions and interests…….and to communicate their identities" (Rambe, 2012, p.297).

3.2.1 Stages of discourse development on university social networking sites

This study takes the University of British Columbia (UBC) as a case to explore its two university-operated social networking sites: The University of British Columbia Facebook Fan page and AskUBC 大学[9]Weibo pages. Both Facebook and Weibo are well-known social networking sites which potentially supports collaborative engagement and allow universities to make presentations to communicate a particular school identity to audiences.

Given that mass communication largely works to produce and reproduce the power of discourses (Shirazi, 2012), this study intends to explore the institutional discourses being formed and disseminated on two university-operated social networking sites. Figure 3.1 draws on Shirazi's framework of the stages of discourse development (Shirazi, 2012, p.34) to conceptualize the discourse development on university social networking sites.

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[9] "Ask UBC 大学" is the official name of the UBC Weibo page for prospective Chinese undergraduate students to access to the school events or related resources and information about the university.

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Intensity
                                              ┌─────────────────────┐
                                              │      University       │
                                              │ operation/management  │
                                              │   practice/strategies │
                                              └─────────────────────┘
                                    ┌──────────────────┐
                                    │  Internal forces  │
                                    └──────────────────┘
                          ┌──────────────────┐
                          │  External forces  │
                          └──────────────────┘
                ┌──────────────────┐
                │  Social network   │
                │     discourse     │
                └──────────────────┘
      ┌──────────────┐
      │    events     │
      └──────────────┘
                                                              Time
```
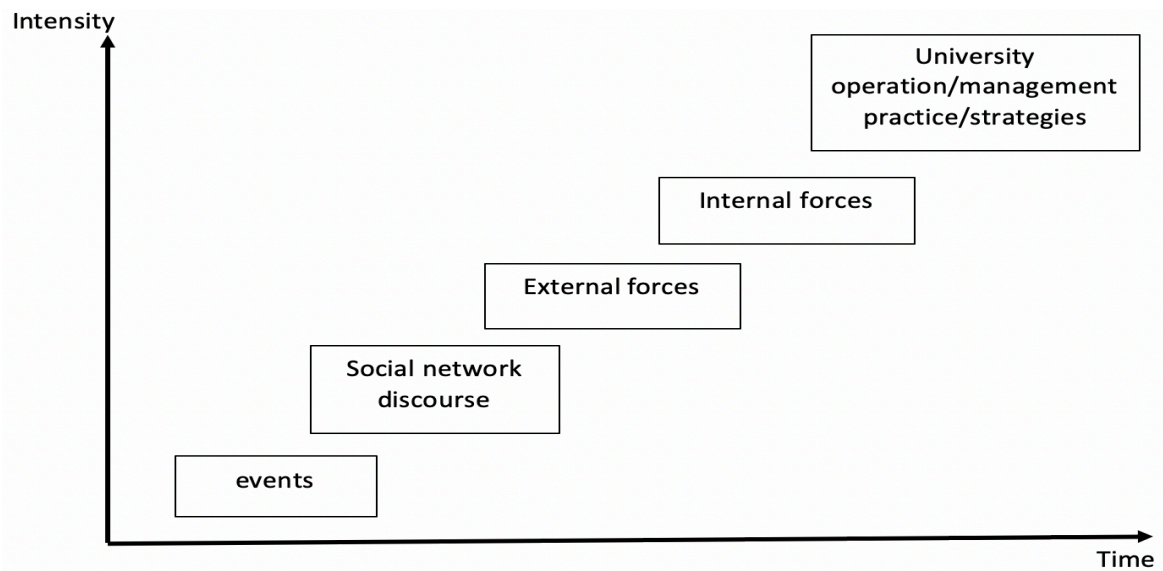
Figure 3.1. Stages of discourse development on university social networking sites

In this study, I draw on Shirazi's framework to conceptualize my understanding of how discourses are being formed and reproduced in social media, and how these discourses entangled with the external forces (e.g., neoliberal internationalization and globalization) and internal forces (e.g., the promotion of rankings and the demands of recruiting international students). Ultimately, this study aims at exploring how the development of discourses on social media impacts university management strategies and practices.

Figure 3.1 demonstrates the development of institutional operation/management directions and the stages of progression in the formation and dissemination of discourses. I developed five stages of discourse development on university social networking sites. In the first stage, there are particular events being captured and valued by a larger number of interactants (i.e., audiences). The message producer (i.e., the university) perceives the amount of attention that those particular events have been paid by interactants. Based on this awareness, such perception becomes the grounds for the message producer to promote and manage specific messaging strategies on the social networking sites (stage II). In this case, social network

discourse refers to the university's perception about what kind of events are more likely to be valued by the audience and work to represent/promote identities of the institution.

Simultaneously, the social network discourses are reproduced and disseminated through the impacts of external forces (stage III) outside the university campuses. The external forces, such as the declining governmental HE budgets and the trend of internationalization of higher education, are often accompanied by certain entrenched offline social discourses that facilitate the reproduction and dissemination of the social network discourses. For example, university rankings, which are valued by audiences in view of the enthusiastic responses and feedbacks on the social networking sites, would become one of the significant indexes for university to communicate its prestige, as well as for the audience to evaluate the quality and reputation of the institution. As a result, university rankings have been assigned more ideological meanings, such as the representation of prestige, excellence, and the "world-class" status, by the media to amplify and naturalize the importance of rankings.

The impact of external forces strongly relates to the internal forces of the university. University is not only an educational institution but also a social institution, which has its social responsibilities like knowledge production and social service. In view of the significant role that universities play in a society, it is crucial for researchers to not only look at the school itself, but also a nation's history, culture, political background, and the broader social context (Oldford, 2010). Based on this perspective, it is not surprising that the internal forces of the university are greatly influenced by external forces outside the university campuses (stage IV). For instance, there is an increasing number of universities, worldwide, which put more efforts on recruiting international students who can afford to pay higher tuition fee due to increasing demands for universities to raise a higher proportion of school funds from private sources. In this case, there

are more institutions internally making major changes which accord with a market mode of operation to make the institution more financially autonomous (Fairclough, 1993). Based on this context, the demand of recruiting international students has facilitated a shifting priority in terms of school operation/management practices and strategies (stage V). Ultimately, the social network discourses, external forces, and the internal forces framed and shaped the trajectory of the current institutional operation/ management practices and strategies. For example, universities might present features which are more likely to attract prospective international students, such as a safe and friendly learning environment, education quality, and the school reputation, on the media platforms.

3.3 Methodology and Research Approach: Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis

Multimodal critical discourse analysis is a methodology and practice of critical analysis of discourse in the field of multimodality, which makes use of multiple semiotic resources other than printed text, such as visual images, space, or the design of the exhibition (O'Halloran, 2004, p.2). Given much of the CDA research is mainly concentrated on the study of linguistic characteristics, O'Halloran (2004) argued that it is crucial to pay more attention to the influences of other semiotic resources in terms of the construction of meanings. Otherwise, it will result in the limited understanding and perspectives regarding the function and connotation of discourses. O'Halloran's viewpoint echoes with Habermas' (2001) argument that "communicative symbols express behavioral expectations and thus remain rooted in a context of action, whereas non-linguistic actions are connected to linguistically interpersonal relations as the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of behavioral expectations" (Habermas, 2001, as cited by Shirazi, 2012, p.140). With this viewpoint, there are some scholars who advocate considering not only linguistic characteristics but also evidence from the multimodal meaning-making practices that form

coherent and meaningful online texts (KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014; Lee & Barton, 2013; Pauwels, 2012;).

Multimodal discourse analysis takes into account the functions and meaning of the visual images, as part of multiple semiotic resources, which are considered for the analysis and interpretation of texts. This section draws on Pauwels' conception of multimodality and his framework for the research design to demonstrate how this study uses MCDA as a methodology for exploring the university social media.

3.3.1 Pauwels' conception of multimodality

The notion of multimodality is conceptualized as the "connection with physiological or sensory channels or capacities such as seeing (the visual mode), "hearing (auditory mode), touching (tactile mode or the "haptic" mode when considered as aspects of a device), tasting (gustatory mode) and smelling (the olfactory mode)." (Pauwels, 2012, p.250) Among all of these modes, whenever at least two modes are involved, or interplay can be identified, as multimodality. However, existing multimodal studies focused on the visual and the auditory mode as two primary modes.

Pauwels' study (2012) provides a foundation of a multimodal framework for analyzing websites from a sociocultural perspective to examine cultural decoding. Given that multimodal analysis has a strong focus on the effects of the interplay between different modes, it is an analytical approach that helps to "gain insight into the complex paradigmatic choices and signifiers" (p.251) of objects of analysis, or in Pauwels' study, the cultural expression in websites. In the view that websites and the broader infrastructure of cyberspace are not culturally neutral, using MCDA as an approach to conduct cultural research of websites aims at unveiling both explicit and implicit cultural statements constructed by the expression of certain values,

norms, opinions, and perspectives. For instance, by exploring how a particular combination of modes may intentionally or unintentionally be promoted or marginalize specific themes, such as issues regarding gender, race, social class, or sexual orientation, MCDA helps to uncover the contents embedded with particular ideologies of which exercise abuse of power and discursively, visually, or even auditorily reproduce social injustice (Molina, 2009; Pauwels, 2012).

With the basic understanding of the rationale and connotation of the notion of multimodality, the next section provides a thorough illustration of how to take MCDA in practice.

3.3.2 Pauwels' six-phase analysis

Pauwels' six-phase analysis framework of MCDA was employed by other scholars to study university websites (see, for example, Stack, 2016). His analyzing framework focuses on exploring the semiotic resources and symbolic dimensions of websites to uncover the intended or unintended meanings constructed and expressed through multimodal contents on the websites (Pauwels, 2012, p.252). Below, I review this six-part analytical approach, and describe how I will employ each step in my own study.

3.3.2.1 Preservation of first impressions and reactions

The first phase of analysis suggests researchers retain their initial and general impression. This is the very beginning of the process of analysis, which requires researchers to observe the "ecology" of the website as well as to thoroughly record what researchers see, think, and feel about the website. For instance, what information or elements on the site are attractive or easily overlooked, and what do they feel intuitively regarding the first impression of the website, etc. By carefully and thoroughly observation and record, researchers collect data for the following analyzing process. In this step, I will set a specific time period of data collection and preserving

the first impressions of each selected post on both the UBC Facebook and Weibo pages. Analysis of the first impression helps to think through the format and design of the posts being used to draw viewers in.

3.3.2.2 Inventory of salient features and topics

The second phase of analysis suggests researchers pay attention to collecting and categorizing present and absent features and topics of the websites based on the chosen sample they gain in the first phase. This step involves for one thing categorizing salient features and topics to create main themes on the website. For another, investigation and inventory of the "negative" features, namely, to bring lights to the elements that are "meaningfully absent" (p.253) in the site, are significant in the second phase as well. Through an inventory of salient features and topics which are unintentionally or meaningfully presented or absent, researchers can measure these features and attributes and put them into categories based on theoretical insights or hypothesis. Those presented or absent topics and features may be socially, culturally, and politically significant in that they are likely to point to implicit values and norms. In this step, I made an inventory of salient features and dominant themes of the presented information, identifying the structure and formats being used in the posts on the UBC Facebook and Weibo pages.

3.3.2.3 In-depth analysis of content and stylistic features

The third phase of analysis advises researchers to take a preliminary look at the potential information that resides in different modes of contents and to identify the effects of the interplay between different modes. This step of analysis requires researchers to increase the depth of analysis in terms of the "negative analysis" (Pauwels, 2012, p.256), which refers to the aspects,

issues, or opinions and perspectives that are marginalized or excluded. Take the university website, for instance. The absence of certain issues, such as the issues regarding equity, or the absence of certain groups, such as Indigenous or racialized minority groups, might have some meanings that reside in their absence. This phase suggests the preliminarily in-depth analysis of content and stylistic features of websites, by which negative analysis plays a crucial role in uncovering hidden messages in the overall presentation of the site. Nevertheless, it is also worthwhile to suggest that a negative analysis can be applied to all phases of the analysis framework for uncovering the broader sociocultural and political context of the study. In this step, I will use in-depth analysis to explore the types of content, including the literal and any kinds of multimodal materials which UBC consider important and worthwhile to present on social media – as well as note those that are *not* considered worthwhile.

3.3.2.4 Embedded point(s) of view or "voice" and implied audience(s) and purposes

The fourth phase of analysis suggests that researchers interrogate the first impression in phase one with a more in-depth analysis of explicit and implicit purposes. This phase aims at further exploring and analyzing what is being said or expressed: who is saying what to whom, and with what purpose through the form and content of the sites. These questions guide the analyzing process for exploring the embedded point of view or voice, as well as the inquiry of certain meanings of website utterances, to identify any potential implied audience purposes. The utterance of websites seems to explicitly provide information about the school for prospective students, yet the embedded points of view are framed by the market-oriented, neoliberal ideologies which highlight elements regarding competitions and accountability. Based on this perspective, the implied audiences and purposes of the university website are to marketize

prestige to construct the school brand while communicating the institutional discourses and identities to attract prospective students and their parents.

The embedded points of view reside in multiple aspects of the sites, including the visual, textual, and design elements, such as templates. Given that website is not formed by a single author but by a combination of different sources and materials, the purpose of this phase is mainly to uncover what the dominant points of view are as presented in the sites as a "grand syntagma" (Pauwels, 2012, p.257). In a case study of university website, after a closer scrutiny of the contents of the website, it may become clear that particular elements, such as ranking performance and the reputation of school faculty, are in fact using the website as a vehicle to present images of a prestigious, distinguished, or world-class university status (i.e., point of view) to attract and recruit prospective students (i.e., implied audiences and purposes).

This phase of analysis helps to determine the implied audiences and, connected to that, the implicit/intended goals and purposes embedded in messaging strategies to understand "whose goals are served, whose values are propagated and who is to benefit from expressing them" (p.257). Website offerings, such as the presentation of particular points of view, may hold indications of expected behaviors of audiences. In this step, I will analyze embedded points of view/voice, and implied audience and purposes on both sites, exploring the dominant points of view and discourses which are valued by the institution to present, as well as examining the clues for whether certain types of images, videos, or articles were particularly presented for marketizing the school brand.

3.3.2.5 Analysis of dynamic information organization and spatial priming strategies

The fifth phase of analysis suggests researchers focus on the design of the sites to explore the content as linked with the spatial hierarchy that works to "steer preferred readings and

conduct, and exercising control" (p.258). This phase aims at analyzing "structural and navigational options and constraints" of the websites. For instance, exploring what items have more, or less space occupied in the sites, what kind of information is easier or harder to access, what is the order and flow of elements that guide the users to access particular information, et cetera.

In this phase of analysis, researchers need to look at the overall display and structure of the design that information organized in the sites, as well as to explore the place or position of various types of information within the structure. To be more specific, what is in the menu screen, what elements are included in the internal or external links, and what is the design of navigational tools that exhibit specific order or set of rules that visitors should follow. The analysis of dynamic information organization and spatial priming strategies of the websites may provide researchers with hints and implications of a social or cultural hierarchy, in which the findings may be an indication of the level of importance of the information and identification of the preferred points of view, including expressions of particular interests, value systems, and social, cultural, or political aspirations. In this step, I will analyze information, organization, frequency of post types and topics to explore what elements are presented by the institution and what might be meaningfully absent.

3.3.2.6 Contextual analysis, provenance and inference

The sixth and also the final phase of Pauwels' multimodal discourse analysis framework suggests researchers determine the "politics of artifacts" (p.259), namely how specific values, norms, and expectations are embedded into the structure and design of the website. This phase requires researchers to put forth inferences and interpretations based on the previous analysis phases.

Notwithstanding that the primary purpose of the multimodal discourse analysis of websites is to both uncover and identify the social and cultural norms/signifiers that reside in the design and infrastructure of the sites, it is also worthy to note that provenance of the design rationale. Pauwels argues that the design and infrastructure of the website itself seem political, given that the positions of website designers and managers are limited to specific groups of people with particular positionality. In other words, who is able to manipulate the structure and operation of the websites is political and cultured. For example, the expensive tools and particular knowledge or skills required for website designers and managers have already precluded certain groups of people. Based on this premise, the inference that who or what is responsible for choices, and how these different choices combine to deliver particular points of view and implied audiences and purposes, is crucial for ultimately construing and interpreting meanings from the embedded semiotic resources of the website. In this final step, I will use contextual analysis, provenance and inference to examine strategies used by UBC to manage interactions on Facebook and Weibo pages to communicate institution identity and its positionality of participating and responding to the trend of internationalization.

Pauwels' six-phase analysis framework of MCDA provided a detailed look at the different multimodal elements and semiotic resources that constitute the web-based communicative utterances. His practical analysis framework contributes to the development of an analytical tool for decoding social and cultural signifiers embedded in the ways of presentation of the website (Pauwels, 2012, p.261). The next section will illustrate how this study draws on Pauwels' framework for the research design and methods of data collection and analysis.

3.4 Research Design and Methods

My study proposes to explore UBC-operated Facebook and Weibo pages to critically analyze messaging strategies applied in two social media sites. To answer my research questions, there are four objectives guiding the research design of this study:

(1) Exploring the structure and format being used in posts on the UBC Facebook and Weibo pages.

(2) Examining the content of posts, including the literal and any kinds of multimodal materials (e.g., visual and auditory modes), that the university presented on Facebook and Weibo pages to identify what is presented or absent on both pages.

(3) Exploring meanings, norms, and discourses which resides in the messaging strategies on the UBC Facebook and Weibo pages, as well as identifying the implied audience and purposes.

(4) Examining whether or how the messaging strategies and cues are used by UBC to reinforce the school brand on both sites.

3.4.1 Rationale of the research design

Fairclough's concept of discourse provided the foundation of the theoretical framework of my study. His studies helped to raise more attention to the relationship between language use, discursive power, and social practices, which have brought and promoted CDA research into not only the field of sociolinguistics, but also other fields of study such as media studies, political science, and education since the 1990s. Notably, Fairclough conceptualized the connotation of discourse to refer to not only spoken or written language use, but also shed light on other forms of messaging by arguing that, "I would also wish to extend [discourse] to include semiotic practices in other semiotic modalities such as photography and non-verbal communication"

(Fairclough, 1993, p.134). His perspective has inspired numerous CDA scholars to pay more attention to multiple modes of messaging strategies. Based on this context, Pauwels' study (2012) inherited Fairclough's concept of discourse and further proposed a more specific multimodal framework for discourse analysis. Pauwels' analysis framework inspired my research design to employ a multimodal framework for analyzing university social media platforms.

To fulfill the goals of this study, I draw on Pauwels' six-phase MCDA analytical framework to distinguish the emphatic pattern in the use of language, visual messages, or other modes of semiotic elements from the ideological and authoritative perspective (i.e., the university).

Additionally, my study is interested in observing the different language use (i.e., English usage in Facebook versus Mandarin usage in Weibo) to explore what/how UBC presents itself in English and Mandarin on the two social networking sites. To be specific, I am particularly interested in exploring what might be the similarities or differences of language use, visual clues, and external links provided in the pages that communicate what purposes to whom on the two sites.

3.4.2 Data collection

This study uses MCDA as the methodological framework for data collection and analysis. As the well-known social networking sites, Facebook and Weibo allow users to share information, visual messages like photo or video, and interesting news or links on the "post wall" to make self-presentations. Besides, each post is followed by a forum for discussions and comments exchanges on various topics, events, or issues, among a virtual network of not only friends but also the potentially larger groups of audience (KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014). Notably, both Facebook and Weibo allow users to organize interest groups and "fan pages" that help

gather people who share similar interests or care about particular issues or topics in a cyberspace. In these interest groups (i.e., fan pages), members can post messages to the post wall, such as textual messages, photos, videos, or links of news or other external resources for other members' interest. Notably, each page will have one or more "administrators" who can apply different degrees of control over the content being presented on the post wall. For instance, group administrators can delete some posts and comments, or pin specific messages so that they are highly visible and not replaced by other posts.

My study aims at examining how discourses on social networking sites are produced, reproduced, and disseminated by the immediate interactional context in cyberspace and broader social structural issues (Rambe, 2012). Considering time limitations and the proposed scale of this study, it is important to make the data manageable for detailed qualitative analysis, as well as keep the focus and context of the data under control for MCDA contextualization purposes. Based on this premise, I collected posts of the issues, events, school management practices or strategies related to the UBC participation in the trend of internationalization on the university Facebook and Weibo pages over the past one year. The rationale of sampling is modeled from KhosraviNik and Zia's (2014) approach of data collection and selection.

Through a pilot topic analysis of the discussions between 1st May 2019 and 1st May 2020, I selected post walls/topics which triggered more reactions (i.e., number of responses, including the number of comments and the emojis in the formal "like" buttons) and discussions in the comments sections. As general criteria, I decided to analyze posts that related to the topics of a): (1) cross-national collaboration activities and events; (2) international student related activities and events; (3) announcements and information related to UBC's international reputation, prestige, and status (e.g., the performance in GURs); and (4) remarks related to

UBC's efforts and performances of participating in the internationalization of the university (e.g., one of the most international university in Canada, the size of international students body in campus, etc.) and b) were within the defined time frame; and c) received at least 300 comments/reactions (i.e., number of "likes") on Facebook and 10 comments/reactions on Weibo (considering the differential group size).

3.4.3 Data Analysis

Following the steps of data collection is the process of data analysis. After empirical data is searched and collected from Facebook and Weibo, an English transcription for each message on the Weibo sites was created and saved.

In the process of data analysis, there are four primary goals for this stage to complete:

(1) Conducting an in-depth analysis of the content of selected Facebook and Weibo posts.

(2) conducting the contextual analysis to identify the university characteristics as well as its identity and positionality of participation in the trend of internationalization.

(3) examining the presented information as well as identifying those elements that are meaningfully absent on the Facebook and Weibo pages; and

(4) exploring and examining the embedded and constructed institutional discourses (e.g., prestige and reputation), as well as the implied audience and purposes of the presented information.

In the process of data analysis, I looked at "Who" and "What" (is/is not in the posts), "How" the textual/visual characteristics are/ are not deployed can be answered by investigating the qualities of each post, and interpret and infer to answer "Why" the topics and themes are chosen for presentation, and why the messaging strategies are being used by the university. Noteworthily, the "Why" question is tackled by accounting for the links between analyzed

linguistic and multimodal performance as well as the relevant socio-cultural and political context

(KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014).

Chapter 4 Data Analysis and Discussion

This chapter will critically analyze posts on the UBC Facebook page and the AskUBC 大学 Weibo Page with the intention of answering the three research questions of this study. Analyzed posts on two UBC -operated social networking sites included:

- UBC Facebook and AskUBC 大学 Weibo home page and About page

- Posts on the UBC Facebook and Weibo pages related to the topics of university internationalization and particular themes which I have illustrated on the methodology chapter.

- Posts received at least 300 comments or reactions (i.e., number of "likes") on Facebook and 10 comments or reactions on Weibo (considered the differential group size)

The posts were chosen based on their relevance to the research questions. The following section will organize the data around the three research questions.

4.1 UBC Facebook Page

UBC Facebook page is a fan page created on June 17, 2008, which registered in the category of "college and university." The page with 281,723 followers that join this social networking site to interact with the university and other users. On the home page, the audience can see the cover photo of the aerial photo of the Main Mall on the Vancouver campus. The photo provides the three layers of the campus, ocean, and mountains (Figure 4.1). On the About page, the information about the University of British Columbia described the university as "a global center for research and teaching, ranked among the top 20 public universities in the world" (UBC Facebook, 2020, April 25). The description on the UBC Facebook About page

communicated the identity of the university as a "global center for research and teaching" and the

"top   20   public   universities   in   the   world."

Figure 4.1. Screenshot of the UBC Facebook "Home" page (2020, April 5)

The UBC Facebook home page and the About page seem intended to impact the audiences' first impression or perception about the university. The home page also provide links to a "contact us" web page that provides a place to leave questions. The About page is prominently displayed on the navigation bar and with one click audiences are introduced to what the authors choose to share about the history of UBC. I first notice the prominent statement about UBC being a highly ranked global center for research and teaching. Interestingly, following the statement of being a highly ranked global center, the university communicated its own motto and mission to "inspiring people, ideas and actions for a better world" (UBC Facebook, 2020, September 30). Such textual context seemed to imply that a highly ranked university plays an essential role to "inspire people, ideas and action" for leading to a "better world." In this case, the statement assigned rankings an ideological meaning by linking the ranking performance to the positive global impacts of the university.

