

Research on the Reconstruction of Government Discourse under the Background of Social Transition in China

Based on the Theory of Postmodern Public Administration Discourse

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Abstract

At present, China is in a critical period of multiple transitions, social structure is undergoing profound changes and the pattern of interest reorganized sharply. With the development of diversified society, China's public governance is in crisis that characterized by discourse rupture and discourse conflict. How to reconstruct the discourse under the new circumstances is a difficult problem that must be solved by Chinese government. The theory of postmodern public administration provides a new theoretical perspective to this problem, which advocated discourse democracy, and pays more attention to the communication between government and society, citizens. The Chinese government should construct a new mechanism that the government communicate rationally with society, citizens and equal dialogue, and then establish a new type of partnership based on governance; get out of the discourse crisis in order to realize "good governance".

Key words:Socialtransformation; Discoursecrisis; Administrative discourse;Reconstruction of discourse

1. Introduction

At present, China is in a critical period with multiple transformations, the social structure is undergoing profound changes, and the pattern of interests is undergoing dramatic restructuring. With the development of social diversity, especially the coming of the era of network, China's public governance is in crisis that characterized by discourse rupture and discourse conflict. How to reconstruct the discourse under the new circumstances is a difficult problem that must be solved by Chinese government.

2. The Origins of China's Social Transition and the Crisis of Administrative Discourse

The term "discourse" is derived from linguistics. In linguistics, discourse refers to the "A sentence can expresses the relatively complete meaning or thought semantically (See: Yuan Shiquan,199). With the research of discourse penetrating to the social science such as philosophy, sociology, politics, discourse concept has also been given a new meaning. On one hand, people use language to think and express

willingness and demand, maintain communication and contact between each other. On the other hand, discourse connect with power. People influence others and achieve a specific purpose by words, but also influenced by others' words. In the imbalance of social power relations, discourse is not only the characterization of power relations, is constructed by power relations, and also has the significance of adjusting and influencing power relations.[2]The new medias is promoting the rise of the words power, Baudrillard even said the non-reference sign determines the real P49 [3].

Administrative discourse refers to the participants spread information, express interests and demand through social action, sound, text, and other symbols in the administrative process, which mainly includes the speech behavior of the government and officials and citizens. [2]. As the part of the administrative process, administrative discourse is an important window for the perspective of public administration.If government and citizens communicate well and smoothly, it can improve the efficiency of public administration, and promote

mutual understanding, enhance mutual trust and consensus required for construction; on the contrary, if they failure to communicate, it will results in crisis of administrative discourse and the failure of public policy, causes the negative psychology, such as resentment, dissatisfaction and distrust each other, brings huge hidden trouble to social stability. [4]

With the rapid transition of Chinese society, especially the coming of the era of network, it accelerates the diversification trend of Chinese society. With the pluralistic development of the society and the popularity of internet, all of that expand and strengthen the discourse power of citizens. Facing to the huge pressure of "information explosion" and "network in politics", the government also adjusts adaptively, using the network technology and E-government to build the platform and channel to communicate with citizens, with a positive response to public opinion. The sharp expansion of government discourse and civil discourse, inevitably leads to the unprecedented collision of both, that has brought the crisis of administrative discourse, on the other hand also contribute to the reconstruction of discourse structure and steering, and if will have a profound impact on the power of the social structure.

3. The Theoretical Explanation of the Theory of Postmodern Public Administration Discourse

In 1950s, when the thought of Postmodernism appeared, Fawkes and Miller proposed the theory of postmodern public administration discourse, and emphasized the autonomy and equality of the participants, pay attention to the diversity and openness of discourse; establish a strict system of dialogue, to develop a new way to express the citizens' interests.

