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The discursive construction and realization of the Hong Kong brand: a corpus-informed study

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Abstract: Branding is essentially discursive in nature and yet discourse studies of branding are surprisingly few in number. The present study is a rare attempt to examine how branding, in particular place branding, can be conceptualized and operationalized linguistically through the investigation of a corpus of marketing texts on the official branding of Hong Kong. A quantitative analysis using corpus tools and techniques was first conducted to identify the main textual patterns based on frequency information. A qualitative analysis then followed to investigate the dominant textual patterns in context in order to uncover the branding strategies used and their associated linguistic realizations. Findings from the present study reveal that the branding discourse of Hong Kong is strongly business-oriented, largely constructed through taken-for-granted qualities, and heavily reliant on the technical branding jargon. Such findings can be directly compared with those from traditional marketing research to pinpoint any inconsistencies between official branding policies and consumers' perceptions. This will in turn provide more concrete suggestions to help bridge the divide, if any, between brand creators, consumers and other stakeholders involved, and ultimately promote more inclusive branding for all.

Keywords: branding, corpus, Hong Kong, marketing discourse, place branding, tourism discourse

1 Introduction

As a well-established notion in marketing, branding traditionally concerns the efforts made to distinguish one company, product or service from others. Central to the idea of branding is therefore differentiation (Boo et al. 2009). Specifically, a brand is “a distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as a logo, trademark, or package design) intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of

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competitors” (Aaker 1991: 7). A brand, however, is not simply a name and/or a symbol. It also embodies a distinctive and carefully crafted mix of beliefs and attributes representing the essence of the brand (Simões and Dibb 2001). It is thus a promotional process which aims to make any item for sale unique in the eyes of the customers.

In contemporary society, however, the development of a unique image to promote sales or any form of economic gain is no longer confined only to companies, products or services but also applies to geographical locations. *Place branding*, sometimes interchangeably yet more specifically termed *destination* or *city branding* in the marketing literature, refers to such efforts made to advance the “economic, social, political and cultural developments of cities, regions and countries” (Kerr 2006: 278). The increasingly keen competition between economies around the world in tourism, international trade and industry has propelled the more “focused, integrated and strategic oriented” marketization and reconceptualization of places as brands, making place branding a global phenomenon in the last three decades (Kavaratzis 2005: 330).

Although place branding has been extensively studied in a range of disciplines, most notably in marketing and tourism (Lucarelli and Berg 2011), studies which examine the linguistic, discursive or communicative dimension of branding in general, and place branding in particular, have been few and far between (see, for example, Flowerdew 2004; Koller 2008). Most scholarly work on place branding, in addition to unpublished market research, has relied on the survey methods and tools of questionnaires and focus group interviews to investigate people’s perceptions of a place, often conducted sometime after the branding process is in place to inform subsequent branding processes (see, for example, Ekinci et al. 2013; Kavaratzis and Hatch 2013). This approach, however, only examines branding *indirectly* through the emotive assessment of the place brand in the public mind. The actual discursive construction and realization of a place brand, by contrast, remains a largely unexplored territory. Given that branding is essentially discursive in nature (Flowerdew 2004), a more direct approach to the study of place branding through a stronger focus on the place brand itself, rather than on the responses to the brand, is therefore urgently called for in the interdisciplinary research area of place branding.

With this focus in mind, the present study examines how a place brand can be conceptualized and operationalized discursively in a place-branding campaign. To this end, a small corpus of marketing texts comprising a number of key branding documents from the official place-branding campaign of Hong Kong is compiled and subject to quantitative and qualitative analysis. Combining the strengths of corpus methodology with a discourse analytic approach, the study aims to

uncover the dominant discursive patterns and strategies employed in the construction and realization of the place brand of Hong Kong.

After this introduction, the paper will review the relevant literature on place branding and tourism discourse. It will then describe the background to this research, and the data and methodology employed in the study. In the findings section, the main textual patterns found in the data will be presented, followed by a discussion on the branding strategies. The final concluding section will highlight the value of the study and suggest areas for further research.

2 Literature review

The last two decades have seen a rapid rise of academic interest in the arena of place branding spanning various disciplines, most notably in marketing, tourism, geography and urban studies. Despite the disciplinary differences, two recurrent themes are commonly found in place-branding research: model building (see, for example, Da Silveira et al. 2013; Kavaratzis 2004) and model testing (see, for example, Ekinci et al. 2013; Hosany et al. 2006). The former involves identifying key components of a place brand and constructing theoretical models to understand the interconnections between such components. The latter involves testing and validating models, or dimensions of models, through a survey of the views of target respondents. Two key components found in the major theoretical models of place branding are *place identity* and *place image*. *Place identity* refers to the efforts made by the brand creators, promoters and managers to define, communicate and maintain a place brand (Hayden and Sevin 2012), whereas *place image* deals with consumers' perceptions of a place brand (Kavaratzis and Hatch 2013). Together, the two notions take into account the perspectives of stakeholders from both the supply and demand sides of place branding.

Scholarly attention thus far has mostly been directed to place image, wherein progress has been made not only on the building but also on the testing of models through using such research tools as questionnaires and interviews to survey people's views and to devise over 150 indexes to assess the branding performance of places (Jones Lang LaSalle 2013). Research on place identity, in comparison, is lagging behind and still rests at the stage of model building. Some models focus specifically on certain aspects of place branding, such as the Strategic Place Brand Management Model proposed by Hanna and Rowley (2011). Others are broader models of the place-branding process, such as the City Marketing Theoretical Framework developed by Kavaratzis (2004). However, no single theoretical model thus far has gained universal acceptance (Konecnik Ruzzier and De Chernatony 2013). Further, empirical case studies examining

how a place brand is actually constructed and communicated in texts are currently missing. A discourse-oriented approach to the study of place identity based on empirical evidence is therefore not only a welcome but valuable addition to complement the presently theory-based research paradigm as described above.

Elsewhere in discourse and communication research, place branding has yet to come under the spotlight, but a growing number of studies, especially in the last decade, have emerged focusing on its close neighbor, tourism discourse. While such tourism texts under investigation are extensive in type, ranging from travel guidebooks to television holiday shows (Thurlow and Jaworski 2010), these studies have demonstrated the value of incorporating the perspectives of discourse analysts into the ever-expanding industry of tourism. Importantly, such analyses often employ an array of research methods and tools, enriching the dimensions of study and showcasing the synergy achieved from combining resources from the discourse-analytic toolkit.