Exploring both the home page and the About page help to perceive the intention of the university to highlight the features that have the most advantage to attract audiences. For instance, it is noticeable that the identity being communicated on the About page recognizes UBC as a "global center" with beautiful campus environment and the excellent ranking performance among the higher education institutions worldwide. The message producer's intention is to highlight and promote UBC's "international competitiveness," "higher position on the rankings league table," and the "level of internationalization as a global center for research and teaching" on the social media platform.

4.1.1 Analysis and discussion

Based on all the posts selected from the University of British Columbia Facebook page, six significant themes are being categorized for the in-depth discourse analysis. These six themes including posts relate to (1) university rankings; (2) tradition, culture, and lifestyle of UBC; (3) internationalization; (4) school brand, values, and identities; (5) responses, attitudes, and reactions of UBC toward global issues; and (6) prestige, reputation, and excellence. In this section of the analysis, I will summarize the content and my observation of each theme and provide my interpretation to answer the research questions.

4.1.1.1 University rankings

University rankings are one of the most critical themes in the UBC Facebook page. During the period of data collection from May 1st, 2019 to May 1st,2020, seven posts make the announcement, celebrate, or respond to the ranking performance of the UBC. These posts communicate the honor or reputation UBC received in the rankings, the international positions or

impact of the university, and the relationship between university and rankings in the social networking site.

Rankings and reputation of UBC

When the posts aim at communicating the honor of UBC in the university ranking league tables, one of the messaging strategies of these posts is to use specific numbers to indicate the ranking performance. Those particular numbers refer to not only the ranking position but also include the specific numbers of how many institutions across how many countries or continents participate in the rankings. Besides, the post sometimes may use percentage to represent the competitiveness and the global position of the university. For instance, a post announced and celebrated UBC's performance in the 2020 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, stating that UBC has been "placed first in Canada and seventh globally out of more than 850 participating institutions from 89 countries across six continents" (UBC Facebook, 2020, April 22). Another example is a post announced that UBC was ranked 51st best university in the world in 2020 QS World University Rankings, stating that "UBC ranks among the top five percent of institutions in the highly-influential QS rankings, which considers over 1,000 institutions worldwide" (UBC Facebook, 2019, June 19). Using a specific rankings position to communicate the reputation of the university is an effective messaging strategy for message producers. For one thing, ranking numbers are straightforward to audiences to sense the global position of the university. One of a rationale in terms of the construction of global university rankings is foregrounded on the idea of international education. Particularly, given the trend of globalization which promote the international student mobility and cross-national university collaborative activities, rankings provide an indicator to compare and contrast different higher education institutions in different contexts through the "scientific" and "statistical-based" evaluation

system. In other words, the meaning of ranking is to create a global consensus of what is the criteria of being a prestigious university, and according to this evaluation criterion, universities from all over the world and different social and cultural contexts will be evaluated based on the same evaluating standard.

For another, rankings, especially the well-known Big Three rankings, play the role as external validators to "justify" the university's global positions. In this case, the numbers released by the rankings tend to be used to communicate the excellence and competitiveness of the university by providing a specific number of competing institutions or the percentage of the university's ranking position.

Another messaging strategy of the posts related to university rankings in the UBC Facebook page is to communicate what rankings mean to universities and students. By talking about or providing external resources (i.e., the link of the ranking webpage) to demonstrate the importance and meaning of rankings, audiences are more likely to perceive the reputation and prestige of the university. For instance, a post announced that UBC ranked 30th in U.S. News Best Global Universities Rankings also provided a link for the audience to access the webpage to gain further information about the U.S. News Best Global Universities Rankings. The webpage provides a brief introduction to this ranking, which helps to communicate the honor and prestige of the university to perform well in the ranking. For one thing, the introduction implies that the ranking represents the "success" and "excellence" of the universities from the U.S. and more than 80 other countries in "academic research performance" and "their global and regional reputations." For another, it also implies that one of the purposes of the university rankings is to "serve" students by providing "options" of higher education that "exist beyond their own countries' borders" and help them "compare key aspects of schools' research missions" (UBC

Facebook, 2019, October 24). Another example is a post to announce and celebrate that UBC has been ranked 37th globally in 2019 Times Higher Education (THE) Reputation ranking, which demonstrated that UBC continues the "positive trajectory among the world's leading universities." This post communicated two ideologies. For one thing, it implies that THE Reputation ranking represents the excellence of universities and helps recognize the "world's leading universities" based on "the world's largest invitation-only opinion survey of senior, published academics." For another, it implies that the auspicious and senior academics worldwide are qualified to name universities that "they believe are the best for research and teaching in their field, based on their own experience" (UBC Facebook, 2019, July 17). However, the absence of information that is worth asking concerns whose opinions are eligible to be recognized to justify the quality of universities, and what are rationales for selecting people to participate in the reputation survey.

Rankings and UBC's international position and impacts

In addition to using messaging strategies to communicate the reputation UBC received in university rankings, some Facebook posts use the issues or discussions of rankings to inform the international position and impacts of universities. Notably, the university leaders often communicated UBC's ambition and potential to align with other higher-ranked institutions worldwide, while also promoting UBC's identity as one of the leading universities in making social impacts.

Using ranking performance to communicate the university's ambition and potential to compete or align with other higher-ranked North American universities is one strategy to promote the identity of prestige and excellence. For instance, in the post which announced UBC's 2020 QS World University Rankings performance, it provided a link to direct audiences

to the UBC News webpage to read the news article about UBC's ranking performance this year. Notably, UBC is ranked the 51st in 2020 QS rankings, which is lower compared to the achievement in previous years. However, when the university leader responded to the ranking performance this year, the UBC president Santa Ono commented that:

As in previous years, private universities in the United States dominate the top spots in the rankings. But amongst public institutions, UBC is ranked 36th in the world and seventh in North America……. At just over 100 years old, UBC is comparatively young among global universities. To be cited as among the world's best is a tremendous achievement to be celebrated by our entire community – students, faculty, and staff. (Ono, 2019, as cited by UBC Facebook, 2019, June 19)

Besides, the UBC Vice-President Andrew Szeri also particularly responded to UBC's performance in the research reputation category by saying that:

UBC's global academic reputation is the highest-ranked indicator for the university. UBC's performance in this year's QS rankings shows our university's continued focus on significant and impactful research. It's great to be recognized as one of the very best institutions in the world by our peers. (Szeri, 2019, as cited by UBC Facebook, 2019, June 19)

Responses of two UBC leaders implies that for one thing, in such a fierce globalized university ranking competition, UBC still performed well this year. Particularly, UBC's research reputation was recognized by over 94,000 senior scholars in various fields around the world, which demonstrated the university's excellence. For another, given that UBC is comparatively young among global universities and still being recognized as one of the world's best institutions, we

have ambition and potential to align with other higher-ranked North American private universities in the future.

Sometimes the ranking posts are used to communicate UBC's international influence and the university's commitment to continue leading the world to make meaningful social impacts. Such discursive strategies imply that UBC is not only selective in academic achievement but also recognized as the leader to make changes. An example to support this observation is two posts that celebrated and responded to UBC's performance in THE impact rankings. One is President Ono responded to the ranking result in a video attached in a 2019 post by stated that "UBC has partnered with other institutions to work on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. This brought together the leaders of top research universities, ……, and non-governmental organizations" (UBC Facebook, 2019, September 15). The other one is a response in a 2020 post in which Ono responded to the UBC 2020 ranking performance by stated that "for UBC, the rankings also provide recognition of the great work of our students, faculty, and staff who combine their expertise to ensure UBC is a leader in creating vibrant, sustainable, and connected communities and campuses," (Ono, 2020, as cited by UBC Facebook, 2020, April 22). Responses from the UBC president promoted the university's international influence and its commitment to continue leading the world. It also implies that UBC is a leader of a top research university to partner with other outstanding institutions and organizations worldwide.

Summary

University rankings can be recognized as one of the significant themes in the context of the UBC Facebook page. The critical discourse analysis helps us to explore the implied audience and purposes of the message producer (i.e., UBC) when they communicate and respond to the relationship between university rankings and UBC. In the discussion of how the university

communicates the institution reputation that university received from the rankings, two important messaging strategies are being used to promote the excellence and prestige of the university and help to perpetuate the ranking discourse. Nevertheless, it is also crucial to problematize the messaging strategies that the university uses when communicating rankings as a theme in social media. Firstly, it helps to perpetuate the simplification of evaluating the quality of higher education institutions by using specific numbers to represent and communicate the university's excellence and prestige. Moreover, communicating the importance and the meaning of rankings may perpetuate the legitimation of entrenched neoliberal ideology in the globalized higher education market. Given that the majority of highest-ranked institutions are the wealthy, white-dominated, private institutions with English as a primary medium of instruction and concentrated on North America and Western Europe, such as the U.S. and the U.K., it is fair to argue that these highly ranked Western institutions have certain power to dominate the global consensus in terms of the criteria of a prestigious university. In this case, institutions which are struggling to improve the ranking performance may start to learn from those highly ranked Western institutions, including the reform of university management strategies and education policies. As a consequence, rankings not only impact the university development direction worldwide, but also help to promote and construct the model of global higher education that foregrounded on Western neoliberalism and capitalism.

Last but not least, how the university uses ranking information and how to apply specific discursive strategies to present or communicate to the audiences represents the university's attitude and positionality towards university rankings. For example, a post announced and celebrated that UBC has been ranked as one of the most international universities worldwide by THE World University Rankings, making a statement to position universities as "global

institutions" (UBC Facebook, 2020, January 31). UBC presented the information by sharing the external link attached in the post has shaped and framed the new identity of higher education institutions by communicating the ideology to promote the importance of internationalization, which implies that the university also recognized the importance of internationalization to some extent. In short, Facebook, as an influential social networking site, can, on the one hand, be used to produce or reproduce certain ideologies. On the other hand, it also provides opportunities for researchers to employ discourse analysis to explore the content of Facebook posts from the critical lens, including the analysis of what are produced and reproduced, how to do so and why.

4.1.1.2 Tradition, Culture, and Lifestyle of UBC

According to the posts selected from the UBC Facebook page for analysis, many talked about the tradition, culture, and lifestyle of the university. University can be seen as a large community for students, staff, and faculty members for not only a place of working and learning but also a living place. In this case, communicating the university's campus tradition, culture, and lifestyle is an excellent way to facilitate or improve the sense of belonging for members affiliated to the university, such as current students and alumni. Given that tradition, culture, and lifestyle of the university is a major theme presented in the UBC Facebook page, this section will explore what is shown in the Facebook page to communicate the tradition, culture, and lifestyle of the university and what are messaging strategies that producers apply to achieve what implied audience and purposes.

Food culture and living environment

Food and the living environment are two significant elements for the university to communicate the lifestyle of studying at UBC. Lifestyle not only refers to ways of living or how the daily life of a UBC student looks like but also indicates the campus culture or tradition that

bring lights to the collective memory and identities of being a member in UBC. Take two posts that talk about the historical food culture on campus, for instance. The two posts introduced the recipe of two UBC cousins, Banana Bread and Cinnamon Bun, in the posts and shared a brief history of these two traditional campus cousins. The discursive practice of these two posts communicated, for one thing, UBC is a university with a long history and a unique food culture. For another, food culture is recognized as one of the important elements to represent UBC identity. For example, the posts wrote that Banana Bread and Cinnamon Bun are "UBC tradition" and the "quintessential part of the UBC experience," which can be found in "nearly every UBC Food Service café and dining room on campus" for "more than five decades" (UBC Facebook, 2020, April 9). The observation of posts about traditional snacks in the university campus is interesting. For one thing, the university identified the banana bread and cinnamon bun representative for communicating the UBC culture. For another, the time point of posting was note-worthy given that at the point (i.e., April) the university campus was closed to prevent the Covid-19 outbreak.

In addition to introducing the campus food culture on the social media platform to demonstrate the UBC lifestyle and the school identity, the on-campus living environment (i.e., dormitory) is another crucial part to demonstrate student life in the university. Take a post that introduced one of UBC's newly opened student dormitory, for instance. The post was published on the UBC Facebook page in early September (i.e., the start of school season). It included a room tour video blog filmed by a female undergraduate student who shared her great experience of living in this new "140-square-foot nano-suites". The post highlighted the popularity and affordability of the dorm considered the new facilities inside, the location and living environment, safety, and convenient transportation for students. The post introduced the new UBC dorm

facility to the audience and demonstrated and communicated a lifestyle of UBC students. Given that there are many students who go to university away from their home cities or countries, the dormitory is recognized as one of the crucial and important parts of university life. In this case, the quality of the on-campus living environment has become a significant index for students and parents when they apply for the university. The university presented the post at the start of the school date, which provided some specific details for incoming or prospective students and their parents to visualize what my/my child/s college life looks like if s/he attends to this university. For example, the post stated that:

> the residence is uniquely situated in the heart of campus. It sits above the new UBC bus exchange and is steps from the UBC Aquatic Centre and Student Recreation Centre, while the AMS Nest and UBC Life building are just around the corner," and "the student best suited to a unit like this is one who is very active on campus, who participates in extracurricular activities and who is quite social. They have their own private space they can call their own, but they can also quickly dash to the library or the Nest or hang out in the coffee bar or jump on a bus and go downtown. (UBC Facebook, 2019, September 3)

The descriptions provide an uncomplicated and convenient lifestyle of a UBC student, such as going to class from the dorm, going to the gym or student club after class, rich on- and off-campus activities, etc.

History of the university

Based on the selected posts from the UBC Facebook page, history and campus scenery are two significant elements to communicate the university's culture, tradition, and lifestyle. Notably, the university tends to use pictures or photos of various places on campus to visualize the history and campus life of UBC. Visualizing the university's history is a popular messaging

strategy to demonstrate the long history and prestige of the institution. For instance, there are three posts presented the aerial view of the UBC Vancouver campus in 1930 (Figure 4.2), 1923 (Figure 4.3), and 1924 (Figure 4.4), which are parts of the UBC Archives Historical Photograph Collections.

Figure 4.2. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, March 12)

Figure 4.3. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, February 24)

University of British Columbia
February 6 ·

#TBT to UBC's main library, now part of the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, under construction in September 1924.

Part Of: UBC Historical Photograph Collection
Access Identifier: UBC 1.1/1869

423   24 Comments 25 Shares

Figure 4.4. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, February 6)

All three posts received positive reactions from audience on the Facebook page. For instance, the photograph presented the 1930's UBC Vancouver campus received over 700 likes, another photograph presented the 1924's campus received over 400 likes, and the other photograph presented the 1923's campus received over 900 likes. Given that the click of "like" on Facebook is an important interactive way to express audiences' emotion or opinions toward the post, three UBC historical photographs presented on the post wall and received many "like" from audiences implied a visual strategy that the university used to communicate particular UBC

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identity. For one thing, the visual effects of pictures, such as the sights of the campus half a century ago, are more exciting and impressive than introducing the lengthy text of university history to audiences. For another, presenting historical photograph collections on the media platform helps to magnify the sense of pride and identity of audiences toward the university. Historical photos make the comparison to demonstrate the development of the university from the past to the present, illustrating that the university has grown to its current scale, training countless outstanding alumni and scholars, as well as becoming one of the top universities in both Canada and the world.

Another interesting observation based on the selected post is that the Museum of Anthropology (MOA) is recognized as a remarkable landmark of the university to communicate the UBC identity. Many posts, introduced, or shared the MOA web page's links for audiences to access the website. For instance, a post introduced a monumental sculpture titled "The Raven and the First Men," which is collected in MOA, and the background story of the sculpture and the artist. The post provided a link to direct audiences to the MOA website and read the whole introduction article. MOA is recognized as one of the most important research centers, university landmarks, and even tourist attractions at UBC and Metro Vancouver. In this case, it is essential for the university to communicate the school identity, such as their contributions and efforts to preserve Indigenous art and as well as the influence and achievements of the museum as an important research center on university-led research.

Campus scenery

Among all the selected posts on the UBC Facebook page, posts about campus scenery account for the highest percentage. For example, the cherry blossom tree in the spring, the sunset at the Wreck Beach, or students walking, chatting, or eating lunch on campus in the sunny day.

Notably, these posts use pictures as the main body, with a small amount of text, to present the campus scenery to the audience. Figure 4.5 shows a good example of the pattern of posting to present the UBC campus scenery.
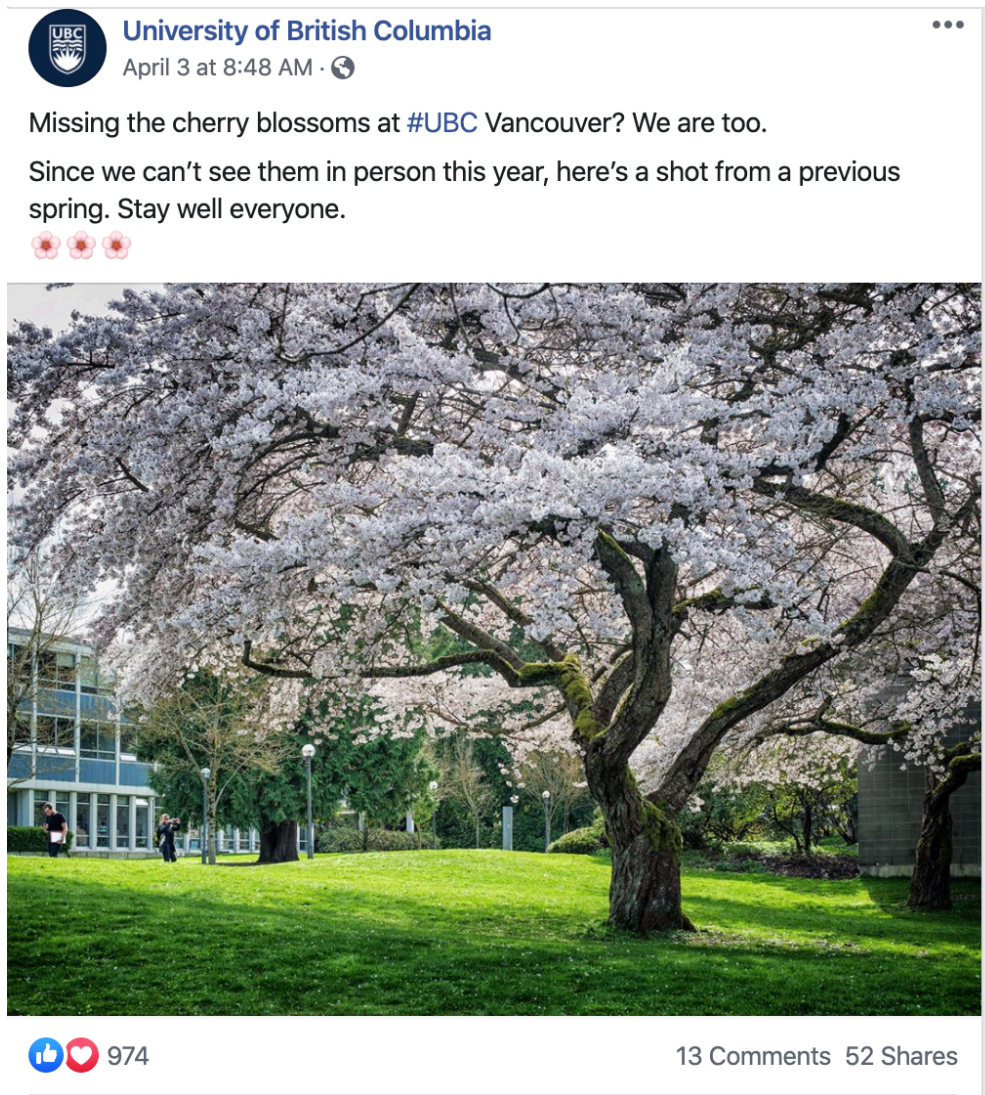
Figure 4.5. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, April 3)

There are two major messaging strategies of using pictures of campus scenery in the posts. On the one hand, presenting photos of the campus scenery accompanied by texts to raise the sense of belonging. For example, given the recent global COVID-19 outbreak, UBC closed the campus and temporarily turned all courses into online courses. During this period, two posts

included photos of, cherry blossoms on campus, the sunset scenery of Wreck beach (Figure 4.8), students study at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKB) (Figure 4.6), and the snowy Main Mall with students having a snowball fight (Figure 4.7). Moreover, all the photos were accompanied by the text asking the audience if they *"miss UBC"* or *"missing the cherry blossoms at UBC Vancouver"* (also see Figure 4.5, UBC Facebook, 2020, April 3). Both the posts are not only aimed at presenting campus scenery to the audience but also implying that UBC is their second "home," a place for every member to miss for if they are unable to return. Therefore, the university presented photos of campus views that promote a "sense of belonging" among UBC members to consolidate and stabilize this online UBC community.

Figure 4.6. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, April 8)

Figure 4.7. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, April 8)

Figure 4.8. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, April 8)

On the other hand, demonstrating the campus scenery on the media platform can not only using the impressive seasonal campus views to attract potential prospective students, but also communicate a lifestyle of living and studying in the university for audiences to visualize ideas or imaginations of college life. For instance, there were some posts presented photos of campus scenery, such as the beautiful cherry blossom trees in spring or the Red Oak trees on Main Mall in Autumn, accompanied by brief greetings which implied or conveyed the hidden messages like "you can study and live in this fabulous campus if you become one of the members here!" or "how lucky are we to be one of UBC members and enjoy this unique winter scenery." A post published in early January showed the scenery of The Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKB) building in heavy snow (Figure 4.9), accompanied by the text "winter has arrived at UBC Vancouver!" (UBC Facebook, 2020, January 9). to share a beautiful, unique seasonal campus scenery to audiences. Another post published on Christmas Day showed the animated picture of IKB student learning center and Ladner Clock Tower with the snowy background to send the holiday greetings on behalf of the university (Figure 4.10). Notably, an interesting takeaway of these two examples is that the message producer selected IKB student learning center as the most representative building of the UBC Vancouver campus. Both the posts used the image of IKB to communicate the identity of UBC in holiday greeting posts.

Figure 4.9. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, January 10)

University of British Columbia
December 25, 2019 · 🌐

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from UBC!
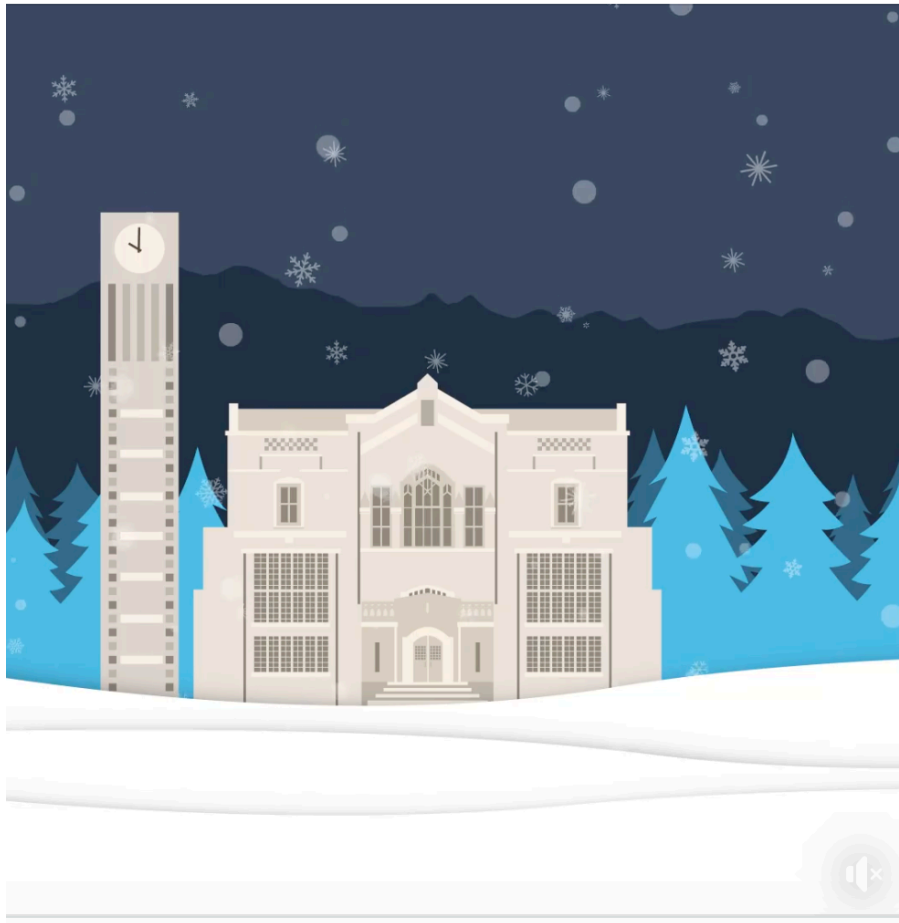
Figure 4.10. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2019, December 25)

In addition to the holiday greetings, some posts with photos of campus scenery help communicate the UBC lifestyle on the social media platform. For example, A post showed the snowball fight took place at the Main Mall in the UBC Vancouver campus, which communicated a winter only UBC campus activity as part of important campus culture (Figure 4.11).

