President Xi Jinping's Use of Persuasion Techniques in His BRI Program Speech Text

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ABSTRACT

This study ivestigates the use of persuasive techniques in Chinese President Xi Jinping's speeches delivered to promote the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This study aims to identify the forms of persuasion employed and to understand how Xi Jinping constructs his image and influences his audience to accept the BRI concept consciously and without resistance. The study is based on the view that a speech is a persuasive discourse requiring careful selection of language, techniques, and communication strategies to ensure that the message is received in line with the audience's values and moral beliefs. The analysis of the speech data reveals 119 instances of persuasion, classified into six types of techniques: rationalization, identification, suggestion, conformity, compensation, and projection. Rationalization is used to build logical justification for the BRI concept; identification emphasizes shared viewpoints between the speaker and the audience; suggestion functions to persuade through the emotional use of imperative diction ; conformity creates a sense of equality and togetherness; compensation highlights transformation toward a better condition; while projection is employed to position China as a positive and open actor, subtly shifting negative impressions toward others. The findings indicate that Xi Jinping strategically employs language and persuasive techniques to deliver political and economic messages within a framework of humanistic, harmonious, and low-conflict communication. These techniques strengthen China's image as an inclusive global leader that promotes shared benefits through the BRI program.

Keywords: *speech, persuasive techniques, Xi Jinping, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), political discourse*

ABSTRAK

Studi ini menyelidiki penggunaan teknik persuasif dalam pidato Presiden Tiongkok Xi Jinping yang disampaikan untuk mempromosikan *Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)*. Studi ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi bentuk-bentuk persuasi yang digunakan dan untuk memahami bagaimana Xi Jinping membangun citranya dan memengaruhi audiensnya untuk menerima konsep BRI secara sadar dan tanpa perlawanan. Studi ini didasarkan pada pandangan bahwa pidato adalah wacana persuasif yang membutuhkan pemilihan bahasa, teknik, dan strategi komunikasi yang cermat untuk memastikan bahwa pesan diterima sesuai dengan nilai-nilai dan keyakinan moral audiens. Analisis data pidato mengungkapkan 119 contoh persuasi, yang diklasifikasikan menjadi enam jenis teknik: rasionalisasi, identifikasi, sugesti, konformitas, kompensasi, dan proyeksi. Rasionalisasi digunakan untuk membangun justifikasi logis untuk konsep BRI; identifikasi menekankan sudut pandang bersama antara pembicara dan audiens; sugesti berfungsi untuk membujuk melalui penggunaan emosional diksi imperatif; konformitas menciptakan rasa kesetaraan dan kebersamaan; kompensasi menyoroti transformasi

menuju kondisi yang lebih baik; Sementara proyeksi digunakan untuk memposisikan China sebagai aktor yang positif dan terbuka, secara halus mengalihkan kesan negatif terhadap pihak lain. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Xi Jinping secara strategis menggunakan bahasa dan teknik persuasif untuk menyampaikan pesan politik dan ekonomi dalam kerangka komunikasi yang humanistik, harmonis, dan minim konflik. Teknik-teknik ini memperkuat citra China sebagai pemimpin global inklusif yang mempromosikan manfaat bersama melalui program BRI.

Kata Kunci: pidato, *teknik persuasif, Xi Jinping, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), wacana politik*

INTRODUCTION

A speech text is a form of communication intended to convey the speaker's ideas or thoughts to the audience. In order for this goal to be effectively achieved and for the ideas or thoughts to be consciously accepted without causing resistance or conflict, the speaker must pay attention to language choice and use, as well as to the techniques and strategies of delivery (Caldas-Coulthard, 1988; Cortazzi, 1989; Holtgraves & Lasky, 1999; Ottah, 2020; Shaikh et al., 2020). In many cases, through speech texts, speakers aim not only to express ideas but also to influence even change the audience's mindset and beliefs so that they follow and act in accordance with the speaker's intentions (Knowles & Linn, 2004; Subandi et al., 2022). In such contexts, while delivering these intentions and goals, the speaker must avoid generating conflict and must skillfully craft the language so that the argumentative framework aligns with the audience's personal values and moral beliefs. Thus, when the language used successfully gains sympathy and is able to alter the audience's attitudes and behavior, it functions as an instrument to achieve the speaker's purpose (Blankenship & Craig, 2011; Maureen et al., 2022; Subandi et al., 2024; Subandi & Mustofa, 2019). Speech language is considered effective because, in addition to being delivered directly and supported by the speaker's delivery skills, it is also carefully structured and composed with persuasive elements both in terms of linguistic structure and diction choice to achieve propagandistic effects (Apanovitch et al., 2003; Boeynaems et al., 2021; Rothman et al., 1993).

One example of a speech text that demonstrates persuasive language use is the speech delivered by Chinese President Xi Jinping to regional heads of state to

promote the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Xinhua, 2023). The language chosen and used by Xi Jinping in his speeches appears well-organized and refined, though traces of persuasive intent remain evident (Subandi et al., 2022). In promoting investment, it is necessary to identify communication strategies that enhance effectiveness, as persuasive communication is a primary area of activity and an essential component of the global economy (Cialdini, 2009; Hirsh et al., 2012; Petty, 2018; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). One such strategy, message tailoring, involves adjusting persuasive messages to fit the audience's characteristics. For instance, regulatory fit occurs when a message is framed to match the recipient's motivational orientation. Messages that align with an individual's motivational orientation are processed more smoothly and evaluated more positively than those that do not (Cesario et al., 2004; Clary et al., 1994; Higgins et al., 2003; Hirsh et al., 2012; Lee & Aaker, 2004).

