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**ANALYSIS OF SELF-HELP BUSINESS LITERATURE IN CHINA BASED
ON THE BOOK *BE YOUR PERSONAL BEST* BY LI KAIFU**

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The article investigates the self-help business literature in hyper-competitive social system of China. The need to succeed stimulates the wish for self-actualization and self-realization in the context of high social pressure.

The self-help business books are being studied by adopting the interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that views language as a form of social practice – Discourse Analysis. So, the discourse in the article is understood as the main component of sociocultural interaction.

Despite its popularity, the field of self-help discourse is under-researched and undervalued. Self-help books' main intention is to give us the source to help ourselves. In self-help books, concepts, not the human characters, are the main characters.

The content of self-help discourse varies greatly. It is very rhetorical, persuasive, and manipulative. The step-like how-to format is prevailing in this genre, such books give simple steps, implementation of which would lead to achieving the big goal step-by-step along with supportive techniques to strengthen the newly gained knowledge.

The book *Be Your Personal Best* (“做最好的自己”, 2005) written by Li Kaifu (李开复, born December 3, 1961) is a typical representative of self-help literature which responds the user's needs, it is a part of personal growth and transformational literature which is a branch of self-help literature that covers life and self-improvement. The main aim of the book is to show the reader how to be more effective in achieving private and professional success by means of developing habits. It gives advice and instructions on improving of personal qualities and social relations by increasing one's potential and raising personal productivity.

It includes many formal characteristics of self-help books, such as: lists, application exercises and practices, visualization, metaphors, repetition of core concepts and ideas. The main intention is in the educational purpose, sharing of ideas, knowledge, life experience, concepts, it is a pragmatic advice-giving text.

Keywords: *Be Your Personal Best*, business discourse, China, discourse analysis, genre, Li Kaifu, self-help literature

Self-help books are known in China as “chicken soup books” (“心灵鸡汤”). The term originates from the series of the self-help books written by the motivational speakers

Canfield and Hanson from USA under the name “Chicken Soup for the Soul”. These books first appeared in America in 1993, and in 1998 they were translated in Chinese, starting the new bestseller genre in China.

The speed of economic development in China is extremely fast, it is stressful for the carriers of Chinese business discourse, as it imposes certain responsibilities and tensions in all spheres of life. When in one day it is possible to gain everything or lose everything by taking one wrong step. Chinese society is hyper-competitive, the exam-oriented education system has trained the carriers of the Chinese language mentality to understand the binary “win or lose” system from the young age to be the part of the normal world picture. The desire for self-actualization and self-realization in the context of high social pressure is driven by the need to succeed.

This study investigates the self-help business books by adopting the interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that views language as a form of social practice – Discourse Analysis. Discourse is a complex interdisciplinary phenomenon that is widely used by several humanities, the subject of which directly or indirectly involves the study of the functioning of language. Stubbs identifies three main characteristics of discourse: 1) in formal terms – is a unit of language that exceeds the volume of the sentence; 2) in terms of content, the discourse is related to the use of language in a social context; 3) in its organization, the discourse is interactive, i.e., dialogical [Stubbs 2003].

Serio identifies 8 meanings of the term “discourse”: 1) the equivalent of the concept of “speech”; 2) a unit that exceeds the size of the phrase; 3) the impact of the statement on its recipient, taking into account the situation of the statement; 4) conversation, as the main type of expression; 5) speech from the position of the speaker as opposed to the story, which does not take into account such a position; 6) the use of language units, their speech actualization; 7) socially or ideologically limited type of utterances (e.g. political discourse); 8) theoretical construct designed to study the conditions of text production [Serio 1999]. Van Dijk interprets discourse as the main component of sociocultural interaction with the presence of the main characteristic features – interests, goals, and styles [van Dijk 2000].

