



Persuasion Speech Analysis in Xi Jinping's Speech during the National Day Celebration of the People's Republic of China

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ABSTRACT

Communist countries often utilize persuasive speech to demonstrate authority, leadership, and legitimacy of the ruling party. This study explores the use of persuasive utterances delivered by the president of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping, during the People's Republic of China National Day celebration. This qualitative study is based on data from Xi Jinping's speeches during the National Day Celebrations of the People's Republic of China during Xi Jinping's tenure. The data are in the form of sentences that have elements of persuasion, which were collected using content analysis techniques. The findings of this study are that 46 persuasion utterances were found in four speech texts of Xi Jinping. The persuasion sentences vary, but always follow the following indication patterns, namely (1) the use of collective pronoun, (2) the use of collective nouns, (3) the use of deontic modality, (4) the use of epistemic modality, (5) the use of majas, and (6) the use of evaluative vocabulary.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Problem

Speech is an effective means of communication in shaping public opinion and perception. In the political realm, speeches are used to build positive impressions, convince audiences, and influence public attitudes through persuasive communication strategies (Ramadhan et al., 2024). Persuasion itself means a communication process that aims to influence the thoughts, feelings, opinions, and actions of others (Keraf in Agustin, 2021).

In a communist country like China, persuasion strategies are used as the main tool to maintain the hegemony of the ruling party, in this case, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The President and General Secretary of the CCP, Xi Jinping, is known to utilize persuasive rhetoric in his speeches. This tradition is in line with the history of other communist state leaders such as Stalin (Harlizah & Reynaldo, 2022), Kim Il-Sung (Tyler, 2015), and Fidel Castro (Turner, 2007), who also used speeches to build power and public trust. Mao Zedong is known to use communication strategies to form a personal cult (Stefan, 2019).

Xi Jinping uses state speeches to convey national visions such as the concept of 中国梦 (Chinese Dream), which aims to develop national spirit and national identity (Wicaksono, 2017). With mega infrastructure projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative (Jie & Wallace, 2022), Xi Jinping is also strengthening China's position globally, as well as reinforcing the CCP's central role in all aspects of governance.

Based on the above explanation, this research studies the aspects of persuasion in Xi Jinping's speech during the National Day celebration of the People's Republic of China. The text of the speech studied was taken from the official website of the Chinese central government (www.gov.cn). The research was conducted using van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis approach, focusing on text aspects (macro and micro structures).

1.2 Problem Formulation

- 1) How are persuasion utterances used by Xi Jinping in the National Day speech of the People's Republic of China?
- 2) What is the function of the use of persuasion utterances in Xi Jinping's speech on the National Day of the People's Republic of China?

1.3 Relevant Research

"Language and Power in Political Discourse: Ruth Wodak's Historical Discourse Analysis of President Joko Widodo's Speech" in 2023 by Siahaan et al analyzed the historical value in President Joko Widodo's speech at the commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence of the Republic of Indonesia. This research was studied using Wodak's Critical Discourse Analysis model, which emphasizes the historical value of Discourse. The strength of this research is that the historical aspect is explained in detail, while the weakness is the absence of other dimensions, namely text and social, in the study. This research contributes to the author's understanding of the variations of Critical Discourse Analysis models.

"Critical Discourse Analysis of Teun A. van Dijk Model in "#DebatKeren Papua - Budiman Sudjatmiko VS Dandhy Laksono" by Prihartono & Suharyo in 2022 explains the discourse structure and ideology built in the #DebatKeren Papua event. This research is studied with van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis model, which highlights the dimensions of text, social cognition, and social context. The strength of this research is that the three dimensions in Critical Discourse Analysis are used as research units, while the weakness is that there is no analysis of the micro component in the text dimension, leaving a void. For the author, this research contributes by helping to understand the application of van Dijk's model in Critical Discourse Analysis.