University of British Columbia

January 16 · 🌐

Snowball fight! ❄️❄️❄️

It may have happened a day late because yesterday was TOO snowy, but UBC Vancouver students took to Main Mall today to play in the snow.

Figure 4.11. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, January 16)

Another example was a post showed a photo from a students' perspective on the fourth floor of Koerner Library (Figure 4.12) and accompanied by the text "not a bad spot study spot" (UBC Facebook, 2020, February 27). The photo showed a study space close to the window on the Koerner Library, where students can see the front door of IKB student learning center and Ladner Clock Tower in front. This post was published during the reading week in late February. There were over 500 reactions (i.e., Likes) toward the post, which seemed that many students, alumni, or other members in the Facebook page can resonate with the photos or agreed with the idea that this is a good study spot. Given that UBC is self-identified as an academically

demanding university where students will receive high quality and rigorous academic training, finding a good spot at the library to study during the free time between classes is a common daily life for UBC students. The post presented the photo to not only make audiences resonate with part of their college life at UBC, but also recognized and communicated that "study at the library" is an important part of the UBC student lifestyle.

Figure 4.12. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, February 27)

Annual Campus Events

The announcement, celebration, and introduction of annual campus events is another significant topic in the UBC Facebook page. Three major annual campus events are often mentioned on the media platform: the start of school events, graduation ceremony (especially the Spring graduation ceremony), and on-campus summer activities. Notably, the posts related to the

annual university events have a typical discursive pattern and characteristics. All the posts tend to include a photo of a lively campus scenery, a brief introduction about the event (usually some quotes from the article on the university website), and a link for audiences to access the university website to gain more information about the events. Sharing these important annual campus events on social media platform provide not only information about the university but also communicate the tradition, culture, and lifestyle of the university. In this section, I select one post of each event for in-depth analysis.

Start of school events

The post I select relate to the announcement and celebration of the start of school events was published at the beginning of 2019 academic year—the post aimed at sharing information about the UBC orientation program for incoming students. The post included a link to direct audiences to the university web page to gain detailed information about activities in the orientation program. In addition to the text, there were three photographs included in the Facebook post and the web page to visualize the lively college life. The first photo is students of different ethnicities celebrating the start of school together at a welcoming party (Figure 4.13). The second photo presents the school mascot – Thunderbird, with the UBC mark on it (Figure 4.14). The third photo is a group of students from different genders and racialized backgrounds sitting together who appear to happy (Figure 4.15).

Figure 4.13. Screenshot of the photo on UBC News (2019, September 6)

Figure 4.14. Screenshot of the photo on UBC News (2019, September 6)

Figure 4.15. Screenshot of the photo on UBC News (2019, September 6)

There were three highlights I took from the post description and the article on the university website. First, the university communicated its identity as a large "community" and promised students from diverse backgrounds to have a sense of belonging in the university campus. The UBC orientation program is their first step to make a connection with this huge community. For example, the article stated that "92 percent said their participation in the program increased their sense of belonging at the university and their comfort in interacting with faculty members"; and "friendships and a sense of belonging are key, and we know social and academic success go hand-in-hand, we want to make it fun, inspiring, and inclusive for everyone, which allows students to put their best foot forward right away" (UBC Facebook, 2019, September 6).

Moreover, the university communicated its particular care for Indigenous students, and students from other equity seeking groups including "rural, or even a first-generation university student," that they can get useful suggestions or information about the support or services that the university provided them in the orientation program. For example, the article highlighted that:

> it is challenging for most students to come to a big university………We hope this program will encourage more Indigenous students to visit the Longhouse, see the beautiful space, and have the opportunity to meet with other students, mentors, and elders who understand their culture and environment. (UBC Facebook, 2019, September 6)

Finally, the university promoted and communicated the idea that UBC is a "home" and an inclusive community for every student. For instance, the university website described the primary goal in the orientation program was to "making students feel at home before classes even begin" for both returning and incoming students by stating that "UBC's approach to orientation program satisfies the differing needs of incoming and returning students, and all are

designed to make students feel not just welcomed, but at home" (UBC Facebook, 2019, September 6).

Graduation ceremony

The post I selected relate to the announcement and celebration of the graduation ceremony was published in late May. The post was to celebrate UBC's annual Spring graduation season and shared information about the incoming activities and ceremonies on media. My first impression of the post was a brief introducing text and some quotation retrieved from the article in the university website, which followed by a short video that introduces how the university team planed a series of activities for the graduation ceremonies. The post provided a link for the audience to access the university website where the audience can read background story (the article titled "Go behind the scenery at UBC grad and see how it all happens") about this important and meaningful annual UBC events. There was not much information in the post, so I clicked on the link to read the full text.

The article on the university website communicated four messages to readers. First, the university made lots of efforts to provide students a "meaningful, joyous, and satisfying" graduation ceremony for those who are "lucky enough" to participate and "carry the memory with them through their lives" (UBC Facebook, 2019, May 27). The university recognized the graduation ceremony was one of the most significant events for both students and the university. Second, the article communicated the long history of the university in which it has cultivated countless graduates for a century since the 1900s by stated that "the difference in numbers is significant, but the meaning inherent in the ritual is timeless" (UBC Facebook, 2019, May 27). Third, the article highlighted the acknowledgment of Musqueam as one of the significant UBC tradition valued in the graduation ceremony by stated that "acknowledging Musqueam's

traditional relationship with the land UBC sits on at the start of each ceremony when a representative is not present" (UBC Facebook, 2019, May 27). Last but not least, the university identifies itself as a "home" for every student and alumni. The university sent the best wishes to students at the graduation ceremony, saying that UBC is "always their home" (UBC Facebook, 2019, May 27).

These four messages I took from the post and the article implied that, first of all, UBC is a university with a long history and nurturing countless students worldwide. Moreover, it has its unique culture and tradition that values the relationship between the university, students, and the First Nation community. Finally, every student and alumni have a strong sense of belonging to UBC because it is not only a place for study temporarily but also a home forever. The ceremony symbolized students and their families that students have completed their studies and acquired a degree in the university. To the university, the ceremony symbolized the inheritance of knowledge from generation to generation. The discursive practices implied that being a UBC student is lucky given that the student can receive a good education and meaningful graduation ceremony in a university with prestige and long history.

On-campus summer activities

The post shared information about the annual Berry U-pick events at the UBC farms. The post includes a short video introducing this annual seasonal event and the operation of the UBC Farm. The post demonstrated an important lifestyle of the university and the role UBC plays in the local community. The UBC farm provides diverse opportunities for the university to conduct teaching and research. Besides, the UBC farm also takes the responsibility to promote the indigenous culture in the local community by providing indigenous children's programs, volunteer workshops. Finally, the UBC farm is recognized as an urban garden in the metro

Vancouver in which it is "the only sort of organic berry U-pick here in the city which people love because they can take the bus, walk or bike to the UBC farm" (UBC Facebook, 2019, July 10).

Messaging strategies applied in the university Facebook page implied what kinds of campus events are recognized to represent the tradition, culture, and lifestyle of UBC. Based on the methodology of data selection and collection, we found that the start of school orientation programs, graduation ceremony, and the on-campus summer activities are three of the most important annual campus events recognized by the university on the social media platform. By analyzing the selected posts on the Facebook page, there are three highlights promoted by the message producer to communicate and represent the school identities. Firstly, these posts promoted the idea of inclusivity. For instance, posts related to the start of school events and graduation ceremony shed light on the idea of "home," such as "UBC is a home for every student" and "UBC is always their home even after graduation." Communicating the sense of belonging and school pride on the media platform implied that this is a place for everyone to achieve what they need. The university will help you well-integrated into the UBC community at the beginning of your study until you graduate from this inclusive and friendly campus. Communicating the identity of inclusivity to students, particularly prospective international students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, may be attractive for them and their families to consider UBC as the right choice of receiving higher education. Secondly, the posts also communicated the school pride to the audiences by promoting the long history and the prestige of the university in the webpage articles. Provided a link to direct audiences to the university website and read the article is one of the common messaging strategies guiding the audience to notice what they want to promote and convey. In this case, the message producers

have more chances to produce certain discourses through discursive practices in social media platforms and the university website. For example, the Facebook posts celebrated the annual spring graduation ceremony presented a photo, brief text to describe the importance of graduation ceremony, and a link for the audience to read the article on the UBC website.

Finally, the posts focus on a commitment to Indigenous students through communicating the university's social responsibility to value Indigenous cultures and the well-being of Indigenous students. For instance, in the posts related to the graduation ceremony, they talked about how they value and include events on the ceremony to highlight Musqueam's acknowledgment as one of the significant UBC traditions. Besides, the post introduced the on-campus summer activities talked about several specific measures practiced by the university and affiliated communities, such as providing Indigenous children's program, volunteer, and workshop in the UBC farm to promote the Indigenous culture among the local communities.

Diversity

Diversity is recognized as one of the most critical UBC culture and lifestyle in many Facebook posts. Based on my observation and analysis of the selected posts, there are three messaging strategies to communicate diversity as one of the most important UBC identities and values on social media.

One messaging strategy to communicate the value of diversity is to use stories or interviews of students, demonstrating their feelings and experiences of studying and living in an inclusive and diverse campus. For instance, a post used a UBC student's story to communicate the university's commitment and efforts to support LGBTQ+ students and communities. The post highlighted the title "welcoming diversity: there's a space for everyone at UBC" and used a story of a student who talked about how the university provided her useful suggestions in the

orientation program, saying that "these events reflect UBC's deep commitment to embracing diversity and supporting student wellness" (UBC Facebook, 2019, September 4). Both the post and the story implied that the university valued and gave priority to every student's well-being and interests from diverse backgrounds.

Another messaging strategy the university applied to communicate diversity as a school identity is to introduce and announce the series of campus activities aimed at promoting the value of diversity. For example, a post introduced a series of diversity-related campus activities, "UBC Pride" on the media platform, which refers to the "pride" of diverse students, faculty, and staff. The university webpage described the activities to state that one of the primary purposes of UBC pride activities is to create a "positive space" on and off campus to stand up for "sexual orientation and gender identity diversity" (UBC Facebook, 2019, August 3).

The other messaging strategy of the university to communicate diversity as a school identity is to celebrate the external evaluation performance on the media platform to demonstrate the school's reputation. For example, a post was published to announce and celebrate that UBC acquired the honor to be recognized as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers in 2020. The post included a link for the audience to access the UBC webpage to gain more detailed information about the background story of why and how UBC was selected as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers. The article in the university webpage illustrated several reasons for UBC to gain this reputation, including the university's efforts to promote the history and culture of Indigenous people, the wellbeing of students, staff, faculty members and other people in the UBC community, and university's efforts to promote equity by creating an inclusive learning and working environment for people to study, working, and living in UBC. The post communicated

the identity of UBC as not only a university with excellent teaching quality and academic achievement but also contributing to create a diverse and friendly community for everyone.

Based on the analysis of three messaging strategies that communicated diversity as a significant value to represent UBC's identity, the university conceptualized diversity from three perspectives. First, the university highlighted the diversity of student composition. For example, the post provided a link to direct the audience to the UBC webpage and read the article, which stated that "UBC is an incredibly diverse place – here, you'll get the thrilling opportunity to meet and make friends with students from over 169 countries!" (UBC Facebook, 2019, August 14). This communicated the internationalization of UBC, implying that UBC is one of the most international universities for students to meet people worldwide.

Moreover, the university promoted a friendly and inclusive campus culture that valued the interests and well-being of every student from diverse backgrounds. For instance, the article stated that "UBC strives to be a welcoming, caring, and inclusive space for everyone" and "during your time here, you'll have lots of ways to share your ideas and opinions and find resources to help you express your identity and voice your needs" (UBC Facebook, 2019, August 3). These messages implied that the university cares about and values the voices of every student, including those from minority groups such as Indigenous or racialized minority communities. Finally, the post and the article brought lights to efforts the university contributed to creating a welcoming and inclusive campus for sexual orientation and gender identity diversity. This communicated UBC's commitment to care about and value the interests of LGBTQ+ student groups on campus.

4.1.1.3 University internationalization

The internationalization of the university is another important theme on the UBC Facebook page. The idea of internationalization originally described a phenomenon that, given the entrenched neoliberal ideology that impacts the operation of higher education institutions, universities apply particular practices or management strategies to respond to the increased competition among globalized higher education markets. For instance, universities establish international student recruitment and advising office to improve the quality and service of international student enrollment and related affairs on campus; the cross-national research projects are promoted by universities and government to encourage the international collaboration; the ideas of international education are involved in the content of the curriculum. These examples of practices can be seen as the means and the ends of the internationalization of higher education. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of internationalization has become an institutional discourse of universities. The idea of internationalization is recognized as not only a trend in the era of globalization but also has become a significant indicator for evaluating the outcomes of universities in terms of academic productivity and teaching quality. For instance, global university rankings consider the level of university internationalization as a critical index, such as the ratio of international students and faculty members, for evaluation.

Given the importance of internationalization as a popular and influential institutional discourse among universities, the UBC Facebook fan page has many posts that communicate internationalization as an important UBC identity. Based on the analysis of selected posts, there are five topics commonly used to represent or communicate the identity of university internationalization.

Value of multiculturalism

Demonstrating that UBC has a campus with cultural diversity is one of the best ways to communicate the university's efforts to create a multicultural and international campus for students. There were some posts published to illustrate how students experience diverse cultures on campus. For instance, a post published to celebrate the Lunar New Year shared the upcoming campus events of celebrating the start of Lunar New Year in Chinese culture. The post showed a photo of Chinese Lion Dance to represent the traditional Lunar New Year celebration (Figure 4.16). Besides, there was a link for the audience to get further information about the related celebration activities on campus in the university website.

Figure 4.16. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, January 21)

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There were three Lunar New Year related celebrating activities introduced on the website. Notably, each event's descriptions promoted the idea that these activities were the best opportunities for students to experience different cultures. For instance, the website used the term like "unique experience," "learn more about Asian culture," "the event will highlight the large diversity," and "learn about different cultures," to introduce the activities (UBC Facebook, 2020, January 21). Based on my observation and the analysis of discursive practices in the post and the website, the narratives on social media and university websites defined Asian culture as an exceptional, minority cultural experience. In other words, in the UBC's narratives of culture diversity, Asian culture is not recognized as a part of the dominant campus culture despite the high proportion of international students from Asian countries.

Student experiences and study abroad opportunities

Opportunities for students to go abroad, such as participating in the co-op, international summits, or exchange programs, are recognized as essential criteria to represent the identity of university internationalization. There were some posts on the UBC Facebook page presented the information or stories of UBC students who participated in the exchange program, the UBC-led international research project, and the internship opportunities to introduce the supports and resources that the university provides.

For example, a post introduced an international project funded by UBC's donor and led by a faculty member in the Department of Asian Studies. The project named V20 gives UBC students opportunities to actively engage in many significant international summits and meet or interact with national leaders in the summits. There were two highlights I took away from the post. On the one hand, the post communicated the prestige of the UBC, by which implied that the university has adequate resources for students to experience extraordinary learning opportunities

that "even Harvard students cannot experience" (UBC Facebook, 2019, August 3). It is noteworthy that the university use "Harvard" as an analogy to communicate the reputation of UBC. As a globally well-known private research university in the U.S. that dominated the top spots in the rankings, Harvard is considered as a "role model" of "world-class" higher education institution worldwide. Given that Harvard foregrounded our understanding of prestigious university, UBC used Harvard as an analogy to imply that UBC is a university to align with, even go beyond, Harvard in terms of providing extraordinary leaning opportunities for students.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the period this post was published coincided with the severe conflict between Hong Kong and the Chinese Communist regime, as well as the increased tension between the international community (especially the Western countries) and Mainland China. The background of the project and the founder of the V20 project implied UBC's attitude toward the conflict between China and Western countries to some extent. For instance, the post quoted a brief interview which stated that "we are also trying to decrease tension between the U.S. and China and other key nations, all the while including UBC students at the heart of the process" (UBC Facebook, 2019, August 3). This implied that the university believed that maintaining a friendly relationship with China deserved more attention and efforts on policy innovation. UBC's faculty members and students have passionate and potential to make contributions.

Another example was two posts shared two UBC undergraduate students' experience of participating in the UBC Go Global programs. Externally, the posts using students' personal experience to encourage students to take a chance to apply for the UBC Go Global program and experience different cultures abroad. For example, both Go Global program participants mentioned that studying abroad helped improve their language ability, acquired a better

understanding of the social and cultural context in the host countries, and the overall experience had the positive impacts on their personalities. Nevertheless, some discursive practices in the posts and the articles on the university website implied the UBC's identity of international positioning. Take a student who took her Spanish studies to Ecuador, for instance. The post showed a travel photo (Figure 4.17) she took during her studies in Ecuador and provided a link for the audience to read the story on the webpage.

Figure 4.17. Screenshot of the post on Facebook (2019, November 24)

In the article, she shared her reflections and thoughts about the experience of living and studying in South America, writing that "I am interested in global development, so visiting the Casa Saber Pega Full was an amazing opportunity for me to see how developing countries are dealing with critical social issues" (UBC Facebook, 2019, November 24).

There are some notable points I took from the post to make further analysis. For one thing, many students are participating in the UBC Go Global program annually; however, the university decided to post a white female student's experience on social media as a representative. For another, the discursive practices in both the post and the passage identified Ecuador as a developing country for a student from Canada who is interested in global development to visit. The discourse of development in the narrative communicated that the UBC undergraduate student is seen as having the knowledge to apply what she has learned from her undergraduate program at UBC to figure out how to help the developing country improving the critical social issues. The role UBC plays is like a "charity" to train outstanding students and working with their partners in the Global South by sending students to visit the under-developing countries and experience the local social and cultural context. Such a perspective framed the discourse to perpetuate the dominant global position of countries in the Global North. In the narrative of UBC student who travels to Ecuador, Canada is recognized as the "leading countries" to cultivate "global leaders." They can achieve the ultimate goal of global development. This communicates the discourse that the way Global North conceptualize the idea of development is recognized as dominant and superior to Global South.

International students

The high proportion of international students at universities has been seen as a crucial criterion of higher education internationalization. Given that the UBC Facebook page is a popular media platform for the university to present messages and interact with the audiences, it is also recognized as an ideal space to make some important campus announce. Particularly, providing useful information or guidance related to the interests of incoming and prospective international students is an effective approach to reach or interact with students outside Canada.

There were two posts made an important announcement related to international student affairs. A post was published in late July in 2019, which aimed at providing suggestions and information about the required health insurance to live and study in Canada for incoming international students. The post included a link for the audiences to access the university web page and gain further information about what types of health insurance international students need and how to apply for it. Another post was published in early April in 2020, which aimed at providing resources and information about how COVID-19 will impact international students, such as the immigration application or health insurance. The post also included a link to direct the audience to the university web page (the page of student service) and to read the updates and FAQ regarding questions that students commonly have and the university's responses.

Both posts were informative for international students to access useful and essential information to well-prepared for the incoming college life in Canada. Nevertheless, the posting time and the choice of the cover photo of the post deserve further discussion and analysis. For example, the post announced the importance of international student health insurance was published in late July in 2019, which close the start of the fall semester. Given that there was only one month left before the start of school dates, many students and parents were preparing for incoming college life. The particular post aimed to provide international students with more understanding about Canadian life and express the university's concern and attention to international students' well-being and interests. Notably, the end of July 2019 happened to be the most severe conflict between Hong Kong and Mainland China. Media from all over the world have a lot of discussion and attention on Hong Kong issues. In contrast, as the official social media pages, the UBC Facebook fan page did not publish or provide any related discussion about the increased tension between China and the international community or the Hong Kong issues.

Instead, the message producer decided to communicate the university's care and welcome toward incoming international students. This observation implied the dilemma of the UBC. On the one hand, as a Western regime that self-identified as a country promotes freedom, democracy, and human rights, Canada may not agree with the Chinese regime's treatment of Hong Kong issues. On the other hand, Canada's situation is complicated in the conflict between the United States and China. Given that Canada is an immigrant society, immigrants and international students from China have provided considerable social and financial resources for the long-term development of Canadian societies and the higher education system. As one of a representative public university in Canada, UBC avoided sensitive political issues and chose to apply other messaging strategies to express its welcome to international students.

In addition to the noteworthy posting time, the photo choice of the Facebook post also deserves further attention. For instance, the post which shared important information about how the COVID-19 outbreak will impact international students, the cover photo was a female Islam student who worked concentratedly on her laptop (Figure 4.18). The message producer chose a female Islam student to represent the image of the large group of international students at UBC. The observation seemed that the post tried to present the diverse cultural expression on campus to imply that UBC is a diverse, friendly, and inclusive university for international students. Given that the Islamic groups are vulnerable to stereotypes internationally, taking an Islamic female student who studies at the UBC may help to communicate the image to promote the idea that "UBC is a place for everyone."

University of British Columbia
April 6 at 8:46 AM · 🌐

International students, we know you have questions about how COVID-19 will impact immigration and health insurance.

Read our FAQs to start getting the answers you need: https://bit.ly/2xHFWNr

STUDENTS.UBC.CA
International Students: Immigration and Health Insurance FAQ on COVID-19

Figure 4.18. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, April 6)

Global impacts and contributions

Given that internationalization of higher education has become a significant indicator in the global university rankings to evaluate the quality and international competitiveness of universities, promoting the global impacts and contributions of the university on the media platform is recognized as an essential criterion to communicate the identity of university internationalization. The UBC Facebook pages published several posts to communicate the university's global impacts and contributions.

There are two primary messaging strategies to demonstrate and communicate the UBC's global impacts and contributions. One is to present the research outcomes to promote the

university's international academic reputation. The other one is to communicate the contribution and influence of the university toward the critical global issues.

In the cases of presenting research outcomes and promoting the international academic reputation of the university, the message producer on the UBC Facebook page tends to employ certain discursive practices to highlight the international influence of UBC in academic activities. For example, a post shared the outcomes of a UBC-led group developing a new website featuring free, multilingual storybooks for over 40 countries and regions on five continents, which facilitated language learning and promoted the global literacy rate. This post communicated the UBC's commitment and global responsibility to develop a website for people worldwide that helped improve the literacy rate. My first impression and feeling about this post is to acknowledge the university's contribution and efforts to serve the international communities. However, there are two things that worth to bring some attentions for critical thinking. For one thing, the university's presentation on social media implied that UBC is expressing as the dominant knowledge producer towards the areas with low literacy rates, which portray the image for the audiences to consider the UBC and Canada as a leader who has the power to help.

For another, the choice of image of a Black child who read a book with smile also imply the subject of receiving help, especially the people from Global South (Figure 4.19).

Figure 4.19. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, January 24)

Based on such observation and critical analysis, this study found that the discursive

practices and messaging strategies used by the university may help to produce and reproduce the

discourses to perpetuate the superior global position of Western countries.

Another example was a post that shared the news to announce that the university

received grants from Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) to

conduct "world-leading discovery research in science and engineering." This post communicated

the university's identity to be recognized as the institutions to lead the international development

in the field of science and engineering.

