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硕 士 学 位 论 文

A Comparative Study of Language and Ideological Representaions in Political Speeches by Chinese President Hu Jintao and US President Barack Obama

中国国家主席胡锦涛和美国总统奥巴马政治演讲语言及意识形态体现的对比研究

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Abstract

With the ever-quickening pace of globalization and increasing interdependence between nations, China and US have witnessed accelerating exchanges in political, economic, military and cultural spheres. Policies and economic development of these two countries are receiving more attention from all over the world than ever before. Presidential speeches by Chinese and US leaders have always been the focus of media, and researchers on discourse analysis and international politics all over the globe have never failed to show great interest in them. Since their social and political backgrounds are different, it is certain that speeches delivered by them reflect ideologies and values they hold to be correct. Therefore, presentations of ideologies and values of the two nations will be presented explicitly and implicitly through their political speeches to perspective audiences.

Although there is an impressive body of literature on political discourse analysis, the present author deems it a great shame that most studies of language in political speech in the past have been concerned with just one particular language, rather than comparisons of political speeches between two different languages. In the hope of finding out differences and similarities in political speeches made in Chinese and English and bringing forth reasonable explanations of their causes underlying those differences and similarities, this author conducts a comparative analysis of Chinese President Hu Jintao's and US President Barack Hussein Obama's speeches. Under the big ceiling of contrastive discourse analysis, the present author adopts multidisciplinary approaches of systemic-functional grammar and critical discourse analysis. These different methodologies are adopted to compare the sentence structure, tenor, and emotive devices adopted in political discourses of Chinese and English. Comparative analysis of the two countries' presidential speeches on these different levels will uncover language features and cultural values, and further explore political ideology behind them.

Key Words: political speech; contrastive discourse analysis; systemic-functional

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grammar; critical discourse analysis

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摘 要

政治演讲研究一直是语言学家们关注的领域。几十年以来，很多学者致力于政治语篇分析研究。他们中大多数都是从批评语篇分析的角度对政治语篇进行分析，取得了瞩目的成果，极大地推动了政治语篇分析研究。但是，过去的研究大多局限于一种语言内或者同一国家内的政治演讲，而本论文的研究路径是：通过比较汉英两种语言的语言现象和文化独特性来对中美领导人的演讲进行批评分析。

对比语篇分析是由对比语言学和语篇分析结合而成。它融合了对比语言学和语篇分析的理论和方法论，为分析各种题材的语篇提供了较全面的视角。采用这一视角，本研究对中美国家领导人的演讲语篇进行了具体的比较分析，挖掘了中美领导人演讲语篇在句子结构、语旨、修辞策略以及情感表达等方面的异同点。此外，本论文也对中美思维差异也进行了比较分析，并对产生此差异的原因做出诠释。在分析过程中，主要采用举例说明法进行分析，辅以统计法对中美领导人同一场合下所做演讲中的词汇进行定量和定性分析。本研究融合了系统功能语法和批评性话语分析方法对 14 篇中美领导人不同场合的政治演讲稿进行了句子结构、语旨、修辞手法以及情感手段等不同层面的比较，试图揭示中美在文化价值观、思维方式和意识形态方面的差异。这种综合的研究方法不同于传统研究中只专注于意识形态的研究方法，它增加了文化层面的比较。政治语篇毫无疑问带有浓厚的政治色彩和意识形态烙印，本研究将文化因素做为重要的考察对象，使政治语篇分析不是局限于分析各个政党的政治思想或一个国家的政治体制和意识形态，而更关注语言的社会功能，即语言是如何体现社会文化的功能。

关键词：对比语篇分析； 政治语篇； 意识形态

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Introduction

Language is considered a particular symbolic system capable of presenting culture and society in a multitude of ways. Studies have constantly indicated that ideological production, value reflection and cultural dissemination cannot be realized without language which carries culture-specific features and embodies different social values and ideologies (LUCAS, 2001: 3). As the two most widely spoken languages in the world, Chinese and English have always drawn special attention from linguists. Great efforts have been made to compare these two languages through analyzing different types of discourses. Statesmen and politicians make political speeches to explain, clarify, and reinforce a nation's policy, ideology and political positions. Political speech, as a special genre used by state leaders and politicians to reinforce mainstream ideology, has drawn increasing attention in the circles of both Chinese linguists and linguists in English speaking countries.