In a study of tourism websites for different countries, Hallett and Kaplan-Weinger (2010) conducted a multi-dimensional examination comprising critical, mediated and multimodal discourse analysis, allowing them to investigate the intricate interactions between the verbal texts, visual images, social actions and computer technology in the understanding of identity in the contemporary era of tourism. Similarly, Lou (2010) employed a combination of textual, visual and ethnographic methods in her analysis of the narrative construction of Chinatown in Washington, DC, in a billboard advertisement which serves to promote the neighborhood. While the merits of using corpus methods and tools in discourse analysis have been well documented and attested (see, for example, Baker 2006; Baker et al. 2013), a corpus-based discourse analytic approach to texts in tourism in general, and in place branding more specifically, has yet to be fully utilized. As such, the power of drawing on frequency information to identify dominant discursive patterns as a gateway to the systematic analysis of place-branding discourse remains to be unleashed.

In the small number of discourse studies with a focus on place branding, three notable examples are pertinent to the current discussion. Flowerdew (2004) traced the preliminary consultation process of the branding of Hong Kong through a critical discourse analysis of three official consultation documents and showed how the so-called public consultation process was highly manipulated and carefully controlled by the government. Employing such notions as intertextuality, voice and core values from genre theory and branding, his study provides an important backdrop to the early evolution of the branding of Hong Kong, which is essential for understanding the discourse of the current campaign.

Also adopting a critical approach but with a stronger orientation toward the semiotic and cognitive aspects, Koller (2008) examined the remodeling of city brands as corporate brands through an analysis of vision documents outlining the ideal future for two cities in the United Kingdom and in Germany. Her comparative analysis of different semiotic modes suggested a link between the use of selected linguistic and visual features, including comparative and superlative forms, deontic modality and logos, and the mental representations of the brand producers. Koller's (2008) study thus reveals how observable discursive patterns of words and images in text can offer a glimpse of the intangible minds of the brand producers through conceptualizing city brands as instances of socio-cognitive representation. Like Flowerdew (2004), however, Koller (2008) concentrated more on the pre-branding process as realized in the vision documents before the launch of the actual campaign. An investigation into the branding campaign itself can, accordingly, extend this line of inquiry from process to product, in order to further our understanding into such aspects as branding strategies.

Finally, Caldas-Coulthard (2008) conducted a multimodal analysis of advertisements in tourism brochures and web pages for promoting the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro and found the depiction of the human body to be a pervasive branding strategy. Similar to Koller (2008), Caldas-Coulthard (2008) argued that the social practices and worldviews of the advertisers are reflected textually in the construction of identities typically associated with the place advertised, as in this case, the stereotypical identities of the beautiful Brazilian woman. Her study therefore provides further evidence for the identification of branding strategies through examining the discursive patterns in texts in discourse-oriented place-branding research.

Inspired and informed by insights from this body of previous research, the present study fills three main gaps in the current literature: a dearth of empirically grounded research on place identity in general; a lack of corpus-based approaches in tourism-related discourse studies; and a scarcity of scholarly work in the field of discourse analysis which specifically deals with the actual products of place-branding campaigns. Importantly, no empirical discourse-oriented, corpus-based study has been conducted thus far on the place branding of Hong Kong. To the best of my knowledge, the only study on the Hong Kong brand is Chu (2011), which assesses the implications of the branding project following an anthropological approach based on the origin and development of the brand as well as relevant government's policies. Through a corpus-informed discourse analysis, this study aims to understand the discursive construction and communication of the place identity of Hong Kong in an official branding campaign by identifying the major textual patterns and branding strategies in the key branding documents of the campaign.

3 Data and methodology

3.1 Background

The idea of branding Hong Kong emerged at the beginning of the post-colonial era, when the city's return to China from Britain in 1997 raised concern regarding its international status (Brand Hong Kong 2014a). A government initiative thus began in the year of the handover, with the initial formation of an advisory committee, consisting of opinion leaders in the public and private sectors, on the long-term development of the territory (Flowerdew 2004). After a series of conceptualization, consultation and consolidation processes common in institutional decision-making in Hong Kong (Bhatia 1997), the Brand Hong Kong (BrandHK) campaign was launched in 2001 in an attempt to develop and position Hong Kong as "Asia's world city". A review exercise of the campaign was subsequently conducted in 2008/2009, which "sought to engage a wide cross section of the community in fostering a shared vision for Hong Kong and its branding" (Hong Kong Government 2010). It involved professional opinion surveys, sectoral consultation sessions, focus groups and workshops. Based on the review results, the brand was revitalized and its campaign revamped in 2010 (Brand Hong Kong 2014b), with minor changes made to the place brand's core values, attributes and its visual identity.

3.2 Data

The data for the present study came from the BrandHK website, which is the major vehicle for branding the city. Supervised and managed by the Brand Management Unit of the Hong Kong government, the website is an integral part of the branding campaign since its online presence in 2001. It thus plays a principal role in forming and communicating the place identity of the Hong Kong brand. At the time of the study, a number of textual and audiovisual resources for branding Hong Kong were found on the website, including fact sheets, publicity photos and videos. Of all the resources available, four branding documents, published from 2010 to 2013, were the most comprehensive and constitute the core official branding effort. They were also more homogeneous in nature, when compared with the individual, isolated audiovisual promotional resources.

These four promotional publications which constituted the main products of the branding campaign were thus selected to compile the corpus. They are (i) a

61-page full-length document entitled “This is Hong Kong”, which constructs and communicates the Hong Kong brand in detail, mainly through elaborating the five attributes of the city: cosmopolitan, dynamic, secure, diverse and connected; (ii) a 24-page booklet which explains and illustrates the core elements constituting the Hong Kong brand, including its positioning and platform, visual identity, core values and attributes; (iii) an eight-page leaflet which describes the above core elements of the brand with a general introduction of Hong Kong and the evolution of the brand; and (iv) a two-page fact sheet which gives a short summary of the core brand elements.

