

Full Length Research Paper

Well-received Chinese rhetorical strategies as identified in the public speeches and reports by Chinese leaders

Pinfan Zhu

Department of English, College of Liberal Arts, Texas State University, United States.

Received 18 February, 2020; Accepted 2 November, 2020

Cross-cultural communication is inseparable from both oral and written communication. But effective language communication requires effective rhetorical strategies in terms of selecting the most effective means of persuasion to ensure its success. Aristotle defined rhetoric as “the art of identifying (and applying), in any given situation, the most likely means of persuasion.” Naturally, to conduct effective communication with cross-cultural audiences requires us to find out or understand the favorable expressions used in that country. In this way, the speaker can say in the target language what audiences from that country or culture like to hear, and thus win over their trust. This study explores the well-received Chinese rhetorical strategies or means of expressions used by Chinese leaders in their public speeches or reports through discursive analysis. It has identified six commonly used means of expression as persuasive means to engage and influence the audiences. In light of the analysis here, the author hopes other researches could also identify well-received means of expression or persuasion in other cultures, and thus make contributions to the art of cross-cultural public speaking.

Key words: Cross-cultural communication, rhetorical strategy, Chinese, means of expressions.

INTRODUCTION

Cross-cultural communication is inevitable with globalization and is ever on the increase. Unlike communication within the same culture, it requires communicators or translators to have a good understanding of all the concerned aspects of the target culture such as its business conventions, cultural values and assumptions, relevant laws and regulations, communication styles, etc. Overlooking any of those aspects will lead to troubles or even failures in achieving the business goals. The author once discussed business

blunders in language use, website design, and business translation in previous issues of *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*. But in this article, the focus is on identifying favorite rhetorical strategies in a different culture, taking China as the example. Rhetoric is defined as means of persuasion according to Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1.2, 1355b26f), and nowadays is also defined as an art to make the language more effective, beautiful, convincing, and acceptable to audience so as to achieve different communication purposes. Audience is the most important

E-mail: pinfan_z@yahoo.com.

Author(s) agree that this article remain permanently open access under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

element of a rhetorical situation because our communication goal in the last analysis is to make the audience accept, trust, and appreciate our ideas. Thus, only by meeting the audiences' needs and giving them what they like, can a writer or speaker easily win over their trust and achieve the communication goal. As a language of each culture has its own conventional or favorite expression forms, syntax, and discourse organizational patterns which people of that culture consider idiomatic, effective, or comfortable to accept, the task is naturally to identify these language elements to effectively communicate with them. Limited by the space, this article mainly focused on the Chinese means of expression. The author does so because China is the second largest economy in the world that deserves our attention. Through extensive reading, examining, and analyzing reports and speeches made by leaders of China and relevant literature, the author has identified some frequently used or well-received rhetorical strategies works and speeches by Chinese people.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Researches into the language use features of Chinese leaders do not seem to have yielded abundant results, compared with other types of language studies. Having examined the literature on language use characteristics of Chinese leaders in mainland China and the internet sources, the author has read these articles: "On Mao's philosophical works" (Jing, 2017), "Mao's writing characteristics" (Xia, 2013), "Mao Zedong on approaches to writing" (Li, 2018), "The writing artistic features of Deng Xiaoping for his speeches" (Fu, 2017), "Stylistic Features of Xi Jinping's Language" (Wen, 2013), and "The literature world of Mao Tsetung" (Boorman, 2014). These works mainly focus on the characteristics of language used by the leaders mentioned earlier, such as the vocabulary features, syntactical features, or rhythmic features or the styles. For example, Xia discussed Mao's skills in textual organization. Jing praised Mao's philosophical thinking while Fu studied Deng Xiaoping's direct style and arrangement skill in writing. And Wen commented that Xi Jinping liked to use stories, chatting style, heuristic approaches, and emotional appeal in his writing. Boorman mainly studied Mao's techniques in writing poems and his opposition to sticking to the eight-section ancient Chinese prose writing style. Overall, most of these articles approach the writings and speeches of Chinese leaders from linguistic and philosophical perspectives, which cause the author to explore from a different angle, which is a rhetorical perspective. Rhetoric and technical communication are the research area of the author. So, he tries to identify if some of the language preferences and characteristics of these leaders are also their rhetorical strategies to persuade their audience and make their language effective. These two are the purpose

of rhetoric, which differentiate the author's study from those of others' researches.

