



Political Discourse Analysis in Translation of Speech Texts on “One Belt One Road (OBOR)”: A Dialectical Cognitive Approach

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Abstract. Topic on “One Belt One Road (OBOR)” is the main idea of China’s Xi Jinping political speech conveyed at the forums of multilateral and bilateral cooperation since 2013. The speech texts on OBOR as a case study is analyzed through qualitative analysis within a dialectical cognitive method, and mainly aims to explore the main characteristics and features of the speech texts, as well as the impacts on cognitive aspect. In this study, data is gathered from official websites of the PRC’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs in UN Mission and in Brisbane. There are 6,722 Chinese characters and 3,261 English words of speech texts translated by the diplomatic missions’ translators to be explored. As a result, the study not only describes the objective of a Political Discourse in diplomatic speech texts (i.e. to gain acceptance from the communication’s audiences), but also identifies their linguistic features and the impacts. In short, China applied “three plus one” dialectics as OBOR speech texts’ structural strategy to achieve its aim. The dialectics principles, which are based on the Chinese culture of Confucianism (and is part of Van Dijk’s cognitive rhetorical models), consist of: (1) change principle, (2) contradiction principle, (3) general relationship or holistic principle, and (4) compromise-based justification or harmony principle. It is shown that China applied quite different structural strategies of dialectics in the multilateral platform of UN, and in bilateral cooperation with Brisbane of Australia. Therefore, it is easier to be accepted or more effectively persuasive.

Keywords: Political Discourse · One Belt One Road (OBOR) · Translation · Speech · Dialectical Cognitive

1 Introduction

1.1 One Belt One Road (OBOR) Speech Text and Its Political Dimension

China’s One Belt One Road (OBOR), coined by Xi Jinping in 2013, is now among the world’s well-known policy slogans. Due to the scope of the policy, this slogan has been intended to be made available to the world audiences by various means. One of them is public diplomacy channel and its language of political discourse, mostly delivered in the form of official speeches. This political language or discourse can indeed be greatly

subjective. According to a dictionary-style of political book, entitled “Key Concepts in Political Communication” [1], slogans are also categorized as propaganda, and both have the same characteristics of a symbolizing as well as dialectical way of thinking, particularly in delivering its messages to the audiences, as a means of connecting to their irrational or emotional feelings.

From China’s history, one can see the variations of every Chinese leader’s slogans, for example: Mao Zedong’s “实事求是、工作作风、群众路线、独立自主的一些原则” (seeking truth from facts, work style, mass line, independence and self-sufficiency); Deng Xiaoping’s “改革开放” (reform and opening up); Jiang Zemin’s “三个代表” (three represents); Hu Jintao’s “和谐社会、科学发展观” (harmonious society, scientific outlook development); as well as Xi Jinping’s “中国梦、新常态、四个全面性、人类命运共同体” (Chinese dream, new normality, four comprehensives, community of shared future for mankind) [2].

The Chinese government under Xi Jinping administrative has been disseminating the OBOR policy under the slogan of a “community of shared future for mankind”. The OBOR policy has also been known as Silk Road Economic Belt, 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (MSR), as well as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It covers diverse areas of cooperation in infrastructure, finance policy, as well as people-to-people contacts. Up to the point of this writing in November 2020, more than sixty countries had joined the OBOR’s projects in its six cooperation corridors. Xi Jinping in his speech at the APEC Business Summit on November 18th 2018 gave a definite number of 68 OBOR member countries, as well as about 140 countries and international organizations listed as participants [3].

According to Lams, China’s slogan as part of official political discourse, is based on ideology, hegemony, propaganda, and strategic political value [4]. Furthermore, as a slogan of public diplomacy, this political value of OBOR has some sense of the idea of soft power as coined by Joseph Nye. It is aimed at getting the acceptance and support from the domestic and international public. Moreover, it also aims to influence international relations [5]. In order to achieve the main goals of propaganda, a country needs to deliver its slogan or main policy in a clear and concrete style, particularly in the content of its official speeches. At this point, by looking at the political discourse, national interests are the ultimate considerations in a country’s efforts to have a crystal-clear political policy [6].