Discourse analysis studies language in use, in both spoken and written texts, while paying attention to its social functions, in this case the connection between the text and its social situation in which it is placed. Hereby, the language is seen as a “social action” [McCarthy 1991, 5–6]. Text is the main unit of discourse analysis. A text is “a unit of language in use...any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole” [Halliday, Hasan 1976, 1]. Textual unity is so a result of both: unity in text structure and unity in text texture [Halliday, Hasan 1976].

In modern society, the sphere of business has a great impact on the most of parts of human life. Business Linguistics is a new field of linguistics that explores the use and functioning of language in a context of business discourse, researches the appliance of language units in the process of business communication, investigates the use of verbal and non-verbal units in business discourse. According to Daniushina classification of Business Linguistics key areas, the study of self-help business literature can refer to the Lingua-pragmatics in a business context and Business Rhetoric, including specifics of a leader’s speech, argumentative and persuasive communicative strategies for carrying out presentations, conducting meetings and negotiations, as well as the application of language resources in motivating, problem solving, brainstorming, teambuilding, selecting personnel and its appraisal, (in)formality and (in)directness of business speech, formulating and conveying the meaning, building trust and rapport, and getting the feedback [Daniushina 2010]. We share the opinion of Daniushina that: “the investigation of the language functioning in business should be based on a discursive approach, which implies a deep speech penetration in life. Business discourse is supposed to be the object and the center of study for Business Linguistics” [Daniushina 2010]. We also agree with

Karasik's opinion [Karasik 2000, 18] that business discourse is a kind of institutional discourse and is defined as the linguistic interaction of people who are trying to realize their status and role opportunities within the social institutions that have been formed.

Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson and Planken refer to business discourse as the communication between interactants who are in a business relationship, most of which is conversation and written language between people whose main activities and interests belong to the business sphere, and whose common goal is business, as well as the corporate dimension, i.e., all that associated with the activities of the corporation [Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson, Planken 2013].

The main features of texts of business discourse include: brevity and economic use of language, clichés, and the use of abbreviated words, wide use of terms, coherence, logical construction, statements, clarity of presentation [Shlepkina 2011, 222].

The theoretical researches of Chinese business discourse use wide range of approaches of systematic-functional linguistics. Systematic-functional linguistics studies the use of the language and its function in particular social context, analyzes the ways language conducts a special social function within particular genre. Despite the fast-changing business environment in China and rapid economic growth, few studies exist in Chinese business discourse. On the other hand, despite its popularity, the field of self-help discourse is under-researched and undervalued, as its success is mainly measured by the number of sold books. The genre is categorized as "authentic non-fiction" and among popular authors are high profile professional psychologists, as well as self-studied amateurs, writing beyond their field of expertise [Salerno 2005, 8]. Self-help books' main intention is to give us the source to help ourselves. The term "self-help" means "the act of relying on your own efforts and abilities in order to solve your problems, rather than depending on other people for help" [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 2010, 1377]. In self-help books, concepts, not the human characters, are the main characters.

Self-help books commonly express social expectations and compare the behavior of the individual to the behavior of others, addressing abnormal issues or suggesting what could/should be improved/fixed by providing action-oriented strategies [Bergsma 2008, 341]. Self-help is not a scientific discipline; it lacks standard testing by scientific methods and empirical evidences. As one's understanding of well-being and happiness is highly subjective, it is extremely hard to evaluate the results of the self-help actions. Each person is unique, so the universal solutions do not work for everybody in the same way. The fact of reading the self-help book doesn't give any guarantees that something will change for better. The process of reading can give the false feeling of changing life for better, but without real actions it won't work. Even the fact of making some actions from the self-help guide oriented to change some aspects of life in most of cases won't led to any improvement, as the number of obstacles often prevail upon the chances.

The forerunners of today's advice literature were ancient Greek texts with maxims and aphorisms, philosophical writings concerned with ethics, such as conduct and etiquette books on how to behave in society [see: Lamb-Shapiro 2014, 6]. The basis for future self-help books was made in the middle of the nineteenth century. The first classic work of the genre was published in 1841. It was the essay *Self Reliance* by Emerson. It deals with self-development and fulfilling one's potential, regardless of social conformity. This work contributed greatly to the do-it-yourself approach and strengthened individualism [Butler-Bowdon 2003, 127].