METHODOLOGY

Discourse refers to any instance of language use such as a piece of writing or speech. Discourse analysis aims at studying how language is used in specific situations. A discourse is a collection of one's language uses that reflects his/her style, tone, diction, syntactic preference, preferred language strategies and linguistic idiosyncrasies. Thus, to understand the characteristics of one's language use, an effective way is to use discourse analysis. Since the author explores in this article the language strategies used by Chinese leaders for persuading their audiences, naturally, discourse analysis becomes his preferred choice. Specific practice includes data collecting, data analysis, and result reporting. To reach this goal, the author read works written by representative or important Chinese readers and tried to identify patterns that help support the hypothesis that common sayings, four-character Chinese idioms, use of metaphors, use of stories, and ancient poems, quotations from renown sources are well-received language strategies used by Chinese leaders. Some of these strategies were identified through the author's literature review as stated earlier. The author took works by Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping as his study scope because they are very well-known leaders and published more works than others did. Specifically, Works studies include *Four Collections of Mao's Anthology*, *Selected Works by Deng Xiaoping* and *Selected Works by Xi Jinping*. Through identifying and analyzing language use features and patterns in aspects like content, syntax, and vocabulary, the author has come up with the following strategies in persuasion and making the language effective.

Strategy 1: Use of common sayings

Identification is an important rhetorical theory of Burke (1969), who suggests that "you persuade or communicate with a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his". This theory clearly tells a good way to persuade your audience is to identify yourself with them to make them aware that you are a member of them and share the same value, assumptions, or belief with them, which is an effective way to let them accept you and your ideas. Common sayings are popular sayings, most of which were summarized by the general public from their life or working experiences. Ordinary people are familiar with them and understand them easily. Burke's theory of identification may not be familiar to Chinese people. But Mao (1930) advocated that language should be learned from the general public. So, using common sayings of the general public is an effective way to communicate and persuade them. China's leaders understand well this important way of communication and like to use this form of language frequently in their reports and speeches.

In his *Speech at the Sixth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection*, President Xi Jinping (2016) used the following popular sayings: "Tigers that want to eat up sky but don't know where to

start with” to describe people who want to do big things but without a specific plan. He also used “To forge iron, one needs to be strong” to indicate that, to fight corruption, one needs to be morally sound first oneself, “not only shoot tigers but also swap flies” to mean cleaning up corrupted officials holding both very high leading positions in the Central Committee and lower positions at the local level, “They would be caught in the rounding-up” to imply (corrupted elements) would be arrested in the anti-corruption campaign, “You have your way of closing the door while I have my way to loophole it” to describe a situation where ordinances banning power-abusing were enacted but ill practice of rule-breaking by way of loopholes still exists, and “like railway cops, each is responsible for his own section” to criticize a situation where lack of overall and coordinated management is obvious. In this speech, more than 50 popular common sayings were used. In his other speeches, such as “Speech at the Symposium to Commemorate the 120th Anniversary of Comrade Mao Zedong’s Birth,” “New Year Message (Xi, 2014b),” and “Speech at the Moscow Institute of International Relations,” Xi (2013), he used many popular sayings like “lack of calcium” to mean people short of beliefs in the great cause, “glass door” to refer to not easily visible impedance to private enterprise investment, “the suitability of shoes is decided by one’s own trying” to mean a good road for development is only known by a country itself by experimenting, and “weeds on the wall” to criticize people without a firm stand (weeds moving in whatever directions as the wind blows them). Editorial comment (Ma, 2020) from New China Net explicitly points out using common sayings is one of the typical language styles of Xi.

In fact, the use of popular common sayings was also similar in works or speeches by former presidents of China. Mao (1942) once pointed out, “Language is not something that can be easily learned well. One needs to put hard-working efforts in it. One must learn language from the general public whose vocabulary has rich, vivid, and reality-reflecting expressions” in the speech of ‘Anti-Stereotypical Communist Party Writing Style’ at the Cadres’ Conference in Yanan. Mao used numerous such sayings in the four volumes of *Mao Zedong’s Selected Works* and one famous saying is the expression “Imperialism is a paper tiger.”

Deng Xiaoping, another former president also liked to use common sayings. In his works on *Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Several Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reform* (Deng, 1988), Deng used the saying like “To grope in a river to cross it” to describe an uncertain situation China was facing in the course of opening to the outside world. Deng was famous for his use of the saying “Cats, no matter they are black or white, are good cats so long as they catch rats” (Deng, 1962) to explain that, whatever method is a good method as long as it helps to complete something.