China’s OBOR policy as implemented by Chinese governmental agencies around the globe (including by its Missions abroad) reflects its government’s ideology and socio-culture. This ideology is clearly seen in the structures and norms [5]. These particular structures are very useful as a means to inform and persuade audiences of speech texts, for instance, the Chinese government not only links the OBOR with the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (UN SDGs 2030) in the two speeches featured as a case study in this research, but also in another speech [7].

OBOR’s political dimensions as translated in its Political Discourse places limits on translators and interpreters. They have to be very strict in the translation and interpretation of political texts. It means no freedom of expression or innovation in doing their work, nor any subjectivity in the completion of their tasks, but to stick to the structures and norms of the government institutions or agencies, and to support or be loyal only to the ideology or

culture of the institutions or agencies as manifested in the source texts [5]. One important thing that also differentiates them from translators or interpreters who deal with other discourse of texts is in the requirement to have an in-depth understanding, along with an awareness of the source texts' ideology and culture. Moreover, they also may not add or omit a single word to or from the texts. All these restrictions and limitations distinguishes them from other translators or interpreters who handle other texts, for example literary, et cetera. It is a common practice for a translator to insert personal subjectivity value into a target text of literary translation in order to bring variations, while in contrast, it is a taboo to do this in a political text [8].

Besides, other differences between political and non-political speech texts lie in the aspects of sensitivity and formality surrounding proper wording [9]. Therefore, the translator must pay attention to the correctness of works produced. "Correctness" in a translation refers to having an exact or precise cognition, i.e., way of thinking in understanding the real meaning of a word prior to translating it for an audience. A translator of political speech texts not only has to focus on the aspect of correctness, but also have to translate it properly, comprehensively, and effectively. In short, they must have a thorough understanding of the background, aim, and sensitivity of the source texts. In other words, without possessing this knowledge, the translator will not realize the utmost importance of this understanding in translating political speech texts.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Political Discourse

From an academic point of view, although OBOR political speech texts represents the official position of the Chinese government, they cannot be examined by using Chinese Discourse as invented by a Chinese scholar [10]. The discourse limits the scope of study to only China's contemporary domestic changes. This research takes China's OBOR policy as its case study, thus the analysis of its translation strategy and structure will be based on Political Discourse. The OBOR policy is delivered to the world through official speeches, therefore, it will be analysed using Political Discourse. Political Discourse is an approach commonly used for analysing political texts such as policy, interview, news, press release, et cetera. This discourse was invented/coined by Teun A. van Dijk in 1997. As a type of discourse, Political Discourse also uses language/texts to deliver its messages. "Politic means Cooperation" is the discourse's main argument and it will be carried out/implemented through discussions and reviews by all the concerned parties/stakeholders, in order to achieve a commitment/joint resolution. In short, Political Discourse includes main argument, the meaning of the interaction that can be analysed using practical structure, and the overall contexts [11].

In his 1993 and 2006 studies, Van Dijk brings together the correlation of the two studies, namely "power and dominance" of 1993 and "language and cognition" of 2006. In his study in 2006, he mentioned that dominance is expressed through action and cognition. According to Merriam Webster dictionary, cognition is related to ideology, logical/reasoning, and memory. It is parallel to persuasiveness, deception, and manipulation. Based on Cambridge English dictionary's definition, deception means to cover up real emotion, character, intention; while manipulation refers to advantage by controlling



Fig. 1. Van Dijk’s Correlation Studies of “Power and Dominance”, processed by the author based on van Dijk’s study in 1993.

another person’s actions through unfair measures. In his earlier study in 1993, Dijk mentioned three aspects that constitute a text, i.e., access patterns, setting and participants, as well as properties of the speech texts, as shown in the Fig. 1.

