

Study on the English Translation of “Xi-style” Speech from the Perspective of Appraisal system --Taking Xi Jinping’s keynote speech at the China-Central Asia Summit as an Example

Liu Yi^{1*}

¹School of Foreign Languages, Baoding University of Technology, Baoding, Hebei 071000, China

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*Corresponding author: Liu Yi

School of Foreign Languages, Baoding University of Technology, Baoding, Hebei 071000, China

Abstract

By analyzing the English translation of “Working Together for a China-Central Asia Community with a Shared Future, Featuring Mutual Assistance, Common Development, Universal Security, and Everlasting Friendship” delivered by President Xi Jinping, who presided over the first China-Central Asia Summit in Xi’an City, Shaanxi Province, on May 19, 2023, the article analyze how President Xi’s keynote address used the attitude of evaluation theory system to promote China’s joining hands with Central Asian countries to build the Belt and Road, and to lead the future in-depth cooperation between China and the Central Asian region.

Keywords: The belt and road initiative; Xi Jinping’s keynote speech; appraisal system.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In September 2013, during his visit to Central Asia, President Xi Jinping proposed for the first time to build the “Silk Road Economic Belt”, and in October of the same year, during his visit to Southeast Asia, he also proposed to build “the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road”, which together constitute the major initiative of “Belt and Road”. Together, they constitute the “Belt and Road” initiative. Over the past ten years, as a major initiative to expand China’s openness to the outside world, the Belt and Road Initiative has opened a new chapter in the development of China and the world. Over the past ten years, President Xi has visited Central Asia seven times, maintained close interaction with leaders of Central Asian countries through various means, and promoted the leapfrog development of China’s relations with Central Asian countries. Today, China and the five Central Asian countries have achieved full coverage of the comprehensive strategic partnership and the signing of cooperation documents for the joint construction of the Belt and Road. On January 25, 2022, a video summit was held on the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the five Central Asian countries. The most important outcome of the summit was the announcement of the two sides to build a China-Central Asia community of destiny, ushering in a new era of mutual relations. China and the five Central Asian countries are also committed to promoting the

building of a community of destiny at the bilateral level, which was an important topic of President Xi’s talks with the heads of state in Xi’an.

On May 19, 2023, President Xi Jinping hosted the China-Central Asia Summit in Xi’an, Shaanxi Province, and delivered a keynote speech entitled “Working Together for a China-Central Asia Community with a Shared Future, Featuring Mutual Assistance, Common Development, Universal Security, and Everlasting Friendship”. In his keynote address, President Xi summed up the historical contributions to world civilization made by China’s friendly exchanges with the peoples of Central Asia, made a profound elaboration on what kind of Central Asia the world needs and how to build a China-Central Asia community of destiny in the new era, put forward suggestions on China’s cooperation with the Central Asian countries, and solemnly announced a number of practical initiatives, which comprehensively broke down the blueprint for the development of future China-Central Asia relations. It also solemnly announced a number of practical initiatives, comprehensively drawing a blueprint for the development of future China-Central Asia relations. This meeting has set up a new platform for cooperation between China and Central Asia, opened up new prospects, and is of landmark significance in the history of the development of relations between China

and Central Asian countries. A series of deepening Belt and Road initiatives put forward by China and Central Asia have been efficiently implemented, and the signing ceremony of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Railway, a strategic project for China's connectivity with Central Asia, was held in Beijing, which will inject strong impetus into the economic and social development of the three countries and even the Central Asian region, and once again proves the great significance of the "Belt and Road" project, and demonstrates that building a community of human destiny is the most important way of building a common future.

Through the perspective of appraisal system, this paper analyzes the English translation of President Xi's keynote speech "Working Together for a China-Central Asia Community with a Shared Future, Featuring Mutual Assistance, Common Development, Universal Security, and Everlasting Friendship" delivered at the China-Central Asia Summit on May 19th, and analyzes how President Xi has made use of discourse strategies to build a good international image of China and to promote China's cooperation with Central Asia on the Belt and Road. The English translation of the keynote speech analyzes how President Xi uses discourse strategies to build China's good international image and promote the in-depth development of the Belt and Road cooperation between China and Central Asia.

2. Overview of the Appraisal System

In Halliday's systemic-functional view of language, language has three major meta-functions, namely, ideational function, textual function and interpersonal function. The Appraisal System belongs to the category of Systemic Functional Linguistics, which was created by Martin, a famous linguist, and is a further expansion of the interpersonal function of language. The theory focuses on the study of appraisal means, by analyzing words, phrases, or sentence patterns with appraisal meanings to explain the author/speaker's positive or negative evaluation of entities, events, and developments in the discourse. The appraisal system covers attitude, engagement and graduation.

