China's poverty alleviation in the media: Analyzing the television series *Minning Town* from a cultural discourse perspective[1]

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Abstract

Existing scholarship on Chinese poverty alleviation has largely proceeded from institutional or economic perspectives, paying insufficient attention to the role of cultural discourse in understanding this new campaign of China. The present study adopts Cultural Discourse Studies (CDS) as methodology to examine the television series *Minning Town*, aiming to reveal the discursive strategies reconstructing the emergence, methodologies, and underlying logic of the Minning poverty alleviation efforts. It makes the following argument. Firstly, the success of the township's alleviation poverty efforts is made possible by such forces as state policy initiatives, relocational migration, technological assistance, the nation's East-West collaboration, industrial development, the unity between the Party and the masses, the awakening of human agency, and dialectical synthesis of ecological modernization. Secondly and most crucially, these motivating factors are rendered present through a diversity of Chinese discursive-cinematic techniques: Chinese-specific parole and narratives, particular types of personages, dialectal dialogue, polyphonic soundscapes, and contrast montage. This study demonstrates that Chinese cinematic discourse provides an effective way of understanding Chinese poverty alleviation efforts.

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Introduction
In recent years, research on China's poverty alleviation has drawn widespread academic attention both domestically and internationally. Domestic scholarship primarily focuses on the institutional strengths and policy efficacy of the poverty alleviation campaign. Scholars have systematically elaborated on dimensions such as the targeted poverty alleviation strategy, the East-West pairing-off collaboration mechanism, and the effective transition from poverty alleviation to rural revitalization. Rich academic outputs have emerged around topics like poverty reduction achievement evaluations and long-term mechanisms for addressing relative poverty. In 2020, "Poverty Alleviation and Rural Revitalization" was named one of China's top ten academic hotspots, marking this field's transition into a phase of deep theoretical construction. Meanwhile, international scholarship predominantly examines China's poverty reduction practices through the lens of development economics, alongside systematic literature reviews on China's rural revitalization policies in recent years. However, existing research largely favors policy text analysis, economic data statistics, and institutional mechanism interpretation, leaving the discursive construction, emotional mobilization, and production of meaning embedded within cultural texts (such as film and television works) under-analyzed (Chen, 2021; Fan, 2024; Lei, Teo, & Candida, 2024).

A Cultural Discourse Studies perspective
Cultural Discourse Studies (CDS) is an interdisciplinary research paradigm devloped by Shi-xu (2025, 2014, 2022) in the early 21st century. Integrating cultural studies with discourse analysis, CDS emphasizes that discourse is not merely a vehicle for transmitting information, but an arena for constructing cultural meanings, power relations, and identities. Its central concern lies in unraveling how specific discursive practices are produced, circulated, and received within particular historical and cultural contexts, as well as how discourse participates in the construction and reproduction of social reality. Moving beyond traditional discourse analysis's exclusive focus on linguistic forms, CDS contextualizes texts within broader cultural traditions, ideologies, and social practices.

Introducing CDS into the analysis of poverty alleviation provides two crucial new avenues for scholarly inquiry:

How discourse constructs the reality of poverty alleviation: It illuminates how cultural texts like TV series translate abstract policy language into concrete, palpable stories of individual destiny through narrative strategies, visual rhetoric, and emotional mobilization, thereby constructing audience resonance and institutional legitimacy for the cause.

Discourse-power dynamics: It enables an examination of the discursive negotiations and power dynamics among diverse actors (state, local governments, and citizens) within poverty alleviation narratives. By examining who speaks, how they speak, and how speech shapes action, this perspective deepens our understanding of the underlying cultural logic of China's poverty alleviation.

Below, we examine media representations of a landmark Chinese poverty alleviation case to uncover the underlying drivers of these initiatives, while delineating the discursive communication strategies used to depict them.