Smiles' simplistic novel *Self-Help*, published in 1856, was one of the first classics of this genre. It was promoted as a personal guide, which was giving advice on behavioral change, work, and life, popularizing and valuing virtues, perseverance, purpose, diligence, and self-control [Briggs 1987].

How to Win Friends and Influence People by Carnegie was published in 1936. It raised the popularity of the self-help genre by selling the vast number of exemplars and

being translated to many languages. Carnegie focused on social and communicative skills to influence people, win them over, and improve social relations [Butler-Bowdon 2003, 81–85].

In the 1980's, there was a huge wave of self-help books, making it a mainstream phenomenon, which led to the appearance of the postmodern self-help classics, such as *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Covey [Covey 1990]. There has been a steady rise of self-help culture, and contemporary advice books are nowadays part of the wider popular culture, reflecting current concepts, notions, values, and widely held beliefs in modern society [McGee 2005, 11].

Modern self-help books are less moralistic; they depict the features of self-perception, self-awareness, and self-knowledge by emphasizing the individualism, personality, organizational skills, and personal change to improve the life quality of the recipient.

There are two categories of self-help books, which can be classified into: personal growth/transformational literature, and the problem-oriented literature. All self-help books are written with a particular intention for a distinct purpose and marked with specific characteristics [Salerno 2005, 5–6]. Momentarily, inspirational, growth-oriented literature is most purchased and fastest growing among the self-help sector, while business and finance related topics remain steady [Salerno 2005, 10].

Publishers of the self-help literature invest in investigations determining the main customers, meeting their needs and interests. So, there are specific groups of recipients who are addressed to in the literature of this genre. The publishers know for sure recipients' fears and problems. The main aim of the self-help book is to address the customer's life circumstances and personal qualities by using different approaches and styles, giving the solutions or guide to changing for better. Self-help discourse careers have become less stigmatized and more universal, educated, and affluent, anyone not occupied with basic survival, but economically and materially secured, with the support and resources to change their behavior and life, and with interest in greater control of self, family, career, and finances.

In the book *The self-help compulsion: searching for advice in modern literature* by Blum [Blum 2020] the author reveals the look on the self-help literature as the part of historical and literature context, shows the influence of the self-help genre on the history of the literature, as well as its future. The study argues and proves why self-help literature is a genre worth paying attention to when studying literature in general, that it is not just a set of ready-made formulas from semi-experts, but an independent literary genre that is worthy of critical attention, combined with a historical and literary context.

Self-help discourse is verbalized, among other, through such language means as: self-improvement therapy dialogues, consultancy, support and life coaching group programs verbal communication, boot camps, meetings, success trainings language means, lectures, classes, seminars by life-coaches and motivational speakers, as well as books, workbooks, online products, e-books, audio books, multimedia seminars, videos, online programs or apps, forums, websites, blogs, etc.

In comparison to other genres, the content of the self-help discourse varies greatly. It is very rhetorical, persuasive, and manipulative. The typical constituent parts of self-help books and products include: simplistic formulaic phrases, exaggerations, stereotypes, myths, simple answers as logical, commonsense assumptions, uplifting slogans, platitudes and clichés, presumable correlations, explanatory notes, comments, experiences, anecdotes, practical advice, visualization techniques, inspirational tales, and emotional stories replacing eloquent proof, repetition of core concepts or phrases with a rhetorical and cohesive function [Lamb-Shapiro 2014, 9].