2.2 OBOR Translation & Cognitive Model of Political Discourse

A translator will realize the utmost importance of a thorough understanding (on the source texts’ background, aim, and sensitivity) in translating political speech texts, if he or she not only focusing on the correctness aspect, but also aiming for a proper, comprehensive, and effective translation. According to Van Dijk [12], political discourse texts can be analyzed through two models, i.e., corpus model and cognitive model, as shown in Fig. 2. He also mentioned that political discourse would be useful in analyzing speech text’s characteristics, including its grammar, style, dialectical, practical, argument, interaction, et cetera. Since the speech texts have a fixed context topic on OBOR, and the Chinese local semantics; therefore, this research will only focus on “rhetorical devices” as its main object of study. The “rhetorical devices” refer to a cross-cultural realm of a country’s special meaning of words and expressions, e.g., “belief” (meaning: assertive), “wish” (meaning: directive), “desire” (meaning: directive), et cetera [13].

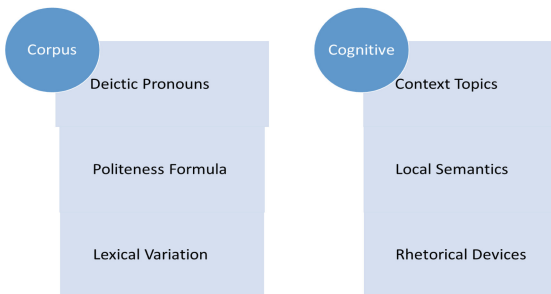


Fig. 2. Van Dijk’s Two Models of Speech Texts Analysis, i.e., Corpus & Cognitive

From a Chinese local semantics point of view, especially as appeared in the OBOR political speech texts, it has a crystal-clear political policy, due to its own national interests as basic considerations [6]. This is the main factor that differentiates political and non-political translation. Indeed, political speech is also delivered through language in order to persuade audiences. However, it is not simply a language decoding process, but a rather complex process that involves many factors, such as language, culture, cognition, author, reader/listener. In the end, the translator who translates all of the speech context i.e., content and those embedded factors, will deliver it “as a full and complete product” to the reader/listener through language [14]. In other words, cognition as one of those embedded factors, is an inherent and essential factor; thus, a speaker is trying to make use of cognition characteristics to persuade hearers in his/her communication. The political discourse in OBOR political speech is reflected in its persuasive structure and semantic strategy. Van Dijk (2006) [12] defines the political discourse strategy as four characteristics: first, fact-based argument; second, exaggerative dialectics to emphasize other “negativity” and self “positivity”; third, using particular style of Part of Speech (POS) to indicate words and keywords; fourth, using “story-telling” style of rhetoric model as the part of cognitive analysis.

2.3 Previous Studies on Political Discourse and Diplomatic Speech

Previous studies using Van Dijk’s research in 1993 on political discourse as a theoretical framework were conducted by Wang and Fetzer. Wang (2016) [15] combines political discourse and critical criticism approach to analyze four major components, i.e., “fair”, “rational”, “agenda setting”, and “mediatization”. Fetzer (2013) [16] uses a pragmatic approach to analyze dialectical-ness of political discourse. In her study, she differentiates dialectical-ness into three kind of action, namely forensic (in the past), epideictic (at present), deliberative (in the future), linking them through ethos, logos, and pathos to persuade the audience as well as to deliver the messages.

Preliminary studies on diplomatic speech were conducted by Chinese MoFA official, Zhao [17], and a Chinese scholar, Xu [18]. Zhao mentioned characteristics of diplomatic translation that have strong relations with a country’s sovereignty, territorial rights, as well as comprehensive national interests in all aspects and levels [17]. Xu [18] mentioned that diplomatic translation differs from other kind of translation, especially in its aspects of sensitivity and formality on proper wording. Moreover, Xu also explained about the eight characteristics of Xi Jinping’s speeches [18]. Amongst the characteristics explained, only one characteristic matches the international situation, while the seven others are suitable for domestic situation. The characteristic of international situation is “story-telling, giving examples (including mentioning the situation and condition in some countries), getting friendly with likely-minded people, reaching consensus”.

This study is different from the previous studies conducted by Wang, Fetzer, Zhao, and Xu. The main contribution of this study is the use of dialectical cognitive model under the framework of political discourse as the principle analysis of the OBOR. This study is not based on Xi Jinping as the main speaker but takes Chinese high-level officials in MoFA as the speakers. Despite the limited number of official speakers, the speech on OBOR itself is already representative of the Chinese position due to its inherent distinction under the framework of Chinese political slogan on “community of shared

future for mankind” as coined by Xi Jinping. This also complies with Zhao’s study on the same framework that explains that it not only acts as Chinese diplomatic value, but also acts as the theoretical framework in the 19th committee of Chinese Communist Party (CCP). It is also intended to be the driving force of regional and international economy within the concept of major country diplomacy [17]. Therefore, the same characteristics exist.

