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# **The Image Construction of the City Yiwu in Overseas Media: Corpus-Driven Research Based on 2010-2015 and 2016-2021**

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**Abstract**---Every year, hundreds of thousands of businessmen from all over the world flood into Yiwu, a small commodity town known as “The world's largest small commodity trading market.” As Yiwu’s slogan says, “Buy from the world, and sell to the world.” This small town has been influencing the world using its own style. This paper extracted 1413 sentences from the Now Corpus using the keyword “Yiwu.” We divided data into two time periods: 2010-2015 and 2016-2021, and made an in-depth analysis of Yiwu's overseas image with the change of timeline. The research results showed that with the gradual maturity of projects such as “China-Europe Freight Train” and “Yiwu Fair,” Yiwu's oversea image has become more positive during these 12 years. Moreover, Yiwu has gradually become a modern city integrating with the world instead of a world-famous “Christmas factory.” Importantly, residents of Yiwu have been influencing the world with their unique wisdom.

**Keywords**---critical discourse, image construction, now corpus, overseas media, Yiwu.

## **Introduction**

Every Christmas, people all over the world put plastic Christmas trees from Yiwu in their homes. Americans held materials from Yiwu to cheer for the candidates during the 2016 and 2020 US presidential elections. People in Brooklyn, the United States, and Madrid, wait for protective products from Yiwu during the epidemic in 2020. Yiwu, a small trading town with a unique commercial activity of

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"using chicken feathers to exchange sugar" prevailing in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties, plays a pivotal role in the world pattern of the 21st century (Zheng, 2003; Bai, 2005; Bai, 2006; Zhou, 2009). As a part of China's overseas image, people cannot help wondering what the image of "Yiwu," a modern town known as "The world's largest small commodity trading market," will be overseas (Flowerdew, 1999; Jones, 2007).

In view of this research problem, Qian (2020), a professor from Zhejiang Technology and Business University, summed up the image of Yiwu in foreign media from 2010 to 2019: "Yiwu's commodities have become a cultural symbol, gone out of the country, set up a bridge of communication among people in the world, and become a carrier of benefit sharing, mutual benefit, win-win, people-to-people communication, and the mutual identification of civilizations." However, the author believes that the construction of Yiwu's overseas image is not achieved overnight, and its image is bound to change over time. More importantly, with the opening of the "Yiwu-London" and "Yiwu-Marashevich (Poland)" sections of the Western Line of China-Europe freight train respectively at the end of 2016 and 2020, Yiwu has had more trade contacts with the European mainland, and its image in overseas media has also changed. Accordingly, in this paper, we decide to combine corpus linguistics (CL) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) to analyze the prediction about Yiwu in the NOW Corpus. Therefore, the discourse used in this paper is divided into two periods of 2010-2015 and 2016-2021 according to time, and the research focuses on the change of the Yiwu image over time and describes its change track (Li et al., 2014; Reid et al., 2008).

## **Literature review**

### **Corpus linguistics**

Before the advent of corpus linguistics, linguistics was rationalism and did not rely on objective data to conclude. Francis & Sinclair (1994), pointed out that such intuitions often give a sense of plausibility, and it is this intuition prevents us from perceiving important linguistic facts. However, with the rapid development of computer technology, it is possible to deal with a large amount of data, making conclusions more authentic and reliable. As Sinclair (1991), said: "Thirty years ago, almost everyone thought it impossible for us to process a corpus which contains millions of words; twenty years ago, this was considered highly unlikely; today, it's quite common." Corpus linguistics is concerned with "keyword" and the "collocations" around it (Palmer, 1959; Firth, 1957). For critical discourse analysis, collocation is important because it can help researchers discover the text's hidden ideology (Qian, 2010). Based on this demand, scholars suggest the combination of Corpus Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), called "methodological synergy" (Baker, 2006; Baker et al., 2008).

