

Metaphor Analysis of Security Discourse in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China (Volume IV)* and Its English Translation Strategies

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Abstract

This study employs the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) to capture the security discourse and its metaphors in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China (Volume IV)*, conducting both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Based on the framework of Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA), the study explores the humanistic values and political implications behind the “security metaphors”. Given the highly politically oriented nature of Party materials, the study finds that diverse translation strategies need to be adopted for the metaphorical elements in security discourse to achieve precise transmission and cross-cultural adaptation of metaphors while maintaining the original political intent and contextual coherence.

Keywords

Security Discourse, Metaphors in Security Discourse, Translation Strategies

1. Introduction

As we enter the new century, China faces many complex security challenges. At home, there are problems like cyber threats, natural disasters, and unexpected public emergencies. Abroad, some Western countries invoke the notion of a “China Threat” to impede and contain the country, posing tangible threats to China’s economic development and territorial sovereignty. In Volume IV of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, there’s a dedicated chapter on “Development and Security”, which underscores the profound commitment of the Party Central Committee to national security.

Metaphor, a frequent element in political speeches, has permeated every aspect of Chinese political language, exhibiting the uniqueness of Chinese culture and

revealing the deeper meanings behind political discourse. The book uses an abundance of plain yet culturally meaningful metaphors on security discourse and makes hard-to-understand ideas easier to grasp and connect with people's feelings. The official translation does a great job of interpreting these metaphors and sharing their cultural and political meanings with readers from other countries.

Consequently, the thesis takes Volume IV of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* as its research material, conducting both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the security discourse and its metaphors. We aim to unravel the rhetorical motivations, decipher the underlying values, and explore the English translation strategies of these security-related metaphorical expressions through a self-constructed corpus.

2. Discourse of Security

Arnold Wolfers (1952) believed that “security” was an “ambiguous symbol” with dual characteristics: objectively, security refers to the fact that the acquired value is not subject to any form of infringement or threat, where the “acquired value” could be resources or interests in various forms such as material wealth, political status, and social identity; subjectively, security means that people do not have the fear of their acquired value being infringed upon. With advancements in security research, the definition is now widely applied across disciplines, emphasizing both objective threats and subjective perceptions. From a social constructivist viewpoint, the meaning of “security” evolves through social interactions and is co-created by society's members.

“Security issues are essentially a form of discourse construction” (Yu & Zhang, 2019) that carry significant symbolic meanings and emotional overtones. Given the broad and multi-faceted nature of security issues, a complex and intricate discourse system naturally emerges, encompassing a coordinated system of communication structures and principles that permeate social practices in this field which can effectively facilitate the completion of social practices (Fang & Guo, 2022). Through language and symbolic systems, security discourse flexibly constructs and adjusts security issues. It not only reflects the history, culture, and values of society but also shapes people's perceptions and expectations of “security”, demonstrating a profound social influence.

This book offers insightful scientific judgments from various dimensions such as “political security”, “people's security”, and “ecological security”, constructing a unique security discourse system rooted in the context of the times that continues to evolve. In the new era, research on “security” has focused on interpreting the connotation of the “National Security Concept” and building the discipline of “National Security Studies”. However, there remains a lack of in-depth analysis of the content of security discourse and the transmission of values. As such, quantitative and qualitative analysis of the security discourse in the fourth volume can fill the gap and provide valuable insights for future research.

In April 2014, the major strategic concept of the holistic approach to national

security was officially established, marking the birth of the first guiding concept for national security work in the history of the Communist Party of China. Among them, the “Ten Adherences” are the core essence of the overall national security concept, profoundly reflecting the comprehensive consideration of national security from multiple dimensions and all aspects. With the vigorous development of China’s socialist cause, the national leadership assesses the situation and sizes up the trend, continuously enriching and developing the concept in accordance with the complex and ever-changing domestic and international situations, making it more suitable for addressing security challenges and needs of the new era. Therefore, after fully understanding the core essence by referring to the holistic approach to national security and the important speeches made at the National Security Commission in recent years, the author classifies them in a more scientific manner.

Table 1. Data analysis of security-related discourse in Volume IV.