The step-like how-to format is prevailing in this genre, such books give simple steps, implementation of which would lead to achieving the big goal step-by-step along with supportive techniques to strengthen the newly gained knowledge. To encourage the

recipient and increase his/her motivation, quotes and positive affirmations are widely used. Formulas, which seem to be successful, are frequently repeated. Important points are often capitalized, answers are written as bullet points, highlighted in bold print or as exclamations to draw attention to the main concepts. Cause-and-effect relations between events, most likely to happen, are commonly emphasized [Salerno 2005, 5].

Egalitarian idea is one of the brightest in this genre. The equality and equal opportunities for all come as a red stripe throughout the self-help literature. This notion is utopian and in contrast to the real world, where the personal inequalities do make difference in achieving the successful results in any sector of life and work. Successful and popular self-help books use understandable language and simplistic approach to adapt the style and level of information to the level which the recipient can understand.

The reforms carried out by Deng Xiaoping and his allies gradually led China away from a planned economy and Maoist ideologies, opened it up to foreign investment and technology, and introduced its vast labor force to the global market, thus turning China into one of the world's fastest-growing economies [see: Denmark 2021]. The public sphere, though strictly monitored by the Party-state, opened to alternative, non-socialist sources of life advice once again. Confucianism resurfaced in the 1990s and early 2000s [Bell 2008].

The flagman of the first generation of the local Chinese writers was Li Yanjie (李燕杰, 25.10.1930 – 16.11.2017) with his book *Shaping Beautiful Soul* (“塑造美的心灵”), which was the compilation of his motivational speeches which he revealed before the young Chinese people who were seeking for the motivation for their spiritual and mind growth. It was published in 1982 and became very popular (sold over 4.6 million copies) [News Chinamag 2021].

Bestselling self-help authors from China include Bi Shumin (毕淑敏), Wu Ganlin (吴甘霖), Ma Yun (马云), Li Yanhong (李彦宏) and Bai Yansong (白岩松). Many of China's most successful “business gurus” appeared as a result of the growth of the IT sphere, among them are Li Kaifu (李开复), Ma Yun (马云) and Li Yanhong (李彦宏).

Ma Yun (马云) is a Chinese business magnate, investor, and philanthropist. He is the founder of Alibaba, a multinational technology group. Ma is a strong proponent of an open and market-driven economy. Among his most popular self-help books are *Ma Yun's Comments on Starting a Business* (2007) (“马云点评创业: CCTV《赢在中国》现场精彩点评实录”), and in 2019 *Jack Ma in his own words* [Ma 2019].

Li Kaifu (李开复, born December 3, 1961) is an entrepreneur in software development and artificial intelligence who has held senior management positions in the Chinese divisions of major US firms and leads large-scale investment projects in China, worked as a top-level manager for Apple, Microsoft, and Google. After leaving Google, he stayed in Beijing and set up investment funds to promote the development of the Chinese IT industry and artificial intelligence. In 2018, he published *AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order* [Li 2018], in which he described how China is moving towards a global leadership in artificial intelligence.

As the vivid example of the Chinese self-help business literature, we used in this article the self-help book *Be Your Personal Best* (“做最好的自己”, 2005) written by Li Kaifu (李开复) [Li 2005] as the main material of the linguistic study of the peculiarities of the Chinese self-help business discourse literature.

It is written in simple and understandable manner to make it appealing to the wider range of readers. It is very rhetorical and persuasive. Reading the book gives the reader the impression that his personal success depends upon his personal choice and attitude to life and others: “每个人都有成功的机会” / “Everyone has a chance on success” [Li 2005, 10], “别人眼中的自己, 才是真正存在的自己” / “The one whom others see, is the real you” [Li 2005, 63], “我怎样对待别人, 别人就怎样对待我” / “How I treat others, others treat me” [Li 2005, 59].

Common to most self-help books structural feature – the step-like how-to format with step-by-step instructions is also part of the book. In chapter 3 there is a part 积极主动的七个步骤 / Seven steps to be proactive, which introduces seven simple steps to easier implementation of proactive way of life and work.

