



The Cohesive Means of Xi Jinping's Speeches: A Case Study of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* (IV)

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How to cite this paper: Li, Z.Z. (2023) The Cohesive Means of Xi Jinping's Speeches: A Case Study of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* (IV). *Open Access Library Journal*, 10: e10637.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1110637>

Received: August 22, 2023

Accepted: September 16, 2023

Published: September 19, 2023

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Abstract

Language is indispensable to the development of human society, and as the most important communication tool, it plays an irreplaceable role in various fields such as politics, economy and culture. Since the 18th National Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping has delivered a series of important speeches, comprehensively elaborating his socialist ideology for the new era. Xi's unique language style has made his thoughts more easily understood and accepted by people. This thesis, from the perspective of discourse analysis, analyses the cohesive means of Xi Jinping's series of speeches aiming to find the characteristics of Xi's language and enrich the analysis of Xi Jinping's discourse.

Subject Areas

Linguistics

Keywords

Discourse Analysis, Cohesive Means, *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* (IV)

1. Introduction

The fourth volume of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* contains 109 important works written by General Secretary Xi Jinping from February 3, 2020, to May 10, 2022, which elaborates on Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, comprehensively and systematically demonstrates the rich connotation and vivid practice of Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese characteristics. This book is divided into 21 special topics, and

the content of each special topic is arranged in chronological order, with rich and diverse contents, fully reflecting the characteristics of General Secretary Xi Jinping in language. The existing analysis and research of General Secretary Xi Jinping's language by scholars mainly focuses on two aspects: one is to explore the characteristics of Xi's language from the perspective of rhetoric and stylistics, and the other is to analyze the language from the perspective of foreign translation strategy. Thus, this study analyzes Xi's language from a cohesive means to enrich the perspective of Xi Jinping's speech research.

2. The Theory of Cohesive Means

Language is a functional system, a semantic unit of expressing meaning. In the field of discourse analysis, cohesion has attracted much attention due to its important role in discourse construction. The concept of cohesion was first proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976) [1] in their book *Cohesion in English*. It refers to a semantic relationship that is an unstructured relationship that constitutes a discourse and can span any length interval. With the continuous development of the theory, Halliday (1994) [2] points out that there are four ways to create cohesion, including reference, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical organization. Hu (1994) [3] emphasizes that cohesion mainly refers to the semantic correlation in the discourse, and he adds transitivity and isomorphism into the means of cohesion. Zhang (2001) [4] further expands the scope of cohesion, and he connects the situational context and discourse cohesion to explore the meaning of the text.

Based on the development of comprehensive cohesion theory, this thesis analyzes the series of Xi Jinping's speech from two levels of grammar cohesion and lexical cohesion. Here, there are two ways of grammar cohesion to the processing of text: reference and substitution. Halliday (1994) [2] mentions that reference creates cohesion by creating links between elements, which makes the text possible to maintain consistency. He argues that reference creates cohesion by creating links between elements of meaning, but there is also another resource which is construed as a systemic variant. The substitution serves as a place-holding device, showing where something has been omitted and what its grammatical function would be. On the other side, there are four ways to form lexical cohesion, including repetition, synonyms, antonyms and hierarchical relationships. Repetition is the most direct form of lexical cohesion, which can be used to emphasize important things. Halliday (1994) [2] argues that the result of lexical cohesion comes from choosing a lexical term that is in some sense synonymous with the previous one. Unlike synonyms to select the words that mean similar, antonyms are words with opposite meanings. The writers use this contrast of words to achieve the results they want. Hierarchical relations include hyponymy and meronymy. Hyponymy is a kind of elaborating relationship, which is based on classification from specific to general. Meronymy is similar to the extending domain, which belongs to the "parts of" relation.