Communicating the university's contribution and influence toward critical global issues is

another way to illustrate the university's global impact. Take a more recent critical global issue,

the outbreak of COVID-19, for instance. Since the end of February in 2020, many posts have

been published to make important campus announcements or related news and discussions on the UBC Facebook page. Notably, there were many posts that communicated the significant COVID-19 related research led by UBC research teams. For example, a post introduced a UBC Chinese sociologist who is originally from Wuhan, China, studying the human experiences and mental health issues of quarantine. Her research project sponsored by the Canadian federal government, which made a meaningful academic contribution. Another post shared the interview of a UBC clinical associate professor who served as a co-chair of the WHO's clinical research team. The interview promoted the international influence of Canadian scholars in playing the role of leaders on the world stage. The quotation from the interview such as "Canadian experts will continue to be among some of the leaders on the world stage, working to tailor their studies and ultimately inform the response to the outbreak in the coming weeks, months, and years ahead" (UBC Facebook, 2020, February 28), communicated the commitment and ability of Canada and Canadian scholars to work with the global community to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The other post shared news about a group of UBC biomedical engineering students who developed a simple, low-cost ventilator that could save more lives during the global pandemic outbreak. The post also celebrated UBC students' success by which their work was among the final ten in a competitive international competition. This post promoted the idea that the UBC students have potential and ability to make a "major real-world impact." Besides, the UBC students' talent and the leadership they demonstrated will be "require to ensure Canada's recovery" (UBC Facebook, 2020, April 25).

All in all, posts demonstrated the UBC's global impacts communicate the commitment and contribution of UBC to work with the global community to respond to the critical global

issues. Moreover, the demonstration of research outcomes represents the university's status on the world stage given that the researchers and students are capable of standing out to play the leading roles. The ways of presentation on the social media platform provided us some evidence in terms of the mediatization of higher education. Nevertheless, while the university relies on the media to communicate particular school identities, the messaging strategies or the ways of the presentation can be problematic. Given the ubiquity of media that has power to frame the ideologies or public opinions of the societies in which that communication takes place, the process of mediatization helps to frame certain discourses to favor particular values or beliefs, such as constructing the discourses about what stands for a "world-class," "prestigious," or "excellent" university. In the case of the UBC Facebook page, the university's self-presentation implied that the university is seen as the dominant knowledge producer to express the charitable concerns towards, for instance, developing countries and the areas with low literacy rates. The discursive practices portray the image for the audiences to consider the UBC, and the country where the UBC is located, as a leader who has the power to help. In other words, the process of the mediatization of the higher education, on the one hand, is a phenomenon referring to the universities' increasing reliance on media for specific purposes, such as branding or marketing. On the other hand, discursive practices and messaging strategies used by the university help produce and reproduce the discourses to perpetuate the Anglo-American supremacy and Western cultural hegemony in terms of the geopolitics of knowledge production.

4.1.1.4 Values, identities, and school brand

Social media is a more dynamic platform for message producers to publish or update posts in a short period compared to the website. Besides, it is also an interactive social networking platform for all users to interact with each other easily. Given the social media

features, the university can release many posts with diverse topics in even a single day. Posts with various topics or narratives help portray the university's image and frame audiences' understanding of the institution. In this perspective, what topics were chosen to represent the university's identity or to communicate particular values toward audiences deserve further analysis and discussion. This section aimed to identify the implied purposes among the posts with diverse topics, exploring the rationale of messaging strategies to communicate the UBC's value and identities on the Facebook page.

Value is an abstract idea that commonly indicates the philosophy of university management and operation. Communicating values on a media platform can be seen as a messaging strategy to promote the university's reputation or school image. In other words, the university has its "brand value" to attract people who recognize the value of this university. A post is an excellent example of communicating the university's value on social media. This post shared a video to portray daily life on university campuses. The video used the images of people who work for the UBC, with monologue talking about its value. Notably, the narrator used abstract terms in her presentation to communicate the UBC value. For example, she said, "our value connects our community. They drive our activity, interactions, and decisions everywhere, in research, teach, and work. We support each other, so everyone has the chance to reach their greatest potential" (UBC Facebook, 2019, December 17). The discursive practice, such as "our value" drive our "activity, interactions, and decisions," and everyone has the chance to reach their "greatest potential," did not convey the specific idea about what the UBC values are or how the UBC values capable of driving what activity, interactions, and decisions to make everyone has the chance to reach their greatest potential.

Another interesting observation in this post is that the message producer tries to visualize the UBC values in the video. Notably, the video narration does not directly say what the UBC values are. Instead, the video left spaces for the audience to imagine or interpret what are the UBC values through the visual image in the video. For instance, the video depicted the image that a racialized female professor explains the experiment with a group of students in the laboratory (Figure 4.20); a male Indigenous educator surrounded by students in the workshop (Figure 4.21); and a racialized male career manager having a conversation with an Asian female student (Figure 4.22).

Figure 4.20. Screenshot of the video on UBC Facebook (2019, December 17)

Figure 4.21. Screenshot of the video on UBC Facebook (2019, December 17)

Figure 4.22. Screenshot of the video on UBC Facebook (2019, December 17)

Rather than straightforwardly state that what are UBC values, the video uses visual strategies to communicate and imply certain identities of the university. For example, UBC has a friendly and racial diversity campus for every students and staff to actively participate in this large community; UBC has devoted to promoting Indigenous culture by actively working with Indigenous scholars and local communities; and UBC provided a student-centered learning opportunity for students to work with faculty members.

Communicating the university's social responsibilities

There are two examples to explore how the university uses posts with different topics to communicate its social responsibilities on social media. The first example is a post that announces the university's current practice regarding marine ecological protection. This post announced the new food purchasing practice to purchase and offer only "100 percent Ocean Wise recommended sustainable seafood" started from July 1st in 2019. This new practice aimed at "moving away from seafood companies involved in over-fishing, by-catch or unsustainable fishing practices" toward "those businesses working to conserve our water through sustainable fishing" (UBC Facebook, 2019, June 7). The post not only made the announcement but provided a link for the audiences to access the UBC News webpage to read the story and gain further information about the new practice. The post and the article on the web page communicated a UBC value of supporting the sustainable fishing business and UBC's identity as a "role model" for other Canadian institutions and universities by leading them to make a change to protect Earth's natural resources. The post implied that, for one thing, UBC is a leader of making change. For another, the environmental issues that focus on marine ecology and resources are recognized as a critical thing valued by the UBC.

The other example is two stories about UBC students from disadvantaged backgrounds who made a life change after studying at the UBC. Both posts demonstrated how UBC values students' interests to communicate the university's charitable concern. One post shared the story of a UBC student who came from Syria. The post provided a link for the audience to read his story on the university website, in which he talked about how he was helped by Canada and the UBC donors who supported his education and changed his life. The other post shared an inspiring story of a UBC graduate who was once a single parent, and suffered from domestic violence, received her Law degree in 2019 Spring graduation ceremony. The story highlighted that she once wanted to give up, but she received support from the university and the faculty member in her program. Because of the valuable educational opportunities to study at the UBC and the professors who are willing to give care and encouragement in her difficult time, she eventually succeeded in obtaining a degree.

Both posts were presented to share the inspiring stories and communicated a UBC value of providing educational opportunities for everyone. Given that there are many students in UBC come from different countries, cultural background, and socioeconomic classes, UBC is self-identified as a university for people who eager to pursue higher education. Both stories implied that students from even disadvantaged backgrounds could meet great people here at UBC who are willing to help. Moreover, the university will provide supports for them until they finish their studies. In short, the message producer uses students' personal stories to communicate the university's charitable concern as an essential UBC value that the university wants to promote on the media platform.

University leader's response to particular issues

Presenting the university leader's attitude toward specific issues on the media platform can bring light to a particular university's identities. For example, two posts shed light on the university's identity that valued and promoted the importance of mental health issues. One post presented the CBC news interview of the UBC president Santa Ono, in which he shared his personal story about struggling with mental illness. The post provided a link for the audience to access the UBC web page and the CBC news websites and gain further information about Ono's story and his commitment to helping Canadian university students maintain mental health. The other post shared the information about the UBC Mental Illness Awareness Week and shared the story of an outstanding UBC athlete who overcame depression. This post aimed to introduce and promote the purposes and activities in Mental Illness Awareness Week. The post also provided a link for the audiences to read the article on the UBC News web page, which mainly introduced the mental health and well-being resources and assistance that the university provided.

Two posts mentioned above communicated the university's efforts on caring and improving the well-being of UBC students. For one thing, the posts raised example to illustrate the services that the university provides to the students and the related activities which welcome everyone to join to gain a better understanding of mental health issues or find the supporting groups. For another, the posts also implied that the mental health problem had been recognized as a significant issue for the university. The importance of mental health issues is promoted by the university and be recognized as an essential identity for the UBC to care for and put more effort into the relevant research, service, and practices.

Another example of the university to communicate identities through different posting topics was to bring light on the university leader's philosophy of managing and operating the university. For instance, a post presented an interview with President Santa Ono that shared his

opinions about the university's responsibility for promoting liberal arts education to college students. In the post and the article, Ono took himself as an example to discuss his experience of receiving an excellent liberal arts education. The experience has impacted his personality and career to a great extent. The post helped to communicate a UBC leader's educational philosophy to manage and operate a university. It also implied the university's identity as a university that pays attention to the professional and academic achievement of students, as well as devotes to cultivating students' humanities and preparing them for the real-world challenge after graduation.

All in all, all the examples discussed in this section told us that the university does not directly present the UBC's values or identities on the posts. Instead, it publishes posts with diverse topics to imply the UBC values to the audiences. These posts may be the campus announcements, the stories, or the campus activities chosen by the message producer to promote the university's social media platform. In other words, the decision of messaging practices implies what the university wants to present and promote to the audience. Communicating values and identities on a media platform can be seen as an essential messaging strategy to promote certain discourses that may impact the university's reputation.

4.1.1.5 Prestige, reputation, and excellence

Communicating the prestige, reputation, and excellence of the university on the social media platform helps to promote particular school images to the broader audience body. Notably, communicating the excellence of the faculty members and students is two common messaging strategies to promote university prestige. The message producer will not directly state that UBC is an excellent university of prestige and reputation. Instead, it tends to use specific examples to imply what are the criteria for being an excellent university of prestige and reputation. The message production and dissemination helped to communicate the positive school identities to

attract more recognition and attention from the audience. Nevertheless, the communication process also shaped and framed certain discourses to determine the characteristics of an "excellent" and "world-class" university.

Excellence of the faculty members

There are three examples to explore how the university communicates the excellence of the UBC faculty members to demonstrate the university's prestige and reputation on the social media platform. The first example was the post to share a UBC senior scientist who led international research teach that commit to the study of treatment and vaccines of COVID-19. The post presented a photo of this outstanding white male scientist who smiled with confidence when accepting the interview (Figure 4.23). It also included a link for the audience to access the UBC News web page to read the article, highlighting how this cross-national collaborative research team led by the UBC scholar has contributed to the world. Notably, the Facebook post particularly quoted the sentence "UBC-led study gives hope for COVID-19 treatment " (UBC Facebook, 2020, April 8) to imply the contribution and influence that the UBC research teams have made.

Figure 4.23. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, April 8)

Another example was the post celebrating a faculty member in the Creative Writing Program who received a distinguished literary award, Scotiabank Giller Prize, for his novel. The post highlighted that the prize he won is "Canada's largest literary award and recognize the very best of Canadian fiction" (UBC Facebook, 2019, November 2). The third example was the post celebrating a faculty member in the Forestry Department who won "the most prestigious forestry honor, the Marcus Wallenberg Prize" in 2020. The post also included a link for audiences to access the UBC news web page to gain further information about the importance of the Marcus Wallenberg Prize and the outstanding research that the UBC faculty member had done. Notably,

both the post and the article highlighted the significance and honor of receiving the prize by describing the Marcus Wallenberg Prize as "the world's most prestigious forestry honor" and the "Nobel Prize of forest research" that "all forest researchers aspire to win" (UBC Facebook, 2020 April 28).

Presented and demonstrated the excellence of UBC faculty members helped to communicate the prestige and reputation of the university. For one thing, all three posts applied certain discursive practices to promote the strength of research productivity and the academic reputation of the faculty members. Such messaging strategy implied that UBC has many such excellent scholars to provide high-quality educational resources. Students will have the chance to work with these faculty members if they become members of this university. For another, the message producer communicated the university's prestige by emphasizing the university's international position as a "world's top universities." For instance, in the post which celebrated a UBC forest scientist who received the remarkable honor in the 2020 Marcus Wallenberg Prize, the UBC news article stated that "UBC is the top-ranking institution on the globe in terms the highest number of prizes received in the 40-year history of the Marcus Wallenberg Prize" (UBC Facebook, 2020, April 28). The discursive practice worked to extend the excellence of the faculty members to the university's prestige in which these extraordinary scholars works.

Excellence of the students

Additionally, to communicate the excellence of the faculty members, demonstrated the excellence of students and alumni cultivated by the university is another messaging strategy to promote the prestige and reputation of the university. For instance, two posts were presenting the interview and photograph of UBC students. One post shared a story and interviewed to introduce an outstanding Ph.D. candidate who had discovered 17 new planets, including a potentially

habitable, Earth-sized world. This post was mainly talked about her achievement during the time she studies at UBC. However, the post presented was not only demonstrated her distinguished performance but communicated the education quality of the university in terms of providing students opportunities and resources of self-accomplishment. This doctoral student was used to represent UBC students' role models to communicate the prestige of the university to the audiences on the social media platform.

The other post shared a photo of a former UBC Zoology postdoctoral fellow wearing a T-shirt with the UBC school name printed on it, taking photograph in the International Space Station (Figure 4.24). The description of the photo was "UBC in space!" (UBC Facebook, 2020, February 10).

Figure 4.24. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, February 10)

The photo made me think about astronauts took photos with their national flags on the Moon, or explorers put flags on the top of the mountain to represent the success of their adventure. The photo of a former UBC fellow who wears the T-shirt with the school name communicated the sense of "pride" or "belonging" toward the university. In this case, UBC presented this photo on the university social media platform was to share such a special moment with the UBC aluminon and communicated the school pride to the audiences on the Facebook group.

Overall, this section explored the messaging strategies to communicate the prestige, reputation, and excellence of the university on social media. I found that demonstrated the excellence of faculty members, and students were considered two significant ways to promote the prestige of UBC by message producers. However, it is also noteworthy to explore what elements were recognized as important to communicate the university's prestige and excellence. Given the university's increasing reliance on media to promote particular school images, the process of mediatization can influence the ideology of how the audience perceives and understand the criteria of prestige and excellence. For instance, in the case of exploring and analyzing the UBC posts, celebrating the honor of faculty members to receive academic awards, presenting the achievements of UBC students or alumni, and highlighting the global ranking performance of the university were recognized as significant criteria for presentation on the social media platform by UBC. The mediatization process not only communicated the positive school identities but also produced or reproduced certain discourses to shape and frame the ideology of "prestige," "excellence," and "world-class." In other words, the process of university mediatization may facilitate the risk of epistemic violence by promoting particular discourses to favor specific types of higher education.

4.1.1.6 Responses, attitudes, and reactions of UBC toward global issues

Among all the posts on the UBC Facebook page with diverse topics and issues, several of them are posts relating to the current global issues. Based on the selected posts from May 1st, 2019 to May 1st, 2020, four global issues received more attention from the university and audiences in the Facebook group.

Hong Kong issues

A post updated the current situation of Hong Kong and provided the university's responses and reactions toward the Hong Kong issue. The post aimed to make an important announcement related to the students' safety and interests. Moreover, it also communicated UBC's care and responsibility to maintain the safety of students. For example, the post stated that "UBC's number one priority is to ensure our students, faculty, and staff is supported and safe, whether studying at UBC or abroad" (UBC Facebook, 2019, November 20). The post highlighted the university's attitude and reaction to put students' interests and safety in the first place when responding to the Hong Kong issue. Notably, the Hong Kong issue was particularly serious started from May in 2019; however, no other posts presented related information or discussion to respond to it. The university only responded to how to protect the safety and rights of students. UBC's attitude or position towards Hong Kong issues was absent from the media platform.

Canada-China relation

The recent conflict between Canada and China is originally stemmed from the U.S.-China conflict. Nevertheless, the arrest of Meng Wanzhou[10] has triggered judicial, political, and diplomatic incidents involving China, the United States, and Canada. As a public university with

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[10] Meng Wanzhou is the vice chairman and chief financial officer of Huawei, a Chinese multinational technology company, was arrested by the police while crossing the border in Vancouver in 2018.

a large proportion of international students from China, it seemed critical for UBC to respond to the issue to communicate the university's identity and standpoint regarding the increasing Canada-China conflict. Notably, the university did not directly express their concerns. Instead, the university applied specific messaging strategies to avoid sensitive political issues and communicate the welcome to Chinese international students. For example, a post shared the survey research on Canadian public attitudes on China and Canada-China relations. Notably, the post presented a photo of the People Republic of China's national flag (Figure 4.25), and a link for the audience to read the research summary article on the university website.

Figure 4.25. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2019, November 4)

The article highlighted several key findings from the survey results, including the public attitude toward China and the proportion of support for maintaining a friendly relation with

China. The summary of the research findings promoted the idea that most of Canada's public prefer to retain a positive relation with China rather than the conflicting relationship. The post seemed to demonstrate the findings and outcomes of a research project related to China and Canada's international relation. Nevertheless, the post also implied the university's intention to maintain a good relationship with China and Chinese companies, considered a large proportion of Chinese international student study at Canada, and the research projects in cooperation with Chinese capital.

Ukraine International Airline Flight 752 Plane Crash

There were two posts announced the tragedy of the PS752 place crash, which happened in early January in 2020. A post showed a photo of the half-flagged Canadian national flag in the UBC campus (Figure 4.26), representing the university's concern and mourning for the tragedy and people we lost in this accident.

Figure 4.26. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, January 13)

The other post announced the newly established memorial award to honor and memorize all the victims in the plane crash, including four UBC affiliated members, by providing opportunities for students to flourish. The post also included a link for the audiences to read the entire announcement on the Support UBC web page. The web page announced the establishment of the memorial award and listed four UBC-affiliated victims in the plane crash.

As a university composed of students of multiple nationalities and races, the posts communicated the university's identity to respond to the accident that received international attention. The university communicated its sympathy and condolences to families and friends who lost their lives in the plane crash.

COVID-19

The outbreak of coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) is the most critical global issue currently. This highly contagious disease poses a threat to human health around the world and causes significant impacts on most countries' infrastructure, including education and economic activities. Notably, the COVID-19 outbreak has significantly impacted international students worldwide, given that many host countries have temporarily blockade national borders to prevent the spread of the epidemic and prevent foreign travelers from entering. During this challenging period, most Canadian universities have transitioned the in-person classes to online courses to protect students and faculty members.

Among all the posts on the UBC Facebook page, there are three main dimensions of presentations relating to the discussion of COVID-19 issues. The first dimension of presentation is the important updates and campus announcements. For example, two posts presented the video of the university leader's talk to the UBC community and the university's current practices to respond to the pandemic. One post showed a video in which President Ono updated some

significant decisions made by the university, such as the cancellation of the in-person final exam and the transition of online courses. The other post included a link for the audiences to read the university's letter in the Office of President's web page.

Both posts were informative, which aimed at updating important information to the UBC community regarding the impacts of COVID-19 outbreak and the university's current practices. However, in addition to making announcements, the university leader communicated the university's responsibilities and commitments to engage with actions working together with Canada and the world to fight against the outbreak of COVID-19. For one thing, in the video, UBC president pointed out that "our medical and nursing students are helping out in local healthcare facilities; our researchers are working on crucial COVID-related research" (UBC Facebook, 2020, March 27), which communicated how UBC tried to practice its social responsibility among not only the nation but the globe. It also implied that UBC is committed to and capable of leading the world to contribute to curbing the pandemic. For another, the discursive practice in the letter aimed to relieve anxiety by communicating the university's responsibilities and current practices to protect the health, safety, and interests of all students and members in the UBC community in this challenging time. For instance, the president promoted the idea that the university is "safe" and "under a good control by school leaders and the group of stakeholders" (UBC Facebook, 2020, March 12), and particularly emphasized that the university has been in close contact with to the provincial health office to ensure UBC is following policies and practices.

The second dimension of presentation is the university's response regarding the increasing anti-Asian emotion worldwide. A post shared an article written by an assistant professor of the History Department, which discussed how the history of empire and colonialism

was always deeply intertwined with histories of race and disease. This article provided a critical perspective to review and respond to the COVID-19 issue and the growing anti-Asian emotion among North American and some European countries. This post used a cover photo of a racialized male who wore a face mask (Figure 4.27). Both the post and the article created a space of nuanced conversation and discussion for students and audiences in the Facebook group. Moreover, the post and the article also represented the university's position and identity to respond to the global pandemic outbreak.

University of British Columbia
February 28 ·

A virus is a virus, but humans have a long history of turning their fear of disease into unwarranted panic about people and places.

This is nothing new, according to Heidi Tworek, assistant professor of history at UBC.

NEWS.UBC.CA
When a virus is the cause, racism is often the symptom
A virus is a virus, but humans have a long history of turning their fear of...

Figure 4.27. Screenshot of the post on UBC Facebook (2020, February 28)

The third dimension of the university's presentation regarding the COVID-19 issue is to provide relevant information for prospective students undergoing the process of application and

may have some concerns about the impacts of COVID-19. For instance, a post included a photo of a male student studying in the library, and a link directed the audience to the UBC admission blog web page. The university admission web page's article updated the university's current practices and responses toward questions about the application process. For example, the text of the article stated that the university has "made some changes to ensure that all prospective students remain safe and healthy, and that all applications are treated fairly" (UBC Facebook, 2020, April 1). It seemed that the post tried to demonstrate the university's effort to reduce the impacts of COVID-19 toward prospective domestic/international students.

This section explored the posts related to the current global issues on the UBC Facebook page. Based on my observation, the Hong Kong issue, Canada-China relation, Ukraine International Airline Flight 752 plane crash incident, and the outbreak of COVID-19 were four global issues that received more attention and discussion on the UBC Facebook page from May 1st, 2019 to May 1st, 2020. Except for the discursive practices and messaging strategies of all the posts mentioned and analyzed in this section, the rationale of the university to choose particular global issues deserves more discussions. What global issues were chosen by the university to present on the UBC Facebook page, and how does the university respond to the issues implied the university's implied audience and purposes.

4.2 AskUBC 大学 Weibo Page

AskUBC 大学 Weibo is the official Weibo page of the University of British Columbia created on July 4, 2013. Sina Weibo (Weibo) is a Chinese microblogging social networking site launched in 2009. It is recognized as one of the biggest and popular social media platforms in China, with more than 445 million active users. Notably, due to political and information security considerations, most Chinese people cannot access or use foreign social media such as

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube inside Mainland China unless they know how to "cross over the wall" (翻墙)[11]. Given the restriction for the majority of Chinese people to access foreign websites and social media platforms, registered an official Weibo page was an effective approach for UBC to reach and interact with a larger number of Chinese audiences.

AskUBC 大学 Weibo page was categorized as the "foreign higher education institution" on Weibo, which has 8,881 followers. The home page of the AskUBC 大学 Weibo uses the cover photo of the fountain with the sign of the school name in the middle of the Main Mall on the Vancouver campus (Figure 4.28). Moreover, in addition to the cover photo on the home page, five photos are rolling under the cover photo, which presents the lively campus scenery. Notably, people presented on the photos intend to illustrate the college life at UBC. For example, the first photo is a female Asian student who chatted with a white male student (Figure 4.29). The second and third photos presented a female and a male Asian student who looked satisfied with their college life and smiled to the audiences (Figure 4.30 & Figure 4.31). The fourth photo presented a white male student who looks confident and standing in front of the building (Figure 4.32). The last photo presented the Ladner Clock tower on the Vancouver campus (Figure 4.33).

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[11] "Cross over the wall" is a way that Chinese netizens talk about using VPN to connect the foreign websites.