The classification and integration of psychological self-help books: A case study of Taiwan's best-selling psychological books written by Zhu Bairui [Zhu 2022] reveals the results of the study of the Taiwan's psychological self-help books and gives the classification system of the best-selling psychological books in Taiwan in 2021. The classification system has nine categories: "personal growth", "interpersonal relationship", "coping with stress and emotions", "career development and planning", "interpersonal communication", "theory-based knowledge", "(auto)biographies", "trauma, mental disorder and psychotherapy" and "death and grief". According to this newly developed classification, the book *Be Your Personal Best* ("做最好的自己", 2005) by Li Kai Fu can be considered as the part of the "personal growth" and "career development and planning" categories.

The descriptive phenomenological approaches to study the self-help literature are being applied in the work *Exploring the texts of self-help books with descriptive phenomenology* by Lin Tingting [Lin 2018]. Regarding a framework of the textual analysis, the study adopted the theories of self-actualization. A self-actualized person fully reveals one's personal characteristics, thereby achieving the ideal goals of self-improvement and self-realization. This corresponds with the main theme of the book *Be Your Personal Best* ("做最好的自己", 2005) by Li Kai Fu, as the aim of the main character of this book is to become the best version of himself, to achieve success through personal growth.

Wielander and Hird in their book *Chinese Discourses on Happiness* [Wielander, Hird 2018] analyze the forms of happiness in modern Chinese discourse. Different social groups of Chinese society have various thoughts on rendering this concept. The study brings out different connotations of happiness depending on the ideology, religion, social background of the bearer of Chinese mentality. Analyzing the book *Be Your Personal Best* ("做最好的自己", 2005) by Li Kaifu in context of this study we can make the conclusion that Li Kaifu in his work shows that happiness can be achieved through everyday work on improving your personal characteristics, which corresponds to the Confucian ideology, which states that one should study hard, work hard, show his best to make positive impression on others.

Hendriks in his work *Life Advice from Below: The Public Role of Self-Help Coaches in Germany and China* [Hendriks 2017] makes the fascinating comparison of influence of the American-style self-help culture on the representatives of the radically different politico-cultural regimes, particularly Germany and China, through applying the contemporary sociological theory. It seems extremely interesting to conclude that the bearers of the Chinese mentality are more influenced by the gurus of self-help literature compared to representatives of European culture, namely Germans. This can be explained by the influence of Confucianism on the worldview of the Chinese people. In Confucianism, it is customary to listen to and treat the teacher with respect, not criticize his words, and faithfully follow instructions.

Research on the writing style and content evaluation of psychological self-help books: Taking Taiwan's best-selling psychological self-help books as an example by Liu Yunfei [Liu 2016] analyzes the best-selling self-help books in Taiwan, and states that self-help books are written in a manner that attracts the readers' interest and stimulates them to make changes in their life. Most of self-help books are not based on the practical experience of the author. The author came to these conclusions by analyzing modern books in this field specifically in Taiwan. The book that became the basis for our research was written by a person who has achieved significant career achievements and has the moral right to share his experience and impart his wisdom to others.

Social desirability is an important category that is considered in the work “Allowing for Social Desirability in Reception Studies: The Case of Self-help Book Readers” by Marquis [Marquis 2015]. In fact, a significant part of things that a person does every day is the embodiment of a person’s desire for recognition in society. The book we are examining is also an example of the representation of this desire to receive social approval – social desirability. After all, the advice and thoughts contained in the book help the reader to achieve social and career goals, to achieve success.

In the article “From a self-made to an already-made man: A historical content analysis of professional advice literature” by De Keere [De Keere 2014], the author analyzes the diachronic development of self-help discourse literature in the 20th century, notes how the correlation between the personality of the self and work goals have changed. If at the beginning of the century, a person had to adjust himself to the level of a certain job, then today the personality develops guided by his/her interests and desires, and he/she looks for a job according to his/her requests and acquired knowledge. The book we are analyzing confirms the opinion of the author. Since Li Kai Fu also emphasizes personal growth and the desire to succeed, the author focuses on tips for achieving respect and harmonious coexistence in a team, gives the author a chance to become a leader and make the right choices. Li Kai Fu inspires the reader to improve himself, to find a better version of himself to achieve success.