3 Methodology

3.1 Purpose of the Study and New Contribution

The purpose of this study is to conduct comprehensive research on OBOR political speech. There are two main questions: First, what are the main characteristics of the OBOR speech from the cognitive analysis? Second, what are the impacts of OBOR political speech within the cognitive aspect? This study is a pilot study of OBOR speech texts translations within cognitive analysis. Thus, this study contributes to filling the gap of previous research, as stated by a Chinese scholar: “These theoretical explorations (on Xi’s diplomatic thought of dialectical concept/value) are precious new topics in Chinese diplomatic philosophy that are worthy of careful study and in-depth research” [17].

3.2 The Methodology of the Study

The research on OBOR speech texts is analyzed through qualitative analysis within a dialectical cognitive method. The texts consist of two speech texts in Mandarin Chinese version, that are 《常驻联合国代表马朝旭大使在“‘一带一路’倡议和2030年可持续发展议程”高级别研讨会上的发言》[19] and 《协力共建“一带一路”，促进共同繁荣：驻布里斯班总领事赵永琛在昆士兰大学“海洋视野下的中国与世界”第一届国际丝路论坛上的讲话》[20]; as well as in their English versions “Remarks by Ambassador Ma Zhaoxu at High-level Symposium on Belt and Road Initiative and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” [21] & “Work Together to Build “the Belt and Road” for Common Prosperity” [22]. The texts are retrieved from China’s MoFA official websites, in particular from its two diplomatic missions, that are in UN and in Brisbane of Australia.

These diplomatic missions were chosen for two reasons. First, China’s OBOR policy was delivered to the world (a.k.a. the UN member countries) through its mission in the UN; Second, due to the reality that although the Government of Australia on its official political stance has not joined China’s OBOR, in October 2018 its federal/state government of Victoria became the country’s one and only federal/state government to participate in OBOR [23, 24]. Australia (Victoria)’s main reason for participating is basically due to business and employment factors, while China may consider its geo-politics and geo-economics.

The OBOR speech texts were translated from Mandarin Chinese (as source texts) to English (as target texts) by China’s MoFA translators/interpreters, and not by the original author. Overall, the texts are about 6,722 words in English and 3,261 characters in Mandarin Chinese. The translation texts underwent internal Standard Operational

Procedure (SOP) implemented by the missions, such as the verification and approval process by the head of the missions, then were delivered to the public through its official websites. Therefore, the texts are the voice of the Government of China. The OBOR speech texts, then, were analyzed using Van Dijk's theory of Political Discourse and its mental-cognitive model.

3.3 Limitation and Suggestion for Further Research

The study is limited to data from texts of only two main sources; therefore, I do not intend to infer generalizations from the data. Although the sources might have representative values due to a scope that covers both multilateral and bilateral forums; however, I do encourage other researchers to analyze the texts from point of view based on the dialectical-cognitive principles, such as embedded stylistic factor, et cetera.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Cognitive Rhetoric Model in Chinese “Three Plus One” Dialectics

The main objective of Political Discourse in a diplomatic speech is to gain acceptance from the communication audiences i.e., readers or listeners. The Chinese model of its cognitive rhetoric is in terms of “three plus one” dialectics, particularly in order to achieve its diplomatic speech's aim. A scholar, Nisbett, in his study elaborated that traditional Chinese culture is originated from Confucianism and is still relevant today. In short, the Chinese apply dialectics into the details of the speech to achieve the speech's aim. The so-called “three plus one” dialectics principles also appear in the OBOR speech texts, and it consists of: (1) change principle, (2) contradiction, (3) general relationship/holistic, and (4) compromise-based justification/harmony (Nisbett, 2007), as shown in Fig. 3.