All four publications constitute both branding artifacts and instances of meta-discourse on the brand, and no attempts have been made by the official branding body to distinguish these functions in their promotional purposes. Since all the four branding documents contain textual but not always visual elements, only the former aspect of the branding material was examined. In this connection, details of the composition of the corpus are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Composition of the branding corpus.

| Document name | Number of words | Number of pages |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| “This is Hong Kong” | 8,577 | 61 |
| “Brand Hong Kong Booklet” | 1,773 | 24 |
| “Brand Hong Kong Leaflet” | 1,052 | 8 |
| “Brand Hong Kong Fact Sheet” | 1,497 | 2 |
| Total | 12,899 | 95 |

Of varied lengths and sizes, these four publications were chosen for two reasons. First, they are not only publicly available online on the official branding website of Hong Kong, but are also distributed in print form at various official locations and events both locally and overseas, including tourist information offices, exhibitions and trade fairs. Their online and offline presence thus ensures that these branding documents reach a large number and range of target audiences, hence signifying their importance as key items in promoting the Hong Kong brand. Second, these four documents represent coherent, self-contained texts which are strategically produced by the government to construct and communicate the Hong Kong brand for different purposes and situations. Any patterns which are recurrent within and among these texts are therefore likely to be carefully chosen and deliberately emphasized in the branding campaign, rather

than a consequence of coincidence. In contrast to the whole website which exhibits a high level of internal and external intertextuality and the strong presence of isolated and extraneous items through the use of headings, keywords, icons and hyperlinks, the free-standing nature of these documents means that they are more conventional in structure, consisting mostly of running text which is more amenable to the study of linguistic context in both corpus and discourse analysis.

3.3 Analytical framework and research questions

At the stage of corpus compilation, the four publications were first converted from pdf documents into plain text files with manual checking of the processed texts to facilitate subsequent corpus analysis. Admittedly, the branding corpus compiled for the present study is very modest in size, especially when megacorpora of millions or even billions of words are now commonplace. However, it is exactly this small size which allows the corpus to be subject to both quantitative and in-depth qualitative analysis. As noted by Handford, “smaller corpora are more suited for studying specialist genres” (Handford 2012: 256). As shown by previous studies (see, for example, Handford 2012; Sinclair 2001), small corpora can be just as powerful as their larger counterpart, as long as stringent sampling procedures are followed. In the present case, a small specialized corpus of purposely chosen branding documents allows the automatic identification of frequently occurring patterns, which are then subject to a close study of examples of such dominant patterns in context.

Once the corpus was compiled, a quantitative analysis employing corpus tools and methods was first conducted to identify main textual patterns. In this connection, the software WordSmith Tools 6.0 (Scott 2012) was used to assist the analysis in the process. A frequency word list was generated to identify the most frequently occurring items in the corpus. Frequent lexical items which contribute to the construction and communication of the Hong Kong brand were then selected for the generation of concordances.

A close examination of the concordance of such frequent lexical items then followed to observe patterns of use, including a thematic classification of the items in the specific contexts in which they are used. Notions from traditional and functional grammar including clause functions and process types were also applied to understand the major branding patterns by investigating the most frequent clause functions and process types of top items. Any significant collocational or colligational patterns of such frequent items were also noted. The identification of these major textual patterns based on frequency, which are

made visible through corpus methods and tools, can bring to light the underlying branding strategies which are more covert, and hence less observable in nature. Together the textual patterns and branding strategies will give a more telling account of the true conceptualization and operationalization of the place brand, and further our understanding of the social practices, stakeholders and identities involved in branding the city.

The research questions guiding the present study are as follows:

1. What are the most frequently occurring words and patterns which contribute to the branding of Hong Kong in the key branding documents examined?
2. Based on the analysis of the frequently occurring words and patterns observed, what are the key branding strategies used in the construction and communication of the Hong Kong brand?

4 Main textual patterns in the branding corpus

This corpus-informed analysis is composed of three sections. First it presents an overview of the top 100 most frequently occurring items in the corpus (see the appendix, with more explanations to follow). It then specifically examines how *Hong Kong*, the most frequently occurring lexical item, is linguistically conceptualized. Finally, it investigates the key collocational and colligational patterns associated with the second most frequently occurring lexicalized item, namely the possessive marker apostrophe *s*, together with the nouns to which it is attached.

4.1 Top 100 frequently occurring items in the branding of Hong Kong

The appendix lists the top 100 items in the frequency word list of the branding corpus in descending order of frequency. The threshold is set at the hundredth point since the total word frequency of the top 100 items constitutes half the size of the corpus (6,407/12,899, 50 %), giving a reasonably representative coverage of the words present in the whole corpus.

Of all the items listed, two-thirds ($n=67$) of them are considered lexical words as these forms are mostly used in the corpus as nouns, verbs (including modal verbs), adjectives or adverbs. The remaining 33 items, marked in gray in the appendix, are considered function words as they are mostly used in the corpus as determiners, conjunctions, prepositions or pronouns. The relative proportion of lexical words to function words on the word frequency list is

thus 2:1. This ratio is unusually high when compared with those generated from the frequency word lists of large general corpora such as the British National Corpus (Leech et al. 2001) and the Oxford English Corpus (Oxford University Press 2015), which contain more high frequency function words. This high lexical-to-function-word ratio thus highlights the rich lexical load of the branding corpus as a small specialized corpus. As such, the word frequency list alone can already yield some useful insights into the core contents of the corpus, even without the analysis of keywords when compared with a reference corpus. Since the lexical words are the main carriers of information and contribute more to the semantic construction and communication of the place brand, they are examined in more detail in the following analysis, though some of the function words on the list will also be discussed if necessary as co-occurring items with the lexical words.

Based on a detailed concordance analysis, the 67 lexical items are classified according to their semantic meanings and functions in the corpus as shown in Table 2. Ranks of the items, rather than raw frequencies, are provided as the relative frequency of each item as represented in rank is considered more useful for comparison with other frequent items in this small corpus. The appendix

Table 2: The thematic classification of the top lexical items.