"Public energy field" is the core concept of the theory of postmodern public administration discourse. Fawkes and Miller think that, with the rise of global civil society, especially the mutual fusion of state and society, the public sector will gradually lose the significance of its existence, and use the concept of "energy field" seems more appropriate than the public sector. The "public energy field" includes the context, situation and historic, is a place for formulates and modifies the public policy, also for the participants perform the social discourse. Fawkes and Miller think that, because the "public energy field" has the characteristics which transcend and include the existing system, organization, and the bureaucracy, therefore advocate that changing the mode of public administration from the bureaucracy to "public energy field", then provides a true and proper dimension for the realization of the public discourse, namely, the dialogue arena characterized with institutionalization. [3] P98 In the "public energy field", the requirement of diverse interests aims to influence the policy making, restricted by public energy field, based on equal right of expression, form the dialogue system with standard, independency and multiple.

Fawkes and Miller thought that there are three dialogue forms in the policy formulation process, namely, "dialogue of a few people", "dialogue of most people", "dialogue of some people". "Dialogue of a few people" often represents the elite theorists in the comment, besides it leads to power, and may cause problems such as the public apathy, eventually fall into the troubles of monologue. Though the "dialogue of most people don't been manipulated by the elite, but it is easy to cause the lazy to chat and anarchism, public opinion is difficult to reach an agreement. The "dialogue of some people" laid stress

on the spirit of participation; although it limits the participation, but the improving of intentionality and sincerity that conform to the situation greatly outweigh its disadvantages.[3]P143The theory of postmodern public administration discourse provides an open, pluralism, equal normative discourse energy field, because the participants in the process of dialogue and negotiation is equal, there is no priority that special interests of members has surmounted the interests of other citizens "[5].The demands of citizens' interests can through public dialogue and negotiation, debate, and other forms of discourse, to communicate, negotiate, compromise with the others of "public energy field", eventually forming a common policy, in order to achieve harmony of public administration.

4. The Crisis of Administrative Discourse under the Background of Social Transformation in China

In recent years, although China attaches great importance to the construction of harmonious administrative discourse, but the expression of civil discourse and government discourse are still subject to the monologue of government.

4.1. The Hysteresis Quality of Discourse Thinking

Due to the social mentality are slave to political authority, and the subject of discourse often lagging policy discourse thinking.Main show is: on the one hand is the hysteresis of government discourse thinking, the blind pursuit of discourse hegemony, soliloquizes, self-righteous,the discourse structure seems to be rigorous, but poor content, is only the "model operas" acted by power. On the other hand is the independent spirit of citizen, which the demand of civil dialogue relying on other people and society .It will cause the irrational demands once the interests

damaged, and it often angry at society and the public sector.Because the constraint of the discourse of government and citizens, the simple discourse thinking becomes the primary obstacle of openness and diversity of discourse thinking.

4.2. The Unidirectivity of Discourse's Approach

Because administrated by the "input" system of China's public policy, the government and the citizens form a single direction communication mode. On the one hand, the government dominated the mainstream of discourse channel for a long time; take monologue discourse pattern likes a preaching "parents", indoctrinate the citizens in the form of "mouthpiece".On the other hand, in the formulation process of public policy, citizen cannot express interests through normal channels, it result in the formulation process of public policy turn into the pursuit of the interests of the departments. Due to the expression channel of citizens' interest impeded and public policymakers to suppress the problem of interest for a long time, citizens easy to choose the expression of non-institutionalized, and then evolve the contradiction between officials and people into the anger events, it can be found a number of mass incidents in recent years.

4.3. The Bureaucratic Discourse Control

The theory of postmodern public administration discourse argues that the discourse system guided by governmentdepends on the monologue of a small number of elite; it is unable to build two-way communication.First of all, the "bureaucracy" discourse style is serious, the government abuse of discourse power. This kind of discourse system often ignore the public interests, ignoring the interests of the citizens to express, so that the sharpening contradictions between the official and

people. Secondly, the existence of the government "pressure stability" mode, the local governments tend to take the stability as an excuse to suppress the expression of citizens, to create a harmonious illusion. Thirdly, in the process of public policy making, the asymmetry information makes citizens in disadvantage of discourse expression, easy to cause the lack of transparency of public policy making. Due to the discourse of government monopoly runs the pluralistic discourse space, society "relief valve" effect is difficult to play, in the long term, the pressure of public opinion will make society in danger.

