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Shared Discourse Construction in the International Communication of Contemporary Chinese Values

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Abstract:
In contemporary China, the international communication discourse system has an important role that cannot be ignored, which is not only the core element of competition between countries, but also the key to building a new international order. In order to enhance the effect of international communication, China must start from the content of discourse, continuously improve the quality of discourse, and build a comprehensive and systematic discourse system. In the context of globalization, respecting the interests of nations and countries while actively advocating the concept of new globalism in pursuit of the common interests of mankind has a far-reaching impact on the development of international communication discourse. This article adopts the strategy of "balanced communication" to enhance the credibility of China's foreign discourse and the persuasive power of its value-oriented approach through objective and comprehensive reporting, so as to enhance the shared nature of China's discourse and international recognition.

Key words:
international communication; contemporary Chinese values; balanced communication

1. Introduction

Sharedness is a fundamental trait of the Internet age. Human social groups coexist with shared values. Without shared value, human groups cannot be sustained. In terms of technology, the development of the Internet has improved the efficiency of information and resource exchange; in terms of connotation, the development of the Internet has changed the demand structure of users, making the sharing of human groups increasingly visible. At the same time, sharing is also the development concept of contemporary China. The Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) put forward for the first time the five development concepts of "innovation, coordination, greenness, openness and sharing", including the development concept of "sharing". In the process of international dissemination of contemporary Chinese values, it is necessary to firmly grasp the characteristics of the current era of sharing, and follow the law of sharing in the construction of discourse, so that contemporary Chinese values can be transformed into a consensus of human values at the level of sharing, and thus substantively establish the foundation for the dissemination of values.

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2. The Production of External Discourse on Contemporary Chinese Values

In today's national competition and the construction of a new international order, discourse plays an important role. According to Anthony Giddens, "The development of the state is inevitably fused with the formation of discursive styles, which constructively shape state power" (Giddens, 1998)). Each country's position on the international stage depends not only on its own comprehensive national power, but also on its discursive power. China has completely got rid of the situation of "backwardness is to be beaten", but "loss of words is to be scolded" has become a new issue in the new period. For example, Singapore, New Zealand, Denmark, the Netherlands and other countries are not as powerful as the United States, Russia and China in terms of comprehensive national strength, but they are much more powerful than Russia and China in terms of discourse power. In addition to the reason of the Western discourse center, there is also the problem of discourse construction. That is to say, on the basis of China building a platform for dialog with other countries, other countries are willing to actively listen to China's voice out of the need for economic, political, cultural and other cooperation, and how China can proactively tell a good story is the core aspect of building discourse.

There are many ways for a country to improve its international discourse power, and one of the most central ways is to start from the content of the discourse, improve the quality of the discourse, and construct a complete discourse system. Discourse system refers to the paradigm of speech activities in a certain social and historical environment, which carries the subjective will and thoughts of the subject of the discourse in a complete and orderly discourse system. The complete discourse system of a country ensures the relative independence of its own discourse, thus preventing its own discourse from being dissolved by the discourse of other countries. Of course, different discourse systems are not insulated from each other, otherwise it would be difficult to constitute an open communication mechanism between them. A positive discourse system must be inclusive, and it should find the consensus value in different discourse systems as a way to realize the construction and innovation of discourse. In short, a diverse discourse system is the basis for getting rid of the monolithic hegemony of discourse. At the same time, the discourse system is not a closed establishment that hinders human communication; it is open and carries the complete establishment of the historicity of each country's society. Not only does it not hinder the spread of discourse, but it also fully conveys the subjective will of the country in the construction of meaning.

Discourse is not only "form" but also "content". Contemporary China's foreign discourse system requires telling a good story about China in terms of form, but also in terms of content. The foreign discourse system of contemporary Chinese values is based on its own self-confident culture and values, and such culture and values are consistent with the great practices of contemporary China. But the question is how we can further enhance the infectiousness of the values in terms of form and content, and increase the recognition of contemporary Chinese values by people in other countries.

In the process of constructing the external discourse system of contemporary Chinese values, there are both original discourses with distinctive Chinese characteristics and evolved discourses that have been formed by the continuous collision with Western culture during the modern revolution and modernization. Evolved discourse is a double-edged sword, although it is easy to be dissolved by the Western discourse, it is also easy to

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establish an interpretative bridge with the Western discourse. The same is true for the original discourse. Although it has distinctive features and is not easily homogenized by the Western discourse, its cultural barriers naturally exist and it needs to be further popularized through discursive interpretation.