| Category | Number of items | Examples (rank) |
|--|-----------------|--|
| Hong Kong | 2 | <i>Hong Kong</i> (3/4) |
| alignment and positioning | 24 | <i>apostrophe s</i> (9); <i>world</i> (10); <i>city</i> (13); <i>international</i> (19); <i>Asia</i> (26); <i>China</i> (36); <i>new</i> (42); <i>one</i> (43); <i>global</i> (48); <i>Chinese</i> (51); <i>first</i> (54); <i>free</i> (55); <i>mainland</i> (56); <i>centre</i> (67); <i>home</i> (68); <i>major</i> (71); <i>top</i> (73); <i>largest</i> (76); <i>best</i> (79); <i>east</i> (87); <i>hub</i> (88); <i>year</i> (93); <i>cosmopolitan</i> (95); <i>creative</i> (96) |
| aspects of living | 18 | <i>people</i> (20); <i>per cent</i> (40/52); <i>business</i> (46); <i>quality</i> (57); <i>cultural</i> (59); <i>arts</i> (62); <i>economic</i> (64); <i>trade</i> (74); <i>events</i> (75); <i>life</i> (77); <i>development</i> (81); <i>law</i> (83); <i>US</i> (85); <i>living</i> (89); <i>million</i> (90); <i>festival</i> (97); <i>heritage</i> (98) |
| miscellaneous meta-discursive elements and contact information | 15 | <i>hk</i> (16); <i>gov</i> (21); <i>email</i> (31/32); <i>tel</i> (33); <i>brandhk</i> (35); <i>www</i> (37); <i>government</i> (38); <i>brand</i> (47); <i>dragon</i> (63); <i>fax</i> (65); <i>values</i> (69); <i>attributes</i> (78); <i>core</i> (80); <i>information</i> (82) |
| actions and processes | 8 | <i>is</i> (11); <i>has</i> (18); <i>are</i> (23); <i>was</i> (34); <i>have</i> (39); <i>can</i> (66); <i>will</i> (86); <i>ranked</i> (100) |

shows the list of the top 100 items with the lexical items color-coded according to this thematic classification.

An overview of the most frequent lexical items classified in five thematic groups offers some basic ideas about the main themes in the branding discourse of Hong Kong. Specifically, it provides some clues regarding the dimensions which are given special emphasis in the discursive construction and communication of the Hong Kong brand. The categorization of the top lexical items based on these semantic and functional groups also serves as a good starting point for pinpointing items of interest which will then be subsequently analyzed in detail concerning their textual patterns.

The place name *Hong Kong* warrants a separate category of its own, not only because it is the very entity that these branding documents aim to promote, but also because of its remarkably high frequency ($n=382$) in the corpus. While one may argue that in a corpus of marketing discourse on the official branding of Hong Kong, it is hardly surprising that *Hong Kong* is frequently occurring, the unusually high rank of this place name on the frequency list is still exceptional. The items *Hong* and *Kong*, occupying the third and fourth place of the frequency list, respectively, are only surpassed by the definite article *the*, and the conjunction *and*. They are even more frequently found in the branding documents than the ubiquitous prepositions *of* and *in*, and the indefinite article *a*. Attaining a top rank is unusual for any noun in an ordinary frequency word list, let alone for a proper noun. In the British National Corpus, for example, the most frequently occurring nouns are common nouns: *time*, *people* and *way*, which are ranked 70th, 84th and 99th on the word frequency list, respectively (Leech et al. 2001). While the frequency of function words generally increases with corpus size, this comparison of frequency patterns of nouns with a large general corpus still again highlights the unique lexically oriented nature of the branding corpus. Not only does the corpus contain more lexical words than function words in the top 100-word frequency list, it also has a proper noun as one of its most frequent items. Given its common occurrences and central importance in the corpus, *Hong Kong* will be further examined in the next section.

The second thematic category, “alignment and positioning,” concerns the formation and portrayal of the identity of Hong Kong. It involves defining Hong Kong and shaping what it is by aligning it with other geographic entities, and in turn marking its positions and roles with respect to such entities. A total of 24 lexical items on the frequency list are found to belong to this category. Specifically, Hong Kong is defined in relation to three core items of place, arranged here in the ascending order of size: *China* ($n=37$), *Asia* ($n=54$) and

world ($n = 136$), reflecting the three different identities that the Hong Kong brand aims to shape (Figure 1).

| N | Concordance |
|---|--|
| 1 | tunnels and bridges, the city is enhancing connections with Mainland China and the rest of the world with some major infrastructure |
| 2 | to global markets Hong Kong acts as a springboard for Mainland China enterprises seeking to expand globally. As at end March 2013 |
| 3 | be a convenient, open and safe city. It has strong links with Mainland China , one of the fastest growing economies in the world, and it is |
| 4 | Hong Kong an ideal gateway for companies seeking access to China - and equally for Mainland companies reaching out to the |
| 5 | the mouth of Pearl River Delta (PRD) makes it the natural gateway to China . Our connections reach beyond infrastructure to language, |
| 6 | and communications network, Hong Kong is the gateway to China and the rest of the world. Diverse Pluralistic and tolerant, |
| 7 | & Nature 27 - 36 CONNECTED Air, Sea & Land Traffic Gateway to China Infrastructure & Transport Telecommunications 37 - 44 THIS IS |
| 1 | on the Far East trade routes and at the centre of the fast developing Asia-Pacific Region, Hong Kong is one of the world's busiest |
| 2 | Kong. Being the preferred location for companies doing business in Asia , the city hosted 3883 regional headquarters and regional |
| 3 | and entrepreneurship converge. Strategically located in the heart of Asia , it is a cosmopolitan city offering global connectivity, security |
| 4 | sandpiper. Connected Strategically located at the heart of Asia , Hong Kong is superbly connected by some of the best |
| 5 | THIS IS HONG KONG Strategically located at the heart of Asia , Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan city offering superb global |
| 6 | scale new heights in many areas. Strategically located at the heart of Asia , Hong Kong has built a reputation as a regional business hub, |
| 7 | to strengthen its position as a regional dispute resolution centre in the Asia-Pacific. The International Court of Arbitration of the International |
| 1 | Index of Economic Freedom report has ranked Hong Kong as the world's freest economy for 19 consecutive years. A similar study by |
| 2 | Hong Kong was the world's ninth largest trading entity in 2012. World's freest economy The Heritage Foundation's annual Index of |
| 3 | With 118 floors, this is Hong Kong's tallest building. It houses the world's highest hotel, The Ritz-Carlton, and the city's highest |
| 4 | in 2012. Offshore Renminbi business centre Hong Kong is the world's largest and most efficient offshore RMB business hub, with |
| 5 | 1904, and its current fleet of over 160 double-decker tramcars - the world's largest - carries about 200000 passengers every day on |
| 6 | handling capacity of over 19 million TEUs. High-speed ferries The world's largest fleet of high-speed ferries links Hong Kong with |
| 7 | largest and most efficient offshore RMB business hub, with the world's largest offshore pool of RMB. Total RMB deposits and |

Figure 1: Sample concordance lines of *China*, *Asia* and *world*.