In 2023, Dewi et al published a study entitled "Persuasion in the Fifth Debate of the 2019 Indonesian Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidates". This research identifies the persuasion strategies of each presidential candidate and vice presidential candidate of the Republic of Indonesia in the fifth debate. This qualitative research was studied with a descriptive approach and data collection methods in the form of documentation, listening, and recording. The results showed that each presidential and vice presidential candidate used 3 to 5 different persuasion techniques. These techniques are participation, association, pay-off idea, red-herring technique, and icing device. This research is in line with the author's research, which focuses on language. This research can add to the author's understanding of the variety of persuasion models so that they are not only fixated on one type of theoretical explanation.

In 2024, Arismanto published research "Forms of Persuasive Speech Acts, A Political Propaganda in the Speech Texts of Three Candidates for President of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024". This research aims to describe the forms of persuasion performed by the three presidential candidates of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024. The results show that the speech texts of the three presidential candidates of the Republic of Indonesia contain illocutionary speech acts juxtaposed with persuasion approaches. In addition, propaganda speeches are also found in the vision and mission expressed by each presidential candidate. This research is a language research, similar to the research that the author is doing. However, there are still differences, especially in the object of research, research objectives, and theories used in the research. Nevertheless, this research can contribute to helping the author understand the relationship between persuasion techniques and the resulting propaganda utterances.

Research by Kartika and Surwandono in 2023, with the title Critical Discourse Analysis of Chinese Foreign Policy in Xi Jinping's Speech explores the Discourse of China's foreign policy under Xi Jinping's leadership through Critical Discourse Analysis. The data sources used are literature reviews through e-books, news, Scopus, and Google Scholar journals. The results show that Xi Jinping often raises political issues related to domestic stability in national forums, while in international forums, Xi Jinping more often raises economic topics. Critical Discourse Analysis reveals that Xi Jinping acts as a representation of a superpower that is

ready to help various countries, in the midst of today's global dynamics. This is the main focus of the People's Republic of China's foreign policy instruments. The advantage of this research is that Critical Discourse Analysis is discussed in full by covering all three dimensions. However, this research has limitations because it only relies on secondary sources in the form of books and journals that discuss Xi Jinping's speech, not a direct analysis of the original speech text. This has the potential to affect the accuracy of the interpretation of the analyzed Discourse, because the research point of view can be influenced by the interpretation of the author of the secondary source.

2. Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an approach that views language as a social practice that is closely related to power, ideology, and domination. Language is not only understood as a means of communication, but also as a medium for the formation and strengthening of power. Fairclough (1995) asserts that CDA aims to reveal the ideological practices hidden in the text and the social relations behind it. In line with this, Haryatmoko (in Kartika & Surwandono, 2023) explains that CDA allows researchers to map domination strategies that are carried out subtly and systematically through language. In this approach, the analysis not only stops at the linguistic structure, but also includes the social, political, and cognitive dimensions that accompany the process of text production and consumption (van Dijk in Ramadhan & Assidik, 2022).

To examine the power relations in the text, van Dijk developed a structural analysis tool that includes Macrostructure, Superstructure, and Microstructure. The Macrostructure reflects the main idea or global theme of the text, which usually leads to the dominant messages that the speaker wants to emphasize. Superstructure refers to the formal structuring or rhetorical organization of the Discourse, such as the opening, description, and closing, which represents the strategy of delivering messages in a structured and systematic manner. Meanwhile, Microstructure includes specific linguistic aspects such as diction, sentence structure, metaphor, modality, and language style. It is at this level that ideology works subtly through the selection of linguistic forms that can frame the audience's perspective on social and political reality.

One of the ideological strategies that can be traced through Microstructure is the use of elements of persuasion. In this context, persuasion is understood as an effort to influence the audience linguistically through certain markers, such as the use of *majas*, modality, imperative sentences, collective pronouns, and evaluative vocabulary. These elements not only function to build emotions and trust, but also play a role in implicitly creating ideological consensus. Therefore, in the study of political Discourse, the observation of persuasion strategies through microstructures is an important aspect in uncovering the rhetorical power hidden behind the language of power.