### **Yiwu's image in overseas media**

In the application of corpus, many scholars use corpora to study image construction. For example, Wu (2020), a scholar from Hong Kong Baptist University, used the method of corpus-driven to study the ethnic identity of "Hong Kong citizens." Zhu (2012), took "China" as the node word in a self-built corpus

from New York Times and concluded that China is an important country with economic strength and political influence globally, which has not only been recognized and concerned by mainstream media but also caused much criticism. As an important economic town of small commodities in China, the Yiwu model integrating small commodity manufacturing, e-commerce, and cross-border logistics has attracted media attention from all sides. The village of Liu has formed an “e-commerce industrial cluster phenomenon” due to its unique location advantage, storage guarantee, and industrial chain support formed in the middle and late period. It is also crowned as the “The No.1 Village of Taobao.” However, only a few articles have studied the image of Yiwu (Flowerdew, 1998; Zanettin, 2013).

There have been media reports that the commodity of Yiwu is low in value, poor in quality, weak in brand awareness, often causing friction in foreign trade, and dealers often lose confidence in Yiwu due to the phenomenon of “fake and inferior.” In addition, a study on Arab people in business living in Yiwu shows that the interviewees' dissatisfaction with the city's window service and the quality of citizens exceeds the expectation of the research (Feng, 2020). Yiwu will struggle to survive overseas if this situation goes on for a long time (Ji, 2012). On the other hand, some studies show that Yiwu's overseas image is positive. Bao & Wang (2002) show that Yiwu will be a trend maker in the trend of China's globalization since the Yiwu model has historical roots and it is a typical representative of China's gradual development from town economy to modern field economy since the 10th century. Moreover, Qian & Dong (2020), affirmed the international image of Yiwu, by studying the corpus data on Yiwu from 17 countries in recent 10 years, concluded that Yiwu is a safe and livable place; “Yiwu Fair” is an effective trade platform for Asian enterprises; “Yiwu Shopping” is a comprehensive service website; the China-Europe freight trains have accelerated the flow of Yiwu goods to all parts of the world, and Yiwu's small commodities are getting rid of the fame of “low and cheap” (Ebrahimipour & Sepehri, 2011; Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021).

It can be summarized that Yiwu Fair and China-Europe Freight Train have brought it unlimited business opportunities, and scholars generally agree with the status of Yiwu as “The world's commodity city”. Meanwhile, the Yiwu government has also issued a series of policies to strictly control product quality. Therefore, the overseas image of Yiwu are not consistent. Unfortunately, current researches fail to capture Yiwu's changing image over time. In order to fill this research gap, the focus of this paper is on the change of Yiwu's overseas image. Based on this research purpose, the corpus of this paper is divided into two periods, 2010-2015 and 2016-2021, and makes a comparison (Li et al., 2016; Li et al., 2011).

## **Methodology**

### **NOW corpus**

Newspapers on the Web (NOW) corpus is a part of Brigham Young University's College Corpus (BYU), founded by linguistics professor Mark Davies. It stored 13.2 billion discourses from different countries' news and magazines, and around

4 million new discourses from 10,000 new articles are added everyday. NOW is one of the most popular corpus at present since it is used by more than 130,000 people wildly. In addition, due to its complete functions, it provides frequency, releases time and regions, and allows researches to click to view the context in which the article is used. It is suitable for scholars to conduct corpora analysis based on media materials according to their features. AntConc<sup>②</sup> is a free, multi-platform, multi-purpose corpus analysis software developed by a Japanese scholar, Laurence Anthony. It integrates the three major functions of collocates, word list, and keywords list (Anthony, 2004; Wang, 2009).

### Data collection

A total of 1413 discourses (up to August 12, 2021) from 19 countries (regions) were collected by using “Yiwu” as the node word in NOW Corpus (see details in Table 1). It is noticed that the node word was particularly frequently used by media in the United States, India and Singapore, accounting for more than half (51.42 %) of the total number of discourses, and followed by Britain, Hong Kong, Canada, and Malaysia. The number of media reports about Yiwu in these 7 countries (regions) accounts for the majority of the total discourses (77.21%).