5. The Path Choice of Constructing Harmonious Administrative Discourse

China must construct a "public discourse field" with harmonious dialogue between governments and citizens to confront the fact of discourse conflict and fracture, namely to construct an administrative system to adapt the social diversified development and network era, in order to make the governments and citizens can communicate openly, equally, freely through dialogue, discussion and consultation, negotiation, argument, then promote the science formulation of public policy, improve the harmonious development of society.

5.1. To Reshape the Public Spirit and Standardize the System of Administrative Discourse

Firstly, to construct the harmonious system of administrative discourse must be based on the shaping of public spirit. To pursue the socialism core values and adhere to people-oriented, equal consultation and public spirit of democratic governance, to break the monopoly discourse control of power politics or strong democracy, to cultivate a sincere, open, tolerant and rational spirit of dialogue;

make efforts to improve the accomplishment and skills in participant's dialogue. Secondly, to clearly define the boundary of administrative discourse system. On the one hand, to prevent individual readiness to above the public space, with the tendency of personal interest instead of public interest; On the other hand, we should avoid the value of public discourse controlled by the powerful interest groups, so that the rights consciousness of citizen and rights behavior cannot be guaranteed. Thirdly, we should keep the balance of the discourse system between the government and the citizen. The harmonious administrative discourse system should ensure that the government and citizen with bound by rules of discourse, and make the supervision and balance each other. [6]

5.2. To Strengthen the System Construction, and to Construct the Mode of Administrative Discourse with Negotiation Style

First of all, we should develop socialist democracy. To emphasize improving the democratic system, to enrich democratic form, especially improving the legal system, the power supervision system, the administrative accountability system; to carry out the basic political rights which the constitution provided, to protect the human-right of participation, expression and supervision, to ensure that citizens can enter the field and speaking freely, to improve the interest expression function of National People's Congress, Chinese people's political consultative conference, increase the efficiency of the citizens to express. Secondly, we should construct discourse pattern of dialogue and consultation. As far as China concerned, to build a democracy system with reasonable program and complete link, to widen the channel of deliberative democracy in the field of each level, to innovate the form of deliberative

democracy in the network dialogue are powerful explorations to realize the "public discourse energy field" in "the dialogue of some". We can draw on the experiences of European and American countries, and set up the forum for the major public policy and livelihood issues, encourage citizens with spirit of citizenship to participate in the dialogue. We should strengthen institutionalization construction of the network asked politics represented by WeiBo, play the role of expanding issues and supervision by public opinion. Thirdly, we should establish the supervision system of discourse power, to ensure government and citizen to obey the rules, to realize the mutual supervision, return to rational discourse.

5.3. To Based on the Comprehensive Development and Optimize the External Environment of Administrative Discourse System.

Harmonious administrative discourse system is a high quality of "public discourse energy field", the "public discourse energy field" can play a role, not only depends on its own to build and perfect, and it also depends on the development of its external environment. Therefore, we must pay attention to the energy conversion of "public discourse energy field" and external, and put in the energies from cultivating the civil society, constructing the discourse platform, establishing the rule of law society, to achieve the positive communication between government and citizen, and to reshape the government's credibility.

6. Conclusion

In a word, with the transformation of the single-center ruling pattern of government to multiple-center management pattern, the patten of administrative discourse will also gradually transform from

monologue type to polylogue. The theory of postmodern public administration discourse advocates the viewpoints of discourse democracy, and pay attention to the dialogue between government and society, civil conversation, provides the basis for solving this problem. To make China out of the crisis of administrative discourse, it is necessary to reconstruct a new dialogue pattern, to establish mechanisms for rational communication and equal dialogue between government and society, citizens, and then establish a new type of partnership based on governance, to achieve "good governance".

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