Causes driving the poverty alleviation effort in Minning

Extreme natural survival imperatives: Situated in the arid belt of Northwest China, the Xihaigu region suffers from an extremely harsh natural environment. The opening scenes of *Minning Town* establish this existential predicament through highly realistic visual language: a monochromatic color palette of ochre yellows and dusty browns dominates the frame, conveying the tactile sterility of the Gobi Desert (Lu, 2022; Hu, 2021). Continuous howling winds and the abrasive impact of windblown sand construct a distinct "auditory desert". Sharp, jagged mountain silhouettes lack soft gradients, creating an intense sense of visual oppression. This state of "absolute poverty" and "ecological dead end" serves as the foundational impetus for poverty alleviation—when natural environments push human existence to the edge, external intervention becomes imperative.

The series employs specific discursive communication techniques to present and heighten these drivers:

Color codes: The opening scenes utilize a monochromatic palette dominated by yellow-browns and warm dark grays, visually signaling an ecology of drought and barrenness. This high-sensory modality color choice allows audiences to intuitively feel the survival struggles of Xihaigu prior to any textual exposition.

Extreme long-shot composition: Shots of the Gobi Desert position the horizon along the upper two-thirds of the frame, letting desolate hills occupy the main visual space. The sharp, fragmented outlines of the mountains lack soft transitions, intensifying environmental severity.

Ambient sound design: Pervasive wind noise and sand impacts, paired with extended auditory silences, construct a stark "auditory desert". Natural sound

functions not merely as background noise, but as an active narrative element metaphorizing the tense relationship between humanity and nature.

Survival narratives in monologues and dialogues: Old Man Ma squats on a dry field ridge, gazing at the cracked earth and muttering: *"This cursed place! God hasn't fired a shot [rained] in three years. Nothing grows, so how are folks supposed to survive?"* Delivered in unvarnished Northwest dialect, this monologue condenses ecological desperation into everyday vernacular, granting abstract drought an embodied emotional expression. Captured from a low-angle medium close-up, his hunched figure is juxtaposed against the vast, barren backdrop, reinforcing individual vulnerability before environmental adversity.

Historical impetus of state policy: Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, poverty eradication has been established as a core governance task. The "Minning Collaboration" model portrayed in *Minning Town* represents the concrete execution of this macro-policy on the Northwest Loess Plateau. The narrative is grounded in the historical trajectory of East-West pairing-off poverty alleviation efforts established since the 1990s. State policies provided institutional frameworks and resource guarantees for Minning collaboration, enabling large-scale relocation, industrial support, and ecological restoration.

The series conveys and reinforces these institutional drivers through specific discursive choices:

Authoritative tonalities of standard Mandarin: Reporting at a county committee meeting, Magistrate Yang speaks in clear, measured Standard Mandarin with balanced rhythm and formal vocabulary. This linguistic choice aligns policy discourse with official authority, allowing audiences to audibly register the top-down communication of state will.

Visual staging in meeting scenes: During county committee scenes, eye-level, frontal camera angles capture symmetrically arranged figures against backgrounds featuring the Party flag and national emblem. This setup creates a solemn political ritualism that reinforces the policy's institutional authority.

Flashback narratives: The series uses flashbacks to intermingle historical context, such as news broadcasts and close-ups of official documents giving the policy narrative historical depth and avoiding empty sloganizing.

Policy communication via monologue and dialogue: Magistrate Yang reads from a document during a county meeting: *"The Central Committee has made it clear: in the battle against poverty, no one is to be left behind!"* Delivered firmly in Standard Mandarin, his voice translates state will into palpable

linguistic momentum. A frontal eye-level medium shot contrasts the cadre's formal demeanor with the attentive expressions of listening villagers, grounding abstract policy within concrete commitments.

Deep friction of cultural attachment to ancestral land (***An Tu Zhong Qian***): The poverty alleviation campaign required proactive implementation because of the local peasantry's deeply rooted tradition of *an tu zhong qian* (attachment to ancestral land). Villagers in the series resist relocation, interpreting movement as abandonment. This cultural-psychological friction meant poverty alleviation could not remain a matter of physical development; it required a transformation of mindsets. The unfolding of the Minning collaboration represents a continuous effort to strike a balance between state policy goals and the populace's actual needs (Huang, & Cheng 2021).