The first principle of “three plus one” dialectics is “change principle” (变化原则) that sees the world as a changing phenomenon, unstable, as well as tending to be subjective. The second principle is “contradiction principle” (矛盾论之原则) that views the changes of the world as causes of contradiction (e.g., opposites, paradoxes, anomalies/unexpected sudden accidents). This principle contrast with the Western's paradigm of logic. The third principle is “general relationship or holistic principle” (整体论或大局观之原则) that

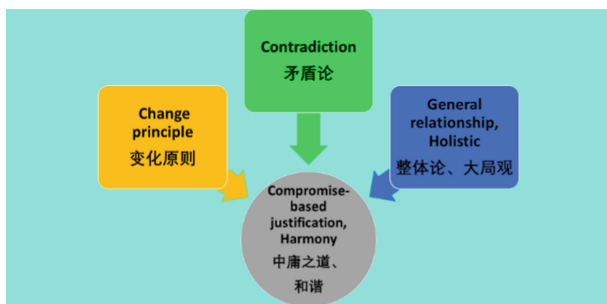


Fig. 3. Chinese “Three Plus One” Dialectics Principle

predicts the relations of a phenomenon from the angle of general relationship or holistic aspects. This principle was also known in the West at the time of Kant, Fichte, and Hegel. The last principle is “compromised-based justification or harmony principle” (“中庸之道”或“和谐”之原则) that only occurs in conflict. This principle is also known as the most proper and correct measure in handling conflict. It also contrasts with the Western principle of justice-based justification which upheld fairness. In regard to the last principle, Nisbett also argues that each of the justification principles has its weak point, i.e., Easterner’s point of view might cause logical error, while the West’s might come with an extreme thinking [25].

4.2 The Dialectics

The speech texts in total have 32 examples of dialectics components, i.e., thirteen examples from the diplomatic mission in UN, and 19 examples from the diplomatic mission in Brisbane. The statistic in Fig. 4 illustrates that within the “three plus one” dialectics framework, the main characteristics of OBOR speech texts are as follows:

Figure 4 shows that the main characteristics of OBOR political speech texts is applying dialectics to deliver its messages to the audiences, to gain acceptance from them, as well as to achieve diplomatic speech’s aims, such as being informative, argumentative, persuasive, et cetera. Despite its semantic strategy, the structural strategy applied here includes four principles, i.e., change principle, contradiction, general relationship or holistic, compromise-based justification or harmony. China applied quite different structural strategies of dialectics in the multilateral platform of UN, and in bilateral cooperation with Brisbane of Australia. In its diplomatic mission in UN, China mainly applied “compromised-based justification or harmony principle” and “contradiction principle” (each proportion of 30%). While in its diplomatic mission in Brisbane, China applied “compromised-based justification or harmony principle” and “general relationship or holistic principle” (each proportion of 37%).

This case study of OBOR will only focus on the representation of eight examples as its in-depth analysis components, i.e., four examples from the mission in UN and other four examples from the mission in Brisbane. The elaboration of eight representing dialectics

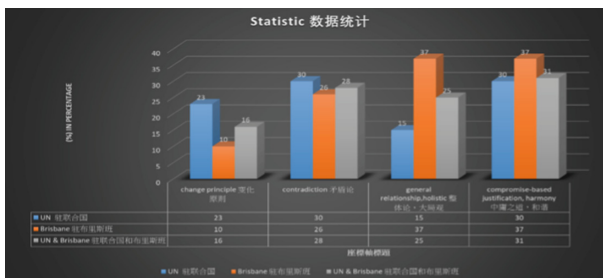


Fig. 4. Main Characteristics of OBOR Speech Texts

(as the examples of OBOR speech texts' structural strategy) in detailed comparison are as follows:

(1) *Change Principle* (变化原则)

- in UN (驻联合国).

Source Text 原文

(第10段) 在斐济第二大岛瓦努阿岛, 中方修建的纳布瓦鲁高速公路和布扎贝高速公路, 解决了当地民众出行困难, 有力地拉动了当地经济发展。中方还在“一带一路”框架下, 面向太平洋岛国举办了多期国际金融交流合作研修班, 根据太平洋岛国需要, 提供能力建设帮助和支持。

Translated Text 译文

(Par 10) On Fiji's second largest island Vanua Levu, Navouwalu Road and Buca Bay Road built by China **have made** travel much easier for the people and **(have) contributed** to local economic development. China **has** also **organized** workshops on international financial cooperation within the BRI framework, providing the most-needed capacity building assistance for Pacific Island countries.