Table 1  
Distribution of news on Yiwu from 19 countries(regions) during 2010-2021

Country (Region)	Frequency	Rate
America	266	18.82%
India	222	15.71%
Singapore	215	15.22%
British	124	8.78%
China Hong Kong	108	7.64%
Candida	93	6.58%
Malaysia	63	4.45%
Others	322	22.79%
In total	1413	100%

In addition, if arranged by year, it can be observed that the world's attention to "Yiwu" has increased exponentially in the past 10 years (up to August 12, 2021) (see Figure 1). Among them, the rising trend after 2015 is particularly prominent. Therefore, it is reasonable for this study to divide the data into two parts: 2010-2015 and 2016-2021. This can better describe the changing trend of Yiwu's oversea image (see Table 2). Based on the aim of this study, there are four steps: 1) Collect data from Now corpus. 2) Delete irrelevant discourses. 3) Import discourses into the corpus analysis tool and observe the frequency list, collocation list. 4) Use critical discourse analysis (see Figure 2).

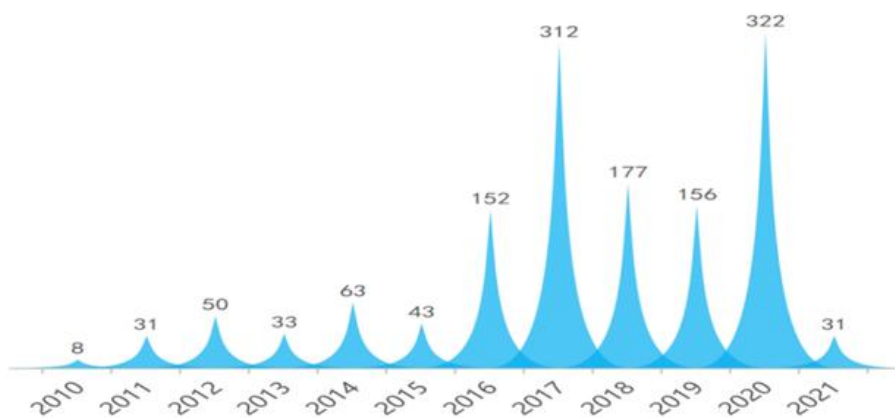


Figure 1. Distribution of news on Yiwu from 2010 to 2021

Table 2  
The discourses after screening

Time period	Discourses	After screening	Tokens
2010-2015	228	114	2640
2016-2021	1185	843	17313
In total	1413	957	19953