In relation to China, Hong Kong is defined as a point of entry for companies, offering business opportunities for foreign enterprises. In constructing this identity, Hong Kong is discursively aligned with China through the strategic co-selection of such items as (*Mainland*) *China* with *gateway*, *access* and *springboard*. About a quarter of all the instances of *China* (9/37) and more than two-fifths of all the instances of *mainland* (10/23) found in the corpus occur in the immediate vicinity, i.e. five words to the left and five words to the right, of *Hong Kong*. In relation to Asia, Hong Kong is defined geographically as occupying a strategic spot on the continent. This identity is hence built through selecting *Asia* together with such items as *centre* and *heart* in the branding discourse, to mark the central location of the city. In relation to the world, Hong Kong is defined as a high achiever, ranking among the finest in the globe and possessing a number of desirable attributes. To create this identity, the apostrophe *s* is attached to *world* and selected together with lexical items denoting allegedly positive qualities such as *free* and *large*. Indeed, *world* and *world's* are the most frequent lexical collocates of *Hong Kong*, occurring in the immediate vicinity of the latter in approximately one-third of all their instances (42/136). The creation of this identity in relation to the world will be discussed further later when the possessive marker, as the second most frequently occurring lexicalized item on the frequency list, is examined in more depth. While the brandline *Asia's world*

city, as a key component of the place brand, occurs 18 times in the branding documents and on the surface seems to give Hong Kong a unified identity, it can also be seen that three different identities of Hong Kong with respect to *China*, *Asia* and *world* are formed throughout the branding discourse by means of the tactical use of different linguistic patterns associated with the three core lexical items of place.

The third thematic category, “aspects of living,” includes 18 lexical items and involves the representation of the purported happenings, major areas of activities, and lifestyles of the communities in Hong Kong. At the heart of the everyday lives in Hong Kong, according to the brand creators, are commercial activities, as evidenced by the re-occurrences of such synonymous items as *business* ($n=27$), *economic* ($n=21$) and *trade* ($n=19$) in the branding discourse, often found close to one another (Figure 2).

| N | Concordance |
|---|--|
| 1 | poll. Hong Kong ranked the second easiest place in the world to do business, according to the World Bank's Doing Business Report |
| 2 | , clean government, major green initiatives, a level playing field for business and disciplinary forces among Asia's finest combine to |
| 3 | international asset management and offshore Renminbi (RMB) business centre, ensuring Hong Kong's global status. Globalised |
| 4 | economies in the world, and it is an international finance and business centre. Hong Kong's Evolving Story Hong Kong's |
| 5 | . For the fourth consecutive year, Hong Kong was named the 'Best Business City in the World' by a leading trade journal. In 2012, Hong |
| 6 | city mean? It includes a reputation for being a cosmopolitan and business-friendly economic centre, for having a skilled and |
| 7 | in Hong Kong. Being the preferred location for companies doing business in Asia, the city hosted 3883 regional headquarters and |
| 1 | efforts of HKSAR Government offices around the world, specially Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs), and cooperates with media |
| 2 | , as well as housing. New industries Hong Kong is expanding its economic base in areas where the city enjoys distinct advantages. |
| 3 | It includes a reputation for being a cosmopolitan and business-friendly economic centre, for having a skilled and knowledgeable workforce, |
| 4 | service suppliers in 48 service sectors in the Mainland. China links Economic cooperation with the hinterland has helped Hong Kong |
| 5 | consistently ranked Hong Kong number one in the world in terms of economic freedom. Competitive For the second consecutive year, |
| 6 | a reputation as a regional business hub, a natural gateway to new economic opportunities in Mainland China and the rest of Asia, and |
| 7 | , including that of final adjudication. The original capitalist society, economic system and way of life remain unchanged and the laws |
| 1 | to consolidate and enhance its position as an international financial, trade and shipping centre, as well as a premier international asset |
| 2 | an international transport hub. Its excellent network facilitates tourism, trade and investment. This is our advantage." Philip N. L. Chen |
| 3 | trade journal. In 2012, Hong Kong hosted some of the world's largest trade fairs, such as the Hong Kong Electronics Fair, the Hong Kong |
| 4 | the world underpin Hong Kong's role as a major international hub for trade, finance, aviation and shipping. World-class universities, an |
| 5 | for an evening out. Sensational shopping At the crossroads of world trade for over 150 years, Hong Kong is a great global emporium, |
| 6 | third runway for HKIA. Hub port Strategically located on the Far East trade routes and at the centre of the fast developing Asia-Pacific |
| 7 | to all. The city is an international centre for finance, logistics, trade, shipping, aviation, tourism and communications. Hong Kong |

Figure 2: Sample concordance lines of *business*, *economic* and *trade*.

While individually each item may not occur in large numbers, collectively they could be seen as a case of over-lexicalization, whereby synonyms or quasi-synonyms are used in abundance and in clusters to indicate “areas of intense preoccupation” (Fowler et al. 1979: 212) of the discourse. To accentuate the scale of the commercial activities in the city as being comparable to other developed economies, quantifying terms such as *percent* ($n=24$) and *million* ($n=16$) are used, the latter co-occurring with *US* to describe monetary amounts in one of the world’s dominant currencies, often for the purpose of reporting and comparing trade figures. Such examples of mathematical representation

are consistent with the ethos of capitalism (Flowerdew 2012) and are an attempt to position Hong Kong on a par with the world’s major trading economies.

Apart from the business sector, another area which is given some emphasis in branding Hong Kong is *law* ($n = 17$). It should be noted, however, that half of the occasions on which the legal sector is brought up is through the expression *the rule of law* (8/17), mostly as a desirable attribute to support business activities. In other words, it almost appears as if the *raison d’être* of the rule of law is to cement Hong Kong’s trade position. This is revealed in the expanded context of the concordance lines, where the importance of the rule of law to the role of Hong Kong as a business hub offering a level playing field and the protection of intellectual property rights is highlighted (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Sample concordance lines of the *rule of law* in expanded context.

Also worth mentioning is the observation that two important sectors, namely education and environment, which were strongly underlined by the former Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa when the idea of branding Hong Kong was first proposed when he was in office (Flowerdew 2012), almost do not feature at all in the current branding discourse. In fact, neither *education* nor *environment* is on the top 100 frequency list.