3. Analysis of the Cohesion Means of Xi Jinping' Speeches

3.1. Grammatical Cohesion

Grammatical cohesion refers to the way of connecting the meaning of discourse through a series of grammatical means. In order to better analyze the language characteristics of Xi Jinping, this section mainly analyses the series of the fourth volume of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* through the personal pronoun and the substitution of two means.

3.1.1. Reference

Reference refers to the use of pronouns to express the discourse connection. The speakers can identify the discourse elements in the text through these indicator words, which produce the connection to form a continuous whole within the language. Here, commonly used personal pronouns are studied. After statistics and analysis, the number of personal pronouns in the text is shown in **Table 1**.

As can be seen in **Table 1**, compared with other pronouns, the first person pronoun “women” appeared most frequently in Xi Jinping’s speeches, about 869 times. For instance:

1) 在党的百年奋斗历程中，我们坚持马克思主义基本原理，从我国国情和不同时期主要任务出发，不断深化对资本的认识，不断探索规范和引导资本健康发展的方针政策。(习近平，2022: 217) [5]

2) 只要 14 亿多中国人民始终手拉着手一起向未来，只要 9500 多万中国共产党人始终与人民心连着心一起向未来，我们就一定能在新的赶考之路上继续创造令人刮目相看的奇迹！(习近平，2022: 554) [5]

The exact meaning of “我们(we)” in the first-person pronoun in examples (1) and (2) is determined by the object referred to. “我们(we)” contains both the audience who appeared on the scene and the audience who did not appear on the scene. The use of these referring words brings closer the relationship between the speaker and the public people. From the frequent use of the personal pronoun “我们(we)”, language acquisition sends a signal of the unity of the whole nation. Everyone works together for the arduous task, and the joy of success should be shared by everyone. Whether it is hardship or joy, it is a matter of the whole nation. Although the personal pronoun “我们(we)” can basically achieve the desired semantic effect, after use, it can reflect the language characteristics of General Secretary Xi Jinping as being approachable, shorten the distance between each other, and moisten things silently.

3.1.2. Substitution

Substitution is to use a substitute word to replace a certain component to make the writing more fluent. For instance:

3) 中国共产党关注人类前途命运，同世界上一切进步力量携手前进，中国始终是世界和平的建设者、全球发展的贡献者、国际秩序的维护者！(习近平，2022: 11) [5]

Table 1. The number of times of the person pronouns appearing in the fourth volume of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*.

Pronouns	我们“we”	我“I”	你(你们)“you”	他(他们)“him”	它(它们)“it”
Number	869	596	27	43	3

4) 共青团要增强引领力、组织力、服务力，团结带领广大团员青年成长为有理想、敢担当、能吃苦、肯奋斗的新时代好青年，用青春的能动力和创造力激荡起民族复兴的澎湃春潮，用青春的智慧和汗水打拼出一个更加美好的中国！（习近平，2022：273）[5]

In *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, we find that there are many forms of “...者(...of men)”, which appeared in ancient Chinese and can be used to replace the semantics of some words in texts. “...者(...of men)” itself refers to a certain kind of person. Here, the “...者(...of men)” with a cohesive relationship refers to the object replaced by itself. In example (3), the “建设者(builder)”, “贡献者(contributor)” and “维护者(defender)” form an alternative connection with the aforementioned “中国(China)”. Using “...者(...of men)” can not only avoid the lengthy language narrative, but also can connect with the above content. In example (4), “青春(youth)” replaces “年轻人(young people)”, because creativity, wisdom and sweat are the good qualities that young people should have, which can not only not overlap with the previous text, but also highlight the characteristics of young men. It also highlights the uniqueness and conciseness of General Secretary Xi’s words.

Grammatical cohesion means in General Secretary Xi’s speeches: personal pronoun and substitution. The personal reference not only connects the context, but also makes the text compact and reduces the sense of procrastination. The most common personal pronoun, 我们(we), reflects the affinity of Xi Jinping’s language and narrows the distance between the person and the speaker. Use this alternative means of cohesion to emphasize important information, and to strengthen the cohesion of discourse.