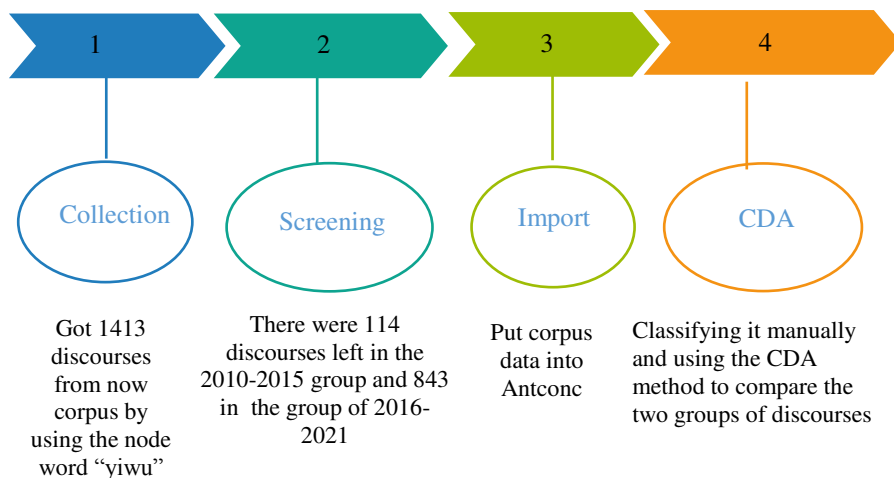


Figure 2. The procedure of this paper

## Data analysis

### The analysis of frequency and collocation lists

The reference corpus used in this research is BE06③ (Baker, 2009). The frequency and collocation list were automatically generated after the two groups of data into AntConc. Among them, the words with high frequency in 2010-2015 are China(31)/Chinese (25), the world (25), market (24), Indian(18)

and, Christmas(14). In the 2016-2021 group, the result is China (314), City (128), Fair (113), Market (103), and Train (73). From the word frequency results, it is not tough to make a simple conclusion that Yiwu gained more international attention through various trade fairs during 2016-2021 compared with the corpus from 2010-2015. Although word frequency analysis shows that there are some differences between the two sets of corpus, further analysis is still needed (Mubarak & Rhaif, 2021; Tampubolon et al., 2021).

### The analysis of 2010-2015

After removing irrelevant corpus through manual screening, a total of 114 discourses were retained. It is clear that the rest of data can be simply divided into five topics: 1) The world's largest small commodity market or a wholesale market of bulk commodities. 2) Trade with India and other countries. 3) The world-famous "Christmas Village." 4) Others. (see detailed information in Table 3). This part makes specific analysis of the first three main data groups from 2010 to 2015.

Table 3  
Yiwu's overseas image in the group of 2010-2015

2010-2015			
Theme	Number	Rate	
1. The world's largest small commodity market	46	40.35%	
2. Trade with India and other countries	43	37.71%	
3. The world-famous "Christmas Village."	17	14.91%	
4. Others	8	7.02%	
In total	114	100%	

- The world's largest small commodity market  
From 2010 to 2015, the world media's praise for Yiwu accounted for the largest proportion of corpus (40.35%). Many sentences directly use non-restrictive attributives to modify directly, or use some metaphorical expressions. Such description not only shows that Yiwu as the city of "world small commodities" is really worthy of the name and reputation, such as (1) (2). However, between the lines in some other examples, we can see the media's low evaluation of the quality of Yiwu's products. Some language materials think Yiwu's small commodities are "cheap" but selectively neglect to evaluate the quality of Yiwu's products or directly describe it as "average quality," such reports really ring the alarm bell for Yiwu's reputation. For yiwu manufacturers, the quality of their products should be checked to reverse the negative evaluation of their poor quality in the Western media, and to remove hidden dangers to open a bigger market. Such as (3) (4):
  - The 600,000-square-metre China Commodity City in Yiwu city, often often referred as "Walmart on steroids." (12-01-2014 Financial times) (1)
  - China Commodity City, Yiwu Futian market in Zhejiang province, was honoured by the UN, the World Bank and Morgan Stanley amongst other world authorities in 2005 as the "largest small commodity wholesale market in the world". (15-04-2015 The guardian) (2)