The book has the typical generic structure. It consists of 15 Chapters and has two Appendixes. Each Chapter reveals the ways that help to achieve success in modern Chinese society. Appendixes show the life story of Li Kaifu written by him and by Lin Zhijun. It includes many formal characteristics of self-help books, such as: lists, application exercises and practices, visualization, metaphors, repetition of core concepts and ideas. The main intention is in the educational purpose, sharing of ideas, knowledge, life experience, concepts; it is a pragmatic advice-giving text.

The coherence of genre is being achieved, as we can understand the text as a typical self-help literature, written according to the expectations of self-help business books, main aim of which is to render the ways to achieve the success. The register coherence reflects the situation. The three key aspects of a situation that significantly influence language use in a particular situation are register variables: field, mode, tenor [Eggs 2004, 90]. The field is specific; it is the guidance and advice in achieving the success in business sphere. The main topic is the description and step-by-step instructions for self-improvement. The author uses every day, familiar vocabulary to make the text understandable for the beginners.

The mode can be observed in a different distance between language and situation occurring, that is in spatial/interpersonal and experiential distance [Eggs 2004, 90]. There is a spatial/interpersonal distance between the author and the recipient, the contact is one-way, the communication is non-interactive with no visual or verbal feedback. The mode of the book is a written monologue, the narration from the viewpoint of the author, written in the first person singular. Regarding the experiential distance, language does not accompany activity between the interactants (author and recipient), but it constitutes social process and constructs experience [Eggs 2004, 91]. Written language usually tends to be formal, but in this book, it is casual, informal and every day, to minimize the distance between the author and recipient. The structure is determined before the text is written, because of the generic structure, where the author follows the typical stages.

The tenor influences the type of language that is used. This is reflected in the hierarchy in power relations between interactants. The author is an expert who gives advice to the general reader. Most of the language is neutral and standard, with some form of sophistication achieved using the 书面语 vocabulary and grammar structures.

Continuity of the text, its links between individual clauses and sentences is called cohesion. Cohesion is expressed through grammatical and lexical devices. Such devices

bind the text together. Grammatical cohesive devices are reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Lexical cohesive devices are repetition of words and collocations [Halliday 1978, 1-4]. Reference is a cohesive device which directs the reader to look for its interpretation in an entity, of which he already has a mental representation [Halliday 1978, 229]. The most common reference resources include demonstratives, pronouns, comparatives, and the phoric adverbs like here, there, now, then [Schiffrin, Tannen and Hamilton 2001, 36].

References can be endophoric and exophoric. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), there are three types of endophoric references: personal (he, she, it, etc.), demonstrative (this/that, there, then, etc.), and comparative (same, identical, equal, similar, better, more, less, etc.), which are referred through category of person, by means of location or means of comparison – similarity or non-similarity [Halliday, Hasan 1976, 37]. When the author uses the exophoric references, he expects us to understand his world picture and cultural background. Such references are text external.

The examples of using references in the text are as follows:

1. 真正的成功有很多种: 它可能是创造出了新的产品或技术... / There are many kinds of real success: **it** could be the creation of a new product or technology [Li 2005, 40].

2. 最重要的是, 要善于接受不同的思想和意见, 善于吸取别人的优点..., 只有这样, 才能成为全面发展的、完整的人 / The most important thing is to be good at accepting different ideas and opinions, and be good at absorbing the advantages of others... only acting like **this** can you become a well-rounded and complete person [Li 2005, 42].

3. 正如此前所说的那样, 国际化人才是融会中西文化精华的人才 / **As** mentioned earlier, international talents are talents who integrate the essence of Chinese and Western cultures [Li 2005, 31].