3.2. Lexical Cohesion

Lexical cohesion is also one of the main means to achieve discourse cohesion, which is to show the coherence between discourse meanings in the form of vocabulary. Lexical cohesion is run through the relevant words in the discourse to form a vocabulary chain, so as to ensure the coherence of the discourse (Zou, 2012: 207). [6] Halliday (1994) [2] pointed out that the choice of such words can be either of semantic relevance or collocation. Lexical cohesion is achieved through a certain choice of words, which are somehow related to the above terms. This provides a good clear meaning of the theme and maintains the context. The following section’s analysis mainly focuses on repetition, synonyms, antonyms, and related hierarchical relationship words.

3.2.1. Repetition

The most direct way of lexical cohesion is repetition, through which the theme

of the text can be reiterated, playing a cohesive role in cohesion. There are some long chapters in General Secretary Xi Jinping's speeches, and the use of vocabulary repetition can make the discourse concentrated. For instance:

5) 我们完整、准确、全面贯彻新发展理念，坚持以人民为中心的发展思想，坚持发展为了人民、发展依靠人民、发展成果由人民共享，努力实现更高质量、更有效率、更加公平、更可持续、更为安全的发展，在发展中使广大人民群众获得感、幸福感、安全感更加充实、更有保障、更可持续。(习近平，2022: 270) [5]

6) 一百年来，党和人民取得的一切成就都是团结奋斗的结果，团结奋斗是中国共产党和中国人民最显著的精神标识。百年奋斗历史告诉我们，团结就是力量，奋斗开创未来；能团结奋斗的民族才有前途，能团结奋斗的政党才能立于不败之地。(习近平，2022: 554) [5]

7) 必须坚持以党的政治建设为统领，坚守自我革命根本政治方向；必须坚持把思想建设作为党的基础性建设，淬炼自我革命锐利思想武器；必须坚决落实中央八项规定精神、以严明纪律整饬作风，丰富自我革命的有效途径。(习近平，2022: 550) [5]

In example (5) “人民(people)” runs through the whole paragraph, closely connected together. The repetition of this vocabulary allows the audience to feel more naturally what the speaker is emphasizing, more appealing and infectious. It not only strengthens the tone, but also highlights the importance of people in Xi's language. The repetition of the word “团结奋斗(unity)” in example (6) also plays a discourse articulation role, making the semantic information of the discourse clear. It sends the message that unity can bring a bright future, enhancing the audience's impression of the semantic content of “团结奋斗(unity)”, and ensuring the continuity of the topic. In example (7), Xi Jinping repeats “必须坚持(have to stick)”, and this connection makes the sentence more fluent and also highlights the determination to comprehensively and strictly administer our party. Thus, it can be found that the repetition of words used by General Secretary Xi Jinping not only highlights the key theme of the speech, but also highlights the appeal of his language.

3.2.2. Synonyms

The association between words in semantic relationships in the discourse is used to articulate the context while effectively avoiding the monotony and repetition of words. The articulation made up of near-synonyms is a more frequently used means of articulation, which can add colour to the text and reduce the tedium of the discourse. For example:

8) 更好把握和运用党的百年奋斗历史经验，弘扬伟大建党精神，增加历史自信、增进团结统一、增强斗争精神，动员全党全国各族人民坚定信心、勇毅前行，为实现第二个百年奋斗目标而不懈努力。(习近平，2022: 29) [5]

9) 构筑中华民族共有精神家园，促进各民族交往交流交融，推动民族地区加快现代化建设步伐，提升民族事务治理法治化水平。(习近平，2022: 244) [5]

10) 要加强对换届纪律风气的监督, 坚持党管干部原则, 强化党组织领导和把关作用, 特别是要严把政治关、廉洁关。(习近平, 2022: 552) [5]

In the discourse, General Secretary Xi Jinping uses a series of synonyms, which makes the small sentences achieve the effect of strengthening the cohesion, and avoid semantic repetition and adding a lot of colour to the discourse. The above reflects the rigor and diversity of the language in the word selection, which makes the style of the series more distinct, and the whole discourse is more rigorous and coherent.