Figure 4.28. Screenshot of the AskUBC 大学 Weibo home page (2020, April 5)

Figure 4.29. Screenshot of the photo on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2020, April 5)

Figure 4.30. Screenshot of the photo on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2020, April 5)

Figure 4.31. Screenshot of the photo on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2020, April 5)
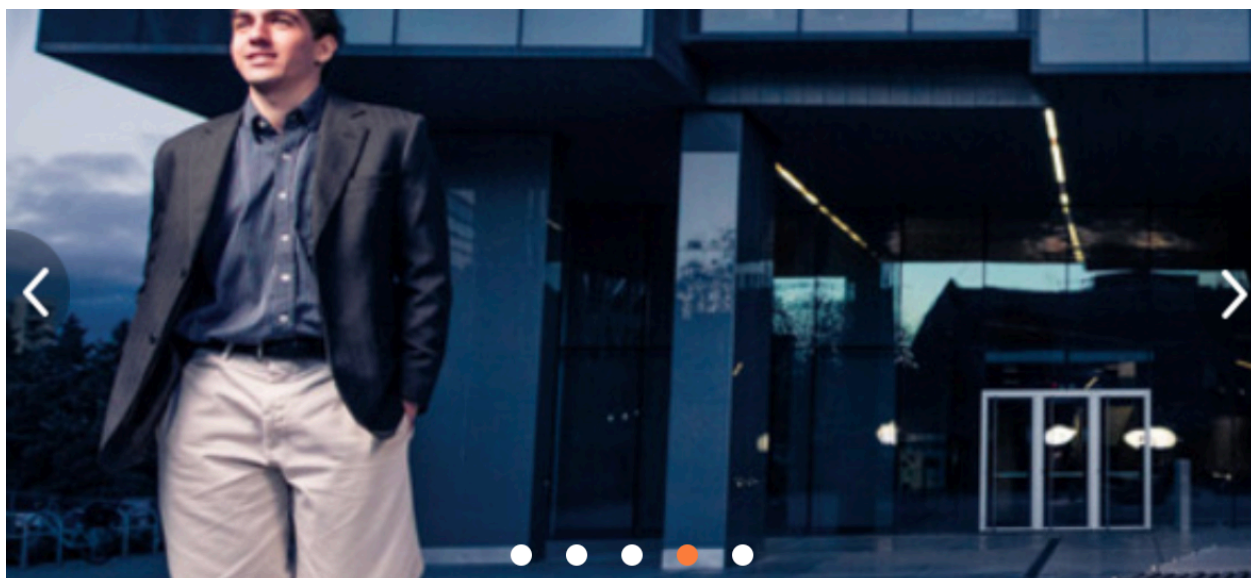
Figure 4.32. Screenshot of the photo on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2020, April 5)
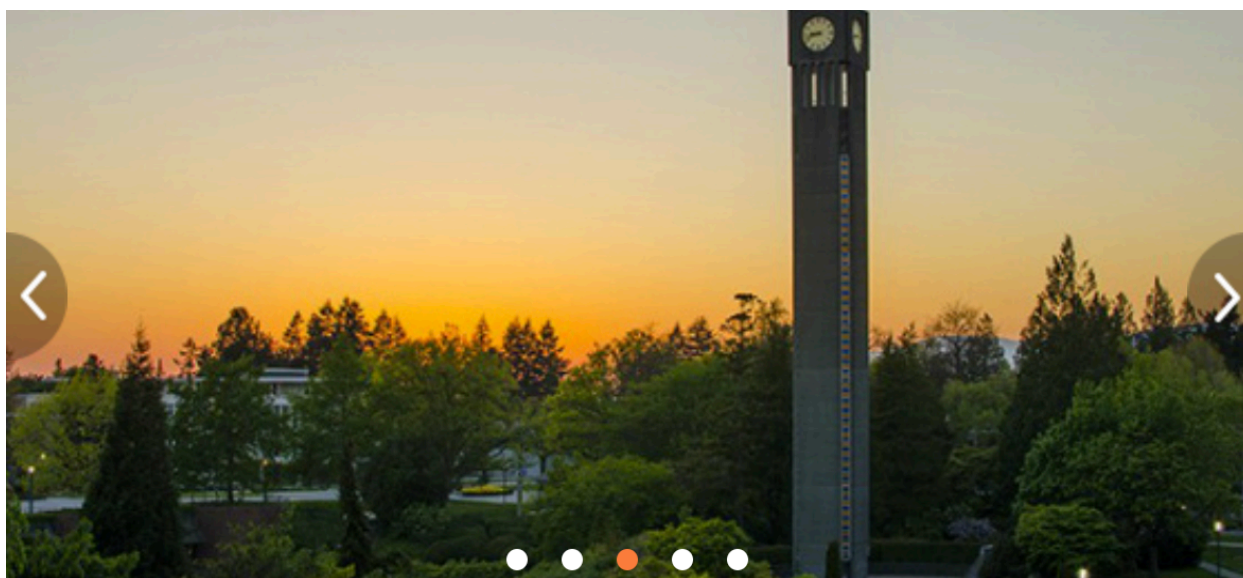
Figure 4.33. Screenshot of the photo on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2020, April 5)

The first impression of these five cover photos on the Weibo home page make audiences visualize the college life at UBC. Nevertheless, the message producer's rationale to choose what to present on the home page implied the particular purpose or preference of posting. For instance, the photos mainly presented the lifestyle of Asian students who study at UBC. They make friends and interact with white students on campus. They enjoy the beautiful campus scenery and

high-quality living and studying the environment on campus. The choice of the photos being presented on the Weibo page implies that the visual strategies work to shape certain images and the audiences' understanding of UBC. Ultimately, the school images help to frame institutional discourses as well as audiences' understanding of the university and may impact the school choice decision of prospective Chinese students.

On the About page, the introduction of the page is "news and updates for prospective undergraduates from the UBC student recruitment team" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2020, April 25). Notably, on the "more information" section, it provides four external links for the audiences to access the UBC Undergraduate Programs and Admission web page, the UBC YouKu channel home page, the UBC Vantage College official Weibo page, and the UBC Sauder Business School official Weibo page. The external links provided by the AskUBC 大学 Weibo implied two things. For one thing, the Weibo manager has perceived that audiences are more likely to interest in the information provided by these four external web pages. For another, building the "partnership" with these four external web pages helps to attract or access more prospective students who may interest in applying for UBC. In short, the contents, design, and the external resources provided by the AskUBC 大学 Weibo implied the more noticeable marketing purpose than the UBC Facebook page.

4.2.1 Analysis and discussion

Based on all the posts selected from the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page, three significant themes are being categorized for the in-depth discourse analysis. These three themes including posts relate to (1) university rankings; (2) culture and lifestyle of UBC; and (3) international student application and academic advices. In this section of analysis, I will summarize the

content and my observation of each theme and provide my interpretation to answer the research questions.

4.2.1.1 University rankings

Among all the selected posts, three posts related to the UBC's ranking performance were presented on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page. The first post announced the UBC's performance in the QS World University Rankings. The post celebrated that "UBC ranked among the top ten in four program areas. The library and information management program are ranked first" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, May 2). The post included a UBC Vancouver campus scenery with the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKB) and the Ladner Clock Tower (Figure 4.34), and a link of DailyHive Vancouver News website for the audiences to read the full news article.

Figure 4.34. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, May 2)

The second post and the third post celebrated that UBC ranked 34th in the 2019 Times Higher Education World University Rankings (THE rankings) and notably stated that the

university "ranks first in the world in taking urgent action to deal with climate change and its impact" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, May 31). Two posts included photos of the UBC Vancouver campus scenery (Figure 4.35 & Figure 4.36) and links for audiences to access the UBC News web page and read the full articles on the university website.

Figure 4.35. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, May 31)

Figure 4.36. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, October 5)

Three posts about UBC's ranking performances on Weibo used direct and concise text messages to announce UBC's position on the ranking league tables. Noteworthily, most of posts on Weibo are published in Mandarin with a celebratory tone. For instance, the post which announced UBC's ranking performance in 2019 THE rankings on Weibo page display a photo of campus scenery as a main body of the post (also see Figure 4.36) with a briefly and straightforwardly statement "UBC ranks 34th in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings!" Such discursive practice is to apply the very concise and clear statement to attract readers' attention and increase audiences' interest to learn more about the university (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, October 5).

Moreover, the narratives of Weibo posts tend to be "exaggerated" that demonstrate the message producer's ambition to promote the prestige of the university. For example, two posts regarding UBC's performance in 2019 THE rankings described UBC's result is "even more impressive in 2019" given that UBC "places in the top 2.5 percent of universities ranked

globally" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, October 5). UBC's ranking performance has made the university "continued to be recognized on the world stage" concerning "both teaching and research excellence" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, October 5). Besides, UBC also continues to "perform extremely well in THE International Outlook category," which "reflects the university's ability to attract students and faculty from around the globe, the key to its success on the world stage" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, October 5). The discursive practices of language use, such as the term "impressive," "top 2.5 percent," "world stage," "excellence," and "extremely well" communicated the message producer's ambition to highlight and promote UBC's prestige.

Last but not least, the message producers presented different narratives to highlight different information about the same ranking result in two social media platforms. On the Weibo page, the message producer tends to emphasize the more "impressive" ranking number, such as "rank first" in the library and information management program or "rank among top ten" in four program areas. In this case, the university is like a product to be marketed, and the Weibo message producer is the salesperson to promote the most positive features of this product to consumers with an exaggerated and noticeable marketing strategy.

In sum, given that most of audiences on Weibo are Chinese people, the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page has a stronger branding and marketing purposes of communicating the school identity to attract prospective Chinese international students and their parents. In this case, the message producer on Weibo page tends to highlight information that Chinese international students and parents may care about, such as the university's global ranking performances, as marketing strategies to promote the "brand value" of the university. Moreover, the language use and posting style of Weibo posts will be more like an "advertisement" by using exaggerated,

direct, and concise texts to convey the messages that are beneficial to promote the university's reputation and impressed audiences.

4.2.1.2 Culture and lifestyle of UBC

Presenting the university's culture and lifestyle account for an important part of both UBC Facebook and Weibo pages. Based on the selected posts on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page, there are three significant ways to present the university's culture and lifestyle on social media that targeted Chinese audiences. One is to present the college life of UBC students. Another one is to demonstrate the quality of the living/studying facilities/environment. The other is to promote the UBC identity of being an international university.

College life of UBC students

Given that the target audiences of the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page are incoming and prospective international students or their parents in China, presenting posts to communicate the college life of UBC students can provide some information for audiences to better understand the "lifestyle" in terms of living and studying at UBC. For example, a post used narrative of several current UBC international students to communicate their experience of being a UBC student. The post included a link to direct audiences to the UBC Admission Blog web page to read the article "Tips from UBC students for after you have been admitted." Notably, the article quoted some interviews of international students to convey particular messages which help to promote and communicate the school identities and values to prospective students. Those quotation including students' opinions regarding academic training, self-achievement opportunities, the university's commitment to support Indigenous students, and the reputation of UBC on the global stage. For instance, a quotation from a current UBC international student from Jordan stated that "the student-centered environment at the university stood out to me and made me

realize that there are endless ways to grow and discover myself on this campus" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2020, April 6). Another quotation highlighted UBC's commitment to support Indigenous students by stating that "I loved the values UBC had and the high level of support UBC has for Aboriginal students" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2020, April 6). The other quotations such as "UBC is one of the best universities in the world" and "the learning environment offered at the UBC campuses exactly met the criteria that I had for an ideal university" also communicated the reputation and prestige of UBC to audiences.

By exploring the Weibo post about college life of students at UBC, the message producer did not merely communicate UBC identities from the university's perspective. Instead, the messaging strategy used the experiences and specific interview quotations of current UBC students to communicate particular school identities and promote the idea that "UBC is the best choice for students worldwide," in which they can receive the high-quality education and enjoy the fulfilling college life here.

In addition to presenting narrative of UBC students, some other posts presented the lifestyle of UBC students from various perspectives. For instance, a post introduced the "lesser-known study spaces in UBC" and provided the link of the UBC Life blog web page. Notably, the post included the text message stated that "UBC has a wealth of great study spots that you might not know about" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2020, February 25). Such statement not only communicated an essential part of college life at UBC but implied the adequate educational resources and campus facilities that students enjoy in campus. Another post presented a photo of a female student bathe in the sunshine and sitting on the wooden bench outdoors on campus and used her laptop (Figure 4.37), and two students are chatting in front of the campus café shop on a sunny day (Figure 4.38). One another post provided a link for audiences to watch a YouKu video

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titled "what is the daily life of UBC students on the Vancouver campus?" The video was filmed by an Asian UBC undergraduate student who shared her one-day Video blog (Vlog) of her campus daily. The other post introduced a student club called "UBC Rockets," where a group of UBC students designed and launched its rocket into space. The post included a link for the audience to access the Vancouver Sun web page and read the full article about the story and UBC students' accomplishments.
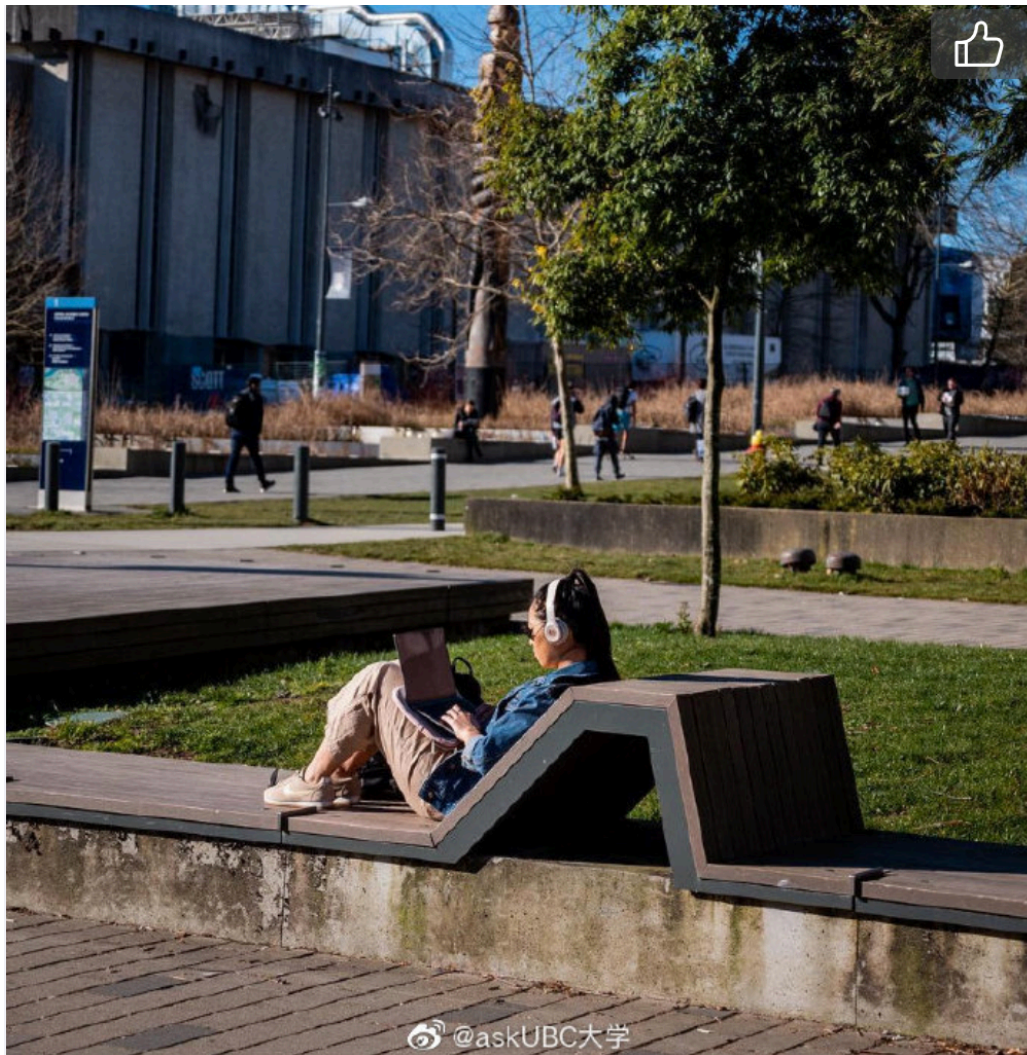
Figure 4.37. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, May 24)

Figure 4.38. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, May 24)

Based on all selected posts mentioned above, studying, living, and student activities are recognized as the three most essential elements of college life by the university message producer. It seems the UBC Weibo page tend to include posts that presented the "daily routine" or "daily life" of students who study at UBC. Such messaging strategies focus on making audiences in China "visualize" what the college life looks like at this university. Students bathe into the afternoon sunshine, walk and chat with friends outdoors, study in a quiet campus corner to prepare for the exams, or join a student club to learn new skills and make new friends. The

university used the posts on social media to communicate a certain type of college life and implied that UBC has abundant resources for you/your kid to experience fulfilling college life in this well-known Western university.

Identity of being an international university

Being an international university is an important school identity communicated on the UBC Weibo page. Similar to the posts published on the UBC Facebook page, the message producer used the UBC students' story to communicate the idea that UBC is an international university that provides students wealthy educational resources and opportunities of going abroad.

Two posts introduced the UBC Go Global program and the oversea Co-op internship on Weibo pages and received positive reaction from audiences. A post introduced the UBC Go global program on the Weibo page, which presented a photo, a brief Mandarin text message, and an external link to direct audiences to the UBC Life blog web page. The presented photo on the post is a male student standing at the peak of the mountain and overlook the clouds (Figure 4.39) with Mandarin text message stated, "Want to experience studying at other world-class universities as an exchange student? Want to follow a field trip with a professor during the summer? UBC Go Global provides students with many learning opportunities across national borders" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2020, February 15).

Figure 4.39. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2020, February 15)

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Moreover, the article on the UBC Life blog web page promoted the idea that the Go Global program provides students several options and chances to study abroad. Both the post description and the article using the encouraging discursive practices, such as "going global: your options for studying abroad" and "from the moment you start thinking about any kind of international experience with UBC, Go Global is your best resource" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2020, February 15). The post not only introduced the program but also communicated the idea that UBC is a world-class university to build a partnership with "other world-class universities" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2020, February 15) and offer wealthy educational resources and opportunities for UBC students to study abroad.

Another example shared a story of an Engineering undergraduate student who went to work in Japan through the UBC Co-op program. The post presented photos provided by the student that taken in Japan, including the image of Temple Fair, Japanese Shrine, and Mt. Fuji, with the Mandarin text message to state that "he brings back not only working experience but also new language skill and a completely different working attitude" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, May 17). Moreover, the post also provided an external link for audiences to read the story about his experiences working in Japan. The discursive practice in this post promoted the idea that how the Co-op experience benefit the students by stating that "his story showcasing student learning experiences at UBC – ways for students to participate in community service learning, research, internships, mentorships, international opportunities and co-op experiences" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, May 17). Besides, the article also highlighted how the working experience in Japan helps the student that "richer than" the experience of going abroad. He also "learned a new language and a new work ethic" and "learned to think critically – about everything" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, May 17).

Two examples introduced the resources and opportunities of international education and internship that the university offer to students. Notably, both the posts communicated the UBC's identity as a "world-class" and "international" university. For one thing, the UBC Go Global program has built the partnership with "other world-class universities" worldwide, which offers UBC students many options and opportunities to join the exchange program and study abroad. For another, the UBC international Co-op internship makes students not only experience foreign culture but also broaden their horizon and learn new languages.

Similar to posts related to the topic of university internationalization on the UBC Facebook page, posts on the Weibo page also help to promote the importance of university internationalization. The analysis of Weibo posts implied that the message producer identified that being a world-class international university with wealthy educational resources as significant UBC identities to communicate on the Weibo page to attract audiences. Nevertheless, narrative presented on Weibo tend to highlight the experience of students in the so-called "developed" countries, such as Japan, rather than the experience in "developing countries" like Ecuador. Furthermore, the text messages on the Weibo posts tend to emphasize the idea that students who join the exchange program will study in other overseas "world-class universities" and enjoy the valuable study abroad experiences.

It seemed the message producer perceived what might interest Chinese audiences and chose particular narrative to present on Weibo. In other words, messages that the audiences prefer to read or care about are more likely to be the topic of choice for the message producer to consider. In this case, it is fair to argue that some ideologies or discourses being formed on social media that favor certain countries, languages, or groups of people are not constituted by the message producer unilaterally. Instead, they are the outcomes of interaction between the

audiences and the message producers. For instance, the message producer may perceive that most of Chinese audiences, particularly prospective international students and their parents, have more interests in knowing the education quality and reputation of the university, or the university's partnerships with other globally well-known institutions (especially those visible on the ranking league table) that may benefit students. However, it is also fair to argue that such interaction between audiences and message producers has the power to shape and frame certain ideologies or social discourses to retain the privileged status of those wealthier, English-speaking Western higher-ranked institutions in which the major student composition are white people from the upper/middle socio-economic background.

Living/studying environment

Another important category of posting I perceived in the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page is the posts related to the living and studying environment in campus. There are several posts related to the topics of the on-campus dormitory, campus buildings or other facilities, and the seasonal campus scenery. Notably, the primary way of presenting is to present the photos with brief Mandarin text messages.

Take five Weibo posts which received positive reactions from audiences, for example. These five posts presented the photographs of UBC student activity center in Vancouver campus (i.e., the Nest building) (Figure 4.40), libraries (Figure 4.41), and the Museum of Anthropology (MOA) (Figure 4.42) accompanied with a brief Mandarin text message.

Figure 4.40. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, November 2)

Figure 4.41. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, August 17)
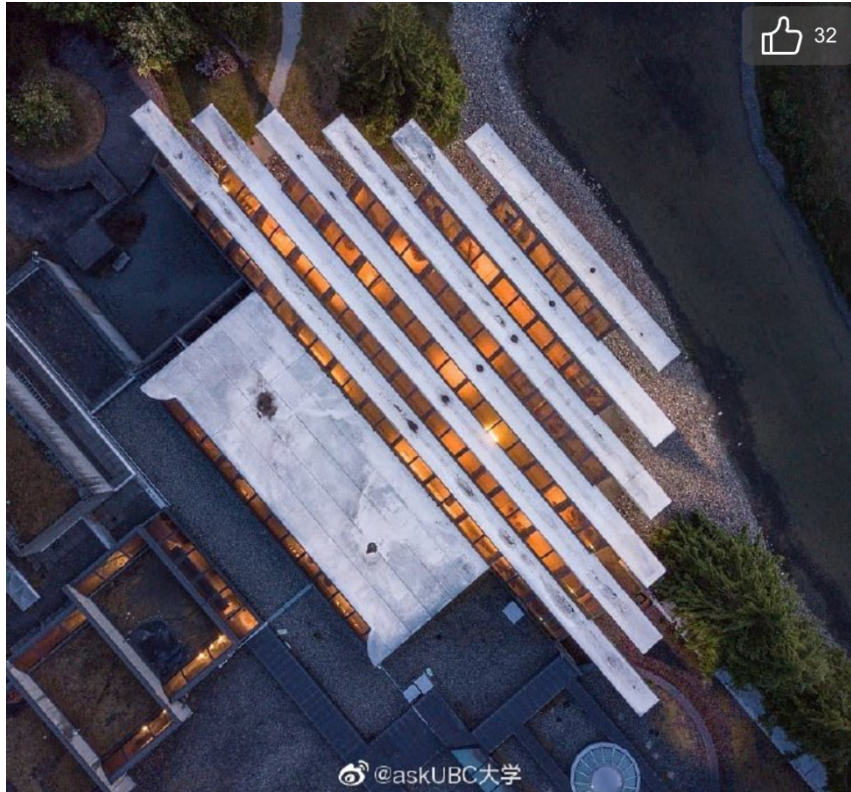
Figure 4.42. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, July 20)

Interestingly, accompanied with campus scenery photographs, the text messages tend to use questions to raise audiences' interest or catch their attention. For instance, the post showed the Nest building accompanied with the text message asked audiences "did you know that there is a sky garden on the roof of the UBC student activity center (the Nest)?" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, November 2); another post showed the environment of a UBC library asked audiences "did you know that there are 15 libraries in UBC campus?" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, August 17); the other post showed the photo of MOA building asked audiences "have you ever seen the Museum of Anthropology from this angle?" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, July 20)

In addition to using questions as a messaging strategy to catch audiences' attention, some posts presented both photographs and external links to direct audiences to the university website and gain further information about the living and studying environment in the university. For

instance, a post introduced the newly opened on-campus dormitory provided photos and the link for audiences to access the UBC News web page. The web page included a room tour Vlog filmed by a UBC female undergraduate student and the introduction of an article for the audiences to gain further information about the dormitory. Notably, the post provided six photographs of the equipment and design of dorm rooms and the surrounding environment. Noteworthily, a photo showed a female student sit on the bed next to the window in a bright and spacious dorm room (Figure 4.43).