Category	Related Discourse	Frequency	Proportion
Political Security	Political Security: Chinese civilization was plunged into darkness; demonstrate stronger vigilance; be prepared for potential danger; safeguards our socialist country; Taiwan Question; root out... any viruses that would erode its health	675	33%
People’s Security	People’s Security: making people’s lives and health our top priority; waged an all-out people’s war on the virus; breaking through the last strongholds of absolute poverty	540	26%
Social Security	Social Security: Implementation of control measures has been put in place; combat all crimes endangering people’s lives and property; traffic safety has been implemented; flood control and disaster relief	507	25%
Economic Security	Economic Security: weak links; restore production order; cannot stop functioning for long; ensuring normal foreign trade and foreign investment operations; both upstream and downstream business will be affected	165	8%
International Common Security	International Common Security: The international landscape is more complex; economic globalization is facing opposition; China has consistently been a builder of world peace	105	5%
Food Security	Food Security: Food security is...strategy; remain vigilant concerning food security; farmland must be preserved; black soil conservation...	43	2%
Bio-security	Bio-Security: ...implement Biosecurity Law; Biosecurity awareness; improve the system and capacity for national biosecurity governance	28	1%

The holistic approach to national security emphasizes that **political security is the foundation of national security (2024)**, which incorporates the security of regime, systems, and ideology into the positioning of political security. Through in-depth study, the book manifests “political security” in aspects such as “safeguarding national territory and sovereignty”, “upholding the leadership of the Com-

unist Party”, “never disengaging from the people”, “adhering to the socialism”, and “strengthening the Party’s integrity”. As 2020 marked the 70th anniversary of China’s War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea, the commemorative speeches repeatedly highlighted the spirit of the Chinese People’s Volunteers in defending their country and not fearing sacrifice, conveying the firm determination that “China will never allow its national sovereignty, security, and development interests to be harmed, nor will it allow any forces to violate or separate its sacred territory”.

In the national security system, people’s security is the fundamental purpose. The topic in this book mainly focuses on two areas: fighting against the pandemic and poverty alleviation. The discourse on “fighting against the pandemic” centers on people’s safety, highlighting the governing philosophy of “putting people first” and inspiring the firm determination of the people to unite as one to resist COVID-19. Secondly, the comprehensive victory in poverty alleviation has accomplished the arduous task of eliminating absolute poverty, ensuring the basic livelihood of disadvantaged groups, and demonstrating the political advantages of the CPC and China’s socialist system, as well as the governing quality of leaders who always keep the people’s “safety, well-being, and hardships” in mind.

Based on the changes of the times, China’s security strategy has evolved from a single focus on military and political security to an overall national security concept, and further to an upgraded perspective encompassing international, global, and human security. With its growing international voice, China has proposed the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, contributing the Chinese solution to the agenda of global security. The Global Security Initiative, meanwhile, points the way for international security cooperation that adheres to a common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security concept. Upon consolidation, the discourse of international security mentioned in this text include “the increasingly complex international environment”, “a firm commitment to the path of peace and mutual benefit”, “a resolute opposition to hegemonic practices”, and “contributions to the global pandemic”. In light of the current era, these discourses demonstrate President Xi’s concern over the global international security situation, emphasizing the importance of cooperation and dialogue among nations to resolve international disputes and promote the goal of a community with a shared future for mankind.

3. Analysis on Metaphors of Security Discourse in *Xi Jinping: Governance of China (Volume IV)* (Xi, 2022)

3.1. Related Studies and Research Process

For a long time, influenced by Western logical positivism, scholars generally prefer to use scientific and rational descriptions while treating metaphor as a marginalized research area. However, upon deeper analysis, it becomes clear that scientific research is not a purely rational exploration divorced from human nature, and the scientific field inevitably exhibits a rich humanistic color and depth. Currently, there is extensive research on metaphor in the academic community: At