Examples mention earlier show that China’s leaders paid attention to identifying themselves with common working people by speaking their language and expressions, which helped them effectively make their ideas accepted by the general public.

Strategy 2: Use of four-character Chinese idioms

Ethos is one of the important persuasive means in Aristotelian rhetorical theory. Ethos is to use one’s good character, trustworthiness, and professionalism to persuade people. Though ethos, as a term of rhetoric, is not familiar to Chinese people, the concept of having a decent face is what Chinese seek. A decent face, as they believe, provides them with credibility and trust and brings them the respect from people around them. To show one’s command of encyclopedic knowledge is definitely a good way to earn a decent face and win over audience’s trust. Otherwise, Chinese people would not have the proverb like “a bird’s beauty is known by its colorful feathers while a man’s beauty is by his knowledge.” Naturally, it’s important for an orator or writer to show his/her knowledge to the audience. One strategy to achieve this purpose is to employ as many four-character Chinese idioms as possible in the speech or writing.

Four-character Chinese idioms are the most expressive element in the Chinese language. There are about 4,000 such idioms. These idioms have 4 Chinese characters in them. Each character is a syllable with a different tone. Each idiom sounds rhythmical and musical with four different tones put together. When a bunch of such idioms are used, they read like a poem and sound very pleasing to ears. In form, they look symmetrical and orderly. In meaning, they can be antithetical, parallel, repetitious, progressive, and antonymous. Their origins are from numerous fields, covering areas such as historical anecdotes, daily life experience, ancient poems, natures of animals, plants, human body, tools, emotions, behaviors, etc. They are the crystallization of human understanding of all aspects of the world. Chinese people especially like those idioms. Whenever they find a non-native speaker using those idioms in his/her speech, they feel amazed and adore the speaker very much. So, using such idioms is an inevitable part in speeches and reports by China’s leaders.

Take Xi for example: in his speech at G20 Summit, he used such four-character idioms to communicate that Chinese people emphasize unity, harmony, and peace because they seek “和衷共济、和合共生,” which means seeking harmony, coexistence, and mutual benefits but never “国强必霸，穷兵黩武” which means a strong country is bound to seek hegemony or the willful use of force or wars. To persist in opening to the world, he used idioms like 轻关易道，通商宽农，应有之义, which means the governance of a country should be based on simple

customs procedures, improved infrastructures, convenience for business transactions, and preferential agricultural policies. What implies in these idioms is the importance of building an open-to-the-world economy. He emphasized “行胜于言” which means action speaks louder than words. Referring to management strategy, he holds that “小智治事，大智治制” which means that people with petty shrewdness attend to trivial matters while those with greater wisdom attend to governance of institutions. Finally, Xi stressed that people should be the priority of a country because he said,

“民惟邦本，本固邦宁” which means that the people are the foundation of a country and only when the people lead a good life can the country thrive.

Mao (1945) did the same in his works of *Coalition Government*, volume 3, page 316, where he encouraged his people to be engaged in self-criticism or self-purification. For this purpose, he used 4-character idioms like “流水不腐，户枢不蠹，知无不言，言无不尽，言者无罪，闻者足戒，有则改之，无责加免，” which can be translated as follows: Running water is never stale and an active door hinge is never worm eaten, so people should constantly make mutual criticism and self-criticism to stop from being corrupted. They should say all they know and say it without reserve; blame not the speaker but be warned by his words; correct the mistakes if you have committed them and guard against them if you have not made the mistakes.

Deng Xiaoping in his 37 articles used almost 200 four-character idioms according to Chinese Idiom Net. For example, in his report on “Current Situation and the Tasks” (Deng, 1979), Deng used “含糊不清” to mean ambiguity and vagueness of policies, “确确实实” to mean very true indeed, “不足之处” to mean short comings, and “平平稳稳” to mean stable and steady development. In another article “Adhere to the Four Modernizations” (Deng, 1978), he used “不可估量” to mean inestimable value, “千难万苦” to mean thousands upon thousands of hardships and troubles, “混淆视听” to mean sending confusing and misleading messages, and “堆积成山” to mean accumulated problems like a mountain.