Figure 4.43. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, October 7)

These photos help audiences to visualize the on-campus living environment. By using the images of the bright, clean, and novel equipment of the campus dorm room, these images implied and communicated the high-quality living condition of the campus dormitory. Moreover, using the image of a female student sitting on the bed playing the Ukulele also implied the university's effort to provide students a comfortable, safe, and private space in campus for

students to rest and study. Particularly, given that China had implemented one-child policy from the late 1970's until 2016 to control the population growth, many Chinese students who are now in college age are only children in the family. Under this context, an increasing number of females have opportunities to enjoy sufficient educational resources given that they are the only child in the family. Notably, according to the data from Chinese Women's Development Program (2011-2020) report, which was published by National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC) in 2018, the data demonstrated a higher proportion of females (48.02%) receiving higher education than males (43.37%) in 2017 (NBSC, 2018). This report provided an evidence to argue that more and more Chinese parents invest adequate financial and educational resources to cultivate their daughter, including supporting them to pursue oversea degree. With some understandings of the unique social context in China, the message producer chose the image of an Asian female student who stay in the dorm to communicate the idea that the university offers a safe and comfortable private space for your daughters to live in campus and enjoy her college life at UBC.

In addition to the presentation of on-campus buildings/facilities and living environment, demonstrating the seasonal campus scenery on the Weibo page is identified as another essential messaging strategy used by the university to communicate the living and studying environment. The pattern of these posts is similar to the presentation of on-campus buildings/facilities, providing the photos with a brief text message which tends to catch the audiences' attention. For instance, five posts were selected from the Weibo page that received positive reactions from the audiences. The first one presented a photo to show the winter scenery of snow covered the UBC campus (Figure 4.44) with the Mandarin text message "start to look forward to heavy snow in the coming year and wrap the campus silver" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, December 22).

Figure 4.44. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, December 22)

The second post presented a photo shot at night on campus with a light moon and a few students walking on the Main Mall at the UBC Vancouver campus (Figure 4.45) with the Mandarin text message "the weather is getting cold. A little miss the warm summer night campus" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, November 30).

Figure 4.45. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, November 30)

The third post presented a beautiful sunset campus scenery (Figure 4.46) with the Mandarin text message "look at our oil painting-like campus" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, September 28).

Figure 4.46. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, September 28)

The fourth post presented a photo of UBC Ladner Clock Tower and the blooming Magnolia tree next to the tower (Figure 4.47) with the Mandarin text message "Pink Magnolia next to UBC Ladner Clock Tower! I wish you a nice weekend" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, May 18).
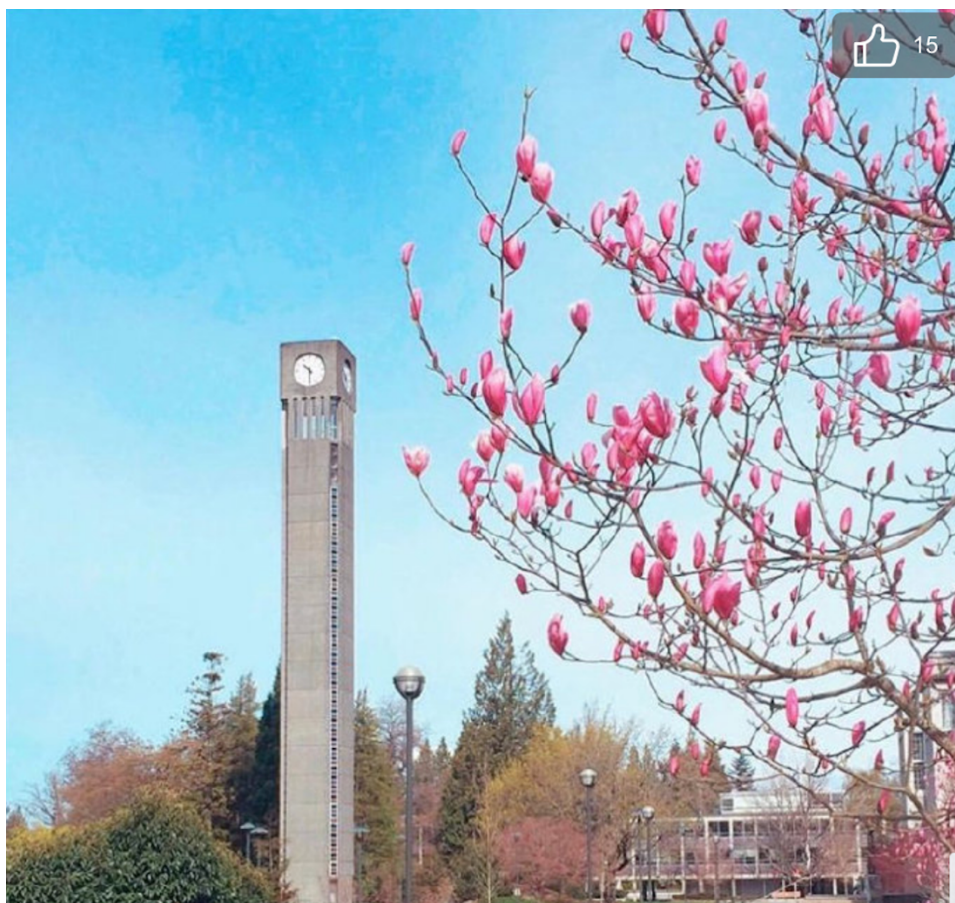
Figure 4.47. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, May 18)

Finally, the last post presented four photos of UBC campus scenery and a link to direct audiences to the UBC Life blog web page to read the article "Unexpected best views on campus." The four photos are two buildings (Figure 4.48 & Figure 4.49), the forest trail (Figure 4.50), and the wreck beach (Figure 4.51), with the Mandarin text message, stated that "you may have seen many photos of sunsets, cherry trees, etc. on the UBC campus. But there are still many other beautiful places! We have listed the five best campus landscapes you never expected" (AskUBC 大学 Weibo, 2019, July 15).

Figure 4.48. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, July 15)

Figure 4.49. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, July 15)

Figure 4.50. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, July 15)

Figure 4.51. Screenshot of the post on AskUBC 大学 Weibo (2019, July 15)

The similarity of the five posts mentioned above is to make the audiences visualize the campus environment for them/their kids to live and study oversea. Noteworthily, using visual strategy presenting photographs to communicate the university's culture and student life is especially noticeable in both the UBC Facebook page and the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page. Nevertheless, the Weibo page showed a higher reliance on visual messages in posting rather than text messages. For instance, posts related to the campus culture and student life in Weibo tend to present photos of campus buildings, facilities, living and studying environment, or seasonal campus scenery with a brief Mandarin text message to introduce the photos. Moreover, presentations on the Weibo page tend to emphasize the quality of living and studying at the university campus while less communicated the educational philosophy, values or identities of the university.

All in all, an important finding in this section is that the Weibo page presented more about the "package" of the "product" (i.e., the university) rather than communicated the "brand value." It does not mean that the message producer of the Weibo page only talks about how beautiful the campus is or how good the school buildings and equipment are. Instead, the "package" of the university, by which I mean can refer to the obvious and straightforward features or achievements of the university. For instance, the higher position on the global university rankings league tables, abundant educational resources and student activities, and high-quality living and studying the environment on campus. Posts on the Weibo page seldom talk about UBC identities such as diversity, school pride, or history and tradition.

Furthermore, the Weibo page's visual strategies tend to present the photos which demonstrated the quality of life and studying experiences at the UBC campus, such as buildings, facilities, dormitory, libraries, and seasonal campus scenery. Notably, it leaves few spaces for

presenting the values and identities of the university to communicate the university's global impacts, contributions, or social responsibilities. For instance, presentations about the university leaders' educational philosophy, the promotion of mental health issues or the importance of humanities education were absent from the Weibo site. In short, the AskUBC 大学 Weibo focuses more on the images of the university than the text messages to communicate the marketing purposes toward audiences.

4.2.1.3 International student application and academic advices

It seems that the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page is more than a social networking site. It is also a significant platform for the university to update important information about international student applications and provide academic advice for incoming or prospective Chinese international students. For example, several Weibo posts made an important announcement about the open and the deadline for application progress, such as the deadline for providing the required document, language proficiency test score, and the adjustment measures for application and admission due to the impacts of COVID-19 outbreak. This implied that the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page is recognized as an essential platform for message producers to highlight information about application and admission and marketing to Chinese international students..

There were seven posts provided informative contents regarding international student application. Four posts on the Weibo page noted the important timeline of application progress. One post was released on May 1st, 2019, which reminded students to check their student service account and accept the offer on time. Another post released on October 8th, 2019, which announced that the UBC 2020-2021 school year application was officially open. This post included a link to direct audiences to the UBC admission blog web page to read the full article "UBC's online application is open" and watch a promotion video attached in the web page. The

other two posts were the reminding posts to announce that the UBC application will be closed in less than two weeks and provided guidance for prospective students to learn how to submit required documents in the application progress.

In addition to the posts about the timeline of international application, there were several posts presented the important updates to talk about the impacts of COVID-19 outbreak towards international student applications and the responses from the university admission office. One post included a video message from the staff of UBC Undergraduate Admissions and Student Recruitment and Advising office who provided updates about how do the UBC admission team continue to work during the outbreak of COVID-19. The video discussed what prospective students should know about the current practice that the admission office takes place and how audiences receive more information on the university website. Notably, the video particularly published in Youku, which is a video sharing site in China, for Chinese students and audiences to access and gain information easier. Another post provided a link to the UBC admission blog web page for the audiences to read the article "Your UBC application and COVID-19." The article sorted out common questions from the prospective students and provided the university's responses about how COVID-19 may affect international students' application review. The other post was a notice announced that considered the cancellation of IELTS in late January and February, as well as the postponement of school opening in some areas in China, UBC has extended the deadline for submitting language performance certification materials and documents to the end of March 2020.

Based on posts selected on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page which related to international student application, there are two notable findings and observations. First, the content of the external link page attached to the post implied the marketing purposes of the university. For

instance, a post reminded the open date of UBC 2020/2021 online application provided an external link for the audiences to access the UBC Admission Blog web page. Notably, the page includes not only an article to introduce the application process and common questions but also attached a short video at the end of the page. The first sight of the video is a text question asking the audience, "where will you go?" followed with many footages of UBC Vancouver (Figure 4.52) and Okanagan (Figure 4.53) campuses, as well as the scenery of Metro Vancouver (Figure 4.54).
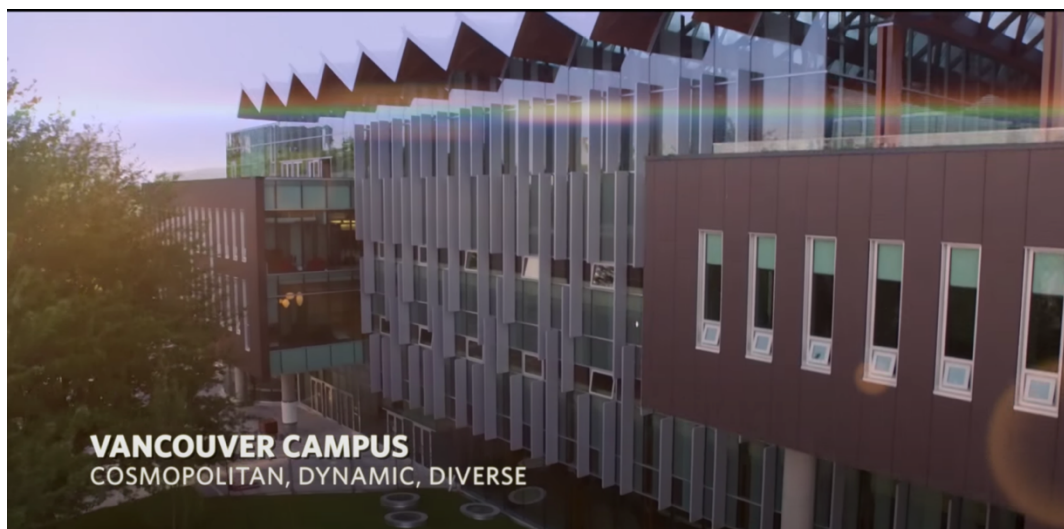
Figure 4.52. Screenshot of the video on UBC Admission Blog (2019, October 8)
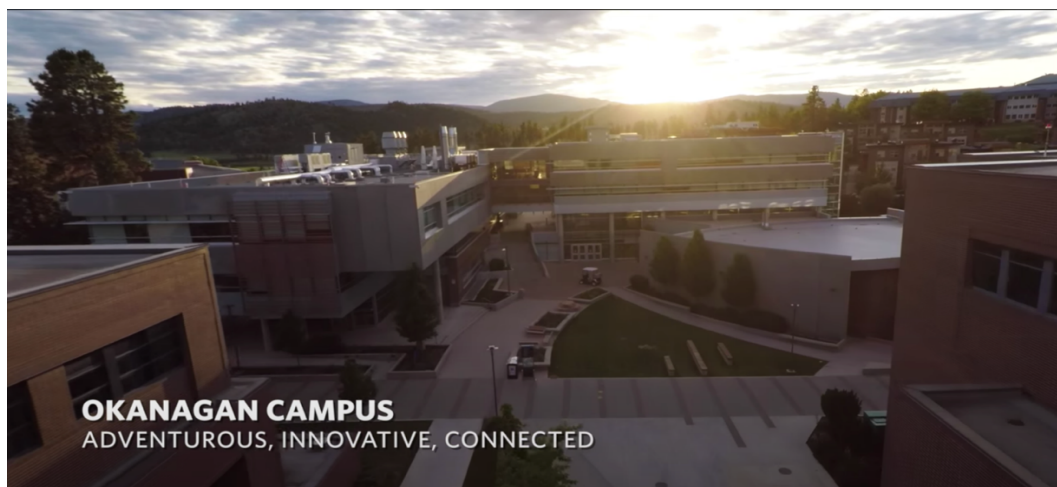
Figure 4.53. Screenshot of the video on UBC Admission Blog (2019, October 8)

Figure 4.54. Screenshot of the video on UBC Admission Blog (2019, October 8)

There is no narration in this short film but the short text descriptions on each screen. When I watched the video, some descriptions caught my eyes. For example, when it screened the footage of UBC campus, the text description showed up and stated that "The University of British Columbia, among the top 40 research university in the world" (Figure 4.55), "Canada's most international university…students from over 159 countries" (Figure 4.56), and "Cosmopolitan, dynamic, diverse, contemporary, forward-looking…...leader in sustainability" (UBC Admission Blog, 2019, October 8). When it screened the scenery of Metro Vancouver, the text description stated that "Vancouver, one of the most livable cities in the world" (also see Figure 4.53, UBC Admission Blog, 2019, October 8).

Figure 4.55. Screenshot of the video on UBC Admission Blog (2019, October 8)

Figure 4.56. Screenshot of the video on UBC Admission Blog (2019, October 8)

The combination of those text descriptions and images made me identify this video as a university promotional film that aimed to communicate the university's prestige, characteristics, and identities. Notably, the video highlighted the quality of living environment (e.g*.,* "Vancouver, one of the most livable cities in the world") and the reputation of the university (e.g., "The University of British Columbia, among the top 40 research university in the world"), which are two essential criteria for prospective students and their parents to consider when it comes to

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studying in a new city away from home. The video attached to the UBC Admission Blog web page communicated "why UBC is your good choice to apply for" to audiences, which implied the branding and marketing ambition and purposes of the university on Weibo.

Another notable finding and observation I took from the UBC Weibo page is the discursive practice of the posts, which also implied the marketing purposes of the university message producer and provided the evidence of the university mediatization. For one thing, all the posts related to international student application included an external link to direct audiences to the specific university web page, such as the UBC Admission Blog web page or the student service center web page. The posts included particular links for the audiences to access the information they care about or interest in. Such posting pattern made the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page a significant media platform to promote particular messages by providing audiences a quick external link when they read the posts. In this case, audiences can access certain information with one click on the link and avoid "getting lost" on the university website. For another, the discursive practice of the text descriptions in the posts "encourage" students to apply for the UBC programs by using positive, hopeful and inspiring words or providing useful information about the programs for students to consider. For example, a post announced that the start date of UBC online application used the text messages stated that "if your sights are set on a future at UBC, now's the time to start thinking about applying" (AskUBC 大学, 2019, October 8th).

Another example was a post provided academic advice on the Weibo page. The text (in Mandarin) of the post gave a short introduction about the undergraduate programs and stated that "if you are interested in many subjects at the same time, you can consider more than a dozen freshman interdisciplinary programs provided by UBC, as well as undergraduate dual degree

programs" (AskUBC 大学, 2020, January 29). It seemed an informative post for students and parents to gain more information about the undergraduate programs at UBC. Nevertheless, the post also communicated the quality of educational resources, which implied that UBC could offer students wealthy opportunities to make self-achievement and learn what they expect from college.

In short, posts related to international student application and admission affairs accounted for one of the important and noticeable posting topics in the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page. These posts included the reminders of an important timeline and the guidance or advice to help students complete the application process on time. Notably, the discursive practice and language use in the posts seemed inspiring and encouraging to "convince" prospective Chinese international students to apply for programs and study at UBC. Moreover, analyzing the messaging strategies and the pattern of posting of the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page provides some evidence of the mediatization of higher education. On the one hand, all the posts related to international student application and admission affairs include external links to direct the audiences to the particular university web page. The messaging strategy takes advantage of the social media's feature to effectively interact with users by directing the audiences to access the specific message that the message producer intent to emphasize or promote. This also implied the university's market-driven rationale of presentation on Weibo page. On the other hand, the messaging strategy of the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page implied that social media could be seen as an essential approach for the organization to interact with audiences and communicate or promote particular messages. Compared to the university website, social media allows the university to update certain information or disseminate particular messages promptly and received more reactions from the audiences. The higher proportion of posts related to international student application and

admission affairs on the UBC Weibo page not only implied the marketing purpose of the message producer. It also implied the evidence of the mediatization given the university's increasing reliance on media to highlight, promote, and communicate specific information or message to audiences in China.

4.3 Key Findings and Discussion

This final section will draw on the UBC Facebook and AskUBC 大学 Weibo home pages, About pages, and the posts selected from both social networking sites to identify the key findings and answer the three research questions. As one concern raised by this research is in regard to the power of media that works to shape and frame particular discourses, this section will draw on the conception of coloniality to further explore and discuss the implications we gained from the research findings. Specifically, this study pays attention to explore whether or how the mediatization of higher education facilitated the risk of Western cultural hegemony and epistemic violence by promoting the neoliberal ideology and practices under the framework of Western capitalism.

4.3.1 Comparing UBC Facebook Page and AskUBC 大学 Weibo Page

This section aims to answer the first research question of this study to explore who and what is present or absent on the UBC Facebook fan page, as compare and contrast to the UBC Weibo pages. To summarize the key findings in regard to the differences or similarities between UBC Facebook and Weibo pages, this section will answer the questions from two perspectives. One perspective of discussion is the differences/similarities of themes presented on two sites. The other perspective of discussion is the messaging strategies and discursive practices applied on Facebook and Weibo.

Drawing on the post categories according to different themes on both social networking sites, I make a summary of what is presented on both Facebook and Weibo pages, what is presented on Weibo but absent on Facebook, and what is presented on Facebook but absent on Weibo.

Themes presented on both Facebook and Weibo pages

Themes presented on both Facebook and Weibo pages are categories of "university rankings," "culture and college life," and "the importance of university internationalization." First, on both the UBC Facebook page and the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page, the announcements to present or celebrate the rankings performance of UBC are noticeable. The university presented the accomplishment that UBC achieved in the Big Three rankings (i.e., THE, QS, and Shanghai ranking) particularly to communicate the university's position among higher education institutions worldwide.

Nevertheless, discursive practices and messaging strategies were different between Facebook and Weibo by emphasizing different information in terms of the same ranking results. The posts on Facebook provided more information about the meaning and agenda of the rankings, including the links of the ranking websites, the introduction of the evaluation methodologies, rankings indexes, and the university's impact ranking performance (e.g., university's impact on climate changes, gender equality, and sustainable cities and communities, rather than research and teaching performances) (UBC Facebook, 2019, September 15). In contrast, the Weibo posts are more inclined to use a celebratory tone to present ranking performance compared to UBC Facebook page. For example, when presented the performance for the same university ranking (2020 QS ranking), The Facebook post announced that "UBC is ranked the 51st best university in the world in QS rankings. This places UBC among the top five percent of institutions in the

highly-influential QS rankings, which considers over 1,000 institutions worldwide, including 26 from Canada" (UBC Facebook, 2019, June 19). On the contrary, the Weibo post announced that "UBC ranked in the top 50 in 41 of 48 subjects tracked by the QS ranking" and "ranked among the top ten in four program areas. The library and information management program are ranked first!" (AskUBC 大学, 2019, May 2). The different discursive practices and messaging strategies on Facebook and Weibo implied the different target audiences and purposes of posting on two social media platforms.

Moreover, in addition to posting the topic related to rankings, presenting the UBC's culture and student life has also accounted for a significant theme of posting on Facebook and Weibo. The message producers on both sites tend to use visual strategies, such as photos or videos, to communicate the life of studying and living in the university. Notwithstanding some differences regarding the contents being posted on the two social media platforms, three notable topics can be identified on both Facebook and Weibo: posts related to the seasonal campus scenery, campus buildings or facilities, and the lifestyle of UBC students. For example, both Facebook and Weibo pages presented photographs of various seasonal campus scenery, such as the cherry blossoms in spring, the red maple leaves in autumn, and the snowy campus in winter. Besides, there are several posts can be seen on both Facebook and Weibo that introduced the living environment like dormitory, libraries, the student activity center, and the Museum of Anthropology. Notably, in addition to photographs showed by the university, message producers also shared UBC students' video blogs on the media platform to communicate the lifestyle of UBC students from the students' perspectives. These are the commonplace contents and topics presented on both university social media sites to communicate the UBC campus culture and student life to prospective applicants or international students.

Finally, communicating the importance of university internationalization is another important theme presented on both Facebook and Weibo pages. Internationalization is recognized as an essential school identity for message producers to promote and highlight on social media. There are three main dimensions that the university communicates the importance of university internationalization to audiences. First, some posts communicated the wealthy resources and opportunities for UBC students to join the exchange programs to study abroad. Second, some other posts communicated the high proportion of international students on campus, which made UBC one of the most international universities worldwide and provided students a diverse and friendly environment to meet people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Moreover, the message producers also presented or introduced some campus activities, such as the series of celebration activities during the Chinese New Year, for UBC students to experience different cultural festivals. Last but not least, some posts on Facebook and Weibo pages communicated the global impacts of the university and the university's identity as a global institution for research and teaching. For instance, given the recent global outbreak of COVID-19, there are several posts related to the research outcomes or contributions made by UBC research teams and student clubs to communicate the university's efforts and commitment to "lead a better world" (UBC Facebook About page, 2020, April 5).

Themes presented on Weibo but absent on Facebook

A notable finding of this research in regard to exploring themes presented on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page but absent on the UBC Facebook page is the proportion of posts related to international student applications. Comparing to the UBC Facebook page, there was a higher proportion of posts on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page related to prospective student admission. Posts on UBC Facebook seldom talked about the detailed process of the international

student application and admission, such as the reminders, announcements, or important updates about international student application and admission affairs. In contrast, there was adequate information regarding international student application on UBC Weibo page, such as the important timeline of application, videos of UBC admission office which made the important updates or announcements, and external links directed audiences to access the UBC admission web page to gain more information about international student application and admission affairs.