"Language and Power in Political Discourse: Ruth Wodak's Historical Discourse Analysis of President Joko Widodo's Speech" in 2023 by Siahaan et al analyzed the historical value in President Joko Widodo's speech at the commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence of the Republic of Indonesia. This research was studied using Wodak's Critical Discourse Analysis model, which emphasizes the historical value of Discourse. The strength of this research is that the historical aspects are explained in detail, while the weakness is the absence of other dimensions, namely text and social, in the study.

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In this study, the CDA approach was chosen because it provides adequate analytical tools to understand speech texts not merely as informative narratives, but as ideological products that convey covert messages of power. Van Dijk's framework is seen as relevant for studying President Xi Jinping's speeches, as it allows researchers to trace how text structures are formed, how rhetorical strategies are designed, and how language is used to build political legitimacy. Thus, CDA is not only a theoretical framework, but also a tool for critical reading of discursive practices that represent and influence socio-political dynamics in society.

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Approach

This research used a qualitative approach to analyze persuasion strategies in the text of President Xi Jinping's speech at the National Day celebration of the People's Republic of China. This approach was chosen because

the research focuses on the interpretation of meaning and language use in a particular social and ideological context. According to Sugiyono (2013), qualitative research aims to examine naturally occurring data without statistical intervention. Furthermore, Creswell (2018) explains that qualitative research is used to explore and understand meaning and interaction in a social domain. With its descriptive and interpretive nature, this approach allows researchers to reveal in depth the linguistic phenomena related to persuasion in political Discourse.

3.2 Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique was carried out through a literature study, namely by carefully and systematically reading the texts of President Xi Jinping's speeches in the series of National Day celebrations of the People's Republic of China. The texts analyzed were selected based on availability and relevance to the research focus, namely speeches delivered in 2014, 2019, 2023, and 2024. Taking into account the presence and context of the speeches, the texts from 2014, 2019, 2023, and 2024 were selected because in those years, Xi Jinping directly delivered official speeches in the National Day celebrations. These four speeches were analyzed as the main data because they directly represent the state discourse style used by Xi Jinping in conveying China's political vision, values, and strategies to the national and international public.

3.3 Data Source

The source of data in this study came from secondary documentation, namely Xi Jinping's speech scripts accessed through the official website of the People's Republic of China government at www.gov.cn. The entire text was downloaded in the Chinese version and translated independently by the author, maintaining fidelity to the original structure and meaning.

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

After the data collection process was completed, the data was analyzed using a content analysis technique with six stages, namely data identification, categorization of persuasion elements, discourse structure marking, interpretation of linguistic and ideological meanings, compilation of findings, and conclusion drawing. This technique was chosen to identify patterns of language use related to persuasion strategies in the context of state political discourse, as represented in President Xi Jinping's speech.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Analysis Framework: Macrostructure, Superstructure, and Microstructure

Based on the four data sources used, the researcher divided the study into three categories, in accordance with the Critical Discourse Analysis approach: Macrostructure, Superstructure, and Microstructure. The Macrostructure contains the theme and message of the speech, the Superstructure contains the formal and logical framework of the parts of each speech text, and the Microstructure contains a detailed analysis of the Discourse, which includes linguistic elements. In the microstructure section, the researcher shows the findings in the form of Xi Jinping's persuasive utterances. The persuasive utterances contained in the speech were characterized by a number of factors, namely, *majas*, modality, evaluative vocabulary, and imperative sentences.

4.2 Analysis of 2014 Speech

4.2.1 Macrostructure

In the 2014 speech, the theme was "65 Years of the People's Republic of China: Reflection, Vision, Mission, and Achievement", with the message that "the founding of the People's Republic of China is a reincarnation that leads China to prosperity, revival, and well-being."