3. Uniqueness of values and New Worldist discourse

In international communication, the dissemination of values and the consensus of discourse are two conflicting sides. In the real international environment, every country has its own values. Therefore, values are a unique message. There is a big difference in values between China and Western countries, so it is often difficult for Western people to accept the communication about Chinese values and concepts in the context of mass communication. However, at the spiritual level, values are particularly important for communicating a country's image abroad. Therefore, in international communication, how to construct a consensus on discourse becomes crucial.

Interests determine discourse. Whether or not a consensus can be formed around a discourse depends on whether or not interests can be shared. As early as the fourth century B.C., Cynic philosophers sought to become "citizens of the world," focusing on the universal values and interests of the human race as a whole. However, the development of realist state relations since then has made nationalism an important ideology affecting the interests of states and constraining the construction of the mainstream discourse of international communication. In particular, World War I, World War II and the Cold War that broke out in the twentieth century made nationalism a current in international relations and profoundly influenced the international communication discourse. However, the end of the Cold War is quietly changing the existing state of international communication. According to Jean Carabi, a sociologist at London's City University, the process of international communication since the nineteenth century can be divided into three phases: the first phase was technology-driven internationalized communication, the second phase was capital-driven globalized communication, and the third phase was transnational/cosmopolitanism-driven communication driven by humanism (Chalaby, 2005). Today, humanist-driven cosmopolitan communication has made global culture less parochial and regionalized, and has led to the emergence of cultural hybrids with regional links across countries and peoples, which constitutes a new trend in the development of international communication discourse.

The development of globalization has prompted people to rethink the harmfulness of the non-holistic concept of "either/or" interests. People are also becoming increasingly aware that "you are in me and I am in you" is the most fundamental value orientation of human development. Although cosmopolitanism has won broad consensus, we still need to be wary of the utopian elements of cosmopolitanism. At present, nationalism and localism still have their necessity and rationality of existence. Until the state is extinct, nationalism cannot be understood in the abstract as an all-equal model of world governance. New globalism still respects the interests of peoples and nations, opposes extreme and narrow nationalism, and pursues the common interests of mankind in a comprehensive interaction of interests. In recent years, China has been actively promoting a series of top-level decisions on international communication, such as the "Belt and Road", the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road Fund, in line with the trend of new worldism. Correspondingly, at the level of spiritual communication, the discourse expression of contemporary China's foreign communication also follows the concept of new globalism. The German sociologist Ulrich Beck cited the German writer

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Thomas Mann's "mixed coffee principle" to construct the structural principle of European cosmopolitanism, demonstrating that although the world dilutes, smooths, and reduces some of its local and national elements, it overall increases its total amount and effectiveness of outward dissemination. This preserves the highly dynamic cultural genes and national spirit, which are readily accepted by the target audience. At the same time, this also provides "a flexible, rational and comprehensive way of thinking for solving the problems of either/or, black or white, antagonism, singularity, contradiction and paranoia in international communication" (Rantanen, 2008). At the level of new cosmopolitanism, the international dissemination of contemporary Chinese values should know how to reverse the fusion of Western elements and Western culture, continue to excavate the universal meanings of Chinese and Western values, transform and convert the special meanings, and learn to borrow Western symbols to interpret Chinese culture and values.

After the Arab Spring, civil war broke out in Syria, and Western countries led by the United States supported the Syrian opposition. In order to overthrow the Assad government, Western countries launched air strikes targeting Syrian civilians on the grounds that the Syrian Government was in possession of chemical weapons. The Chinese government firmly opposes the use of chemical weapons by any country, organization or individual under any circumstances, but advocates the resolution of the Syrian issue through political channels and the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. In February 2017, Chinese media continued to report on the statement made by Jieyi Liu, China's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, at the UN Security Council vote on the Syria resolution. China and Russia exercised their veto in the vote and were cross-examined from the floor by representatives of Western countries. Jieyi Liu responded immediately. Chinese media reports highlighted the details of Liu's off-the-cuff remarks. Citing the Iraq war as an example, Liu said, "The countries concerned should deeply reflect on how the Middle East and Syria came to the present situation. What roles did different countries play? Which ones are honorable and which ones are dishonorable? It is extremely hypocritical to only pay lip service to 'the people'." Jieyi Liu's statement reveals the great contradiction between the claims of Western governments to defend human rights and the reality of human rights abuses, which is the evil consequence of the hegemony of Western governments. In April 2018, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France launched airstrikes against Syria before the results of the investigation into Syria's chemical weapons had been completed. Xinhua News Agency then released a three-minute short film. In the short film, different Syrian children face the reporter's camera and tearfully ask, "What have we done wrong?" Through these images, people are made to think about what the essence of human rights really is and how it should be realized. This kind of shared communication enables people in China and the West to put aside the differences in political systems, to think about the universal connotation of values, and then to understand the specificity of different values and the rationality of special values.