Three subsystems: (1) Attitude system. The attitude system is the core component of the evaluation system, with both positive and negative attributes, and can be further divided into three categories: affect, judgment and appreciation, which can be used to analyze the emotions expressed by the author. (2) Engagement system constitutes the second major subsystem of appraisal system, contains monogloss and heterogloss, and is mostly used to analyze the sources of research attitudes. (3) Grade difference system runs through the whole appraisal system, which is simply the increase or decrease of attitude (This study formulates the appraisal system system as shown in Fig 1).

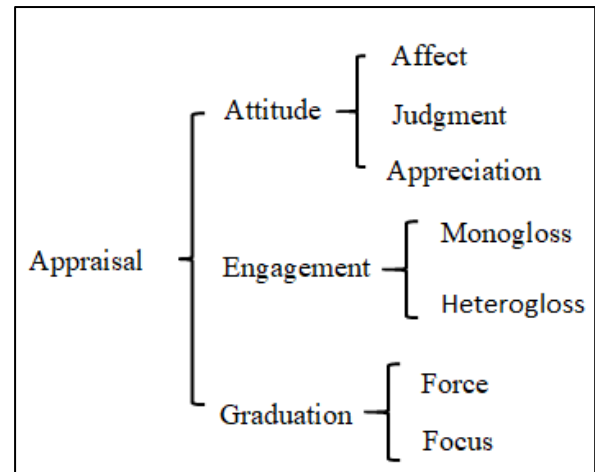


Figure 1: Appraisal System

In recent years, appraisal system has begun to be widely used as a research path and theoretical framework in the translation research of political discourse. Taking the English version of *Xi Jinping's Discourse on Realizing the Great Revival of the Chinese Nation* as the corpus, Liu Xiaolin uses appraisal system as the basis to quantify and qualify the emotions, judgments and appreciation in the attitude system, so as to interpret the core connotation and social significance of the Chinese dream more objectively. Li Wangying, Liu Shuning, and Wang Hongli use the attitude system of appraisal system to compare and analyze the reports on the "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum in China Daily and The New York Times, so as to reveal the views of Chinese and American mainstream media on the Belt and Road initiative. The Belt and Road Initiative in the U.S. and China. Wang Zhihong and Zhan Quanwang analyze the distribution of attitudinal resources in the English translation of the white paper "China's Democracy" and its constructed image of the Chinese state based on appraisal system.

• Text Analysis

Based on the attitude resources of the appraisal system, the author made statistics on the English translation of "Working Together to Build a China-Central Asia Community of Shared Future with Mutual Help, Common Development, Universal Security, and Friendship from Generation to Generation".

Types	Affect	Judgment	Appreciation
Frequency	45	25	10

1. As shown in the table, the words and phrases expressing affective attitudes appear most frequently, with a frequency of 45, which is mainly related to the development vision of the China-Central Asia Belt and Road Co-construction. The affect system is the core part of the attitude system, reflecting the individual's mental activity towards behavior, text and process or phenomenon. People generally have both positive and

negative ways of expressing their emotions during speech, using mostly positive words when they are in a good mood, and negative words when they are on the contrary.

- 1) Over the past decade, China and Central Asian countries have worked closely together to fully revive the Silk Road and actively deepen future-oriented cooperation, steering our relations into a new era.
- 2) Our relations are brimming with vigor and vitality in the new era.
- 3) It was a historic choice made for the fundamental interests and bright future of our peoples in the new era.

In Example 1, the use of positive words such as “fully revive the Silk Road”, “actively deepen future-oriented cooperation”, “steering our relations into a new era”, fully expresses President Xi’s recognition of the ten-year achievements of the China-Central Asia Silk Road and his good expectations for the in-depth development of bilateral relations. The use of such positive terms fully expresses President Xi’s affirmation of the results of the decade-long China-Central Asia Silk Road project and his hope for the in-depth development of bilateral relations, and at the same time demonstrates to the countries attending the conference that China is a leader in the development of the world economy, attracting more countries to participate in the cooperation and development. In his speech, President Xi mentioned that China’s relations with the Central Asian countries have deep historical roots, extensive practical needs, and a solid foundation of public opinion, and have been revitalized and exuberant in the new era. In Examples 2 and 3, expressions such as “bright future”, “brimming with vigor and vitality” reflect President Xi’s confidence in the China-Central Asia joint construction of the Belt and Road, and that China, as the initiator of the Silk Road and the leader of the world’s major economies, is willing to cooperate with other countries in the process of developing and building the Belt and Road. China, as the initiator of the Silk Road and the leader of the world’s major economies, is willing to cooperate with other countries in the process of developing and building the Belt and Road, and is committed to realizing the prosperity and stability of the world based on common interests and long-term development. China maintains good cooperative relations with ASEAN countries and Middle East countries, which provides a broad space for cooperation between China and Central Asian countries, and is conducive to promoting the comprehensive revitalization of the China-Central Asia Silk Road and a brand new era of in-depth cooperation among countries.