4.2.2 Superstructure

In terms of Superstructure, the 2014 speech was composed of opening, presentation of achievements, thanksgiving, reflection, presentation of vision and mission, call for unity, and closing.

4.2.3 Microstructure

In terms of Microstructure, the researcher found 23 persuasive utterances, some of which were:

1. "面向未来, 我们必须坚持同人民在一起。(In welcoming the future, we must always be with the people.)" Persuasion is characterized by the use of the collective pronoun "我们", the use of deontic modality "必须", and the use of repetition in the phrase "面向未来, 我们必须", which was repeated 8 times in this speech.

2. "我们要紧紧依靠人民, 充分发挥人民主体作用, 尊重人民首创精神, 为了人民干事创业, 依靠人民干事创业。(We must rely entirely on the people, maximize the leading role of the people, respect the people's spirit of innovation, and work and strive for the people by relying on the people.)" The elements of persuasion in this sentence can be seen in the use of the collective pronoun "我们", the use of the collective noun "人民", the use of the deontic modality "要", the use of repetition in the phrase "我们要", which was repeated 10 times in this speech, and the use of evaluative vocabulary, such as "紧紧", "尊重", "干事创业".
3. "两岸同胞要继续努力, 巩固和发展两岸关系和平发展良好势头, 坚持一个中国原则, 坚决反对"台湾独"分裂活动, 为祖国和平统一创造更充分的条件, 使两岸一家亲、共筑中国梦。(Brothers and sisters on both sides of the strait should continued to make efforts to strengthen and developed the momentum in the pursuit of peaceful cross-strait relations, adhered to the principle of One China, firmly opposed the separatist action of "Taiwan Independence", and created more mature conditions for the peaceful unification of the Motherland so that both sides can live side by side as one family and jointly build the Chinese Dream.)". There were three elements of persuasion in this sentence, namely the use of collective noun "同胞", the use of deontic modality "要", and the use of evaluative vocabulary, for example "和平", "发展", "良好", "坚持", and others.

4.3 Analysis of 2019 Speech

4.3.1 Macrostructure

Furthermore, the text of the 2019 speech carried the theme of "70 years of the People's Republic of China: Achievements and the Future", with the main message being "the importance of maintaining national unity to achieve progress in various fields, such as economy, education, and social welfare, including always maintaining the principle of "One China", "One Country, Two Systems", in accordance with the 1992 Agreement."

4.3.2 Superstructure

In the Superstructure, the speech was organized into the opening, presentation of achievements, thanksgiving, call for unity, hope for the future, and closing.

4.3.3 Microstructure

Microstructure, the researcher found six persuasion utterances in this speech. Here were some of them:

1. "团结是铁, 团结是钢, 团结就是力量。团结是中国人民和中华民族战胜前进道路上一切风险挑战、不断从胜利走向新的胜利的重要保证。(Unity is iron, unity is steel, unity is strength. Unity is the necessary guarantee that the Chinese people and the Chinese nation will overcome all the risks and challenges that lie ahead and always move towards new glories.)" The element of persuasion can be seen in the use of repetition, "团结是铁, 团结是钢, 团结就是力量。团结是...", the use of metaphor, which likens unity to iron, steel, and strength. Finally, there was also the use of evaluative vocabulary in "重要".
2. "我们要坚持一个中国原则和"九二共识", 推动两岸关系和平发展, 深化两岸经济文化交流合作, 造福两岸同胞。(We should stick to the one-China principle and the "1992 Negotiations", promote, enhance economic cooperation as well as peaceful cross-strait cultural exchanges, and work hand in hand with our fellow countrymen and women on both sides of the strait.)" There were three elements of persuasion in this sentence, namely the use of the collective pronoun "我们", the use of the deontic modality "要", and the use of evaluative vocabulary, such as "平发".
3. "我们要继续全面准确贯彻"一国两制"、"港人治港"、"澳人治澳"、高度自治的方针, 严格按照宪法和基本法办事。(We must constantly and thoroughly implement the principle of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people rule Hong Kong", "Macau people rule Macau", and act in accordance with the constitution and basic laws.)" There were two persuasion-forming elements in this sentence, namely the collective pronoun "我们" and the deontic modality "要".