The present study attempts to answer two questions: (1) how do Chinese and US presidents employ different linguistic devices to convey their attitudes towards certain issues and (2) how do texts of political speeches by these two leaders reflect patterns of thought, ideology and cultural values. The major theoretical underpinning the author employs is the theory of contrastive discourse analysis, which results from combination of contrastive linguistics and discourse analysis. According to contrastive linguistics, differences and similarities between two languages can be revealed through comparison. Therefore, contrastive discourse analysis is taken as the major analytic framework in the present study, and the methodology the author uses for the contrastive discourse analysis in this thesis is a combination of several approaches to discourse analysis mainly from functional and critical angles.

A comparative analysis of speeches by the Presidents of the two countries, which serves as a linguistic unit in two different languages, is bound to reflect the differences and similarities between Chinese and English. The author hopes that the present study can provide a better understanding of specific discourse both in Chinese

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and English. Differences and similarities compared in this thesis are not just language-specific phenomena; they further reflect deeper cultural elements and ideology. The present study is also aimed at discovering those underlying values hidden behind language features and providing practical implications including a raise of the audience's critical awareness and some coping strategies for handling these cultural factors in political speech translation. The present study shows great significance in providing a comprehensive picture of language, ideology and culture other than restricting itself on one single direction.

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Chapter One Literature Review

1.1 Definition and Features of Political Speech

1.1.1 Definition of Political Speech

So far, there is no consensus on the definition of political speech. In this thesis, a political speech is defined as one that a speaker, usually on behalf of a certain class, society, or party, delivers to an audience on some important matters and relationships at home and abroad (LUCAS, 1989: 53). When we think of politics, we think of it mainly in terms of struggle for power "between those who seek to assert and maintain their power and those who seek to resist it. On the other hand, politics is viewed as cooperation, as the practices and institutions that a society has for resolving clashes of interest over money, influence, liberty, and the like" (PAUL, 2004: 3). Language plays an important role in politics. In fact, all political actions are prepared, accompanied, influenced and even controlled by language. Political discourse is not a single genre, but a class of genres defined by a social domain, namely that of politics (VAN DIJK, 1998). Government deliberations, parliamentary debates, party programs, and speeches by politicians are among many genres that belong to the domain of politics. Political science offers many definitions of "politics" and this thesis adopts the definition that politics is a set of activities politicians engage in. In this study, it is assumed that political discourse is the discourse of politicians. As we all know, political speech is the most typical example of political discourse and political speeches are always the special focus of series of studies on the strategies applied in political language. Through political speeches, people indicate their standpoints, expound their conceptions and publicize their positions over a certain issue. Political speeches are generally meant to persuade people to do something that the speaker wants them to, to weaken or change radically their current attitudes or beliefs. The realization of these goals requires strict logic thinking, well-knit organization, careful

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use of language and skillful presentation (GRICE, 1995: 98).

1.1.2 Features of Political Speech

Political speech making is in essence an event of communication between addressers and addressees. Such a communication is very complex. Normally, political speech is made in a specific situation and involves much planning in advance as well as special attention to the dynamic of the audience and other possible elements. The particular public-speaking situation determines that political speeches possess features of written language as well as exhibiting characteristics of spoken language. In order to convey his or her message to the addressee and adapt to the addressee's feedback, the addresser has to make full use of prosodic and paralinguistic methods to achieve successful communication. Carefully prepared in advance, political speeches are also logically organized, closely knitted, and written mostly in formal language. In a word, the nature of special communication between addressers and addressees determines that political speech has the characteristics of both spoken and written language. The focus of this study is on the written texts of political speeches, that is, the manuscripts of a public speech or scripts prepared after a speech was delivered. It is argued that any effective political speech must possess at least the following features:

First, a political speech contains firm and clear viewpoints. In order to persuade the audience to accept and act on what he or she advocates, the speaker should ensure large amount of substantial contents, penetrating political opinions and firm standpoints.

Second, a political speech is usually structured with overwhelming power of logic which makes it eloquent and precise. All parts of the speech are meticulously designed and joined together to form a single entity having a clear purpose. Due to time limitations, a speaker usually has to confine himself or herself to only one theme at a time and must choose words and sentence structures carefully in order to express their thoughts clearly and convey message smoothly. Impressive words, phrases, and sentences are often employed so that the audience can understand what the speaker

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