2. As shown in the table, there are more expressions of judgement in the attitude types, with a frequency of 25, which mainly reflects China’s image as a responsible great power in the process of building the Belt and Road, and China’s willingness to drive the development of the

Central Asian countries as the leader of the Belt and Road Initiative to realize the common progress among countries. Words such as “will”, “need”, “should” and so on, which express social respect in the engagement system, are used many times in President Xi’s speech, demonstrating China’s commitment to the building of a community of human destiny, and fully embodying China’s firm determination and pragmatic action to cooperate with Central Asian countries on a win-win basis.

- 1) We should work together to ensure that our community features mutual assistance, solidarity, and mutual trust.
- 2) China will take this as an opportunity to step up coordination with all parties for good planning, development and progress of China-Central Asia cooperation.
- 3) China will also step up the development of China-Europe Railway Express assembly centers.

In his keynote speech, President Xi Jinping mentioned the “four insistences” and “eight proposals” and announced a series of practical measures to deepen cooperation, creating more opportunities to promote the alignment of development strategies and cooperation with Central Asian countries. The use of “should” in Example 1 emphasizes the necessity of building a community of destiny between China and Central Asia, and that the countries should work together to build a community of mutual understanding and solidarity. “China will” is mentioned twice in Example 2 and Example 3, further emphasizing China’s image as a responsible great power in cooperation and exchange between countries. China will provide new opportunities for the world from the perspective of new national development and encourage Central Asian countries to join the road of mutual benefit and win-win situation, which is conducive to building a closer China-Central Asia community of destiny, revitalizing the economic development of all countries, injecting strong positive energy for regional peace and stability, and creating a better future for China-Central Asia cooperation. It is conducive to jointly creating a better tomorrow for China-Central Asia cooperation.

3. As shown in the table, the frequency of words and phrases that express appreciative attitudes in the attitude type is relatively low, with a frequency of 10, mainly reflecting the achievements and significance of the joint construction of the Belt and Road by China and Central Asian countries. In President Xi’s speech, the appreciative attitude is mainly expressed in the words of value resources, of which positive value words account for the vast majority.

- 1) Our gathering in Xi’an today to renew our millennia-old friendship and open up new vistas for the future is of very important significance.
- 2) It is important that we deepen strategic mutual trust, and always give each other unequivocal

and strong support on issues concerning our core interests such as sovereignty, independence, national dignity, and long-term development.

At the summit, President Xi recalled the long-standing friendship between China and the Central Asian countries and, focusing on the world trend and the trend of the times, put forward the “Four Propositions” on what kind of Central Asia should be built, the “Four Insistences” on how to build a China-Central Asia community of destiny, and the “Eight Proposals” on cooperation between China and the Central Asian countries. The “Four Propositions” on what kind of Central Asia should be built, the “Four Insistences” on how to build a China-Central Asia community of destiny, and the “Eight Proposals” on cooperation between China and Central Asian countries have pointed out the direction of efforts to build a China-Central Asia community of destiny. The use of very important significance, important in Example 1 and Example 2 affirms the achievements of China-Central Asia in building the Belt and Road together, injects confidence and impetus for regional and world peace and stability, development and prosperity, and promotes the building of a community of human destiny, and establishes a new platform for cooperation between China and Central Asia, opening up new prospects.

4. CONCLUSION

In his important speech at the China-Central Asia Summit, President Xi fully utilized the resources of appraisal system to express his views, express China’s ideas and put forward China’s voice. President Xi used the resources of positive attitude to demonstrate the development achievements of the “Belt and Road Initiative” and the outstanding contribution of China, which show that China is willing to work together with all countries in the world to realize economic development, overcome development difficulties and realize the vision of a better life for all people. In his speech, President Xi also used appraisal resources to objectively analyze the general trend of historical development and the objective laws of economic development, thus reminding all countries in the world to calmly analyze the economic situation and have the courage to recognize and solve problems, thus fully embodying the demeanor of a great power. At the same time, President Xi put forward “Four Propositions” on

what kind of Central Asia to build, “Four Insistences” on how to build a China-Central Asia community of destiny, and “Eight proposals” on cooperation between China and Central Asian countries. The “Eight Proposals” on China’s cooperation with Central Asian countries has pointed out the direction of efforts to build a China-Central Asia community of destiny. This paper expands the social influence and international influence of President Xi’s speeches on the basis of analyzing the series of speeches at the G20 Summit based on appraisal system. It is hoped that this paper will provide a reference for better writing and analyzing such political speeches in the future, attract more scholars to actively participate in China’s Voice” and “China’s Contribution”, and be conducive to the reshaping of the country’s image and the enhancement of the soft power of discourse.

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