- “It’s the biggest market in the world,” says Shahabi, “the quality is not very good, but the price is very good.” (29-08-2014 The Daily Star) (3)
- Aiming at the lower end of the market, Yiwu’s sales thrived during the recession, as the world shopped for the cut-price. (19-12-2014, The Guardian) (4)
- Trade with India and other countries  
Exotic customs can be found everywhere in Yiwu: Business people worldwide have flocked to Yiwu’s modern airport, restaurants in east and west Asian styles have sprung up, and hotel lobbies are buzzing with chatter in Arabic and English. However, it was found that a large amount of data directly connected Yiwu with India, namely, “India is Yiwu’s biggest partner” after analysis of the data, such as(5)(6). One reason why Yiwu does not appear in the other countries’ media frequently (mainly in the European and American world) is that the “China Railway Epress (Yiwu to Europe),” which completed a round trip for the first time in early 2015, is still in its initial stage. With the steady progress of the “Belt and Road Initiative” and the gradual completion of various routes. Yiwu connects China--Kazakhstan--Russia--Belarus--Poland--Germany--France--Spain, thus playing a more important role on the world stage.
  - India has emerged as the top importer from Yiwu despite unsavory incidents and stiff advisories by New Delhi. (08-07-2021, The Economic Times). (5)
  - The 13,000-kilometer Yixinou Railway that opened last year connects Yiwu with Madrid and allows locally-made goods to reach there in just 21 days. (03-12-2015, Ejinsight) (6)
- The World-famous “Christmas Village.”  
Dotted around Yiwu are more than 600 factories that supply more than 60 percent of the world’s Christmas decorations, from glowing Christmas trees to floppy Santa hats. Most of Yiwu factories start to prepare Christmas decorations from July to August every year, and about 30% of them are put on a cargo ship in September and shipped to the United States. United States. At that time, shops selling ornaments play "Jingle Bells," the staff wears Santa hats. It's the world's most famous Christmas village and, according to BBC reporter Tim Maughan, the real home of Santa Claus, see 7.
  - Christened "China's Christmas village", Yiwu is home to 600 factories that collectively churn out over 60%. (7)
- The analysis of 2016-2021  
Similarly, a total of 843 discourses located in the group of 2016-2021 were retained. Compared with the data from 2010 to 2015, the theme of the corpus in this section shows similarity. Three themes (the world’s largest small commodity market; the world-famous “Christmas Village,” and Yiwu trade with the world ) still occupy the dominant position (44.69% in total). It is worth mentioning that Yiwu's trade with the world has shown diversification, especially with the Arab world, although India is still considered as yiwu's largest overseas market. Meanwhile, the number of news about trade with Britain (London) has shown a significant increase (9.85%). In addition, Yiwu Fair, digitalization, and COVID-19 have all exerted a great impact on Yiwu (See Table 4 ). This part will analyze the six main topics in the Corpus from 2016 to 2021.

Table 4  
Yiwu's oversea image in the group of 2016-2021

2016-2021		
Theme	Number	Rate
1. The world's largest small commodity market	96	11.39%
2. The world-famous "Christmas Village"	76	9.01%
3. Trade with the world		
Asia:		
Arab countries	25	2.97%
India	20	2.37%
Malaysia	8	0.94%
Other Asian countries	4	0.47%
Europe:		
British (London)	83	9.85%
Spanish (Madrid)	15	1.78%
Other European countries	22	2.61%
Africa	8	0.94%
America	19	2.25%
4. Yiwu Fair and other platforms	114	13.52%
5. Yiwu's Digitization	98	11.63%
6. Yiwu as "Anti-covid-19 fighter"	76	9.02%
7. Others	179	22.23%
In Total	843	100%

- The world's largest small commodity market  
In the Corpus of 2016-2021, Yiwu is still dubbed "the world's largest small commodity wholesale market" by many media. But the reasons are somewhat different from those before 2015. Before 2015, most of Yiwu's small commodities were shipped by sea, and its business partners were mainly distributed in neighboring Asian countries and the United States, such as India, Syria, Lebanon, and so on. After the comprehensive opening of the "China Railway Express" in 2015, transportation efficiency was greatly improved. Yiwu Fair and the establishment the "Yiwu Shopping" platform made Yiwu appear more frequently on the international stage. On the other hand, the decrease in export volume and the change of international situation force Yiwu, a small export-dependent city, to transform itself and make gradual efforts towards modernization, as shown in (8) (9). Generally speaking, the overseas image of Yiwu has gradually changed, although "small goods" is still its biggest label, but "small goods" is not all of it.
  - Some worried tariffs would bring risks to Yiwu International Trade Market, which is the world's largest wholesale market and where the dollar stores get their goods from. (24-12-2019, CGTN) (8)
  - Today, Yiwu has connected to more than 2 million small, medium and micro enterprises, more than 20 million industrial workers across the country, and connected to trillion-level business entities. ( 17-11-2020, Yahoo Finance) (9)
- Trade between Yiwu and the world