The fourth category includes miscellaneous items which are either meta-discursive in nature or are used to introduce practical information. For the former, the lexical items are employed to describe the components of the place brand or to discuss the brand itself. Words such as *brand* ($n = 26$), *attribute* ($n = 17$), *core* ($n = 17$) and *value* ($n = 20$) are thus commonly found. The latter involves the use of items introducing contact details such as *email* ($n = 41$) and *tel* ($n = 41$), and elements denoting parts of the address of an e-mail or a website including *gov* ($n = 59$) and *www* ($n = 34$). At first

glance, this category per se may not seem the most useful for understanding the underlying themes in branding Hong Kong. On closer inspection, however, the frequent occurrences of items in this category do highlight two issues. First, the recurrent use of the branding lexicon in the documents shows the brand promoters' conscious attempt at creating the Hong Kong brand through the jargon of branding, including such terms as *attribute* and *core value*. Here it appears necessary to attempt to justify and sanctify the branding process and products through the technical discourse of marketing. The naming of abstract qualities through the repeated use of such technical branding terms as *core values* or *attributes* also serves the purpose of reification. Second, a close study of the contact details in the branding documents shows that the organizations responsible for making contact with the target readers of the documents are again largely business-oriented, including the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, the latter of which only provide contact details for selected parts of the globe in certain key cities in Europe, North America, Asia-Pacific and Mainland China. From the contact details provided, it could therefore be postulated that the target readers of the documents are likely to be from the business sector of the above geographic locations, many of which are considered major economic powers, rather than from, say, Africa or South America.

The final category includes the most frequently occurring verbs on the list which indicate the key actions and processes in the branding discourse. Of the eight verbs listed, only the verb *ranked* can be used exclusively as a main verb. The remaining seven are either modal verbs (*can* and *will*), or verbs which can serve as either main or auxiliary verbs (the three variants of *be* and two variants of *have*). When the modal and auxiliary verbs are excluded, the three main verb lemmas *be* ($n=153$), *have* ($n=24$) and *rank* ($n=15$) remain the most frequently occurring verbs in the corpus. While these three main verbs can potentially realize more than one process type, a close analysis of all instances of these main verbs in context in the corpus shows that they are mostly used for the relational process. Figure 4 shows a sample concordance of these main verbs in relational clauses.

In Figure 4, the concordance lines containing the main verb *is* show that this main verb is used in relational clauses to introduce the attributes of Hong Kong (for example, *a cosmopolitan city*, *a dynamic city*), rather than used in existential processes. As such, the process of identifying or characterizing permeates the branding discourse, echoing the findings reported in Koller (2008) regarding city

| N | Concordance |
|---|--|
| 1 | THIS IS HONG KONG Strategically located at the heart of Asia, Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan city offering superb global connectivity. |
| 2 | the territory. Dynamic A great finance, trading and shipping centre, Hong Kong is a dynamic city. It is also a regional design and |
| 3 | Hong Kong to different international audiences. Brand Evolution Hong Kong is a dynamic, modern city - multi-dimensional and |
| 4 | 'liveability' index, released in November 2012. The report noted that 'Hong Kong is a very compact city that has managed to maintain its |
| 5 | significantly to Hong Kong's unrivalled position as a transport hub "Hong Kong is such an energetic city. In fact, I get most of my |
| 6 | our people. Positioning and Platform Hong Kong - Asia's world city Hong Kong is a free and dynamic society where creativity and |
| 7 | in the attitudes and aspirations of its people set the city apart. Free Hong Kong is an open society, where economic and social |
| 1 | , The Ritz-Carlton, and the city's highest observation deck, sky100. Hong Kong has 101 declared monuments. The Antiquities and |
| 2 | , anti-wrinkle, odor control and oil repellent fabrics. Life science Hong Kong has 300 international and local biotech companies. |
| 3 | give all major religions a focus for their faith. Culinary paradise Hong Kong has a well-deserved reputation as a culinary paradise. |
| 4 | make a place distinctive, memorable and identifiable. Cosmopolitan Hong Kong has a global outlook and combines the best of East and |
| 5 | of food tested has consistently been above 99 per cent. Healthy city Hong Kong has a world-class healthcare system. Residents enjoy |
| 6 | facilities. Digital domain A world leader in free public Wi-Fi service, Hong Kong has over 18800 commercial and government Wi-Fi |
| 7 | actually manufactured rubber duck toys decades ago. Theme parks Hong Kong has two world-class theme parks - Ocean Park and |
| 1 | in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Globalisation Index 2012. Hong Kong ranked fifth in the 2012 Global Cities Index released by |
| 2 | of economic freedom. Competitive For the second consecutive year, Hong Kong ranked first in the World Competitiveness Yearbook |
| 3 | in the Business Traveller Asia-Pacific magazine's 2012 readers' poll. Hong Kong ranked the second easiest place in the world to do |

Figure 4: Sample concordance lines of relational verbs following *Hong Kong* as the subject.

brands in Europe, and presenting some evidence that relational clauses contribute to the flavor of this register.

4.2 The linguistic conceptualization of Hong Kong

This section takes a closer look at the linguistic construction of *Hong Kong* by focusing on its function as the subject of a clause. The subject merits special attention since it occupies a prominent position in the clause as the departure point, representing the theme of a clause (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014). Of the 382 instances of *Hong Kong* in the corpus, only 155 (41%) function as clause elements. The remaining instances are part of a proper noun (e.g. *Hong Kong Disneyland*) or embedded in phrases as modifiers.

Of the four clause functions (subject, object, complement, adverbial) which can be fulfilled by *Hong Kong*, the subject is the most frequently occurring ($n=89$), constituting roughly three-fifths of all the relevant instances. Incidentally, the top three main verb lemmas that *Hong Kong* takes as the subject are again *be*, *have* and *rank*, all of which realize the relational process in these instances (Figure 4), as discussed earlier in Section 4.1. Specifically, the verb forms *is* and *has* serving as main verbs of the subject *Hong Kong* occur 33 and 11 times, respectively. With the three instances of *ranked*, the three verb forms together occur 47 times, outnumbering the 42 instances of the other 32 main verb types added together, all occurring mostly once. Of these remaining instances, many are also relational verbs and near-synonyms of the three most frequent verbs, including *become*, *remain* and *top*. It can therefore be argued

that the processes of being and having not only dominate the branding discourse in general, but also more specifically in defining Hong Kong as a carrier and token in attributive and identifying clauses, rather than as a metaphoric actor or sensor.