Exploring what is presented on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page but absent on the UBC Facebook page has implied the noticeable marketing purpose on Weibo. Notably, some posts made the announcement or update about international student applications also included the external link to direct the audience to the UBC admission blog web page that attached the promotion video under the article. The promotion video has obvious marketing purpose by identifying Vancouver as "one of the most livable cities in the world" and UBC as the institution "among the top 40 research universities in the world." Moreover, posts on the Weibo tend to present more "feedbacks" of international students studying at UBC to communicate the experience of studying at UBC from students' perspective. For instance, a post provided a link to direct audiences to read the article on the UBC admission blog web page. The article included quotations of international students to share their experience to study at UBC. The article was particularly quoted feedbacks about the university, such as "UBC is one of the best university in the world," "I love the values UBC had," and "the student-centered environment at the university stood out to me," have shaped the positive school images and provided the inspiring vision of studying at UBC.

Themes presented on Facebook but absent on Weibo

Compared to the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page, themes and topics on the UBC Facebook are more diverse. Exploring what is presented on the UBC Facebook page but absent on the Weibo page, I identify two notable absent themes on Weibo. One notable absence on Weibo is the posts related to the university's response toward important global issues, particularly the international political issues such as Hong Kong issues and the Canada-China relation. Even though there were few posts on the UBC Facebook to present the university's responses toward the Hong Kong issues or the tension between North America and China regimes, discussions or concerns related to those recent global issues were utterly absent on Weibo page. This finding implied the marketing rationale of posting that recognized the Weibo page as a functional media platform for the university to access, attract, and target the prospective Chinese international students. Furthermore, given that Chinese international students have accounted for the highest proportion of international students at UBC, the messaging strategies in Weibo, including the discursive practices and the choice of presentation, also implied the university's intention of recruiting Chinese international students as a university imperative.

The other notable absence on Weibo is the posts communicated the school values/identities, social responsibilities, and the charitable concerns of the university. Posts on the UBC Facebook page presented narrative in regard to the school values and identities. For example, several posts promoted the value of diversity as an essential UBC identity by calling it the "UBC Pride," which included the diversity of students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds as well as the diversity of students with different gender identities. Moreover, posts on the UBC Facebook page communicated more about the identity regarding the university's social responsibilities and charitable concerns. For example, some Facebook posts promoted the university's care about mental health issues and the efforts that the university made to serve the

local communities, including the commitment of preserving and inheriting the Indigenous culture and language. Besides, some other posts on Facebook communicated the charitable concerns of the university, such as supports or resources provided for equity seeking groups, students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the research contributions that the UBC scholars made to help people and communities in the underdeveloped countries. Those themes and discussions are absent on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page, which also provide evidence implying that the rationales of messaging strategies on the Weibo page are different from the Facebook page.

4.3.2 Evidence of the mediatization on the university social media platform

This section aims to answer the second research question of this study to explore the evidence of mediatization based on the analysis in how the UBC represents the internationalization of higher education to communicate its purposes on the Facebook and Weibo pages. An important finding of this study to demonstrate evidence of the mediatization on the university social media platforms is the pattern of posting on UBC Facebook and Weibo pages. In this section, I will explain how the university takes advantage of the feature of social networking sites to promote and highlight particular messages and information.

Given the increasing competition among the globalized higher education market and the entrenched neoliberal ideology in terms of school management and operation, universities started to feature themselves as prestigious and wealthy individual enterprises, like commercial firms, to enhance their global competitive position. In this case, employing media to fulfill the branding and marketing purposes had become a university imperative regarding university management.

Analyzing the messaging strategies and posts on UBC Facebook and Weibo pages help this study to explore what particular audiences of prospective international student universities are directing their performances to, and to what audiences of international students are

universities orienting their performance. A notable finding that provides evidence of the university mediatization that being identified on UBC Facebook and Weibo pages is the pattern of posting. Posts on both sites tend to provide external links to direct audiences to the particular university web pages, such as the UBC admission blog, the UBC life blog, and the UBC news. Given that social media is a more dynamic and interactive platform than the university website, the feature of social media helps both the message producers and audiences to target specific information quickly. By analyzing the home page, the About page, and the selected posts on UBC Facebook and Weibo pages, the pattern of posting demonstrated how social media have become an effective media platform for the university to fulfill the marketing and branding purposes. For example, a post on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page announced the start date of international student application with an external link included to direct audiences to the UBC admission blog web page and watch the promotion video on the web page. Without the quick link included in the Weibo posts, audiences may not be able to access the article on the UBC admission blog and the promotion video easily. In this case, it might be more difficult for the university to improve the visibility of information that they intent to promote or emphasize.

In short, the pattern of posting provides this study important evidence of the mediatization of higher education. University websites play a significant role in presenting the public face of the institution to communicate the school identities and imagery to audiences. University websites are a key online resource and media platform to present and provide the most important and essential information about the institutions. Nevertheless, a significant finding of this study is to identify the power and effectiveness of social media in terms of message dissemination. Notably, with the changing habit of media usage, social media has become not only a platform for making friends or interacting with other users but an essential

platform for getting information or news promptly. The increasing reliance on managing university social media provides a hint that: the efficiency and power of message dissemination on university websites is no longer seen as sufficient by universities for university branding and marketing purposes. It does not mean that the university social media is replacing the role of the university website. Instead, the feature and advantages of social media, such as low-cost, the efficiency of message delivery, and a higher level of interactivity, have provided significant evidence to support the argument that the mediatization of higher education should be considered as a significant vehicle of university marketization.

4.3.3 Visual strategies of UBC Facebook page and AskUBC 大学 Weibo page

This section aims to answer the last research question of this study to explore what visual strategies and cues are used by the university to reinforce UBC's school brand on Facebook and Weibo pages. By analyzing the pattern of posting and the contents of selected posts on both university social media sites, this study identifies two significant visual strategies used by the university to reinforce UBC's school brand on the social media platform.

Presentation of UBC logo on the posts

One notable visual strategy and cue being used by the university is the presentation of the school name (i.e., the name of the University of British Columbia or the UBC logo) on particular photos that presented on Facebook and Weibo posts.

Given that the timing of the school name showed in photos and presented on social media sites deserves further analysis and discussion, this study identifies four themes and topics that the UBC logo is more likely to show up: posts introduced excellent UBC students or alumni (also see Figure 4.24), unique seasonal campus scenery, posts related to UBC Thunderbird and athlete (also see Figure 4.15), and posts related to university ranking performances.

Although the limited data made this study hard to identify the regular pattern of the timing to present school names on the photos, the four themes and topics mentioned above can still provide some hint to analyze the visual strategy being used by the university on social media platforms. This study finds that the school name is more likely to be presented in the posts which communicated particular school identities. To be more specific, the UBC logo appeared when the university intended to promote or emphasize certain school images, such as the excellent former UBC fellow, the fantastic campus scenery, the lively campus events, and the performance on global university rankings. The message producers used the visual strategy to make the connection between the school name and the particular events. In this case, the name of the university can be seen as the "brand name" (i.e., the UBC logo) to connect with the "brand value" (excellent students, beautiful campus scenery, lively student activities, and the outstanding ranking performance) to communicate the UBC identity.

Visualizing college life at UBC

Another important visual strategy and cue used by the university are to present photos or videos to visualize college life at UBC. This strategy is particularly noticeable on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page in which to particularly communicate experiences of international students.

The pattern of posting on the UBC Weibo page tends to present one or more photos, with a brief Mandarin text message, to catch the attention of audiences. Notably, compared to the UBC Facebook page, posts presented on Weibo have a more definite intention of visualizing the college life of studying and living at UBC. This study identifies that present photos related to student activities and campus environment are two notable topics to visualize student life at UBC on Weibo.

Particularly, photos presented the interaction between Asian students and students of other races were highlighted by the message producers. For example, a cover photo on the AskUBC 大学 Weibo home page showed a photo in which a female Asian student chatted with a white male student in the café shop (also see Figure 4.28). Another example is a Facebook post presented photo of activities on the orientation program. The photo showed a group of students with diverse ethnicities laughing and screaming at the party (also see Figure 4.13 & Figure 4.15). A distinct commonality of photos presented on the Weibo posts is the inclusion of Asian students in images of the campus. I perceived that the intention of message producers was to target Asian audiences on the Weibo page by presenting the lifestyle of Asian students who study at UBC. Such visual strategy makes the audiences on Weibo, particularly the incoming or prospective Chinese international students, to "visualize" the college life at UBC.

In addition to present photos relate to student life, several posts presented the campus environment on the Weibo page. For example, posts presented the seasonal campus scenery, and on-campus buildings and facilities (e.g., dormitory, libraries, the Nest, and MOA) accounted for a higher proportion among the posts published on UBC Weibo page compared to the UBC Facebook page. Such observation implied that demonstrating the quality of life and studying experience at the UBC campus are recognized as important visual strategies employed on Weibo. In short, compared to the Facebook page, the AskUBC 大学 Weibo focuses more on the "visual attraction" of the university to appeal to the audiences in China.

Exploring visual strategies of the UBC Facebook and the AskUBC 大学 Weibo pages help to identify some cues regarding the rationale of presentation on the university social media platforms. The choice of narrative on Facebook and Weibo communicated not only the implied purposes of posting but also the message producers' perception of audience preference. In other

words, messages that the audience interest in or care about are more likely to be the topics of choice for the message producer to consider. Based on such observation, I propose to argue that some ideologies or discourses that favor certain countries, languages, or groups of people on the media platform are not constituted by the message producer unilaterally. Instead, it is the interaction between the audiences and the message producers that help shape and frame certain ideologies or social discourses to retain the privileged status of particular countries, universities, or groups of people and form the hegemony.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

In this thesis, I explored messaging strategies and cues used on UBC's Facebook and AskUBC 大学 Weibo page to reinforce the UBC brand to prospective students. Particularly, I analyzed representations of internationalization through Multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) (Pauwels, 2012; Stack, 2016).

Given the mediatization of higher education as a phenomenon, this study examines the university's ways of presentation which communicate the school identities to prospective international students in social media contexts. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis provided a framework for identifying institutional discourses contained within the posts I examined. I analyzed what is being marketed, and what is the balance between the framing of higher education as a public good with certain social responsibilities versus as a private good with the focus on marketing and branding.

To answer my research questions, I explored who benefits from how the university is presented, and through this process critiqued Anglo-American models of neoliberal internationalization (Marginson, 2006; Stein & de Andreotti, 2016; Guo & Guo, 2017), which reinforces through global university rankings, international partnerships with higher education institutions in the Global North, as well as the identity of considering universities as entrepreneurial entities (Stein, 2017).

5.1 Mediatization of Higher Education and Social Media

The mediatization of higher education refers to the process of the universities' increasing reliance on media to promote their reputation. Previous studies (Gray et al., 2003; Shirazi, 2012;

Stack, 2016; Maschmann 2018) shed light on the importance of university websites as a tool for recruiting prospective students by providing evidence to argue that website images have the power to influence audiences' perceptions and behaviors (Rhoades et al., 2019). However, some recent studies pay more attention to the significance of social media as a means for acquiring and disseminating information (Shirazi, 2012; Rambe, 2012; KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014). Inspired by the previous studies and related literature, this study aims at exploring and examining social media's power entanglement with mediatization in one higher education context.

Analyzing the posting pattern of two UBC social media platforms helped me explore evidence of mediatization in higher education. Given that social media is a more dynamic and interactive platform in which contents of messages are diverse and updated more frequently compared to the university website, the feature of social media helps both the message producers and audiences to target specific information quickly. The power and effectiveness of social media in message dissemination and the university's messaging strategies, such as the presentation of campus scenery, college life, prestige of the university, and useful admission information, implied that the efficiency and power of message dissemination on university websites may no longer be sufficient to meet the needs of university branding and marketing purposes. Grounded on the feature and advantages of social media, including the low-cost, efficiency of message delivery, and a higher level of interactivity, the discursive practices and messaging strategies that this study explored on UBC Facebook and AskUBC 大学 Weibo page have provided some evidence to support the argument that the mediatization of higher education can be recognized as an essential vehicle of university marketization.

The use of social media by universities can reinforce and perpetuate epistemic violence through the colonial global imaginary of higher education. It is critical for researchers to explore

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and identify who is in power on the social media context to communicate certain ideologies or make self-expression and who is limited from this power hierarchy (Shirazi, 2012, p.32).

The implication I learn from the entanglement between the mediatization of higher education and social media is to acknowledge that social media is not a "value-free" platform but rather an instrument for articulating power" (Rambe, 2012, p.296). Take the analysis of UBC Facebook and Weibo page, for instance. This study identifies the messaging strategies and discursive practice on Facebook and Weibo pages help to produce and reproduce discourses and ideologies to frame the criteria of "world-class," "prestigious," and "excellent" institutions, promoting university rankings as an important indication to evaluate the quality of universities, and shaping the imaginary of college lifestyle. Moreover, the charitable concerns communicated by the university are grounded on Western/White supremacy, which implied that Western countries/institutions are superior to others. For example, the university presented narratives to introduce how does the UBC-lead research team create online educational resources with over 40 languages to help improving literacy rate among other countries; how the exchange experience gave UBC undergraduate student a chance to think the way to "help" the developing country like Ecuador to improve the critical social issues; and the story about how the UBC donor and Canadian government helped a Syrian international student pursuing higher education at UBC. Such presentations identify Canada as a desirable country for living and UBC as a model institution for leading a better world or helping developing countries/equity-seeking students. These are the "values" or "beliefs" I noticed in social media like Facebook and Weibo that help produce, articulate, and disseminate.

5.2 Discourses Production, Reproduction and Dissemination

Exploring the university's visual strategies and cues to reinforce UBC's school brand on social media points to how message producers applied visual strategies to accomplish branding and marketing purposes. On the one hand, the university presents photos or videos that relate to the university's campus life, that "visualizes" the UBC lifestyles for prospective students and their parents. On the other hand, the message producer used the visual strategy to make the connection between the school name (i.e., the University of British Columbia or UBC) and the particular events which represent the prestige or reputation of the university. In this case, the name of the university can be seen as the "brand name" (i.e., the UBC logo) to connect with the "brand value" (e.g., excellent students, beautiful campus sceneries, lively student activities, and the outstanding ranking performance) to communicate the "UBC identity."

A key finding from exploring two visual strategies is the choice of whom to serve or who not to serve through the posts on the social media platforms. The rationale of visual strategies communicated not only the implied purposes of posting but also the message producers' perception of audiences' preference. In other words, messages that the target audience is interested in or care about are more likely to be the topic of choice for the message producer to consider. Analyzing Facebook and Weibo pages allowed me to compare and contrast how UBC took different approaches to what they imagined a Facebook versus Weibo audiences. What is clear is the reproduction of a colonial global imaginary is not constituted by the message producer unilaterally. Instead, it is the interaction between the audiences and the message producers that help shape and frame certain ideologies or social discourses to retain the privileged status of particular countries or groups of people and form the hegemony. In this case, it can be problematic to overlook the power manifest behind such interaction. For instance, when

UBC presented photos or videos to visualize college life on the university campus, the choice of narratives might stem from the message producer's perception to consider who and what can be more attractive to the target audiences. The social media posts' performances work to promote a certain type of college lifestyle that favor particular institutions, and pitched to particular groups of students that privilege specific socio-economic class and nationality (such as students from Global North) related lifestyle to the exclusion of others. In other words, the global imaginary of Western higher education framed and conceptualized the image of higher education, which promoted the Anglo-American model of higher education and made such a model as a shared meaning globally. Such the dominant global imaginary help to privilege the Western model of higher education worldwide.

5.3 University Internationalization and Marketization

This study argues that the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page has a stronger ambition and intention to communicate the marketing and branding purposes to Chinese audiences. On the Weibo site, I found that the focus was considerable concentrated on the social matter of university lifestyles to present the higher education experience as a consumption item. Besides, two notable absences on Weibo posts implied the university's focus on higher education's private good. For one thing, the absence of posts related to the discussions or the university's responses toward critical global issues, such as issues of Hong Kong and Canada-China relation, has implied the role that the Weibo page plays as a media platform for the university to target and attract prospective international students from China. This also implied how the university project itself to prospective international students by enacting its performance and presentation towards particular audiences. In other words, the importance of recruiting Chinese international

students as a university imperative makes the message producer avoid sensitive political issues between Western countries and China. Instead, the messaging strategies on the Weibo page centralized the lifestyle experiences by emphasizing cultural exchange and college life to appeal to prospective international students.

I noted an absence of Weibo posts related to the university's social responsibilities towards equity-seeking groups, which implied the university's focus on the private good (such as the branding and marketing purposes) rather than the focus on the public good (such as supports that the university provides to students from a disadvantaged background and the commitment the university make to work with local Indigenous communities). While the absence of posts relating to social responsibilities on Weibo was notable, it is also important to critically consider the impact and implications of the posts that were present on Facebook. That is, despite the fact that there are often messages or narratives of equity-seeking groups on UBC Facebook, such as the presentations about how does UBC provide a diverse and friendly environment to support students from different backgrounds (e.g., Indigenous students, racialized minority students, international students, LGBTQ+ students, etc.), this kind of visual representation of equity can be seen as the means of the commodification of diversity. In other words, the university uses visual strategies and discursive practices to communicate equity and diversity as two significant UBC identities on social media to influence audiences' perception toward the university. However, audiences of social media, especially international students, may not know the real situations before attending the university. In this case, communicating the importance of equity and diversity on the university social media can be seen as a messaging strategy used to attract students or frame the university's reputation as an end in itself. This can be contrasted to an approach in which the practice of actually working toward greater equity is the "end."

5.4 Discussion

Drawing on the key findings in the data analysis process, this section will provide further discussions from critical perspectives and bring light to some nuanced observations and reflections in regard to the prevalent neoliberal model of higher education internationalization.

5.4.1 Tension, contradiction, and absences

Given that UBC is a representative Western university in Canada which sits in a relatively privileged place concerning the recruitment of international students, the understanding of how the university marketing the school brand through the social media platforms can provide some insights into the potential tension or contradiction between public purposes and private benefits of higher education. Notably, in addition to exploring who and what is presented on social media, it is also useful to perform a "negative analysis" (Pauwels, 2012, p.253) that pays attention to those "meaningfully absent" from the sites. To provide my observations and reflections over various aspects of international students' experience, I will discuss separately at three important time points of students: pre-admission, during the school, and post-graduation.

Pre-admission period

Drawing on post analysis in both the UBC Facebook and Weibo pages, there were admission-related information or updates during the so-called university application season (i.e., start from late August to November annually). Notably, posts related to application and admission are relatively visible on the UBC Weibo page compared to the Facebook page. On the AskUBC 大学 Weibo page, I found that the message producer provides frequent reminders and essential updates to audiences, such as the timeline of application progress and the preparation of

required documents. A significant commonality of these posts is to present a brief and succinct text message to announce the main idea of the post and provides a link to direct audiences to the particular university web page, usually the UBC admission blog, to acquire the detailed information. However, among all these admission-related posts I looked from both sites, there was no direct or explicit information about tuition fees or financial support that the university offers to students.

Such significant absence implied the risk of exploiting international students and their families, given that international students usually afford expensive tuition fees that are much higher than their local counterparts. On the one hand, both the posts on the social media and the university web page (i.e., UBC life and UBC admission blog) tend to focus on and promote the "study-abroad dream" discourses through language and visual cues. For instance, they presented pictures of beautiful campus environment or the well-known attractions in Vancouver City, students sit in groups in the sunshine outdoors on campus chatting and laughing, and students of different races have an in-class discussion with the White professor. The university promotes the value of "life experiences" to communicate the study-abroad dream discourses to prospective international students from Asian countries, with the absence of information related to the expensive tuition fee that international students have to pay, implying the idea that what the university can bring to students "far exceeds" the tuition fees they need to pay.

On the other hand, although some Facebook and Weibo posts presented and communicated the university's willingness to support student with financial difficulty (by using the interview quotations of university advisors or students from economically disadvantaged background), there is a significant absence of links to information about scholarships, sponsorships, or university-sponsored emergency funding on the two UBC social media sites.

Moreover, information about the cost of living in Canada, particularly Metro Vancouver, where rents and living expenses are high, is absent among all the presentations on the university social media sites. In other words, there is no indication of how a student or family might understand the reality of costs to spend to accomplish a degree in Canada.

The university painted a beautiful picture for international students and families, including the overseas experiences, improvement of language skills, and valuable diploma and certification, without presenting the reality of the high investment required to complete the studies in Canada during the pre-admission period. In short, data from the Facebook and Weibo posts do not point to any risk of exploitation and instead reinforce a "study-abroad dream" narrative.

During the school period

Both UBC Facebook and Weibo pages presented and communicated the lifestyle of being a UBC student. Many posts showed the unique and fabulous campus scenery or the lively in-campus student activities to portray a particular type of "college lifestyle." Notably, given that the targeted audiences on the Weibo page are Chinese students and families, the university tends to especially present the experiences of international students, drawing on their perspective to make an endorsement for the university. Academic advice is provided, for example, around dual degree programs or interdisciplinary programs offered by UBC. However, the absent is the potential challenges that international students might face in transitioning to life in Canada, including language barrier, the sense of alienation from local student groups, low academic achievement, intense pressure, personal financial crisis, homesickness, and for some students, serious mental health issues. Additionally, another noticeable absence is to present the diversity of socio-economic class and lifestyle (Maschmann, 2018). The visual strategies and discursive

practices used by the university message producers on Weibo and Facebook pages have created a systemic exclusion of other lifestyles. At the same time, legitimized the Western, White settings, and upper/middle-class ways of knowing and living and erased the experiences of non-White, non-middle class university students in general. For example, students' images on media are usually healthy, well-dressed, using Apple MacBooks or iPhones, drinking Starbucks coffee, and eating salad out of a compostable lunch box on a sunny day. Those images look normal and depict "ordinary" college life. Nevertheless, such a lifestyle is not easy as it looks like for some international students, given that they may not be able to afford to eat out frequently or to enjoy the sunny day and coffee due to the heavy study pressure or the intense part-time jobs schedule.

For another, grounded on the general understanding toward international education that refers to cross-national research collaborations or cultural exchanges, international students may expect to experience not only diverse cultures but also the internationalization of the curriculum and work with scholars equipped with international literacy. However, some studies (Yang, 2002; Marginson, 2006; Guo & Guo, 2017) identified that the internationalization of curriculum is still limited in Western institutions, by which the majority of Western universities are dominated by the global advantage of English as a medium of instruction, Eurocentric socio-cultural context, and Anglo-American model of the knowledge hierarchy. In this case, it can be challenging for international students to adapt to the socio-cultural context of the destination countries and transition to the teaching methods or course content in a Western university. For example, UBC communicated the academic advice for prospective international students on Facebook and Weibo pages to express the idea that UBC is a university with a wealth of education resources for students. However, the reality of international student experience during the studying period can be the challenges to access relevant academic and curricular resources about their home

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countries, particularly for those who come from the Global South. In this case, the images portrayed on social media, such as students of different races sitting together to conduct in-class discussion, or an Asian student chatting with a White student, can be an illusion of studying in a Western international university. There is no indication for audiences to identify who speaks, who is heard, and about what. The reality can be a talkative local student who has a strong sense of expressiveness, with a silent international student who tries to join the discussion but still hard to understand the background context of the discussing topics.

Post-graduation period

Last but not least, post-graduation experience is considered one of an essential part of the study-abroad journey to many international students. Surprisingly, there is a notable absence of information related to students' post-graduation experience presented on UBC Facebook and Weibo pages. Indeed, the university provides career advisory services for students, such as the career-planning workshops, but there is little related information about career planning or the narrative of post-graduation experiences, particularly from international students' perspectives.

Findings and observations regarding the university's presentation toward post-graduation experience of international/students make me reflect on Coloma's (2013) study, in which he put forth the "un/wanted discourse" (p.581) of Asian people and indicated the Canadian society's expectation toward racialized minority groups: we need immigrants who are smart, well-educated, diligent, and wealthy to richen our labor market and benefit national economies, but they can't take the spots of university admission, white-collar job positions, and play any important roles in our society. Related to the absence of discourses related to career planning or post-graduation preparation, I would argue that Coloma's study provides a perspective for interpreting such absence.