Obviously, the foregoing paragraphs reflect the similar preference for four-character idioms by leaders of China in their writing and speaking. Limited by the space here, the author has to present only a few of them as examples. Again, the reason for using them is that such four-character idioms have an encyclopaedical coverage of all fields of knowledge. They demonstrate the speaker or writer’s knowledge adequately, and they sound very rhythmic and pleasing to ears. Chinese people like these idioms very much and consider a person capable of using

such idioms extensively as being very knowledgeable. Thus, using such idioms is an effective way of winning over the audience’s respect. Moreover, Chinese Central TV Station of sponsor four-character idioms competitions for people of all ages to participate in, and winners win big prizes for such competitions, which is a piece of evidence to show Chinese people’s preference for using these idioms. So using them is a good strategy to accommodate the Chinese audience’ need.

Strategy 3: Use of metaphors

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable. Metaphor is a kind of rhetorical devices, and rhetoric, according to Plato (1909) is cookery that offers a pleasant feeling and enchant peoples’ soul (463a6-465e1). So, the charming of this rhetorical device is obvious. Advantages of using metaphors are these: (1) they help make abstruse concepts easier to understand; (2) make strange things familiar to people; (3) make abstract things concrete; and (4) make descriptions more vivid, picturesque, and impressive. Consequently, using metaphors is an effective rhetorical strategy to impress the audience. A few examples of metaphors are provided in the following paragraph in italics for easy recognition.

Xi is fond of using metaphors. He compares civilians to *parents providing livelihood for us*, reading to *brain enrichment*, a united leading group to *a fist*, self-purification to *looking into the glass, putting one’s collar in place, and taking bath*; and China to *a peaceful, affable, and civilized lion* (Wen, 2017). In the struggle against corruption, Xi compared high-rank corrupted officials as *tigers* and lower-rank corrupted officials as *flies*, and all these tigers and flies must be swept away. He emphasized that *the master-switch* (core value issues of ideals and beliefs) must be well handled and that cadres need to be *recharged* (strengthened) of their awareness of contingencies (Xi, 2017).

Mao also made an abundant use of metaphors on all kinds of occasions, a Chinese scholar (Zhang, 2011) made statistics of all the metaphors used by Mao and found 183 uses of more than 20 types of metaphors in his 120 articles. For example, he pointed out that imperialism and all reactionaries were *paper tigers*. Young people are the *morning sun at 8 o’clock*. Socialism is *east wind* while imperialism is *west wind*. He criticized people who did not hold a firm stand as *shallow-rooted weeds on the wall* that swayed back and forth in the wind. He reminded people that making revolution is not *inviting guests to a feast, nor writing an article, nor painting a flower, nor doing embroidery*, we cannot be that elegant... (General Political Department of PLA. 1967). In explaining the dialectic relationship between internal causes and external causes, Mao compared the former to *an egg*, the

latter to *temperature* and stressed that *temperature* becomes operative only through *the egg* by turning it to a chick, but temperature cannot change a stone to a chick; thus, internal causes (egg) are the base while external causes (temperature) are the condition. Internal causes play a decisive role.

Deng (1992) used metaphors as well. He referred to fighting without involving masses as *dancing in nude*, described downsizing institutional structures as *obesity diminution*, compared Sino-Japan technological cooperation relationship to *teacher-student relationship*, considered the practice of mechanically implementing policies without adapting to actual needs as *mail room phenomenon* (all mail pieces were packed there), and depicted the handling of a very high-rank officer's problem as *touching the buttocks of a tiger*. These metaphors are so imagery, vivid, and easy to understand that there is no wonder that the Chinese people are so much in favor of them.

Aristotle held that the right use of metaphors is an inborn talent that can not be learned and that metaphors make learning easier (Poetics iii). Chinese people like learning and admire talented people who are good at using metaphors to teach things; naturally, using metaphors becomes one of the well-received rhetorical strategies.

Strategy 4: Use of stories

Stories are interesting and welcomed by people all over the world. Stories can hold audience's attention with their interesting plots and educational contents. Using stories is thus an effective strategy to engage or move the audience. Xi used this strategy in his speech. Xi explained what was meant by Asian Destiny Community by telling this story in Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan.

A Chinese volunteer marrow donor Zhangbo, who had successfully matched his marrow with a Korean patient, had a car accident in 2008, but after his recovery from the medical treatment, he continued to donate his marrow to the Korean, saying that good fortunes and disasters were unpredictable in one's life, now that the Korean was in a great trouble, it did not matter too much for him to give him a hand. And so far, 156 cases of marrow donation have been completed by Chinese donors, among which 45 are for the South Korean patients (2013).