the theoretical level, Sun and Chen (2024) have reviewed the thirty-year development process of metaphor studies and provided prospects for contemporary metaphor research; In recent years, Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) has emerged as a pivotal paradigm for metaphorical discourse analysis. Wu & Li (2023) have delved deeply into its theoretical origins and offered constructive opinions on its future development prospects; Li Ke (2020) reconstructed the Critical Metaphor Analysis based on the theoretical framework of rhetorical criticism, and conducted a systematic analysis and evaluation of the metaphorical discourse in the context of ecological governance in China's political landscape. This work has opened up a new perspective ground for research on Party materials, offering fresh insights into the understanding and interpretation of these texts. The metaphors in political discourse often convey certain humanistic values. Tian & Li (2020) have precisely classified the metaphors in political discourse and analyzed the "farming metaphor", "disease metaphor", "engine metaphor", among others, from a cultural dimension, thereby assisting readers in comprehending the empirical foundation of conceptual metaphors. Currently, research on metaphors related to the theme of "security" is relatively scarce, and the available literature resources are limited. Based on the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), the author has compiled relevant metaphors from examples of security discourse (as shown in Table 1). The specific steps of MIP (Group Pragglejaz, 2007) are as follows:

- 1) Read the text to generally understand its core content.
- 2) Identify the lexical units within the discourse.
- 3) ① Establish the contextual meaning of each word, ② Determine whether the contextual meaning of each word is associated with its basic meaning through similarity, ③ Determine whether there is a clear distinction between the basic meaning and the contextual meaning of each word.

These metaphors are always employed in the Party material to effectively transform complex and abstract political concepts into concrete, vivid imagery, bridging the gap between theory and practice, as well as between elites and the general public. The metaphors embody the unique essence of China's political culture and serve as crucial pillars for shaping a distinctive Chinese foreign discourse system. Drawing upon the outlined steps, we have screened metaphors from security discourse, categorizing them into ten types as presented in Table 2. Notably, metaphors related to war, road, challenge, and body dominate, constituting 32%, 23%, 12%, and 11% respectively, while river, building, and chessboard metaphors appear less frequently. CMA is a tool used to delve deeply into the complex connections between language, thinking, and social contexts. By employing rigorous theories and systematic methods, CMA uncovers how metaphors are embedded within societal discourses. In this thesis, we follow the CMA approach to conduct a three-step analysis: First, identify metaphors by thoroughly reading relevant security discourse and using the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP). Second, elaborate on these metaphors by further categorizing them based on the characteristics and nature of their source domains, as shown in Table 2. Lastly, interpret

the “security metaphors” by examining the values they convey in the context of society.

Table 2. Data analysis of security-related metaphor in Volume IV.

Source Domain	Related Metaphor Discourse	Frequency	Proportion
War	War: it must command the gun; line of defense; remained undaunted; storm of gunfire and shells; surmounting difficulties; struggle; fight against; frontline; overcome; making breakthroughs	474	32%
Road	Road: way; journey; advance; work with; take important steps; mass line; commit ourselves to; the only way to survive	346	23%
Challenge	Challenge: challenge; left us vulnerable to attack; fear; deal a blow to; problems; obstacles; pressure; impact; difficult times; weak links	174	12%
Body	Body: health; pay more attention; dismayed; close bonds; stood together shoulder to shoulder; side by side; stand firm	157	11%
River	River: building new bridges wherever necessary to take us forward; source; climax; turbulence; population flows; upstream and downstream	98	6%
Building	Building: foundation; fortify; consolidate; collapse; worst-case scenarios	76	5%
Chessboard	Chessboard: a wider context of; new opportunity; new development dynamic	66	4%
Illness	Illness: virus; fear it or evade it; fight the virus	43	3%
Game	Game: achievement; victory; race against	24	1%
Art	Art: follow the fundamental principle; wrote an earth-shaking epic; new and splendid chapters; moving epic	24	1%

3.2. Case Studies

3.2.1. Metaphor of War

Upon meticulous analysis, the war metaphors employed in the security discourse of this book are primarily concentrated in four areas: safeguarding national territorial and sovereign security, combating the COVID-19 pandemic, winning the decisive battle against poverty, development strategies of the Party.

e.g.1: 各级党组织和广大党员、干部冲锋在前、顽强拼搏，充分发挥战斗堡垒作用和先锋模范作用(Volume IV, 2022: P. 92)

Metaphor Identification: Based on the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), terms such as “冲锋在前”, “顽强拼搏” and “战斗堡垒” are identified as rich in linguistic appeal, which exhibit distinct metaphorical characteristics.