4.4 Analysis of the 2023 Speech

4.4.1 Macrostructure

In the text of the 2023 speech, the theme was "74 Years of the People's Republic of China: Achievements, Dynamics, and Expectations". Meanwhile, the message contained was "a reflection on all the dynamics and every achievement that the People's Republic of China has successfully passed and achieved over the past 74 years."

4.4.2 Superstructure

Looking at the Superstructure, there were six elements that make up this speech: opening, thanksgiving, presentation of achievements, call for revival, call for unity, and closing.

4.4.3 Microstructure

In the realm of Microstructure, the researcher found seven utterances that were persuasive in nature. Here were some of them:

1. "我们要围绕推动高质量发展，完整、准确、全面贯彻新发展理念，加快构建新发展格局，着力加大宏观调控，着力扩大国内有效需求，着力激发经营主体活力，不断推动经济运行持续好转、内生动力持续增强、社会预期持续改善，切实防范化解重大风险，努力实现全年经济社会发展目标。(We should focus on improving, implement and accelerate high-quality, complete, accurate and comprehensive development. We will strengthen macroeconomic regulation, meet domestic needs, promote business vitality and facilitate sustainable economic activities, and maintain internal support. In addition, we will visibly prevent and eliminate any obstacles to achieving development targets throughout the year." There were four elements of persuasion in this sentence: the use of the collective pronoun "我们", the use of deontic modality "要", the use of evaluative vocabulary, and the use of repetition in "我们要围绕", which was repeated three times.
2. "我们要坚定信心，振奋精神，团结奋斗，继续爬坡过坎、攻坚克难，坚定不移朝着强国建设、民族复兴的宏伟目标奋勇前进! (We must be firm and sure, raise our spirits, unite and fight, and never back down in order to achieve the great goal of building a strong nation!)" This speech contained elements of persuasion, which can be observed through the presence of three elements, namely the use of the collective pronoun "我们", the use of the deontic modality "要", and the use of evaluative vocabulary in the words "坚定", "信心", "振奋", "精神", "团结", and others.
3. "我们要坚持和平发展，坚定奉行互利共赢的开放战略，维护国际公平正义，践行真正的多边主义，推动落实全球发展倡议、全球安全倡议、全球文明倡议，推动构建人类命运共同体，同各国人民携手努力，应对各种全球性挑战，共创人类的美好未来! (We should stick to peaceful development, steadfastly implement the strategy of win-win opening-up, safeguard international justice and fairness, practice true multilateralism, promote the implementation of the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, and promote the establishment of a community with a shared future for mankind. Together with the people of various countries, we join hands to face global challenges and co-create a better future for mankind!)" There were three elements of persuasion: the use of collective pronomina "我们", the use of deontic modality "要", and the use of evaluative vocabulary in "坚持", "和平", "美好", etc.

4.5 Analysis of 2024 Speech

4.5.1 Macrostructure

Finally, the text of the 2024 speech presented the theme of "75 Years of the People's Republic of China: Modernization and Reunification", with the message contained in the text, namely, "75 years is one of the important foundations of the nation. The ideals fought for by past leaders must continue to be strived for. Today, China affirms its vision to achieve modernization with Chinese characteristics, not just as a national renaissance, but as a real future direction. The principle of "One Country, Two Systems" is reaffirmed, but with a stronger emphasis on the urgency of national reunification to unite all of China under one unified government."

4.5.2 Superstructure

In terms of Superstructure, the speech was composed of an opening, thanksgiving, reflection, presentation of vision and mission, call for unity, and closing.

4.5.3 Microstructure

There were ten persuasion utterances that the researcher found; here were some of them:

1. "推进中国式现代化，必须坚持中国共产党领导。(To realize Chinese-style modernization, one must adhere to the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party.)" There were two elements of persuasion in this sentence, namely the use of deontic modality "必须" and repetition in "推进中国式现代化，必须..." which was repeated four times.