The series portrays this cultural dynamic through distinct discursive practices:

Confrontational dialogue design: Villagers vehemently oppose relocation during meetings, relying on Northwest dialect, colloquialisms, and idioms like *"If you don't go, I won't go, either".* Dialect serves here not merely as a communication medium, but as the carrier of a distinct cultural psychology.

Body language and facial expressions: When resisting relocation, villagers exhibit defensive body postures – crossed arms, furrowed brows, and leaned-back stances, paired with resistant facial expressions, visually capturing the psychological inertia of land attachment.

Contrast montage: Cross-cutting between warm memories of life in their ancestral village (old houses, ancestral graves, familiar landscapes) and the unfamiliar environment of the new settlement heightens the emotional rupture caused by leaving home.

Homeland attachments in monologues and dialogues: When Ma Defu tried to persuade the Yongquan villagers to emigrate, Commisar Li came in deep night to him and said, *"The root of us Li family is in this village. Who would agree if you were to uproot it?!"* Delivered in unpretentious local dialect, this monologue transforms abstract cultural resistance into an ethical dilemma. A tracking shot circles from the ancestral graves toward the villager's bowed head before zooming into a close-up of his clenched fist, granting cultural friction a tactile emotional weight.

Methodological tools employed in poverty alleviation

Relocational migration (diaozhuang yimin): Spatial reconstruction: Relocational migration (*diaozhuang yimin*) served as a primary strategy in the

Minning poverty alleviation drive. The series documents the migration from Xihaigu to the Ningxia Plains, highlighted by scenes of Li Shuihua pulling a handcart with her disabled husband and child over hundreds of kilometers. This initiative aimed to break the "ecological dead end" through spatial displacement, relocating populations from uninhabitable areas to zones with economic potential, thereby establishing conditions for industrial support and infrastructure (Wei, 2021; Wu, 2021).

Discursive communication strategies:

Long-take tracking shots: Li Shuihua's migration pull-cart scene uses tracking long takes that remain positioned behind her shoulder. Capturing her strained back, taut muscles, and dirt-caked feet, the documentary-like texture emphasizes the physical trial of migration.

Silhouettes and backlighting: Backlit photography during the journey turns figures into dark silhouettes, while sunlight filtering through dust clouds creates halo effects. This approach conveys the environmental difficulty while bestowing a tragic aesthetic quality onto the scene.

Spatial contrast editing: Cross-cutting between the yellow gullies of Xihaigu and the flat terrain of the new Minning site highlights the contrast in landscape, illustrating the spatial rationale behind relocation.

Migration declarations in dialogue: Pulling her cart, Li Shuihua calls back to her husband: *"Keep moving. What else can we do? Better to die searching for a way out than stay here and perish".* Spoken plainly in local dialect, the succinct dialogue compresses hardship and survival instinct into an everyday phrasing. The camera tracks her from behind to maintain focus on her strained posture, giving spatial reconstruction a grounded, human dimension.

Technological transfer: Intellectuals represented by Professor Ling brought mushroom cultivation technologies to the Minning region. The series details the villagers' shift from initial skepticism toward mushroom cultivation to lining up overnight to learn techniques and build growing sheds after early harvests fetched high prices. Technological poverty alleviation relied on decentralizing modern agricultural methods to the grassroots level, providing farmers with sustainable income sources (Yuan, 2021; Yue, & Pu, 2021; Zhang, & Wang, 2022).

Discursive communication strategies:

Detailed close-up shots: As Professor Ling demonstrates mushroom spawn cultivation in the fields, close-up shots highlight the spawn bags, mycelium growth, and hand movements. This visual focus translates abstract technology into clear physical details, grounding the instructional scenes.

Sequenced facial transitions: The series captures a sequence of changing facial expressions across the village: initial cynical smirks and head-shaking give way to wide-eyed surprise upon seeing full-grown mushrooms, culminating in excited expressions as villagers queue up to learn.

Accelerated editing rhythms: Following the profitable sale of the first mushroom yield, the editing tempo quickens. Rapid cuts showing villagers constructing sheds, transporting spawn bags, and loading trucks, set to upbeat background music, convey a sense of momentum.