4. 恰恰相反, 这里所说的完整和均衡既不反对展示个性, 也不反对挑战自我, 这里所说的完整和均衡仅仅是在提醒大家: 在通往成功的道路上, 需要足够的智慧来避免自己走入偏激的误区 / On the contrary, the wholeness and balance mentioned **here** are neither against showing individuality nor against challenging oneself. The wholeness and balance mentioned **here** are just to remind everyone that on the road to success, you need enough wisdom to avoid yourself into the extreme misunderstanding [Li 2005, 63].

5. 成功的秘诀: 成功等于价值观加上态度加上行为 / The secret to success: Success **equals** values plus attitude plus behavior [Li 2005, 85].

Substitution is a cohesive relation similar to reference, but the main difference is that the substitute should be of the same grammatical class as the item for which it substitutes. A substitute can function as a noun, verb, or clause.

In the text we can find such examples of substitution:

1. 有些人出生时就因为遗传的原因, 患上某种严重的疾病的可能性比较大. ...如果他们因为‘基因不好’就... / Some people are born with a higher chance of developing a serious disease because of **genetics**. ...if they're "bad **genes**"... [Li 2005, 98].

2. 很多人可能说他运气好, 因为被分配到缺乏人才的青海才有这样的机会. 但是, 如果他没有积极的学习, 也无法得到这个机遇 / Many people may say that he is lucky, because he was assigned to Qinghai, which lacks talents, to have such an **opportunity**. However, if he does not actively study, he will not be able to get this **chance** [Li 2005, 99].

Ellipsis is a cohesive relation similar to substitution. But in ellipsis the substitute is zero, so the substituent is replaced by omitting of usage of verbal signs. Such elements are evident and obvious to the recipient, so there is no linguistic need to use them in the text. For example, 等待的方法有两种, 一种是什么事也不做地空等, 另一种是一边等, 一边把事情向前推动 / There are two ways to wait, one is to wait without doing anything, and the other is to wait and push things forward [Li 2005, 112].

Conjunctions refer to the logical-semantic cohesive relations. They connect words, clauses, or sentences. In the discourse they establish the relationships between sentences,

define the kind of these relationships. According to Halliday and Hasan, there are four main groups of conjunctions: additive, adversative, causal and temporal.

The following sentence demonstrates the causal conjunction cohesive relation: 所以, 只有做好充分的准备, 才能在机遇来临时紧紧抓住, 取得成功 / **Therefore**, only when you are fully prepared can you seize the opportunity and succeed when it comes [Li 2005, 114].

The example of the additive conjunction cohesive relation is: 还有, 就算在最辛苦的时候, 当你感觉命运已放弃你的时候, 你还有选择 / **Also**, even in the hardest times, when you feel like fate has abandoned you, you still have options [Li 2005, 117].

但是, 我很清楚, 第一步的成功给我提供的只是一个机遇 / **However**, I knew very well that the success of the first step offered me only an opportunity. This sentence is the example of the adversative cohesive relation [Li 2005, 125].

Discourse analysis of the self-help book *Be Your Personal Best* (“做最好的自己”, 2005) written by Li Kaifu (李开复) has showed that the reference chains of the inanimate participants are longer than the chains of human participants. The main characters in the book are concepts and abstract ideas. Substitution and ellipsis are often used in the narration and conversational dialogues. Logical-semantic relations are expressed through simple coordinating conjunctions; they are frequently used to emphasize the casual tone. Repetition in various forms dominates all types of the lexical cohesion. It can be explained by the fact that self-help books often repeat concepts and ideas.

So, we can come to conclusion that the self-help genre is an independent literary genre with its own peculiarities and characteristics that has its place in the literary and historical context. The main characteristics of self-help literature are the following: rhetoric, persuasiveness, manipulateness, use of simple formulas that can often be implied step-by-step, along with the inspirational stories and repetition of core concepts or phrases.