4. Enhancing Discourse Sharing with "Balanced Communication"

In the course of the transition from the period of political party newspapers to the period of commercial newspapers, the Western press and communication industry has developed the principle of "objective reporting". The objective reporting does not mean that the news media do not have their own position, but emphasizes the process of reporting "balanced communication"—maintaining a balance between "positive information" and "negative information" in the dissemination of information. Marx and Engels also attached great

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importance to the principle of "balanced communication". Marx summarized "balanced communication" as "portraying the facts as they are". Balanced communication is actually a manifestation of audience-centeredness and respect for the audience's ability to evaluate. Audiences are willing to receive information disseminated by a particular media outlet because it is able to disseminate comprehensive and open information, rather than one-sided information. The Chinese news media advocate "mainly positive reporting", which emphasizes a positive orientation, rather than "reporting the good news but not the bad". That is to say, when reporting negative information, the media should also guide it in a positive way to help people understand it more positively. Therefore, there is no contradiction between opinion guidance and balanced communication. In other words, public opinion orientation based on balanced communication implements the technique of "both sides of the story" in communication science, and is therefore more positive.

In current international communication, media bias is far more prevalent than balanced communication. Among the many factors that contribute to the existence of media bias, values are undoubtedly crucial. Therefore, to implement the principle of balanced communication in the international communication of values has its own contradictions. In the specific process of news dissemination, media bias becomes inevitable due to the objective existence of gatekeepers and agenda setting. For example, the US media's China-related reports have the political bias of having more negative reports than positive ones. On February 11, 2015, the Huffington Post website published an article titled "Ghost Stories About China's Declining Values". The article pointed out that for many years, the prevailing popular belief was that China would surely collapse because it was authoritarian, corrupt, and inefficient. As it turned out, China did not collapse, and critics went on to say that China's success was an empty material success (Nair, 2015). The United States exaggerates the individual phenomena that exist in Chinese society as universal phenomena, and by attacking China's contemporary values and belittling China's economic success, its media bias essentially stems from the U.S. fixation on the old order of international communication.

Global cultural exchanges are becoming increasingly frequent. In the process of international communication, it has become increasingly important for China to fully reflect its own reality. Sticking to the principle of "sweeping bad news under the carpet" will only increase foreigners' skepticism about the credibility of the Chinese media. The principle of balanced reporting can undoubtedly show the real state of China to the outside world. In January 2015, CCTV-9's "Approaching China" program did an interview titled "China's Beliefs and Values". The program mainly reflected that since the reform and opening up, the development of China's market economy has led to the emergence of the value of "all about money" among the people—in food safety, people looting, helping the elderly was blackmailed and other news events occur frequently. Currently, Chinese society is characterized by the discordant concepts of "forgetting righteousness for the sake of profit", "being unkind to the rich", and "lack of integrity". This program shows the temporary decline of Chinese values in a negative sense, and emphasizes the necessity of building and spreading socialist core values in a positive sense, and the reality of how to achieve them. This TV program clearly adopts the strategy of "balanced communication", vividly presenting both positive and negative aspects of the construction of contemporary Chinese values, and truthfully showing the world how to build a cultural support system after the rise of China's economy. This not only enhances the credibility of China's foreign discourse in the world and strengthens the persuasive power of value orientation, but also provides an opportunity for the formation of positive values in the presence of negative cultural values.

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No discourse is inherently worldly. Western standards of journalistic knowledge are also essentially regional expressions of discourse. Its universal influence comes from the institutionalized construction of discourse. As a result, Western discourse has taken on a constancy and interacts with discursive hegemony to form a standardized system. "Foreign theories, concepts, discourses, and methods should be analyzed and discriminated, and those that are applicable should be used, while those that are not applicable should not be copied and adapted." (Xi, 2016) In China's discourse system, the leadership of the Communist Party of China always occupies a dominant position, depending on the establishment of the Party's leadership under the socialist system. For the communication discourse of the socialist system to be centered on the interests of the people, it has to play the role of economic power and cultural power under the framework of the Party's power.

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