3.2.3. Antonyms

Antonyms refer to semantically opposite classes of words and present hierarchical characteristics of opposites. Antonymy between words can also promote the cohesion of texts to achieve semantic coherence. For instance:

11) 什么时候社会主要矛盾和中心任务判断准确, 党和人民事业就顺利发展, 否则党和人民事业就会遭受挫折。(习近平, 2022: 30) [5]

12) 既要立足当下, 一步一个脚印解决具体问题, 积小胜为大胜; 又要放眼长远, 克服急功近利、急于求成的思想, 把握好降碳的节奏和力度, 实事求是、循序渐进、持续发力。(习近平, 2022: 372) [5]

13) 事实再次表明, 在全球性危机的惊涛骇浪里, 各国不是乘坐在190多条小船上, 而是乘坐在一条命运与共的大船上。小船经不起风浪, 巨舰才能顶住惊涛骇浪。(习近平, 2022: 483) [5]

14) 我们在这里隆重集会, 同全党全国各族人民一道, 庆祝中国共产党成立一百周年, 回顾中国共产党百年奋斗的光辉历程, 展望中华民族伟大复兴的光明前景。(习近平, 2022: 3) [5]

General Secretary Xi Jinping described the continuous use of the above four examples from both positive and negative aspects, forming a sharp contrast and background of the semantic meaning, which plays a role of strengthening the tone and emphasizing the core meaning, thus making the front and the latter sentences are connected.

3.2.4. Related Hierarchy

Halliday (1994) [2] argued that this hierarchical relationship is a special variant of synonymous relationships, including Hyponymy (specific to general) and Meronymy (part-whole). Any pair of words that appear under this relationship are cohesive. For example:

15) 这是中华民族的伟大光荣! 这是中国人民的伟大光荣! 这是中国共产党的伟大光荣! (习近平, 2022: 3) [5]

16) 长城内外、大江南北, 全国人民心往一处想、劲往一处使, 把个人冷暖、集体荣辱、国家安危融为一体, “天使白”、“橄榄绿”、“守护蓝”、“志愿红”迅速集结, “我是党员我先上”、“疫情不退我不退”, 誓言铿锵, 丹心闪耀。(习近平, 2022: 99) [5]

Whether it is “中华民族(Chinese nation)”, “中国人(Chinese people)”, “中国共产党(the Communist Party of China)” or, “个人(oneself)”, “集体(team)”, “国家(nation)” are co-hyponymys of “中国人(Chinese people)”. These words together constitute the same semantic field, which organically connects the context, so that the meaning of a more coherent highlights the meaning of “中国人(Chinese people)” in the Communist Party of China under the leadership of the tightly united together.

4. Conclusion

The series of speeches delivered by Xi Jinping show the linguistic style and cultural heritage of our new generation of national leaders. This thesis takes the series of speeches of General Secretary Xi Jinping in the fourth volume of Xi Jinping: on the Governance of China as the research corpus, and analyses the means of discourse cohesion in terms of grammatical and lexical cohesion. By analyzing the means of discourse articulation in General Secretary Xi Jinping’s series of speeches, it is found that it is the combined effect of these different means of expression that demonstrates General Secretary Xi’s language’s features of conciseness, expressiveness, and thematic prominence, as well as highlights the strong people’s nature and call to action and other linguistic features. From the point of view of grammatical cohesion means, the use of reference and substitution makes the sentences of the discourse closer to each other and avoids the redundancy of words; from the point of view of lexical cohesion, the continuity of the chapter is guaranteed through the meaning of the linked words, reflecting the conciseness of General Secretary Xi’s language.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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