In addition to this story, Xi told other stories about the friendships between China and other countries. In Tanzania, he told a story about how a young Chinese couple loved Africa and tried their best to help the local people, another one in Mexico about how a Mexican football coach helped Chinese football team achieved good records, one more about how Chinese diving coaches helped Mexican diving team achieved good records, and more ones about how in history the Qin Dynasty and Tang Dynasty perished because of the

severe corruption in the then governmental departments (Xi, 2016).

Mao was also fond of using stories in his works. He used an inspiring story of an ancient Chinese fable "The Old Foolish Man Who Removed the Mountains" (Lie, 475 BC) to encourage his people to strive indestructibly for the final success. The story goes like this:

In ancient China, there was an old man called Foolish Old Man who had two high mountains beyond his doorway, creating great trouble for him to reach out. So, Foolish Old Man was determined to dig up the mountain and unblock the way. Hoe in hand, he led his son digging up the mountains incessantly. Another greybeard called Wiseman sneered at them, saying how silly of you to do this! It's quite impossible for your few to dig up these mountains. The foolish old man replied, when I die, my sons will carry on, when they die, there will be their sons and grandsons, and so on to infinity. High as they are, they will not grow any higher; with every bit we dug, they will be that much lower. Why can't we clear them away? Having refuted the Wiseman's wrong view, he went on digging, unshaking in his conviction. God was moved by his deeds and sent two angels to carry away the two mountains (This story was repeated six times in other works by Mao).

In addition to this story, Mao used the story of *The Farmer and the Viper* to warn all the soldiers not to show mercy on ferocious enemy (1949). On another occasion, he told a story of "Big Donkey in Guizhou Exhausted Its Tricks" (Liu, 618; Tang Dynasty) which goes like this:

A small tiger found a big donkey in Guizhou Province. The tiger was scared of the donkey's size at the beginning. But after it observed the donkey for some time, it found the donkey had only a couple of tricks like kicking and braying, so the tiger was no longer afraid and dashed over the donkey and killed it.

Mao used the story to tell the soldiers not to fear the apparently powerful Japanese aggressors. They could definitely defeat those aggressors because they were not as powerful as they appeared.

When he found some cadres were busy about aimlessly without focusing on the most important task, Mao used *Story of Xiangshan* (Han, 1103), a story about a lady who dedicated herself to Buddhism and practiced kind deeds constantly to finally become Bodhisattva, to educate those cadres so that they knew how to concentrate on the most important task.

In 1962, Mao found some very conceited managerial cadres who did not show concern for the masses or listen to their opinions and suggestions. So, in a report given at the Expanded Work Meeting held in Beijing, he told them a story of *King Bawang Bidding His Concubine Farewell*. The story was about a very conceited king who never

accepted and heard others' good advice. So, he suffered a fiasco and had to leave his concubine by killing himself. The purpose was to warn those cadres of being abandoned by masses because of their refusal to accept or hear different opinions so that those cadres would change their attitude (Mao, 1962).

Strategy 5: Using ancient poems

In the history of Chinese literature, abundant beautiful poems were written in different dynasties, especially in the Tang and Song Dynasties. Those beautiful poems are like shining pearls that Chinese people like very much, especially those written by famous poets. People who can use those poems in writing or recite them in their speech are normally highly regarded as elegant literati. Chinese parents even start to teach their pre-school kids those poems and let them recite before guests. They will feel very proud if their kids receive praises from the guests. People really like those small kids who can recite ancient poems. TV programs often show ancient poem reading performances. Chinese people like to use those poems at the beginning of a grand celebrating event to express their excitement or create a romantic atmosphere. Naturally, using ancient poems will be an effective way to win respect and engage the audience. As a result, leaders of China cannot overlook this; they use these poems in their reports and speeches.

In the opening speech at the G20 Summit in Hangzhou China, Xi (2016b) as the key note speaker, had the following remarks in which a classic poem was used within the quotation marks:

The tidal bore is sweeping up the Qiantang River these few days. As an ancient Chinese poem reads, "The tide riders surf the currents; the flags they hold up never get wet". I, like all of you, look forward to a G20 that will ride the tides in the world economy. I believe that, with various parties working together, the Hangzhou Summit will certainly achieve success.

At the beginning of his speech at APEC summit, Xi intoned a poem from the Tang Dynasty: 秋天来了, 山明水净, 夜晚已经有霜; 树叶由绿色转为焦黄色, 其中却有几片树叶成红色, 在浅黄色中格外显眼, meaning: The fall has brought about clear mountains and lucid waters, and the night befalls with frost; leaves have turned from green to dark yellow, with a few glistening with red radiance, which appear very conspicuous among the yellow leaves (2014). He also used another verse from the Song Dynasty while he was visiting Britain. At the British State Banquet, he said 来而不可失者, 时也; 蹈而不可失者, 机也, meaning: Opportunity may knock just once, grab it before it slips away (Xi, 2015).