5.4.2 Higher education internationalization or Westernization: Expectation and reality

In this section, I will draw on Knight's conception of internationalization and the ACDE report (2014) to examine the "expectation" and "reality" of higher education internationalization and how the Canadian university (i.e., UBC as a case in this study) represents the internationalization of higher education to communicate its purposes on Facebook and Weibo pages.

Given that both the UBC Facebook and Weibo were presenting themselves on a global stage, it is noticeable that the university is self-identified as an international institution from the aspects of teaching/learning, research, and service. Nevertheless, my study has identified some discrepancies between the expecting criteria of higher education internationalization and the reality of how UBC represents the agenda of internationalization on social media platforms.

Teaching and learning

Knight's (1995) study and the ACDE 2014 report published identified criteria of internationalization entangled with teaching and learning has highlighted the importance of providing a wide range of academic programs and curricular activities (Knight, 1995). Nevertheless, according to my analysis, discourses that UBC produced and disseminated on the social media platform mainly focus on marketing the prestige of university instructors or the interdisciplinary dual programs to communicate that students will get a wealth of educational resources during their study period at UBC. Nevertheless, as a Western university with English as a major medium of instruction, the continued favor of teaching/learning materials published in the English language works to centralize the knowledge production of Global North with the limited curricular resources of other parts of the world or different languages. In this case, internationalization of higher education is actually about particular ways of knowing and

thinking about the world, which has limited to "Westernization" without considering other parts of the world that are participants of this global community as well. Given such concern, the idea of internationalization has largely become a hypocritical buzzword to justify the ongoing practices and logics of coloniality, which helps to perpetuate the global advantage of English and the Western-dominated knowledge economy (Yang, 2002).

Research and service

Given that research and service are considered as two other significant functions of higher education institutions, practices and strategies of internationalization regarding the functions of research and service are also identified by Knight's (1995) study and the ACDE report (2014). The expecting criteria in terms of entangling internationalization with the research and service functions of higher education institutions promoted the importance to value international knowledge, cultural and people exchange to increase the "awareness and openness to the world" and "a sensitivity to a global human community" (Knight, 1995, p.27). Such commitment and efforts aimed at addressing national and international issues through research to impact and serve the regional, national, and global communities.

However, according to my analysis, discourses that UBC produced and disseminated on the social media platform mainly focused on how the university's performance on rankings, international research awards (e.g., Nobel Prize, Marcus Wallenberg Prize, and the Scotiabank Giller Prize mentioned and celebrated on social media), and the partnership (i.e., cross-national research cooperation) with other "world-class" institutions globally, to represent UBC's quality of research performance as well as its identity as an international university to be visible on the global stage. In this case, such market-based conceptions of knowledge production can be characterized as academic capitalism, by which the university's priority is in marketing the

prestige of the institution by promoting the research outcomes, the reputation of faculty members, and the position in the global university rankings. In other words, the way UBC presented messages on its Facebook and Weibo pages was shaped by Anglo-American, academic capitalist patterns of internationalization that foreground the neoliberal/entrepreneurial ideology in terms of school management (Rhoades et al., 2019).

As for the discourses related to the university's function of social service, there is a noticeable absence of relevant presentations on the UBC Weibo page, and the communication of charitable concerns on the UBC Facebook page to represent the university's identity and commitment of social responsibilities. However, given to the fact that UBC, as a Western institution, is benefiting from an unjust global educational order (Enslin & Hedge, 2008), it has traditionally been fueled by the perceived ideological superiority of the Western episteme (Altbach, 1989; Stein, 2017; Mignolo and Tlostanova, 2006, see on Chatterjee & Barber, 2020). In the UBC Facebook posts, the university self-identified as the "global leader" by contributing to the critical global issues, such as improving the literacy rate of people from certain countries, or the current outbreak of COVID-19, which positioned UBC's superior status of having power and knowledge to help. Nevertheless, communicating the charitable concerns to represent the university's function of service may have the risk of legitimizing the superior position of the West for enhancing the quality of life of "under-developing" countries and "disadvantaged" groups of people, while ignoring the university's complicity in a dominant global imaginary that is rooted in Western/White supremacy and results in ongoing cycles of injustice.

5.4.3 The "trouble" of the mediatization of higher education

In order to go beyond the current Western-dominated epistemic framework of internationalization which are applied to frame the current neoliberal, capitalized model of

university operation, this section will tie the key concepts together and bring light to the de-Western thought in the global higher education context.

As this study identified several major themes/topics of posting on UBC Facebook and Weibo pages, I found that UBC, as a Western institution, has promoted particular discourses in terms of "what should a desirable university look like." Such "colonial myth of Western supremacy" (Stein & de Andreotti, 2016, p.229) is reproduced not only by and in the West, but also by many across the globe, particularly the non-Western countries. For example, as mentioned in the former section in discussing the discrepancy between the expecting and reality agenda of higher education internationalization, the discursive practices and the visual cues I identified on social media sites position UBC as a desirable Western institution in various aspects. On the aspect of educational quality, UBC is a globally highly ranked institution with world-class research teams and scholars. On the aspect of social responsibilities, UBC has charitable concerns to support equity-seeking groups, students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and social issues of less politically and economically developed countries. On the aspect of college life, UBC is a desirable university that values the diversity of cultures, races, and gender identities for all students to find a place in this community. Those discourses are produced, reproduces, and disseminated on the university-operated social media platform, and framed the imaginary that makes Western higher education the role model of a desirable education product which is recognized by the majority of higher education institutions and international students globally.

In short, this study noticed that the process of university mediatization enables the perpetuations of the Western-centric model of higher education and privileges certain ways of

knowing, being, and thinking while make the systemic exclusion of others, contributing to the risk of Western cultural hegemony and epistemic violence.

5.5 Concluding Thoughts

Issues related to the development of higher education nowadays have been involved in the inter-/national political economy interests under the neoliberal global context. The university's transformative role has not only influenced the organization and administration of higher education institutions but also impacted the model of knowledge production to a great extent. This concluding section will summarize the contribution and limitation of this study and shed light on some of my personal reflections and the implication for future studies.

5.5.1 Contribution of this study

The contribution of this study is to provide alternative ways of thinking to challenge the dominant Anglo-American model of higher education internationalization under the context of a Western institution. Empirically, this study makes some contributions given its framing of the university as players enacting performances on the social media platforms that present messages about themselves to different audiences. Moreover, the messaging strategies, including the discursive practices and visual strategies, also help to make sense in terms of the conceptualization of universities as academic capitalist enterprises marketing to prospective international students (Rhoades et al., 2019). Notably, the noticeable marketing intention toward international students from China is identified on the UBC Weibo page, in which it articulated a more academic capitalist shaped conception, marketing lifestyle consumption to those in China who can afford to pay, and focusing on global rankings and partnerships with universities in other globally well-known institutions in Global North.

Conceptually, my work is significant in problematizing the concept of internationalization and exploring the particularities of its presentation in different geopolitical spaces in the social media context. This study points to how the defining "international," "global," and the "world-class" are foregrounded on the global imaginary of Western higher education and have overlooked and systemically denied the of epistemic violence.

5.5.2 Implications for future studies

Due to the limitation of time and resources, my research scale is relatively small, in which I only take UBC as a case study to explore its UBC and Weibo pages. Such a small-scale study can only provide an in-depth analysis and picture of how a single Canadian university speaks to itself on social media platforms. In this case, my study is not representative enough to speak to the trend of higher education internationalization and mediatization among the larger contexts of Canadian higher education.

Critical analysis of university-operated social media platforms still remains an under-research area amidst the larger body of existing studies and literature focus on the study of university websites. Comparative studies of Western and Asian universities; use of social media platforms, such as Instagram or Twitter, would be useful to expanding understanding of higher education internationalization and mediatization.

This study also raises questions around the role of international students in current practices and ideologies related to internationalization and higher education. Most existing studies focus on the institutions' role in reproducing hegemony and epistemic violence. Further studies on the role of international students in perpetuating or challenging the Western-dominated global knowledge economy would be useful.

Moreover, given the limitations of space and time, this study was not able to delve into the discussion to unpack the study-abroad dream of international students. Considering the high cost of the dream was absent in the social media context, it is critical to further explore why the West remains such an appealing study abroad destination for international students, and the impacts of this dream on the environment and the spaces international students come from. In other words, more exploration is needed to examine how we can understand or analyze the role that international students play in the process of mediatization and commodification of higher education—for example, the promotion of overseas credentials/degrees among the societies. Therefore, the dream of studying abroad can also be regarded as an entrenched social discourse, which motivated and facilitated students from countries like China and other non-Western countries to pursue oversea higher education in order to accomplish a career opportunity (e.g., get an academic job in universities or engage in higher-level jobs in private enterprises). Given that such pressure of studying abroad is not commonly experienced by students from North American and much of European countries, it is critical to explore how media accounts for the impacts of this outward flow to universities and higher education system in (international students) countries of origin.

Additionally, I hope in future studies to develop my analysis concerning the social media strategies Canadian universities use to represent indigenization to prospective international students and how these strategies compare and contrast with different universities strategic plans.

Last but not least, exploring the issues regarding the politics of emotions in social media contexts is also an area that deserves further discussion for future studies. This study analyzed Facebook and Weibo's posts/contents and identified the discourses and ideologies being communicated in the social media context. However, it is also significant to explore and unpack

the emotions that being communicated on social media. For example, to UBC Facebook's audience, the university taps into the sense of belonging and school pride to consolidate and maintain the UBC online communities. The emotions being communicated to imply the university's purposes of remaining the audiences' "loyalty" toward "UBC brand." To prospective international students, the messages on social media communicate the desire and privilege which are embedded within a study abroad dream and simultaneously taps into the emotion of anxiety of not being able to compete with or align to international students who pursue overseas higher education. Unpacking how emotions are framed and communicated across media contexts can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the Western-dominated global imaginary of higher education and the stratification of credential/degree between Western institutions and the local, non-Western universities in students' countries of origin.

The closing thought of this study is the possibility to reimagine the function and responsibility of higher education to reframe the imaginary of higher education under the current neoliberal internationalization framework. It is vital to unpack our understandings and interpretations regarding the "public good" that we expect from higher education. Given the current neoliberal ideology that strongly influences global higher education's development trajectory, to what extent is the university a site for reproduction of the hegemony of Western capitalism and claims to superior knowledge?

As an international student and a novice researcher in the field of higher education studies, I hope this research opened a window for unpacking how the internationalization of higher education is impacted by social media, and what this means for higher education institutions. I also hope my study contributes to some critical perspectives for reframing and reimagining the role of universities in this global era for future studies.

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Yudkevich, M., Altbach, P. G., Rumbley, L., & Taylor & Francis eBooks A-Z (Eds.). (2016). *The global academic rankings game: Changing institutional policy, practice, and academic life*. New York, NY: Routledge.

UBC Facebook Posts

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 28). UBC Forestry Prof. Nicholas Coops is the recipient of the world's most prestigious forestry honour, the Marcus Wallenberg Prize. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158140861628704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 25). UBC engineering students have developed a simple, low-cost COVID-19 ventilator that could save lives. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158130296348704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 22). We're proud to announce that UBC has been ranked first in Canada and seventh globally for impact. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158116715348704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 21). It's banana bread's cakey cousin and a UBC tradition. And now, you can bake it at home! Here's the Ponderosa Cake recipe. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158112804733704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 18). Though the majority of UBC faculty and staff are working from home, building maintenance can't stop for COVID-19. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158102393663704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 9). They're a UBC tradition that goes back over 65 years — and you can make them at home! [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158067931808704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 9). Please stay home and enjoy the cherry blossoms from your phone! [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/10158067803678704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 8). Missing UBC? Need a Zoom backgrounds? We've got you covered. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158064688253704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 8). Join Dr. Josef Penninger for a live Q&A today, Wednesday, April 8, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. PDT to learn more about cutting-edge research and the hope it offers in the global fight against COVID-19. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158064226953704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 6). International students, we know you have questions about how COVID-19 will impact immigration and health insurance. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158057433313704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 3). Missing the cherry blossoms at **#UBC** Vancouver? We are too.[Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/1015804633722 8704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 2). "There is hope for this horrible pandemic." [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158043283273704

UBC Facebook. (2020, April 1). We've made some changes to ensure that all prospective students remain safe and healthy, and that all applications are treated fairly.[Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158039356163704

UBC Facebook. (2020, March 24). Five research teams at UBC are collectively receiving $2.3 million in federal funding for research to help tackle the COVID-19 outbreak.[Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10158008092403704

UBC Facebook. (2020, March 18). "This is a time where we must come together as a caring and empathetic community." [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157986396813704

UBC Facebook. (2020, March 12). An aerial view of the **#UBC** Vancouver campus taken by Canadian Airways Ltd. circa 1930. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/1015796605533 88704

UBC Facebook. (2020, March 6). We're proud to be recognized as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers in 2020. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157949541043704

UBC Facebook. (2020, March 6). UBC sociologist Yue Qian, who is originally from Wuhan, is studying the human experiences and mental health consequences of quarantine.[Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157948816518704

UBC Facebook. (2020, March 3). We're proud to announce that UBC has been ranked among the top universities in the world in the 2020 QS World University Rankings by Subject, Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101579415827 18704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 28). A virus is a virus, but humans have a long history of turning their fear of disease into unwarranted panic about people and places. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157929226008704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 28). Dr. Srinivas Murthy, a clinical associate professor in the UBC department of pediatrics and an infectious disease specialist and investigator at BC Children's Hospital, [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157928532013704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 28). The planet discovered by Kunimoto is just 1 ½ times the size of Earth – small enough to be considered rocky and in the habitable zone of its star. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157928367788704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 27). Not a bad spot study spot. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101579252063 33704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 26). The UBC Vancouver campus from the sky. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157924105953704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 24). This may be the earliest aerial photograph of the UBC Vancouver campus, showing the partially-completed Science Building, agricultural buildings, and experimental fields.[Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101579169661 13704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 14). " Santa J. Ono was afraid to speak out about his mental illness; now he's a champion for mental health on campus." [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157887038843704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 10). UBC in space! NASA astronaut and former UBC Zoology postdoctoral fellow Jessica Meir shared this photo with us from the International Space Station. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101578750624 48704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 6). Rain or shine, snow or sleet, you're always beautiful UBC![Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101578637132 68704

UBC Facebook. (2020, February 6). #TBT to UBC's main library, now part of the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, under construction in September 1924. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101578634918 93704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 31). UBC has been ranked the most international university in North America by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101578453065 38704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 24). A new, UBC-developed website features free, multilingual storybooks for over 40 countries and regions on five continents, facilitating language learning and promoting literacy. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157820294323704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 21). Celebrate the start of a new Lunar New Year and ring in the year of Rat at these UBC events filled with music, food and fun activities. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157811415288704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 17). n memory of all of those who died aboard flight PS752, including four members of the UBC community, UBC has established the Iranian Student Memorial Award. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157800500903704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 16). Snowball fight! [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157797336173704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 15). UBC President Santa J. Ono says studying the liberal arts made him a better scholar, scientist, teacher and father. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157794033043704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 10). Winter has arrived at UBC Vancouver! [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157779527828704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 9). Today flags are lowered at UBC in memory of those killed in the Flight 752 tragedy, including four from the UBC community. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157776906733704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 6). "I came from Jordan as a refugee with nothing in my pocket." [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157768737953704

UBC Facebook. (2020, January 6). On Canada Day, we appreciated all things British Columbia with this iconic view from Main Mall. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/10157741845243704

UBC Facebook. (2019, December 25). Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from UBC![Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157731628858704

UBC Facebook. (2019, December 17). At UBC, our faculty and staff are dedicated to shaping a better world through our research, teaching and work. Here's how we're making a difference. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/videos/678256746337927/

UBC Facebook. (2019, November 24). UBC French, Hispanic and Italian Studies undergraduate student took her Spanish studies to Ecuador. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157638766078704

UBC Facebook. (2019, November 20). There were 31 UBC students on exchange and in co-op in Hong Kong. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157627436383704

UBC Facebook. (2019, November 19). Congratulations to UBC Creative Writing Program professor Ian Williams, who has won the Scotiabank Giller Prize for his novel 'Reproduction'. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/10157623922278704

UBC Facebook. (2019, November 14). "Studying in Italy was the best decision I have ever made in my undergraduate experience." [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157609663718704

UBC Facebook. (2019, November 4). UBC researchers have released the results from their October 2019 national opinion survey on Canadian public attitudes on China and Canada-China relations. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157579463633704

UBC Facebook. (2019, October 24). UBC ranks 30th in U.S. News Best Global Universities Rankings. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101575463520 18704

UBC Facebook. (2019, October 7). When UBC Thunderbirds swimmer Emily Overholt won a bronze medal after competing in the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio, she should have felt like she was on top of the world. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157496240728704

UBC Facebook. (2019, October 2). Looking for the perfect fall photo spot? On weekdays, Main Mall is where the action is. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101574834699 08704

UBC Facebook. (2019, September 15). Universities are well placed to collaborate on achieving sustainable cities, gender equality, healthy oceans and global partnerships,[Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157439150493704

UBC Facebook. (2019, September 6). Every September, UBC Vancouver celebrates the start of the academic year with one of the most unique and comprehensive university orientation programs in North America. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157415222558704

UBC Facebook. (2019, September 4). New academic year, new potential. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150638614923704/101574109156 13704

UBC Facebook. (2019, September 4). New friends, fresh starts: welcome to UBC. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157410835493704

UBC Facebook. (2019, September 4). When Darcy Bandeen arrived at UBC last year, the arts undergraduate student was filled with the usual first-year anxieties. [Facebook status

update]. Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157410596893704

UBC Facebook. (2019, September 3). Take a tour of one of our new 140-square-foot nano-suites
with UBC student Yvonne Ko. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157408622053704

UBC Facebook. (2019, August 29). UBC President Santa J. Ono is sharing his personal mental
health story so students know that they're not alone in their struggles. [Facebook status
update]. Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157396635198704

UBC Facebook. (2019, August 14). UBC celebrates diversity. Here's how you can be yourself
and help others do the same [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157358738553704

UBC Facebook. (2019, August 3). UBC's donor-funded Vision 20 Initiative gives students
opportunity to be at the forefront of addressing global problems. [Facebook status update].
Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157331530008704

UBC Facebook. (2019, August 3). Happy Pride, Vancouver! At UBC, we're proud of our diverse
students, faculty and staff. Find out how we're celebrating [Facebook status update].
Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101573311463
28704

UBC Facebook. (2019, July 30). "This is the public health challenge of our time." [Facebook
status update]. Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157321479548704

UBC Facebook. (2019, July 29). International students are required to have basic health
insurance while studying at UBC. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157319860393704

UBC Facebook. (2019, July 17). UBC has been ranked 37th globally in Times Higher Education
Reputation ranking, continuing our positive trajectory among the world's leading
universities. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101572898236
63704

UBC Facebook. (2019, July 1). The True North strong and free. [Facebook status update].
Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/101572492874
93704

UBC Facebook. (2019, June 19). UBC ranks among the top five per cent of universities worldwide, according to QS World University Rankings. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157218855518704

UBC Facebook. (2019, June 11). Tuum est [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150638614923704/10157199565228704

UBC Facebook. (2019, June 7). Shrimply the best: UBC commits to only serving certified Ocean Wise seafood on campus. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157189708943704

UBC Facebook. (2019, May 27). 28 ceremonies. 16,000 pieces of cake. Go behind the scenes at #UBCgrad and see how it all happens. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/videos/1214568928714306

UBC Facebook. (2019, May 22). Dawn Johnson graduates next week from UBC with a law degree. Read her inspiring story in The Globe and Mail. #UBCgrad [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/posts/10157148273318704

UBC Facebook. (2019, May 21). NSERC / CRSNG has awarded UBC researchers $42.6M in funding to pursue world-leading discovery research in science and engineering. [Facebook status update]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc/photos/a.10150100039888704/10157145657813704

AskUBC 大学 Weibo Posts (retrieved link can only open on mobile Weibo application)

askUBC 大学. (2020, April 9). UBC 当前的录取情况 [Weibo status update] Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/ICx3W2UXq

askUBC 大学. (2020, April 6). 被录取之后，你可以做什么准备大学生活 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IC50E6kZc

askUBC 大学. (2020, March 21). 关于 Covid-19 如何影响ＵＢＣ申请 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IzE6essnE

askUBC 大学. (2020, March 2). 关于如何提供ＵＢＣ申请文件，你所需要知道的[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IwKqj2PAZ

askUBC 大学. (2020, February 25). 校园里少有人知的学习地点 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IvQi6yNKV

askUBC 大学. (2020, February 15). 想做交换生体验在其他世界一流大学学习？ [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IukvbdOq2

askUBC 大学. (2020, January 29). 参考ＵＢＣ提供的本科双学位项目[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IrGXN1k35

askUBC 大学. (2020, January 3). 温馨提示：ＵＢＣ申请还有不到两周就截止了 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/InMdpyeMP

askUBC 大学. (2019, December 22). 期待来年能有一场大雪 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IlXnIi4u9

askUBC 大学. (2019, December 7). UBC 的学生社团发射了自己的火箭 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IjG9e2PI9

askUBC 大学. (2019, November 30). 天气越来越冷了，想念暖暖的夏夜校园 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IiC6vbvmo1

askUBC 大学. (2019, November 18). 在温哥华校区的 UBC 学生的一天生活是怎样的？ [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IgNzuexiP

askUBC 大学. (2019, November 4). 关于 UBC 超酷的十件事[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IeFjtFa8G

askUBC 大学. (2019, October 26). 你知道 UBC 学生活动中心(The Nest)有一个空中花园吗 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/Idj0ijIEL

askUBC 大学. (2019, October 8). UBC 2020/2021 学年度申请正式开放啦！[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/IayplicPv

askUBC 大学. (2019, October 7). UBC 宿舍的新房型：纳米套间[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/Iap2v6Hu0

askUBC 大学. (2019, October 5). UBC 在泰晤士世界大学排行榜位列第三十四！[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/Ia6bvFwtG

askUBC 大学. (2019, September 28). 看看我们如油画一般的校园吧 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/I8Z8Sx9Jy1

askUBC 大学. (2019, August 17). 你知道 UBC 的校园总共有 15 个图书馆吗？ [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/I2Fc23K3I

askUBC 大学. (2019, July 23). UBC 大一学生都需要完成英语课，你是不是也想问[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/HEKT4nPbi

askUBC 大学. (2019, July 20). 你有从这个角度看过 Museum of Anthropology 吗？[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/HEiuFDfgk

askUBC 大学. (2019, July 15). 我们列出了五个你意想不到的校园美景[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/HDDaeiLY4

askUBC 大学. (2019, May 31). UBC 在采取紧急行动应对气候变化及其影响方面排世界第一！[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/HwIjIviBH

askUBC 大学. (2019, May 24). 春天时间，我们学生最喜欢在校园户外的阳光之下温习 [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/HvEe9vIby

askUBC 大学. (2019, May 18). UBC Ladner Tower 旁的粉红木兰，祝大家周末愉快！ [Weibo status update]. Retrieved from   http://weibo.com/3577780837/HuJFbkMUc1

askUBC 大学. (2019, May 17). 工程系本科生 Ryan 通过 UBC Co-op 去了日本工作[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from http://weibo.com/3577780837/HuFiv9aM9

askUBC 大学. (2019, May 2). 今年的 QS 世界大学排名里，UBC 在四个科目领域中跻身前十[Weibo status update]. Retrieved from https://weibo.com/3577780837/HsiEPxvAo

Appendices

Appendix A Sample URLs

UBC Facebook and Weibo Pages:

University of British Columbia Facebook Fan Page: https://www.facebook.com/universityofbc

AskUBC 大学 Weibo Page: https://weibo.com/askUBC?fbclid=IwAR0DmRnR-

KZDCa8LmUMciAfWJGvQOm26M7AuQqqxNrJ-

hk3IHsBhO_eC9uk&is_hot=1&ssl_rnd=1608778659.942

UBC Admission Blog:

UBC Undergraduate Programs and Admissions: https://you.ubc.ca/applying-ubc/blog/ (accessed

October 8, 2019)