Technological icebreaking in dialogue: Squatting near a mushroom shed, Professor Ling explains to curious onlookers: *"These spawn bags are like little babies. Care for them properly, and they'll lay golden eggs for you".* Villager Ma Defu asks hesitantly: *"Can these small things really put food on the table?"* Ling nods: *"Give it a try. If it doesn't work, we'll try another way".* Using plain metaphors and pragmatic questioning, this exchange depicts the transition from skepticism to initial trial. Alternating over-the-shoulder shots track their expressions from doubt to agreement, capturing the local adoption of new techniques.

East-West pairing: Institutional collaboration: Cadres from Fujian Province served as the institutional carriers of the Minning pairing initiative. Characters like Party Secretary Chen Jinshan, speaking Mandarin with a heavy Fujian accent ("Min-Pu"), are audibly marked as outside assistance. They introduced financial capital, project development, management practices, and operational experience. Initial communication hurdles, such as local villagers mistaking the Fujian pronunciation of "sand control" (*zhisha*) for "suicide" (*zisha*) gradually gave way to mutual understanding, reflecting the evolution of East-West relations from unfamiliarity to integration.

Discursive communication strategies:

Dialectal comedic effects: Misunderstandings stemming from Secretary Chen's accent create lighthearted comedic beats. Alternating two-shots capture Northwest villagers transitioning from shock to suppressed laughter, softening cross-cultural friction through humor.

Progressive accent blending: As the narrative progresses, Northwest villagers begin imitating and banteringly incorporating "Min-Pu" terms into their speech. This gradual acoustic shift, highlighted across shared scenes, reflects the integration between the two regions.

Juxtaposed editing: Alternating cuts between Fujian cadres analyzing planning blueprints in meeting rooms and Northwest farmers working in the fields establish a dialogue between macro planning and local labor, giving visual expression to institutionalized assistance.

Environmental transformation: Sand control and afforestation form another primary narrative line in Minning's development. The shift from wind-blown Gobi wastelands in early episodes to green oases by the conclusion traces the process of ecological restoration. Aerial and high-angle shots present neatly planted forest belts, illustrating deliberate human planning and scientific management in alignment with Chinese ecological values emphasizing harmony between humanity and nature.

Discursive communication strategies:

Color transition narrative: The visual arc moves from early monochromatic yellows and dusty grays to vibrant greens and bright blues. This shift functions as a visual metaphor for ecological modernization.

Aerial and overhead angles: High-angle aerial shots in the final episodes depict the structured forest lines from an elevated perspective, allowing viewers to see the scale of environmental remediation and encouraging a sense of accomplishment.

Contrast montage: Flashback edits contrast early views of barren desert landscapes with later footage of green shelterbelts across the same locations, using temporal progression within shared spaces to illustrate environmental outcomes.

Ecological progression in dialogue: Standing on a hillside once prone to sandstorms, Ma Defu looks out over rows of saplings and tells his child: *"Look, the wind has calmed down and the trees have grown tall. Our roots are finally set here".* Delivered softly in local dialect, this monologue captures long-term ecological effort within a quiet moment between father and child. Framing the saplings and open sky from behind Defu's shoulder connects broader environmental themes with personal continuity.

Educational and cultural literacy: Grassroots educators like Principal Bai played a central role in breaking generational poverty cycles by raising literacy and practical skills among the youth. Concurrently, the inclusion of Northwest *Hua'er* folk songs and local dialects functions as a form of cultural agency, placing rural voices at the center of the narrative rather than portraying them as passive subjects.

Discursive communication strategies:

Inclusion of Northwest Hua'er folk music: Characterized by simple rhythms and resonant melodies, *Hua'er* music accompanies labor scenes, travel sequences, and emotional climaxes. Li Shuihua softly humming *Teardrops Drown My Heart* during her migration conveys both hardship and perseverance through traditional musical forms.

***Opening theme song (Don't Drink Cold Water When Thirsty*):** Sung in Northwest dialect, the theme song's direct lyrics paired with imagery of cracked soil establish the regional atmosphere across visual and auditory channels.