2. "有伟大祖国作坚强后盾，香港同胞、澳门同胞一定能够创造更加美好的未来! (With the full support of Motherland, our brothers and sisters in Hong Kong and Macau will be able to create a better future.)" In this sentence, there were three markers that support persuasive speech. First, the use of personification in "祖国", the use of epistemic modality "一定", and the use of collective noun "同胞".
3. "我们将始终坚持维护世界和平、促进共同发展的外交政策宗旨，弘扬全人类共同价值，倡导平等有序的世界多极化、普惠包容的经济全球化，推动落实全球发展倡议、全球安全倡议、全球文明倡议，积极参与全球治理体系改革和建设，推动构建人类命运共同体。(We will always abide by international policies to maintain world peace and promote common development, promote the common values of all mankind, strive for equal and orderly diversity and inclusive economic globalization, promote the implementation of global development, security and civilization initiatives, actively participate in global governance reform, and promote the common future development of mankind.)" There were three building blocks of persuasion in this sentence, namely the use of the collective pronoun "我们", the use of the epistemic modality "将", and the use of the evaluative vocabulary "坚持", "和平", "发展", and so on.

5. Conclusion

Persuasion serves to influence, command, or invite the audience to act in accordance with the communicator's wishes. Persuasion is found in many state speeches, including President Xi Jinping's speech during the National Day celebration of the People's Republic of China. Based on the critical discourse analysis conducted by the author on the text of the speeches celebrating the National Day of the People's Republic of China in 2014, 2019, 2023, and 2024, the following conclusions are obtained:

- 1) The themes and messages raised in the speeches are related to reflection, achievement, vision & mission, and hope for the future, with variations and similarities that are present every year. The four speeches always emphasize the aspect of achievement, namely the success achieved by China, as well as hope, in the form of the desire to continue to be united by fellow Chinese, the hope to always work together to realize national awakening, and the hope that all Chinese people actively participate with the world community to create a more beautiful shared future for mankind. Meanwhile, the difference is in the focus of each speech: the 2014 and 2024 speeches had little to say about achievements and focused heavily on the country's vision and mission that must always be pursued. In addition, the relationship between China and Taiwan, Macau, and Hong Kong also received more focus. The 2019 and 2023 speeches made it clear that the One China rule and the 1992 Agreement on One Country, Two Systems should always be adhered to. However, the 2014 and 2024 speeches further highlighted the issue by describing China's goal of achieving national reunification. Finally, there is one topic that is only found in the 2023 speech, which is related to the dynamics and countermeasures of the COVID-19 global pandemic.
- 2) In terms of Superstructure, the speeches tend to use a similar format. The three main structures are the opening, presentation of achievements, and thanksgiving. The opener is always at the beginning of the speech, while the presentation of achievements and thanksgiving are placed variably, namely in the second and third positions in 2014 and 2019, while in 2023 and 2024 the order is reversed. Then, there are points of reflection, presentation of the vision and mission, invitation to unite, invitation to contribute to national awakening, hopes, and closing. Each of these points occupies a varied order in each speech, except for the closing part, which is always at the end.
- 3) There are 46 persuasion utterances in the four speech texts, with details of 23 utterances in the 2014 speech, 6 utterances in the 2019 speech, 7 utterances in the 2023 speech, and 10 utterances in the 2024 speech. The indications that mark the persuasion texts vary, with a minimum of two and a maximum of six, but are always related to four categories: majas, imperative sentences, modality, and evaluative vocabulary. Majas's uses are metaphor, personification, and repetition; modalities used are deontic and epistemic modalities.

Overall, the results show that the texts of Xi Jinping's speeches during the National Day celebration of the People's Republic of China are full of persuasive speeches, although the frequency decreases considerably in the second and third speeches, then increases slightly in the fourth speech.

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