Metaphor interpretation: The “党员” and “党组织” serve as the target domain, while “冲锋在前” forms the mapping relationship, depicting the proactive and courageous mental state of Party organizations, Party members, and cadres when facing difficulties and challenges. The “战斗堡垒” emphasizes the stability and reliability of Party organizations, which can withstand all risks and challenges to protect the interests of the people from infringement. In summary, this is classified

as a war metaphor.

Metaphor Explanation: This statement, made on February 23, 2020, during a time when China was facing an unprecedented viral assault, employs the metaphor of war to concretize the response to the epidemic. This metaphor serves to underscore the brutality of the virus's invasion and the gravity of the threat posed to people's lives. It highlights the fearlessness and perseverance of Party members and cadres, who embody the principle of putting people first through their actions. Drawing upon sensory experiences, this metaphor evokes the imagery of war scenes in the minds of the public, achieving a "synesthesia" effect that connects the emotional response to a military conflict with the current crisis. Heroism remains a vital element in the discourse, and during the epidemic, numerous patriotic individuals emerged and led the fight against the virus, which ignited a heroic sentiment deep within the hearts of the people. This, in turn, inspired people to bravely confront challenges and triumph over the virus.

e.g.2: 逢山开道、遇水架桥，勇于战胜一切风险挑战(Volume IV, 2022: P. 13)

Metaphor Identification: Based on MIP, the phrase “逢山开道” “遇水架桥” employs a figurative language structure where the basic meaning significantly differs from the contextual meaning, constituting a metaphorical mapping.

Metaphor Interpretation: It likens encountered difficulties to “山”和“水”，while equating the methods to overcome these obstacles with “开路”和“架桥”. This embodies an unyielding spirit of bravery and pioneering, vividly portraying the image of a military force advancing through adversity, offering readers a strong visual impact. It falls under the category of war metaphors.

Metaphor Explanation: Considering the contemporary backdrop, with the resurgence of protectionism and unilateralism, China faces challenges to its social, economic, and political security. The Party and the nation must possess the spirit and courage of innovation to forge new paths and build new bridges. This proactive approach to finding solutions and paths to overcoming obstacles underscores the importance of the Party and the people bravely facing challenges through innovation, evoking emotional resonance among readers or listeners.

3.2.2. Metaphor of Body

After meticulous research, it is found that the metaphor of body in the security discourse in this book mainly focuses on the Party's self-reform, epidemic prevention and control, people-centered philosophy, carrying forward the spirit of the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea, and adhering to the Party's leadership.

e.g.3: 坚决清除一切损害党的先进性和纯洁性的因素，清除一切侵蚀党的健康肌体的病毒(Volume IV, 2022: P. 13)

Metaphor Identification: The basic meaning of “肌体” refers to “skin” or “body”, which differs significantly from its contextual meaning but shares a

common ground, thereby qualifying it as a metaphor.

Metaphor interpretation: The source domain is “肌体” while the target domain is “党组织”. Based on their characteristics and natures, this can be categorized as a metaphor of body (note that while “病毒” in this sentence can be categorized as a disease metaphor, it will not be analyzed here). Within this framework, the Party’s progressive and wholesome nature are akin to the vitality and health of a “肌体”, serving as the source of the Party’s vitality and strength.

Metaphor Explanation: A muscle and body, as part of the human organism, requires health, strength, and purity to maintain its normal functions. Similarly, the Party organization, as an organizational system, requires the same kind to sustain its healthy development. Therefore, the metaphor of “肌体” underscores the importance of the Party’s health, strength, and purity in driving its progress and safeguarding the interests of the people. Furthermore, this metaphor implies a resolute determination to eliminate any unhealthy, weakening, or impure elements within the Party, ensuring that any factors that threaten its vitality, strength, and purity are removed without hesitation, thereby preserving the Party’s stable leadership and the fundamental interests of the people.