Consistent use of dialect: Villagers speak Xihaigu dialect across informal settings, including home life, field work, and neighborhood interactions using frequent regional expressions like *"Zha Lie?"* (What's wrong?), *"Biao Pao!"* (Don't run!), and *"Mei De Hen!"* (Wonderful!). This choice preserves narrative authenticity while foregrounding regional voices within the broader story.

Educational commitment in monologues: Standing in an empty classroom, Principal Bai tells a local official: *"If these kids don't get an education, we'll never pull up these roots of poverty. I've stood here for twenty years; if I fall, someone else must step up".* Spoken quietly in regional dialect, the statement highlights the long-term focus of educational support. A slow push-in shot moves from the doorway to a close-up of his face, emphasizing his personal dedication.

Industrial development: From relief aid to sustainable growth: Later episodes portray the emergence of local industries, such as wine production. By the series conclusion, Ma Defu, now serving as a county leader, delivers a promotional address for the local wine industry in Standard Mandarin, marking a transition from early relief assistance to self-sustaining economic development. Industrial growth served as the foundation for long-term economic stability.

Discursive communication strategies:

Multimodal identity shifts: In the finale, Ma Defu wears a dark, fitted suit and speaks Standard Mandarin at an industrial expo. The combination of tailored attire and standard speech visually and audibly marks his transition from a rural youth to an administrator.

Production value upgrades in setting: Early environments feature rammed-earth homes and modest hearths rendered in muted tones. Later scenes introduce structured processing facilities, modern machinery, and packaged wine bottles lit with warmer, brighter lighting, reflecting regional development.

Collective labor scenes: Group sequences capture villagers assembling mushroom sheds and tending vineyards. Multi-angle framing, ranging from wide shots of work sites to medium shots of group tasks and close-ups of manual labor, conveys collective effort through rhythmic editing.

Industrial declarations in public addresses: Addressing visiting merchants at the wine expo, Ma Defu presents the product in Standard Mandarin: *"Our Minning wine is crafted with the sunshine and dew of Mount Helan; it carries the taste of sweet rewards earned through bitter struggles".* The language shift from dialect to Mandarin, paired with clear product displays, underscores the focus

on economic self-reliance. A zoom-out shot transitions from his speech to the wider expo floor, showing the broader scope of the local industry.

Soft tools for consensus: Through the integrated use of local dialect, regional music, and ambient soundscapes, *Minning Town* functions as a narrative tool for cultural identity and shared understanding. Xihaigu dialect provides a regional audio marker, Fujian-accented Mandarin tempers initial cultural differences, and Standard Mandarin conveys official policy contexts. This combination of voices acts as an audio framework for building consensus and encouraging local initiative.

Discursive communication strategies:

Layered soundscapes: The series incorporates three distinct audio layers: Xihaigu dialect (regional identity), Fujian-accented Mandarin (outside support), and Standard Mandarin (administrative contexts). These speech patterns alternate across scenes, presenting interactions among varied participants.

Narrative roles of sound design: Early episodes rely on environmental sounds, such as wind and empty quiet to establish a desolate setting. Later episodes introduce industrial sounds, machinery, traffic, and community activity, using auditory changes to trace development over time.

Code-switching and role negotiation: Ma Defu uses local dialect when speaking with villagers in the fields and switches to Standard Mandarin during official reporting. This shift illustrates his movement between personal community ties and administrative responsibilities.

Visual tracking of language shifts: Scenes of Ma Defu chatting casually with villagers in dialect (*"Don't worry, I'm here"*) alternate with scenes of him delivering structured updates in standard Mandarin at county meetings (*"Relocation progress remains on track with positive feedback"*). Similar camera compositions across both settings highlight his adaptation to different functional roles through speech choices alone.

Success factors of the Minning poverty alleviation

Unity between Party and masses: Characterizing grassroots cadres as developing subjects: Ma Defu represents the practical experiences of grassroots cadres within the Minning project. Rather than being presented as an idealized figure, he encounters initial skepticism from villagers, faces procedural setbacks, and is shown experiencing moments of deep frustration. Portraying these vulnerabilities constructs a grounded character who perseveres despite obstacles, illustrating how policy implementation depends on sustained effort at the local level.