On June 21, 2016, Chinese President Xi Jinping

published a signed article on a leading Uzbek newspaper *Narodnoye Slovo* under the title of "A Glorious New Chapter in China-Uzbekistan Friendship" before his state visit to the Central Asian country. The quoted poem in the article, also carried by the Jahon News Agency, is as follows:

“绿野草铺茵, 空山雪积银,”这是 600 多年前明代中国官员出使中亚后写下的诗句。乌兹别克斯坦的壮美景色自古为中国人所熟知和向往。

“Grass-covered land is lush green and snow-clad mountains are translucent and silvery.” This is a poem written by a Chinese envoy in the Ming Dynasty after his mission to Central Asia over 600 years ago. The magnificent landscape of Uzbekistan is familiar to and admired by the Chinese people since ancient times.

The quote indicates Xi also used poems from other dynasties of China. He used about thirty ancient poems in his different reports and speeches.

Mao Zedong was a poet himself. He wrote more than 130 poems which were well read in China, especially in late 60s and 70s. He loved the poetry of the Tang Dynasty better than of others. For example, to describe the friendship between China and Albania in the 60s of last century, Mao quoted a line from Wang Bo's poem of the Tang Dynasty: “海内存知己, 天涯若比邻” meaning: “A bosom friend afar brings distant land near” (Mao, 1966). On another occasion Mao used a poem by Li Bai, the greatest poet of the Tang Dynasty, to describe the warm love among Red Army soldiers: “桃花潭水深千尺, 不及你我手足情!” (Zhou, 2014) which means “The Peach Blossom Pond is a thousand deep, but not as much as the love among our soldiers.”

Strategy 6: Use of quotations from a broad range of sources

Quotations cover a wide range of topics such as famous persons' remarks, poems, proverbs, statistics, or whatever in a text. People use quotations for different purposes such as describing, explaining, supporting, opposing, justifying, proving, and enhancing something. An opinion or a statement can be more persuasive or effective when it is well supported with adequate evidence, and quotations can serve this purpose in writing. In addition, quotations can also demonstrate the rich knowledge of a person, which adds more credibility to this person. So, in writing or speaking, using quotations is a good rhetorical strategy. Chinese leaders know this well. They like to use quotations in writing or speaking as a strategy to attract their audience. On the other hand in China, people tend to respect or seek advice from a person who is well-read and can cite a lot

of famous persons in their speech.

According to the statistics made by Sun Xingzhi, a Chinese scholar, Xi Jinping made more than 300 quotes from different sources in his 42 talks and reports within the period from 2012 to 2014. Here are a few examples:

(1) In praise of the victory of anti-Japanese wars, Xi quoted Mao: "Wonders in the history of war, the feats of the Chinese nation, the earth-shattering great cause" (Sun, 2014).

(2) To stress the importance of brand name products, Xi quoted Deng, "We should have our own fist products and create our own world brand, otherwise we will be bullied (Xi, 2004).

(3) To state the importance of opportunities, in a speech during his visit in Britain, he quoted Francis Bacon, "A wise man will make more opportunities, than he finds" (2015).

(4) To remind people of the bumpy road in the course of development, Xi quoted from Nikolay Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky that the road is not the history of the sidewalk on the Nevsky Prospect, it is completely forward in the fields, sometimes cutting through dust, sometimes through the mud, sometimes crossing the marsh, and sometimes through jungles (2013).

(5) To emphasize a solid base for cooperation, Xi quoted from Wei Zhong an ancient Chinese philosopher that a tree has to struct a firm root before it can flourish; a river has to have fully unclogged water sources before it can flow incessantly (Xi, 2014).

According to *People Net*, Xi Jinping's quotations cover a wide range, including famous writers from both at home and abroad of the present time and ancient time. Specific topics include proverbs, poems, popular sayings, allusions, adages, and epigrams, and the amount of quotation is large (more than 300). Needless to say, quotation is his important rhetorical strategy for communicating to his audience.