3.2.3. Metaphor of Road

Through detailed research, the “road metaphor” in the security discourse in this book is concentrated on the themes of “Party development”, “international cooperation”, and “China’s modernization”. Notably, most expressions of the road metaphor include synonyms of “路”, such as “在……征程” and “走和平发展道路”. Additionally, some expressions do not explicitly contain the word “路” but convey its meaning, like “阔步前行”, “迈出步伐” and “同……一道”. Besides, while both “道” and “路” embody profound philosophies and value orientations related to national development, international cooperation, and modernization, they also encompass distinct implications.

e.g.4: 唯有主动迎战、坚决斗争才有生路出路(Volume IV, 2022: P. 83)

e.g.5: 和平发展、合作共赢才是人间正道(Volume IV, 2022: P. 78)

In modern Chinese, “路” refers to the established paths leading to destinations, which can be achieved by just “following the way”; “道” is the path leading to the destination one wishes for but is seldom trodden, which requires constant thinking and unremitting exploration to get through (Xia & Chen, 2009). Combining the two “road metaphors” in Examples (4) and (5), when talking about “路”, it is often used to describe a clear and definite development path or model; “道” metaphorically refers to the path that is uncommon but conforms to the common interests of mankind, implying more exploration and pursuit of unknown fields.

4. Translation Strategies for Security Related Metaphors

The author has manually constructed a compact Chinese-English parallel corpus dedicated to “security-related metaphors” utilizing Excel. Despite the inevitable

subjectivity in identifying and categorizing metaphors, utmost carefulness has been taken to ensure the corpus's precision. The process encompasses: ① Definition. Identifying metaphors in discourses centered on the theme of "security" based on [Table 1](#), with careful attention paid to subtle expressions that, while not explicitly displaying the vehicle, essentially convey metaphorical implications; ② Screening. Sentences or lexical units containing "security-related metaphors" are selected, including but not limited to quoted classical proverbs, idioms, and unique and profound expressions by leaders; ③ Entry. The relevant sentences are manually entered to form a Chinese-English sentence-pair alignment; ④ Annotation. Annotations are made for the source domain and target domain, as well as the translation strategies employed.

[Dagut \(1987\)](#) believes that the translatability of metaphors is significantly influenced by the degree of shared cultural associations among the target language readers. When a metaphor embodies both profound cultural associations and lexical associations, the challenge of translation increases substantially. Metaphor in Party material is no longer confined in singular cultural domain but embodying national mainstream values. The translation surpasses linguistic symbol exchange; its core interest lies in serving and bolstering global expression and recognition of national interests. [Sun and Zhou \(2024\)](#), analyzing metaphor translation through the lens of national translation practice theory, emphasize this process's distinct national character; [Ren and Ji \(2021\)](#) have conducted in-depth research on "novel metaphors" and "metaphors with new meanings for old words" based on the three principles of "political equivalence"—politics, dynamism, and balance. The goal is to achieve informational equivalence between the source language and the target language in the translation process, ensuring that the intended meaning and nuances of the metaphors are accurately conveyed across linguistic barriers; [Chen and Jian \(2019\)](#) emphasized the complementary roles of literal translation and free translation in the analysis of the English translation of scientific and technological metaphors; [Feng \(2021\)](#) believes that some rhetorical devices in political documents need to maintain their political undertones. With the prosperity of the country, the translation, while reflecting the connotations, needs to fully demonstrate a confident and self-reliant image. In addition, numerous previous studies on English version of *The Governance of China* have been conducted: [Shi and Zhang \(2021\)](#) analyzed the English translation strategies of the third volume of *The Governance of China* from linguistic and cultural perspectives, and summarized the translation principles for the Party material—political fidelity. This principle stipulates that, on the one hand, translators should avoid over-emphasizing linguistic fluency through foreignization and on the other hand, within the overall framework of political fidelity, translators should adapt to English linguistic conventions through domestication; [Zhou \(2022\)](#) utilizes CiteSpace to delve into the content structure, academic hotspots, and overall characteristics of translation studies on the first volume of *The Governance of China*, and underscores the inherently interdisciplinary nature of national translation practices, which offers a

crucial perspective for refining national translation practice mechanisms. Related viewpoints have provided profound insights and guidance for the translation work of political text in the new era.

From the perspective of Cognitive Metaphorology, the mapping process from the vehicle to the tenor enables the recipient to form an “image” based on personal experience, triggering an instinctive “semantic association” response. For the metaphor translation of Party documents, the core challenge lies in accurately conveying the political connotations while bridging cultural divides and activating the recipient’s perception of a particular vehicle in a heterogeneous culture. This requires not only faithful communication of political meanings but also replication of the artistic charm of the source text. The English translation of “*The Governance of China*” (Volume IV) skillfully integrates cultural elements from both the source and target languages, achieving precise transformation and adjustment to ensure that the translation is both acceptable and comprehensible in the target culture.