Yiwu has been presented a more international trend since 2015, and only in the aspect of data showed that with the United States, Britain, Russia, Spain, the Czech republic, India, Malaysia, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Somalia, and Kenya, Tanzania, and many other countries trade. One of the most striking is Yiwu's trade with the European world. A piece of news stated that more than 2,200 Indians lived in Yiwu for a long time, and India remained Yiwu's largest trading partner in 2016. The trade story between Yiwu and India has experienced several disturbances, and even the local Yiwu business people also have "afraid to talk about India," but that still cannot prevent Yiwu and India from further deepening cooperation. As the increasing number of Asian business people living in Yiwu, the government has built an "international community," than Arab business people in Yiwu generally have a strong sense of belonging and are willing to settle down for making a living, see (10)(11).

- Yiwu also shares a special relationship with India, given that nearly 2,200 Indian nationals (mostly traders) are long-term residents in Yiwu city and constitute the largest foreign community in this small commodity metropolis in eastern China. (07-05-2017, Outlook) (11)
- For years, the Chinese town of Yiwu has welcomed business-savvy Syrians, Yemenis, Libyans, and Iraqis. (30-04-2017, CGTN) (12)

As of late 2014, the China Railway Express ④ the "Yiwu - Madrid" part started smoothly, and then the "Madrid - Yiwu" part returned securely on February 22, 2015. With the advantages of shorter shipping time and lower price than air freight, China Railway Express reduces the comprehensive logistics cost and breaks the last barrier for Yiwu manufacturing to go abroad. "Made in Yiwu" the road to go abroad still met many difficulties, such as in Yiwu - Madrid part, the train needs to change wheels at least twice due to various countries do not have a unified gauge. However, China Railway Express still paved the way for Yiwu small commodity into Europe's millions of families, see (13) and (14). It is believed that the Yiwu will also gradually expand its influence in Europe when China Railway Express fully completed. Pointed out that this is also conducive to increasing China's voice in railway transportation in countries along the Silk Road and improving the trade convenience brought by China Railway Express to countries along the Silk Road.

- For 16 days and 7,456 miles all the way from Yiwu, the train from China to the UK arrived in London in recent weeks --- making it easy to transport goods and materials. (20-01-2017, The Straits Times) (13)
- Since November 2014, China has opened nine railways connecting Yiwu with cities along the New Silk Road, including Madrid, Tehran, Chelyabinsk, Mazar-i-Sharif, Riga, Minsk, London, and Prague. (29-08-2017, Business Wire) (14)

In recent years, China-Africa trade has grown at an extremely fast speed, and trade with Africa has become an emerging force in China's foreign trade. Huang & Xia (2016) stated that Yiwu attracts a large number of African merchants to pan for gold every year by virtue of its low product prices, and the number of permanent African merchants has exceeded one thousand. In order to create a better sense of integration and promote friendship with African friends, the Yiwu government has also taken several measures to improve its living environment. Such measures can also create

a good atmosphere for maintaining good bilateral trade relations between China and Africa, such as (15).

- Tanzania, Somalia, and Kenya have been sourcing goods in Yiwu for more than a decade. (02-03-2017, Quartz Africa) (15)

In fact, Yiwu has maintained close business ties with the United States, which accounts for more than 30% of annual Christmas orders. After the 2016 US presidential election, the “Yiwu Index” began to have a relationship with the US. It has been joked that Yao Dandan, a business person in Yiwu, successfully made a conclusion that American experts dare not reach just used the basic data that “Trump's order quantity is much larger than Hillary's,” see (16)(17). Although on November 7, 2020, the US announced that Joe Biden was elected as the new president of the United States, which did not match the Yiwu index, it still did not stop large numbers of Americans carrying something “Made in Yiwu” to cheer for Donald Trump. It can be predicted that a large number of orders related to the election will still appear in Yiwu before and after the American Presidential Election in 2024.