Discursive communication strategies:

Grounded characterization: The series depicts Ma Defu experiencing setbacks, being challenged by villagers in public meetings, and dealing with moments of self-doubt. Handheld camera movement and natural lighting lend these scenes an unpolished quality that contrasts with idealized portrayals of officials.

Close-up facial detail: During moments of vulnerability, close-up shots capture subtle facial details, accompanied by quiet ambient audio that focuses attention on his internal resolve during challenging situations.

Grassroots perspectives: By portraying the everyday difficulties of local administration, the series avoids simplified success narratives. Ma Defu's progress develops through trial, error, and persistent adjustment, offering a multi-dimensional view of community work.

Reflective monologues and public directness: Alone at night, Ma Defu reflects: *"I belong to Yongquan Village; its roots are mine. But no matter how deep those roots go, they can't draw water anymore"*. This admission reveals his internal burden when facing harsh environmental realities. Later, at a community meeting, he tells residents: *"A person has two sets of roots, one with our ancestors, and one with our children. Wherever our children settle, our roots can take hold again"*. Delivered plainly in local dialect, the statement reframes relocation as a way to sustain future generations. Fixed medium framing with side lighting visually balances his personal doubts against his outward determination.

From passive recipients to active participants: A key outcome shown in the series is the development of individual agency among local residents. Changing visual presentation reflects this progression: early in the series, Ma Defu wears loose, faded earth-toned shirts associated with rural hardship; later, he wears fitted attire suitable for administrative duties. Similarly, Li Shuihua shifts from the physical strain of pulling a handcart during relocation to running her own bright shop, reflecting a transition from surviving hardship to managing her own livelihood. Her story illustrates how support initiatives can foster personal initiative alongside material improvements.

Discursive communication strategies:

Wardrobe and visual framing: Ma Defu's early loose, worn clothing reflects the difficult living conditions of the region. His later formal attire marks his transition into a structured management role over time.

Physical expression in narrative: Li Shuihua's movement during her relocation sequence, captured through side profile framing, emphasizes her physical effort. Later scenes in her lit shop feature warm expressions and clear eye lighting, charting an emotional shift toward personal stability.

Lighting and visual tone: Backlighting during early travel scenes emphasizes environmental difficulties, while steady framing focuses on her resolve. Later scenes use softer, brighter lighting to convey a sense of security and forward momentum.

Personal declarations in dialogue: During her journey, Li Shuihua tells Ma Defu: *"Things in this world aren't as simple as you think. You can't just choose how everything turns out".* She later adds: *"I won't accept this as my fate. I want to build a better future for my child with my own hands".* Delivered in direct Northwest dialect, these statements express her determination to shape her own circumstances. Alternating close-up and medium shots against the broad desert landscape emphasize her personal resolve within a challenging environment.

East-West pairing: The success of the Minning pairing model rested on establishing respectful working relationships across regional differences. The Fujian cadres' distinct accents are presented as part of their background rather than a deficiency; over time, initial communication hurdles evolved into shared familiarity as villagers adapted to and occasionally mimicked their speech patterns. This gradual adaptation reflects a process of mutual adjustment rather than one-sided assimilation.

Discursive communication strategies:

Acoustic progression from hurdles to rapport: Initial linguistic misunderstandings involving Fujian cadres, such as misinterpreting "sand control" as "suicide" highlight initial cultural distance through light humor. Over time, villagers begin adopting and lightheartedly using Fujian phrases, signaling growing familiarity through everyday speech choices.

Balanced camera framing: Conversations between Fujian cadres and local villagers rely on balanced two-shots and alternating over-the-shoulder cuts, framing both parties equally without emphasizing hierarchy.

Parallel scene construction: Alternating scenes show Fujian cadres drafting plans alongside villagers working in the fields, presenting both practical administrative work and local agricultural experience as essential components of the project.

Addressing communication differences: Early dialogue sequences highlight speech differences, such as a Fujian cadre explaining "sand control" while villagers react with momentary confusion before seeking clarification. As interactions continue, shared terms emerge across conversations. Alternating over-the-shoulder shots trace their facial expressions from initial uncertainty to clear understanding, illustrating the transition toward working trust.