As shown in the concordance lines in Figure 4, the use of these relational verbs serves to introduce such adjectival attributes with positive connotations as *cosmopolitan*, *dynamic* and *energetic*. The discursive construction and communication of Hong Kong as a brand therefore seems to very much hinge on the characterization and evaluation of the place through the implicit assumption of taken-for-granted desirable attributes, instead of conceptualizing it as a collectivized actor endowed with agency (cf. Koller 2008) which actively takes action and fosters changes. While the most frequent attributes to be associated with Hong Kong in such relational clauses are *dynamic*, *free* and *open* ($n=11$), all of which suggest the tendency to change or accept change, the prevalence of relational clauses as discussed earlier highlights the static status of the city and conveys an aura of inertness, providing a sharp contrast to the flexibility and vibrancy that the brand creators hoped to portray. This air of stagnancy created by the dominance of relational clauses is further accentuated through the preponderance of the simple present tense when *Hong Kong* is the subject. Of the 89 clauses concerned, approximately two-thirds ($n=60$) are in the simple present tense, presenting the attributes assigned as inherent qualities and general truths (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014). The present perfect, which indicates transition, is infrequently used, occurring only 10 times (11 %). The continuous aspect, which may also indicate dynamicity and ongoing change, is even more rarely used, occurring merely three times (3 %). Similarly, the simple past is found 13 times (15 %) and the future is only expressed through *will* once with *Hong Kong* as the subject. The branding of Hong Kong is therefore predominantly concerned with the actual self, with minimal reference to the historical self in the past and the ideal self in the future (cf. Koller 2008).

4.3 The possessive marker

As the second most frequent lexicalized item in the corpus, the possessive marker occurs 202 times. Added to the fact that *have*, which realizes the possessive relational process, is one of the most common main verbs, there is a prevailing sense of possession in the branding discourse. This section focuses on the three nouns/noun phrases to which the apostrophe *s* is most frequently attached in the corpus: the proper noun *Hong Kong* (54 times), its synonymous term *the city* (22 times), and the common noun *world* (34 times). Together they

constitute more than half (54 %) of all the instances of the apostrophe *s*, outweighing the remaining 39 noun types to which the apostrophe is attached. For the former two, almost three quarters ($n = 55$, 72 %) of the nouns which immediately follow the possessive marker denote such abstract entities as *core values*, *heritage* and *positioning* and such abstract attributes as *diversity* and *dynamism* (Figure 5).

| N | Concordance |
|---|--|
| 1 | Kong (BrandHK) is the communications platform that encapsulates Hong Kong's core values, attributes and aspirations. The BrandHK |
| 2 | world-class city has certain values that people cherish or aspire to. Hong Kong's core values, as reflected in the attitudes and aspirations |
| 3 | are free to air their views and follow their religious and political beliefs. Hong Kong's diversity is also reflected in its mix of old and new, |
| 4 | Hong Kong positions itself as Asia's world city. BrandHK symbolises Hong Kong's heritage while reflecting the city's forward-looking and |
| 5 | visual identity, a stylised dragon with colourful flowing ribbons, links Hong Kong's historic past with its upbeat modernity. The blue and |
| 6 | brand positioning and visual identity. Brand Platform and Positioning Hong Kong's positioning as Asia's world city is built on a solid |
| 7 | landscape, the richness of its culture and the warmth of its people. Hong Kong's positioning, core values and attributes outlined in this |
| 8 | The challenge of designing a unique visual identity reflecting Hong Kong's values and attributes involved a legion of international |
| 1 | of Hong Kong as Asia's world city. As Hong Kong is ever changing, the city's brand also has to evolve with the times. BrandHK was |
| 2 | a team of international communications experts to ascertain the city's core values and attributes and develop a strategy to position |
| 3 | shape of the ribbons evokes versatility, and the multiple colours signify the city's diversity and dynamism. Core Values Every world-class city |
| 4 | Despite its small size, Hong Kong has great athletes who personify the city's dynamism. Hong Kong sent a team of 42 athletes to |
| 5 | for the city. BrandHK symbolises Hong Kong's heritage while reflecting the city's forward-looking and innovative nature. Hong Kong - Asia's |
| 6 | of the original dragon logo - a mythical and powerful icon that links the city's historic past with its energetic modernity. The blue and green |
| 7 | world city' was considered to be the positioning that best reflected the city's unique features - that Hong Kong is a natural, vital and |

Figure 5: Sample concordance lines of *Hong Kong's* and *the city's*.

A detailed study of the concordance lines in context, however, suggests that such words are often used as part of the jargon of branding (see also Section 4.1) without explication of the notions. The use of technical lexicon to describe the components of the branding exercise such as *core values*, and the official attributes of the brand such as *diversity* and *dynamism*, is again evident here. For the common noun *world*, the possessive marker is almost invariably followed by an adjective in its superlative form first, which is then followed by a noun (Figure 1, bottom). Unlike the abstract nouns in the pattern just discussed, the nouns used after *world's* denote concrete entities such as *banks*, *bridge* and *market*, most notably in the two domains of business and transport. Accordingly, the adjectives pre-modifying them are frequently found to denote physical qualities such as *largest*, *highest* and *longest*. Through this pattern, the city's alleged achievements are thus highlighted through its world rankings, at times further amplified by an emphasis on the temporal dimension through the use of such prepositional phrases as *for 19 consecutive years*. In sum, the possessive marker serves to convey a sense of professionalism through its attachment to branding jargon and to highlight the economic achievements of the city through its collocation with superlative adjectives.

5 Discussion: three branding strategies

Based on the analysis of the main textual patterns discussed above, three key branding strategies are identified in the branding discourse.

5.1 An orientation to the business sector

One key strategy used in the branding discourse is to highlight the role of business in the city. This is achieved linguistically through a number of means, including the frequent use of a business-related lexicon and its overlexicalization throughout the branding texts (see Section 4.1 and Figure 2), together with the localized re-occurrences of such business-related terms specifically with *Hong Kong* and the superlative adjectives to give weight to the city's economic achievements (see Section 4.3 and Figure 1). Further, the reference to the legal sector in the branding discourse appears to be a means to enhance the desirability of the business environment of Hong Kong (see Section 4.1, Figure 3). The combined effect is to further strengthen the already firmly established commercial and trading identity of the place. At the same time, this reflects the brand creators' worldviews that meaningful social practices are predominantly business-related and achievements in finance terms are more worthy than others, in a city which often gives the impression that money talks and pragmatism dominates, with the prevalent "Central District Values" of growth, efficiency and prosperity (Chu 2011).