- in Brisbane (驻布里斯班)

Source Text 原文

(第3段) 改革开放30多年来, 我国对外开放取得了举世瞩目的伟大成就, 发展成为世界第二大经济体, 综合国力得到很大的提高。

Translated Text 译文

(Par 3) Since its open-up over 30 years ago, China **has accomplished** a lot and become the second largest economy in the world, with much improved national overall strengths

In the speech text conveyed in UN, China applies “story-telling” in elaborating its cooperation projects with participating countries of OBOR and picturing itself as the contributor of change (that is in line with the change principle). The role of China as contributor of change is portrayed by the action verbs of “have made” 解决了, “(have) contributed” 拉动了, “has organized” 举办了 that placed in a sequence. Meanwhile, in the speech text conveyed in Brisbane, the change principle in terms of “the contributor of change” is portrayed by the action verb of “has accomplished” 取得了. Moreover, the verb is highlighting that China nowadays is the world's second economic power (change principle from the past condition), and this reflects a contrast to the conditions in 30 years ago.

(2) *Contradiction Principle* e.g. *opposition, paradoxes, anomalies* (矛盾论, 如: 对比、悖论、异常之原则)

- in UN (驻联合国)

Source Text 原文

(第5段) “一带一路”倡议源于中国, 但机会和成果属于世界。

Translated Text 译文

(Par 5) The BRI **is** China's initiative, **but** the opportunities and fruits that it presents belong to the whole world.

- in Brisbane (驻布里斯班)

Source Text 原文

(第9段) “一带一路”建设是开放的, 包容的, 而不是封闭的、排他的。在新的历史条件下, 澳大利亚如果选择搭上21世纪亚洲发展繁荣顺风车, 和中国一道, 协力推进“一带一路”建设, 为亚太的繁荣作为新的贡献。

Translated Text 译文

(Par 9) The Initiative **is** open and inclusive **rather than** closed and exclusive. In this case, it would be wise if Australia decides to take the ride of Asian development in the 21st century and work with China on the Initiative for Asia-Pacific new boom.

In the speech text conveyed in UN, China applied turning point model (i.e., “is...., but....”) (“direct verb, 但”) in the speech texts as the contradiction principle (i.e., opposite) to emphasize contrary meaning in the target texts. Meanwhile, in the speech text conveyed in Brisbane, firstly China applied turning point model (i.e., “is...., rather than....”) (而不是) in the speech texts as the contradiction principle (i.e., opposite) to emphasize contrary meaning in the target texts. Secondly, China applied hypothesis model (i.e., “if”) (如果) as the contradiction principle (i.e., paradox) to highlight the persuasive style in attracting any participant to join OBOR, as well as to stress the contribution it can make in creating prosperous Asia Pacific by means of joining OBOR. The combination uses of the contradiction principle, i.e., “opposition” and “paradox” in the same one paragraph might bring different effect(s) on the audiences’ minds. Thus, this principle is more likely used for persuading them effectively.

(3) General relationship, Holistic Principle (整体论、大局观原则)

- in UN (驻联合国).

Source Text 原文.

(第4段) “一带一路”倡议同2030年议程高度契合, 相辅相成, 相互促进, 共同推进国际发展合作事业。“一带一路”倡议和2030年议程理念相通, 都以联合国宪章的宗旨和原则为基础, 致力于维护多边主义, 促进世界和平与发展。

Translated Text 译文

(Par 4) The BRI and the 2030 Agenda resonate with and reinforce each other. Together, they promote the cause of international cooperation for development. The BRI and the 2030 Agenda have a shared philosophy. Anchored in the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, both are committed to multilateralism and international peace and development.