- During the 2016 US election, Yiwu Index became a hot topic on Chinese social media. It suggests that Donald Trump is more popular than Hillary Clinton. (03-01-2019, Business Standard) (16)
- Trump campaign masks in the Yiwu market are destined for shipment to the United States. (05-11-2020, Business Wire) (17)
- The world-famous "Christmas Village." Media reports from 2016 to 2021 still tend to use "Christmas village" to describe Yiwu, which is the same as the data in the group of 2010 - 2015. Such kinds of discourses have obvious time characteristics, and they are usually widely found in news reports around Christmas from November to December, see (18).
- It's crunch time as Christmas approaches in Yiwu, the Chinese manufacturing hub that has earned a reputation as Santa's "real" factory. (15-12-2016, New Straits Times) (18)
- Yiwu Fair and other platforms China Yiwu International Commodity Fair (Yiwu Fair )<sup>⑤</sup>, founded in 1995, has been successfully held for 26 sessions by August 2021, and the scale of each year shows an increasing trend. The 25th Yiwu Fair ended in 2019, attracting a total of about 60,000 people, including 8,738 overseas business people. Alshoak H. Ahmad, a Merchant from Syria who attended the meeting for the seventh time, said, “ Yiwu is a city of treasures, and it always surprise me.” At the same time, other seminars and exchanges were held during Yiwu Fair to jointly assist Yiwu commodities “go aboard.” Based on the analysis of this part of data, it can be found that the evaluation of Yiwu tends to be positive, such as (19).
- Arkadii, from Russia, said, “When I was doing import business in Russia, I often dealt with business people in Yiwu. As the largest exhibition in Yiwu, Yiwu Fair brings together high-quality new products from China and even around the world. This year, I came with my friends and everyone found what they were looking for.” (30-10-2019, Business Wire) (19)

- **Yiwu's Digitization**  
The "Yiwu Shopping" platform, fully launched in 2013, completely digitizes the Yiwu small commodity market. Customers can fully understand commodities with the unique "panoramic shopping" function and provide convenience for merchants to the maximum extent while restoring a complete offline shopping experience. Apart from that, the Electronic World Trade Platform (eWTP) was launched on March 23, 2016 under the initiative of Jack Ma, chairman of Alibaba Group. He put forward the eWTP Yiwu model of "free trade rules + digitization + infrastructure + subject and trade + government service" to help small and medium-sized enterprises, women, and young entrepreneurs have easier access to the global market (Li and Qiu, 2016). These two largest online and offline markets join hands to promote trade facilitation and liberalization to the greatest extent and serve the global small entrepreneurship subjects. See (20)(21).
  - October 21 marks the fifth anniversary of yiwu.com, the official website of the world's largest wholesale commodity market. (26-10-2017, PR Newswire) (20)
  - To date, Alibaba Group has joined forces with the governments of Belgium, Malaysia, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and Hangzhou and Yiwu in China to establish six eWTP hubs around the world. (21-06-2020, AP News) (21)
- **Yiwu as "Anti-covid-19 fighter"**  
The escalating pandemic of COVID-19 in late 2019 caused the world to temporarily hit the pause button and became the focus of everyone's attention. From the collected discourses, it can be seen that Yiwu tries the best to help the world to fight with COVID-19 together. "The world's first vaccination plan was carried out at the end of October 2020" (Asia Times, November 27, 2020). From these descriptions, people can see a very positive image of Yiwu, see (22)(23).
  - A freight train carrying donated masks and other anti-coronavirus supplies left the eastern Chinese city of Yiwu on Saturday morning for Madrid, Spain. The donations included 110,000 medical masks and 766 protective suits. This is the first cargo train of anti-epidemic supplies from China and Europe, which will arrive in Madrid in two weeks. (22-03-2020, China.org.cn) (29)
  - Jiaxing, Ningbo, and Shaoxing have approved emergency use of China's experimental COVID-19 vaccine. (19-10-2020, India Today) (30)