It became popular in USA, and then spread its popularity widely, becoming one of the most appreciated genres in China. The main reason of such success in China is high social pressure and need to succeed that stimulate the development of desire for self-actualization in hyper-competitive Chinese society.

In this study we used the self-help book *Be Your Personal Best* (“做最好的自己”, 2005) written by Li Kaifu (李开复) [Li 2005] as the prominent example of the Chinese self-help business literature, as it is popular among Chinese readers, written for them by the eminent representative of Chinese IT-sphere, guru and businessman who has the moral right to write the business success guidance books as he has achieved the high position in business and society.

Analyzing the book, we concluded that it can be related to the personal growth literature. Social desirability is an important category that is revealed in the book, which is full of thirst for success, advice on how to achieve it at work. It is written in simple and understandable manner; it gives the clues and advice on how to become the best version of yourself. It is a typical representative of self-help literature that responses the user's needs. The main aim of the book is to show the reader how to be more effective in achieving private and professional success through developing habits. It gives advice and instructions on improving of personal qualities and social relations by increasing one's potential and raising personal productivity.

So, the book *Be Your Personal Best* (“做最好的自己”, 2005) written by Li Kaifu (李开复) is the example of the self-help business literature written by the carrier of the Chinese mentality for the Chinese readers. It reveals the basic features of the self-help business discourse literature. The book serves cultural interests, fulfilling the demand in belief in limitless possibilities of highly competitive and full of risks in economic sphere Chinese society. It praises dominant cultural values, such as self-reliance, ambition, positive willpower, states that background and social status of the person don't make an impact on success. Manifestations of specifically Chinese features of mentality in the self-help business discourse literature will serve as a basis for further research.

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Аналіз селф-хелп-бізнес-літератури в Китаї на основі книги Лі Кайфу "Будь найкращою версією себе"

У статті досліджено бізнес-літературу про самопомігу в умовах гіперконкурентної соціальної системи Китаю. Потреба в успіху стимулює прагнення до самоактуалізації та самореалізації в умовах високого соціального тиску. Бізнес-книги для самопоміги досліджуються у статті із застосуванням міждисциплінарного підходу до вивчення дискурсу, який розглядає мову як форму соціальної практики – дискурс-аналіз. Отже, дискурс у статті розуміється як основний компонент соціокультурної взаємодії.

Незважаючи на високу популярність, сфера селф-хелп-дискурсу недостатньо досліджена та недооцінена. Основна мета книг із селф-хелп – дати нам джерело допомоги самим собі. У книгах із селф-хелп головними героями є концепції, а не людські характери.

Зміст селф-хелп-дискурсу є різноманітним. Книги цього жанру мають такі характеристики, як риторичність, переконливість, маніпулятивність. У цьому жанрі переважає покроковий формат, такі книжки дають прості кроки, реалізація яких крок за кроком приведе до досягнення великої мети разом із підтримувальними прийомами для закріплення щойно здобутих знань.

Книга "Будь найкращою версією себе" ("做最好的自己", 2005), написана Лі Кайфу (李开复, 1961 р. н.), є типовим зразком літератури селф-хелп, що відповідає потребам користувача, літератури особистісного зростання та трансформаційної літератури, належить до літератури для самопоміги, що висвітлює життя та самовдосконалення. Основна мета книги – показати читачеві, як за допомогою розвитку звичок досягти більш ефективного особистого та професійного успіху. Книга дає поради та вказівки щодо вдосконалення особистих якостей і соціальних стосунків шляхом підвищення потенціалу та особистої продуктивності.

У книзі міститься багато формальних характеристик літератури для самопоміги, як от: списки, прикладні вправи та практики, візуалізація, метафори, повторення основних концепцій та ідей. Основна мета полягає в навчанні, обміні ідеями, знаннями, життєвим досвідом, концепціями, це прагматичний текст-порада.

Ключові слова: бізнес-дискурс, "Будь найкращою версією себе", дискурс-аналіз, жанр, Китай, Лі Кайфу, селф-хелп-література

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