The same can be said of Mao Zetong. Mao was a great scholar; he was well read in all kinds of books, especially Chinese classic works, so he was quite able to cite on all kinds of occasions and used these quotations to explain problems people did not understand. Mao published five volumes of works and a poem collection. According to Lu (2009), there are more than 1000 quotations in these works. Mao liked to cite from Chinese classic works more than from other sources. For example, he quoted from classic works such as *The Spring and Autumn Annals by Zuo*, *The Analects*, *Mencius*, *Book of Poetry*, *The Book of Han*, *Zhu Selections of Classified Conversation of Zhu Xi*, *Book of Documents*, *Book of Changes*, *The Great Learning*, *Doctrine of the Mean*, *Stratagems of Warring States*, *Book of the Later Han*, *Records of the Three Kingdoms*, *Laozi*, *The Art of War by Sunzi*, *Record of the Jin Dynasty*, and *The National Language by Weizhao*. One of Mao's famous quotes is from Lu Xun, another great man of letters in the history of Chinese literature,

which reads "Fierce-browed, I coolly defy a thousand pointing fingers (of the enemies). Head-bowed, like a willing ox, I serve the people."

DISCUSSION

As far as the reader can see, the foregoing paragraphs have been discussing the favorite rhetorical strategies used by Chinese leaders. These strategies frequently occur in the works by the aforementioned leaders and, without exception, in each case when the author analyzed the works, they did occur. In addition, these findings are partially based on the author's empirical study as well, which includes observation. The author explains that all through his school years from an elementary school until a university, textbooks he read were filled with such expressions as mentioned earlier. In reality, the expressions he identified as well-received strategies are also used by general Chinese people. And the empirical evidence (speech cases experienced and readings covered by the author), according Aristotle's rhetorical theory, falls within the inartistic proof category and is effective for supporting one's claims. However, if the points made by the author were also supported by more statistical analyses, (quantitative study) the conclusion would be more cogent. So, Lack of more statistic data can be regarded as one of the limitations for the research. The second limitation might be that writings as examples can be more adequate as to include past leaders before Mao Zedong era so that conclusion possess greater validity. Anyhow, limited by the space, the author finds it impossible to discuss the writings of all the leaders and moreover, most of them did not have any works published, so he has to limit himself to the current and most important leaders. Finally, language use is related to personal preference, so it's not possible to see all the well-received rhetorical strategies used by a single person. This means that a strategy used by one leader may not be used by another, so by no means can a leader use all the strategies.

Last but not least, the translation issue would be discussed. Normally, in translating poems certain poetic beauty will be lost such as the rhyme, rhythm, and witty diction in the original text if the two languages involved differ greatly. So, if the translation does not read like a poem, it is more because of this reason and thus it is simply meaning rendering. In this case, the original text is provided for reference. Because of this reason, by no means can one's translation can achieve 100% accuracy in literature works. As translation covers more than words, there surely are other aspects of rhetorical strategies untouched like writing styles, ways of organization, and syntactic features. But the purpose of this article is to identify just those about means of expressions. So, no discussion is offered on other strategies. By reaching this purpose, the author hopes to make some contribution to cross-cultural communication or international technical

communication.

Conclusion

As the analysis shows, the research result (findings from cases and examples studied) does support the hypothesis that language use features of some Chinese leaders are at the same time their rhetorical strategies to persuade their audience and make their language effective and enjoyable. This research result is of significance to the improvement of mass communication and cross-cultural communication. This is because meeting audience's needs is of priority if a speaker wants his points to be accepted by his/her audience, for no one is going to take whatever he does not need. According to Kaplan (2001), people of different cultures have different thought patterns, which result in their preferred discourse organizational approaches, sentence patterns, and communication manners, which differ from one another. People (bilingual persons or translators) who do not realize these differences will yield discourses unsuitable or unintelligible for audience from another cultures. For example, if a French speaker wants to attract and persuade his/her English audience when s/he travels to England to make a speech to audience there, s/he should not still abide by his/her conventional ways of addressing French people when addressing the English audience in their language in aspects of using sentence pattern use, words, discourse organization, and rhetorical strategies, for English people have their own preferred language usage and persuasive means. In this case, the French speaker's speech or writing would appear awkward and unacceptable to the target audience even if he is using English. But, if this speaker or writer is able to identify the preferred or well-received language strategies or conventions of the target audience and adapts his/her communication accordingly, his/her speech is easily accepted and felt enjoyable by the target audience. In this case, s/he achieves the communication goal successfully. The same principle applies to mass communication of the same country. And this is the very value of the author's research in this article and contribution to cross-cultural communication and mass communication from a rhetorical perspective.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests

REFERENCES

- Boorman H (2014). The Literary world of Mao Tse-tung. The China Quarterly, Cambridge University Press, 13:15-38.
- Burke K (1969). A Rhetoric of motives. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Deng X (1962). How to recover agricultural production. Selected works by Deng Xiaoping. China: People's Press.
- Deng X (1978). Decision of the Central Committee of the CPC on several major issues concerning comprehensively deepening reform. China: People's Press.
- Deng X (1979). Report on current situation and our tasks. Uphold Four Cardinal Principles. China: People's Press.
- Deng X (1988). Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on major issues concerning comprehensively deepening reform. China: People's Press.
- Deng X (1992). Report on southern inspection tour. Retrieved from http://cpcchina.chinadaily.com.cn/2010-09/09/content_13917857.htm
- General Political Department of PLA (1967). Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong. China: Dongfanhong Publishing House.
- Fu H (2017). "The writing artistic features of Deng Xiaoping for his speeches" Academic Journal of Hunan Normal University.
- Han B (1103). Story of Xiangshan. China: Folk Arts Press.
- Jing N (2017). On Chairman Mao's philosophical works. Study of the world socialism, China: Chinese Social Science Institute, 11:6-28.
- Kaplan R (2001). Cultural thought patterns in inter-cultural education. Landmark Essays on ESL Writing T. Silva and P. K. Matsuda. Mahwah, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: pp.11-25.
- Li J (2018). Mao Zedong on approaches to writing. Retrieved March 15, 2018, from <http://www.mzdjnw.com/gb/maozedonggushi/2018/0617/2624.html>
- Lie T (475 BC). The old foolish man who removed the mountain. Collection of Chinese Ancient Fables, China: Children Publishing House.
- Liu Z (618). A big donkey in Guizhou exhausted its tricks. Three Abstinenes. China: Chinese Literature Press.
- Lu Z (2009). Mao Zedong's study of Chinese classic works. China: New World Publishing House.
- Ma R (2020). Editorial comments. Retrieved May 6, 2020, from http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2020-05/06/c_1125949102.htm
- Mao Z (1930). Oppose book worship. China: People's Press.
- Mao Z (1942). Anti-stereotypical Communist Party writing style. China: People's Press.
- Mao Z (1945). On coalition government. Selected Works by Mao Zedong, Volume 3. China: People's Press.
- Mao Z (1962). Speech at the expanded work conference. Selected works of Mao Zedong, Volume 8. China: People's Press.
- Mao Z (1966). Congratulation telegram to the fifth congress of Albanian Labor Party. People' Daily. p1. China: People's Daily Press.
- Plato (1909). Gorgias. 463a6-465e1.
- Sun X (2014). About quotations cited by Xi Jinping: more from Confucius beliefs. First Financial Daily, China. P 1.
- Wen X (2013). Stylistic characteristics of Xi's speech. Retrieved from <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/>
- Xi J (2004). Speech at the economical work conference in Zhejiang Province. Retrieved from <http://jhsjk.people.cn/article/29574070>.
- Xi J (2013). Speech at the symposium to commemorate the 120th anniversary of comrade Mao Zedong's birth. Retrieved from <http://en.people.cn/90785/8494730.html>.
- Xi J (2014). Speech on pioneer a more brilliant chapter of Sino-Australia relationships at G20 summit. Retrieved from <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2014-11-17/202931158896.shtml>
- Xi J (2014b). New year message of 2014, Retrieved from <http://english.cri.cn/12394/2014/12/31/2982s859279.htm>
- Xi J (2015). Opening remarks at the British state banquet. Retrieved from <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2016/160903-xi.html>
- Xi J (2016). A glorious new chapter in China-Uzbekistan friendship. Narodnoye Solve p1.
- Xi J (2016b). Opening speech at G20 summit, Hangzhou. Retrieved from <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2016/160903-xi.html>
- Xi J (2017). Report at the 19th national congress of CCP. Retrieved from <http://finance.sina.com.cn/c/%20hina/gncj/2017-10-18/doc-ifymvuyt4098830.shtml>
- Xia F (2013). Mao's writing characteristics. Retrieved December 13, 2019 from <http://www.people.com.cn/>
- Zhang Q (2011). Mao Zedong's writing style. International Political Study. 2011(2).
- Zhou S (2014). Chairman Mao loves poems of the Tang Dynasty. Retrieved from http://www.mzdyjw.com/show_content.php?id=2133