- in Brisbane (驻布里斯班)

Source Text 原文

(第5段) 通过共同打造政治互信、经济融合、文化包容的利益共同体、命运共同体和责任共同体, 彰显人类社会共同理想和美好追求, 创新全球治理模式, 维护国际社会的根本利益, 助推建立持久和平、普遍安全、共同繁荣的和谐世界。

Translated Text 译文

(Par 5) By building a community of shared interests, destiny and responsibility based on political trust, economic integration and cultural inclusiveness, we pursue the common ideals of mankind, create new model governing the world,

uphold the fundamental interests of international community, and help build a long peaceful and harmonious world that is safe and prosperous for all.

In the speech text conveyed in UN, China's purpose is to reiterate that OBOR and the 2030 Agenda, overall, have a similar goal and principle. This is a part of general relationship/holistic principle. Meanwhile, in the speech text conveyed in Brisbane as bilateral scope, the main idea is to restate the idealism of "community of shared future for mankind" (共同体) as a part of general relationship/holistic principle. This idealism is based on the common ideals of mankind, e.g. long peaceful and harmonious world.

(4) *Compromise-based Justification, Harmony Principle* ("中庸之道", "和谐" 原则)

– in UN (驻联合国)

Source Text 原文

(第13段) 中方愿同各方秉持遵循 共商 共建 共享原则, 全面落实高峰论坛成果, 让共建“一带一路”更好造福各国人民。

Translated Text 译文

(Par 13) China is ready to work with all parties, under the principle of extensive consultation, **joint** development and **shared** benefits, to implement the outcomes of the forum and deliver more benefits to people across the world.

– in Brisbane (驻布里斯班)

Source Text 原文

(第14段) 如今在经济全球化、社会信息化的大背景下, 各国之间广泛开展文化交流、学术往来、人才交流、媒体合作、青年和妇女交往、志愿者服务等, 深化合作的民意基础, 是建立**人类命运共同体**的正道沧桑。应以人文交流为重点, 互办文化年、艺术节、电影节和图书展等活动, 合作开展广播影视剧精品创作、展播以及文化传媒交流合作, 塑造**和谐**友好的文化生态和舆论环境, 促进文化共生共荣。

Translated Text 译文

Translated Text 译文

(Par 14) In today's globalized and information world, it is the way to a community of **shared** destiny that all countries exchange ... and media partnership could be conducted to nurture cultural friendship and **harmony**.

In the speech text conveyed in UN, China applied three times repetition of “共” (that means “together/common”) to reflect the compromise-based justification/harmony principle, especially in using the words of “joint” and “shared”. Compared to the keywords in source text, this part of speech/keywords in the target text might be slightly various. Meanwhile, in the speech text conveyed in Brisbane, the concept of “community of shared destiny” (人类命运共同体), that emphasizes the word “shared” (共同体), as well as the word “harmony” (和谐), is an example of this compromise-based/justification/harmony principle.

To sum up these analysis, this dialectical cognitive approach is the main characteristics of the Eastern way of thinking, particularly useful for influencing and persuading the audiences. From the four principles as elaborated above, i.e., change principle, contradiction principle, general/holistic principle, compromise-based/justification/harmony principle; it is the first principle or the “change principle” that has been used with less frequency. Whereas the “compromise-based” principle and the “general/holistic” principle were the two most frequently used principles. China might successfully achieve its aims in publicizing and disseminating the OBOR policy to the world by using this dialectical cognitive approach. It might also more effectively encourage audiences to understand, accept, support, and implement the policy.

5 Conclusion

This study analyzes the Eastern way of thinking within the applied dialectics is an interdisciplinary research. It combines political discourse, linguistic cognitive, as well as diplomatic communication as three related dimensions that interconnect and integrate in studying the persuasive function of OBOR speech texts as the case study, as well as its main characteristics and impacts. In order to improve its persuasive power and make use of it effectively as well as to achieve its communication goal, China applied “three plus one” dialectics (i.e., change principle, contradiction principle, general relationship or holistic principle, and compromise-based justification or harmony principle) as its OBOR speech texts’ structural strategy.