4.1. Transforming Imagery, Revitalizing Styles

Due to differences in cultural perspectives, there exists a barrier in the “communication” of the same imagery between readers of the source language and the target language, as certain imageries often carry unique symbolic meanings within their respective cultural contexts. The English translation of Volume IV creatively reconstructs or substitutes the original imageries to achieve effective cultural connection and profound resonance.

e.g.6: 基础不牢，地动山摇 (Volume IV, 2022: P. 60)

If the foundation is not solid, the building trembles.

Deeply rooted in China’s rich cultural heritage, the strong rhetorical device of “地动山摇” vividly portrays catastrophic consequences stemming from a weak foundation. This imagery, rich in cultural nuances and visually striking, conveys the intense turmoil of nature. However, given the profound differences between Chinese and English cultures, a direct transplantation of this imagery into an English context may inevitably lead to comprehension barriers or a loss of meaning. Therefore, the translator employs a strategy of transforming imagery, ingeniously narrowing the vast landscapes of “地” and “山” down to the specific concept of “building”, thereby aligning more closely with the cognitive framework and life experiences of English readers. Further analysis reveals that the root cause of “地动山摇” in the original text—“基础不牢”—underscores the paramount importance of stability. In reconstructing the imagery, the translator, while condensing the grand imagery into “building trembles”, accurately captures and conveys the core message: an unstable foundation results in severe consequences. This reconstructive approach not only maintains the contextual relevance of the original text but also demonstrates respect for and adherence to English expression habits, achieving the dual goals of cultural transmission and linguistic transformation in

a seamless manner.

4.2. Unraveling Imagery, Clarifying Meanings

e.g.7: 打江山、守江山，守的是人民的心(Volume IV, 2022: P. 63)

As we have fought to establish and consolidate our Party's leadership over the country, we have in fact been fighting to earn and keep the people's support.

On the basis of Critical Metaphor Analysis, “打江山” refers to the process of contending for power and status within a particular field, emphasizing victory and conquest. “守江山”, on the other hand, signifies the protection of established resources, guarding against infringement by other forces, and underscores stability and resilience against risks. The use of “江山” avoids direct literal translation, opting for a more profound and explanatory approach; Similarly, the abstract concept of “心”, as an emotional carrier, is skillfully transformed into the trust and support of the people, preserving its emotional resonance. Furthermore, the verb “earn” highlights the arduous nature of winning such trust and support, while “keep” underscores the significance of nurturing and maintaining this bond.

e.g.8: 在任何困难和风险面前，腿肚子不会抖，腰杆子不会弯(Volume IV, 2022: P. 75)

We do not give in to fear or yield in the face of difficulties and dangers.

This sentence is excerpted from the commemorative speech delivered at the 70th anniversary of the Chinese People's Volunteers entering the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fight in the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea. From the perspective of Critical Metaphor Analysis, “腿肚子不会抖，腰杆子不会弯” signifies fearlessness and resilience in the face of difficulties, challenges, or dangers. A literal translation of this metaphor might mislead readers into interpreting it as a description of actual physical movements, thereby overlooking its symbolic significance. By transforming the specific images of “腿肚子抖” and “腰杆子弯” into a more universal and profound meaning, we can accurately capture the original intention and emotional nuance of the text, facilitating comprehension among target language readers.

4.3. Keeping Imagery, Showcasing Confidence

e.g.9: 坚持党指挥枪、建设自己的人民军队(Volume IV, 2022: P. 11)

...the Party came to recognize the irrefutable truth that it must command the gun and build a people's military of its own.

With the in-depth development of national translation practice, the translation of political rhetoric has become increasingly important in shaping the national image and enhancing international influence, forming a potential “rhetorical strength”. However, the previous understanding of national rhetoric often

overlooked the underlying cultural and linguistic confidence, especially failing to explore the role and strength of political rhetoric from the perspective of national translation practice.