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

The above-detailed description of Yiwu's image of overseas media during 2010-2015 and 2016-2021 is attributed to "The Belt and Road Initiative" and "the unique wisdom of Yiwu business people ."The Belt and Road Initiative has expanded China's economic and trade cooperation with countries along the routes and facilitated the smooth import and export trade flow. As a visible entity of the Belt and Road Initiative, the China Railway Express act as a hub for trade between China and countries along the routes. This initiative has increased the exposure of Yiwu in the overseas market and contributed to the straight rise of its popularity since 2015, and further helped Yiwu sell its small commodities to the world (Zong & Zhen, 2021; Rinantha et al., 2018).

On the other hand, Yiwu enjoys wide popularity among overseas media due to its “businessman mind.” For example, Yao Dandan, a business person from Yiwu, quickly became popular on the Internet by making materials for Donald Trump’s election. A better example is the just-concluded Tokyo Olympics. When Yang Qian, a Chinese shooting athlete, clinched her first gold medal of the Olympics on July 24, lots of business people thousands of miles away in Yiwu was already making blueprint drawing to put her cute “yellow duck” hairpins into production lines. It is easily imagined that it will become a member of Yiwu’s new favorite after a few nights of work. If the “Belt and Road” is the external cause of Yiwu’s productions reputation abroad, the wisdom of Yiwu businessmen is the internal cause. With this modest wisdom, Yiwu, a rising modern town, will never end up playing a new role in the world pattern (Kholid, 2018; Othman, 2019).

Through the whole analysis, we conclude that the overseas image of Yiwu has undergone a lot of changes in the past 12 years and gradually become fruitful. Here, the author plans to summarize the changing track of Yiwu’s overseas image from 2010 to 2021 and outline the complete impression, as shown in Figure 3 and figure 4. From 2010 to 2015, Yiwu was the world-famous city of small commodities; it maintained close trade ties with India; it is the world’s Christmas village, from which Christmas goods were exported overseas. From 2016 to 2021, it is still known as the “City of small Commodities” and “Christmas Village”, and “Yiwu Shopping” provides a broad platform; “Yiwu Fair” and “China Railway Express” give wings to it; Yiwu selling products to Europe, Asia, America, and Africa. Although the pandemic has temporarily slowed its progress, it still has a unique power to affect the world.



Figure 3. Yiwu’s Oversea image from 2010-2015

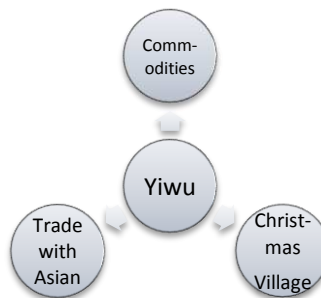


Figure 4. Yiwu’s Oversea image from 2016-2021

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## Notes

- ① This part is quoted from the introduction of BYU corpus by Hunan University Library ; the website is <http://lib.hnu.edu.cn/info/1287/5792.htm>
- ② AntConc download link: <https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/>
- ③ BE06(English Language Corpus) was created by Lancaster Professor Paul Baker and can be found in the Lancaster University Corpus Processor (CQP) for download, <https://cqpweb.lancs.ac.uk/>
- ④ “China Railway Express (Yiwu—Madrid)” starts on November 18, 2014, from Yiwu, Xinjiang, Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Germany, France, and finally arrive Madrid, Spain. The whole journey lasted about 21 days.
- ⑤ We selected The 25th Yiwu Fair in 2019 as a reference since it was not affected by the COVID-19.