In overall analysis, it can be inferred that the cognitive model of Easterner’s dialectics is the main characteristic of political (diplomatic) speech translation. China applied quite different structural strategies of dialectics in the multilateral platform of UN, and in bilateral cooperation with Brisbane of Australia. In its mission in UN, China mainly applied “compromised-based justification or harmony principle” and “contradiction principle” (each proportion of 30%). While in its mission in Brisbane, China applied “compromised-based justification or harmony principle” and “general relationship or holistic principle” (each proportion of 37%). From the four principles as elaborated above, i.e., change principle, contradiction principle, general/holistic principle, compromise-based/justification/harmony principle; it is the first principle or the “change principle” that being used less frequently. While the “compromise-based” principle and the “general/holistic” principle were the two most frequently used principles.

In the bilateral and multilateral cooperation platform, China applied “compromised-based justification or harmony principle” as its main principle. Besides, in the multilateral forum, China applied “contradiction principle” as its secondary structural strategy (30%). The speech itself emphasized opportunities and advantages that China brings to the world through OBOR. While, in the bilateral platform, China applied “general relationship or holistic principle” as its secondary structural strategy (37%). The speech itself not only emphasized the win-win benefit for China and Brisbane in OBOR bilateral cooperation, but also the benefits of the expanded scope of ASEAN (in paragraph 11) and in the Asia-Pacific (in paragraph 9). The two paragraphs mentioning ASEAN and Asia-Pacific are as follows

(第11段) “不仅对澳大利亚北部发展由好处, 而且对推进东南亚经济合作也有利”

(Paragraph 11) “Australia is progressing Northern Development, which will be benefit if Australia could take the occasion of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. **Southeast Asian partnership would also benefit**”.

(第9段) “在新的历史条件下, 澳大利亚如果选择搭上21世纪亚洲发展繁荣顺风车, 和中国一道, 协力推进“一带一路”建设, 为亚太的繁荣作出新贡献, 那将是明智的(“双赢选择”)

(Paragraph 9) “Australia’s policy of integrating into Asia dates back long time. In this case, **it would be wise if** Australia decides to take the ride of Asian development in the 21st century and work with China on the Initiative **for Asia-Pacific new boom**”

Based on the translation in the paragraph 9, omission or zero translation can be found in the sentence of: “为亚太的繁荣作出新贡献, 那将是明智的(双赢选择)”. The latter half part is being omitted or zero translated on purpose of reiterating contributions from all countries/parties (各方做贡献) so as to highlight the same level/status that all parties/countries have in the basis of “general relationship or holistic principle”, rather than to pay attention or focus on win-win benefit option (双赢选择). Another possible reason is to tone-down the imperative tone by omitting the latter half, i.e., “win-win benefit” in the “it will be a wise choice of a win-win benefit”.

In details, the main characteristics under the dialectics of “compromised-based justification or harmony principle”, is that the mission in UN mostly used the words “shared” and “joint”, while the mission in Brisbane used the words “shared” and “harmony”. The “contradiction principle” applied in mission in UN is indicated by connectors, such as “is...but...”, “is...without...”, “is not...rather than...”. The “general relationship or holistic principle” applied in the mission in Brisbane is “community of shared destiny”. As above mentioned, the dialectics of “compromised-based justification or harmony principle” is the main characteristic of OBOR speech texts. This main characteristic is also fit to the slogan of “community of shared future for mankind” as coined by Xi Jinping. Due to the slogan’s value being similar to the common values of mankind, therefore it is easier to be accepted or more effectively persuasive. Therefore, the political discourse in OBOR political speech texts is reflected in its persuasive structure and semantic strategy, by using exaggerative dialectics to emphasize self “positivity”.

The characteristics is in-lined to Van Dijk’s political discourse strategy within its three characteristics: First, fact-based argument; Second, exaggerative dialectics to emphasize other “negativity” and self “positivity”; Third, using particular style of Part of Speech (POS) to indicate words and keywords; Fourth, using “story-telling” style of rhetoric model as the part of cognitive analysis. This would have the impact firstly of portraying China’s “self-positivity” by using fact-based arguments and keywords; and secondly of effectively propagating the OBOR policy in the audiences’ cognitive thinking. Hence, the aims of speech texts related to OBOR policy, that is to gain the objectives of greater audiences’ acceptance and support, might be more successfully achieved.

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