The phrase “党指挥枪” originates from Mao Zedong’s famous dictum—“political power grows out of the barrel of a gun”. Here, “枪” serves as a symbol of military force, emphasizing the army’s role as an instrument for implementing the Party’s decisions, and highlighting the Party’s control and command over the military force. As the influence of the Communist Party of China continues to expand, “党指挥枪” has taken on specific political significance, and related expressions have gained a certain level of recognition and acceptance internationally. Retaining the literal translation of “枪” in overseas publicity materials preserves the characteristics of the source language, ensuring strong adaptability and communicative effect in the target language context. This approach enhances international understanding of China and demonstrates its cultural confidence.

e.g.10: 以“钢少气多”力克“钢多气少”，谱写了惊天地、泣鬼神的雄壮史诗。(Volume IV, 2022: P. 75)

Poor in steel but with an iron will, they wrote an earth-shaking epic defeating an enemy **rich in steel but weak in will**.

The first half of the phrase stems from Mao Zedong’s summation of the experience of the Korean War, where “钢” refers to material steel equipment and military strength, while “气” signifies morale and fighting will. In the process of translation, whether to adopt literal translation or free translation often depends on the translator’s cultural stance and translation purpose. Literal translation not only preserves the cultural characteristics of the source language but also showcases to the world the unwavering conviction and indomitable perseverance demonstrated by the Chinese nation in the face of difficulties and challenges. In response to the recurring war metaphors in the fourth volume, the translations have largely retained the original word formation, effectively embodying the “Four Confidences” at the linguistic level.

4.4. Removing Imagery, Eliminating Redundancy

e.g.11: 再看看我们现在的农村，面貌完全改变了(Volume IV, 2022: P. 66)

But now, our rural areas have changed significantly.

e.g.12: 中国人民在爱国主义旗帜感召下，同仇敌忾、同心协力(Volume IV, 2022: P. 74)

In this war, driven by patriotism, the Chinese people fought shoulder to shoulder against the enemy.

In the translation of diplomatic metaphors, when the source language metaphor is highly loaded and corresponding metaphorical expression cannot be found in the target language culture, it is advisable to abandon the metaphorical form and

adopt free translation instead (Zhao & Yang, 2022). In Example (11), “面貌”, as a metaphorical term, carries significant symbolic implications. However, a literal translation might lead to semantic overlap with the term “rural”, obscuring the intended meaning. The translated text, therefore, strips away the metaphorical shell of the original text, directly revealing the essence, and conforms more closely to the expression habits of the target language, achieving precise and efficient communication of information. Similarly, in Example (12), the translation does not rigidly adhere to preserving the metaphorical imagery but choose to omit “旗帜” directly. Nonetheless, it still captures the main idea through concise translation, demonstrating flexibility and effectiveness in cross-cultural communication.

5. Conclusion

This study, which quantitatively and qualitatively examines safety discourse and its embedded metaphors to uncover their humanistic implications, which holds considerable significance. Nevertheless, while aiming for in-depth research, we must recognize inevitable limitations: Despite the significant importance placed on “security issues” by nations and people, research into the discourse system and metaphorical mechanisms within the security domain remains inadequate, highlighting a pressing need for further academic exploration. As disciplines mature, this area could become a research focus. However, identifying and understanding metaphors often involves complex semantic and contextual analysis. Tools like Wmatrix can assist, but the ability to automatically recognize intricate metaphors, double meanings, and other nuanced linguistic phenomena is limited, often necessitating human intervention and judgment.

The translation of *The Governance of China* series, as a national practice, demands interdisciplinary integration of fields like politics, and cultural studies due to its diverse and political content. This thesis combined disciplines such as security science, politics, and rhetorical theory. Future related studies should further explore the intersection with various disciplines, enriching content and communication. This will ensure accurate meaning transfer and resonance with target readers’ cognitive habits and reception psychology.

The metaphors are employed in the security discourse of the Party materials to effectively transform macro-level and abstract political ideologies into accessible expressions, facilitating the widespread dissemination and deep internalization of political information. This approach enables a more efficient transmission of political aspirations and makes it easier to understand by readers. As such, the in-depth exploration of translation strategies and concepts related to metaphors in Party documents have emerged as a crucial issue in constructing an external discourse system and shaping an international image. This requires us to not only focus on the linguistic techniques of converting these metaphors but also to gain a profound understanding of the underlying values in international communication. This ensures that the translation process accurately conveys the original intentions and emotional nuances while adhering to the cognitive habits and rece-

ption psychology of the target readers.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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