Dialect and local music as connective elements: Regional dialect and traditional music provide emotional grounding within the narrative. The consistent use of the Xihaigu dialect keeps local perspectives central to the story. Concurrently, the resonant melodies of Northwest *Hua'er* folk songs express the endurance of local communities under hard conditions, strengthening a sense of shared regional identity. This cultural continuity helps turn external assistance into active local participation.

Discursive communication strategies:

Authentic dialect integration: The series relies predominantly on Xihaigu dialect during daily interactions, home scenes, and community labor. This linguistic choice foregrounds regional experience throughout the narrative.

Musical resonance of Hua'er: The high-pitched *Hua'er* folk melodies accompany labor sequences and travel scenes at key emotional moments. The closing theme, *Spring Arrives Everywhere as Hua'er Is Sung*, connects regional music traditions with long-term community effort.

Interwoven dialectical voices: Alternating between local dialect, Fujian-accented speech, and Standard Mandarin creates a multi-voiced auditory setting that presents diverse perspectives working together.

Family responsibility and personal endeavor: *Minning Town* connects policy narratives with widely recognized human experiences. Li Shuihua's decision to relocate is driven primarily by her commitment to her child's future and her family's well-being – motivations that center on universal parental care. Similarly, the villagers' shift from hesitant reliance to managing their own farms aligns with broader values of self-determination and personal effort. Framed this way, the story translates regional development efforts into a human-centered narrative about overcoming adversity.

Discursive communication strategies:

Visual focus on family bonds: Li Shuihua's relocation sequence centers on her holding her young daughter while guiding her family's cart across difficult terrain. Her choices stem from personal care for her child's future, grounding the broader migration story in recognizable family motives.

Realistic character details: Unvarnished details, such as three brothers sharing a single pair of decent trousers or hungry villagers taking poultry from assistance shipments, portray the harsh reality of extreme scarcity. These elements show characters responding to severe physical needs rather than acting as ideal abstractions.

Focus on individual effort: The sequence showing villagers initially doubting mushroom farming before staying up overnight to learn techniques highlights

their drive to improve their circumstances. This transition from uncertainty to active work emphasizes personal initiative.

Statements of parental commitment: Holding her daughter, Li Shuihua tells Ma Defu: *"I'm not afraid of hard work; I just don't want my child to suffer like this. If she can go to school and wear clean clothes, pulling this cart for the rest of my life is worth it."* Spoken directly in local dialect, her words place parental care at the center of her decisions. A close-up framing her daughter against her shoulder captures the personal motivations driving her effort.

Ecological modernization: Balancing planned growth and historical memory: The development depicted in Minning integrates deliberate planning with respect for historical context. The emergence of cultivated land demonstrates effective environmental management, while memories of earlier hardships are preserved as a reference point for progress. Through targeted flashbacks and spatial comparisons, the new landscape retains its connection to past trials, offering a realistic view of long-term environmental improvement.

Discursive communication strategies:

Visual traces of environmental shift: Visual adjustments – moving from monochromatic yellow tones to vibrant greens, and shifting from constrained framing to wide overhead perspectives – reflect the landscape's physical changes alongside the evolving relationship between the local community and their environment.

Flashbacks and comparative editing: Flashbacks recall earlier dry conditions within the same geographical locations now covered by shelterbelts, keeping the memory of past trials present within current scenes.

Depicting environmental balance: Even as modern machinery and green landscapes appear in later episodes, natural sounds like wind and bird calls remain present in the audio mix, reflecting a balance between human activity and natural surroundings.

Conclusion

The outcomes of the Minning poverty alleviation initiative emerged from interconnected factors: state policy provided administrative structure, relocational migration and technological support established practical avenues for growth, East-West collaboration provided resources, ecological management improved land conditions, and shared cultural values supported local initiative.

Through its visual and auditory design, including color shifts, camera composition, local dialects, traditional music, ambient sound, and comparative

editing *Minning Town* presents macro policy development through individual human stories. The series demonstrates that long-term poverty alleviation involves not only physical and economic development, but also the growth of personal agency, the preservation of cultural identity, and a balanced relationship between communities and their environment.

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