5.2 A focus on attributes, not actions

Another strategy commonly found involves the assignment of attributes to Hong Kong. It is mainly realized through the predominance of relational verbs both throughout the branding discourse and locally when *Hong Kong* functions as the subject, and also the use of adjectives and noun phrases with generally positive connotation. Through the selection of the simple present tense when the relational verbs are used, the attributes are presented as inherent and invariable, rather than as being developed or evolved. While such static attributes are often emphasized through quantifiable world rankings, the actions required to accomplish such rankings are not specified. Indeed, dynamic actions appear to be lacking on the whole, as evidenced by the low frequency of verbs denoting material processes in the whole corpus. In consequence, the city portrayed is one which is competitive yet complacent, with a constant need to surpass other

cities in an attempt to promote itself. Its perennial concern for the present self and minimal regard for the historical self and the ideal self, however, seems to indicate that such accomplishments are based on qualities considered by the brand creators to be everlasting, rather than gained through specific actions actively taken by the city.

5.3 A reliance on technical jargon

The last strategy to be discussed here concerns a high degree of reliance on branding terminology in constructing and communicating the Hong Kong brand. Apart from the overall heavy use, such branding terms as *brand* and *core values* are also specifically found in the neighborhood of *Hong Kong* as meta-discursive elements to describe the brand itself. The need to legitimize the brand through the language of branding is therefore apparent in the documents. One possible reason for the conscious selection and frequent use of technical branding terms is to give off a sense of professionalism and authority, hence helping to reify the brand and making it more recognizable. More importantly, though, such marketing jargon again aligns Hong Kong closely with the business community, which ultimately represents the major stakeholders whose interests the brand creators wish to serve, while at the same time stifling the voices of other communities such as those in the creative industry (Chu 2011).

6 Conclusions

Through a corpus-informed discourse analysis of key textual patterns and branding strategies, the present study has shown the value of a linguistic approach to place-branding research in deepening our understanding of the discursive construction and communication of a place brand. In contrast to the more conventionally employed apparatus of questionnaires and focus-group interviews, this discourse-oriented method not only serves to fill the gap in the empirical study of place identity in the current literature, but also provides a novel perspective on the interdisciplinary inquiry of place branding.

Findings from the present study demonstrate the long overdue contribution that linguistic tools and analyses can make to the already interdisciplinary research area of place branding, which involves academic efforts not only from such fields as marketing, tourism, and urban studies (Lucarelli and Berg

2011), but also from international relations, public diplomacy and communications (Hayden and Sevin 2012). They also show the untapped potential for insights from linguistics research to be directly applied to the design and implementation of place-branding campaigns in order to better inform branding practices. Methodologically, the present study shows the potential of analyzing a small specialized corpus. While no marketing research on the Hong Kong brand is presently available, results from the present study can be readily compared with those from future studies either conducted by the official tourism body or in the academic domain, to identify any similarities and differences between how the Hong Kong brand is officially constructed and publicly perceived.

Further studies may also examine the extent to which the patterns and strategies found in the present study are generalizable to other place brand campaigns, and explore the highly multimodal nature of branding discourse through the study of the interaction between different semiotic resources. These will in turn enable us to revisit the very notion of place branding and reconsider its aims and the stakeholders involved, with a view to better establishing and conveying a place brand which truly belongs to all in the community concerned, as aspired by the branding campaign currently examined and increasingly by places around the world.

Appendix: top 100 items in the frequency word list of the branding corpus

| Rank | Word | Frequency | Rank | Word | Frequency |
|------|------|-----------|------|----------|-----------|
| 1 | the | 712 | 51 | chinese | 25 |
| 2 | and | 527 | 52 | cent | 24 |
| 3 | hong | 383 | 53 | about | 23 |
| 4 | kong | 382 | 54 | first | 23 |
| 5 | of | 377 | 55 | free | 23 |
| 6 | in | 283 | 56 | mainland | 23 |
| 7 | a | 262 | 57 | quality | 23 |
| 8 | to | 222 | 58 | such | 23 |

(continued)

(continued)

| Rank | Word | Frequency | Rank | Word | Frequency |
|------|---------------|-----------|------|-------------|-----------|
| 9 | 's | 202 | 59 | cultural | 22 |
| 10 | world | 136 | 60 | most | 22 |
| 11 | is | 127 | 61 | while | 22 |
| 12 | for | 113 | 62 | arts | 21 |
| 13 | city | 112 | 63 | dragon | 21 |
| 14 | as | 75 | 64 | economic | 21 |
| 15 | with | 68 | 65 | fax | 21 |
| 16 | hk | 64 | 66 | can | 20 |
| 17 | on | 63 | 67 | centre | 20 |
| 18 | has | 62 | 68 | home | 20 |
| 19 | international | 62 | 69 | values | 20 |
| 20 | people | 62 | 70 | every | 19 |
| 21 | gov | 59 | 71 | major | 19 |
| 22 | its | 59 | 72 | their | 19 |
| 23 | are | 58 | 73 | top | 19 |
| 24 | at | 57 | 74 | trade | 19 |
| 25 | by | 55 | 75 | events | 18 |
| 26 | asia | 54 | 76 | largest | 18 |
| 27 | from | 53 | 77 | life | 18 |
| 28 | that | 51 | 78 | attributes | 17 |
| 29 | an | 48 | 79 | best | 17 |
| 30 | it | 43 | 80 | core | 17 |
| 31 | e | 41 | 81 | development | 17 |
| 32 | mail | 41 | 82 | information | 17 |
| 33 | tel | 41 | 83 | law | 17 |
| 34 | was | 38 | 84 | than | 17 |
| 35 | brandhk | 37 | 85 | us | 17 |
| 36 | china | 37 | 86 | will | 17 |
| 37 | www | 34 | 87 | east | 16 |

(continued)

(continued)

| Rank | Word | Frequency | Rank | Word | Frequency |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|
| 38 | government | 33 | 88 | hub | 16 |
| 39 | have | 32 | 89 | living | 16 |
| 40 | per | 31 | 90 | million | 16 |
| 41 | this | 30 | 91 | or | 16 |
| 42 | new | 29 | 92 | which | 16 |
| 43 | one | 29 | 93 | year | 16 |
| 44 | also | 28 | 94 | all | 15 |
| 45 | many | 28 | 95 | cosmopolitan | 15 |
| 46 | business | 27 | 96 | creative | 15 |
| 47 | brand | 26 | 97 | festival | 15 |
| 48 | global | 26 | 98 | heritage | 15 |
| 49 | more | 26 | 99 | into | 15 |
| 50 | over | 26 | 100 | ranked | 15 |
| grammatical words | | | aspects of living | | |
| Hong Kong | | | miscellaneous items | | |
| alignment and positioning | | | actions and processes | | |

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