However, to conceal the persuasive intent, Xi Jinping employs various persuasive techniques to mask his motives so that the audience does not explicitly perceive them. His calls to action and influence representing a form of propaganda for the BRI are framed through persuasive techniques that produce language forms that are humanistic and harmonious, thereby minimizing potential resistance and conflict. Through these persuasive techniques, Xi Jinping aims for the persuasive motives behind the BRI program embedded in his speech language to be consciously and fully accepted by the audience. Furthermore, he seeks to transform the audience's attitudes and behaviors toward the BRI in accordance with his intentions. The audience, in turn, changes their thoughts and beliefs about the BRI based on awareness, mutual understanding, and alignment between their personal values and moral convictions and the persuasive argumentative framework presented by Xi Jinping.

Persuasion Techniques

Communication is a form of interaction that serves to convey information, thoughts, and/or feelings from the communicator to the communicant. To achieve the goals of communication, the use of language (including diction and delivery techniques) plays a highly significant role. A communicant cannot rely solely on

linguistic competence (vocabulary mastery and internal grammatical rules); they must also possess the skill to select, shape, and apply language effectively through appropriate delivery techniques (Brent, 2008; Taillard, 2000). A communicator must have the necessary skills and expertise in communication techniques and strategies, as both play crucial roles in ensuring the success of the communication process and the achievement of its objectives (Kaur et al., 2013; Xu & Tan, 2020).

As a means of conveying the speaker's ideas and intentions, a speech is one form of communication. Through carefully arranged and stylistically refined language, an orator seeks to create a positive impression to attract and engage the audience, thereby enabling the speaker to communicate their intended message effectively (Pangbourne et al., 2020; Strader & Katz, 1990). As a form of discourse, a speech aims to influence others, making it inherently persuasive in nature (Yang et al., 2019; Zarouali et al., 2022). This means that persuasive discourse contains embedded persuasion techniques and linguistic strategies, such as language style, variability, intensity, tag words, framing, and rhetorical devices (Braca & Dondio, 2023; Renaldo, 2017). Therefore, a persuasive speech text must avoid conflict, as its purpose is to influence, invite, persuade, and convince the audience that the ideas and opinions being conveyed represent a truth worthy of acceptance. The persuasive framework must thus be carefully constructed to reflect the interests, feelings, and desires of the target audience in order to be more effective, appealing, and capable of influencing the audience's attitudes and behaviors (Braca & Dondio, 2023; Hirsh et al., 2012; Maulana & Gumelar, 2013; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

However, adjusting the argumentative framework of ideas to align with the desires and personal values of the message recipients is also a strategy that cannot be overlooked (Feinberg & Willer, 2019; Hirsh et al., 2012; Shen, 2004; Watt et al., 2008). Without alignment between the persuasive argument framework and the audience's values, the speaker's motives will be difficult to accept, thereby reducing the persuasive effectiveness. It is also important to note that an argumentative framework that appeals to certain individuals or groups may not appeal to others and may even offend them, rendering the persuasion

ineffective (Ditto & Koleva, 2011; Feinberg & Willer, 2019; Koleva et al., 2012). Hence, the effectiveness of a persuasive framework is determined by how closely it aligns with the beliefs and personal values of the audience (Feinberg & Willer, 2013, 2015, 2019). This degree of alignment is crucial because the audience, as the target, must sense harmony between their moral beliefs and personal values and the persuasive framework presented by the speaker. When such alignment exists, the audience perceives that the speaker's persuasion represents their own stance and condition (Carfora et al., 2020; Demir et al., 2021; Rosenfeld & Kraus, 2016).

Moral beliefs and personal values are held firmly, so a persuasive framework built upon arguments that resonate with the audience's convictions becomes difficult to ignore and is particularly effective in supporting the realization of the speaker's motives (Chatterjee, 2009; Feinberg & Willer, 2019; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010). For further discussion on the classification of persuasion techniques, see also (Applbaum & Anatol, 1974; Ilardo, 1981; Keraf, 1985).

DISCUSSION

The analysis found a total of 119 persuasive instances, consisting of six types of persuasive techniques used by President Xi Jinping in his Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) speech texts, as shown in Table 1 below. The following section presents a description of each persuasion technique.

Table 1. Number of Data Based on the Classification of Persuasive Techniques

Type of Persuasive Technique					
Rationalization	Identification	Suggestion	Conformity	Compensation	Projection
22	20	25	17	23	12

Rationalization Technique

The rationalization technique seeks to provide logical justification for an idea in order to gain audience acceptance, even though such justification may not necessarily represent an absolute truth (Keraf, 1985:124). This technique is used as an opening to foster confidence, agreement, and justification from listeners based on seemingly reasonable reasoning. Examples (1) and (2) below illustrate the use of the

rationalization technique in Xi Jinping's speech.

(1) "①一带一路"源于亚洲、依托亚洲、造福亚洲，关注亚洲国家互联互通，努力扩大亚洲国家共利益。"一带一路"是中国和亚洲邻国的共同事业，中国将②周边国家作为外交政策的优先方向，践行亲、诚、惠、容的理念，③愿意通过互联互通为亚洲邻国提供更多公共产品，欢迎大家搭乘中国发展的列车. (①**The Belt and Road Initiative originates from Asia, relies on Asia, and benefits Asia**. It focuses on the connectivity of Asian countries and strives to expand the common interests of Asian countries. The Belt and Road Initiative is a common cause of China and its Asian neighbors. China regards ②**neighboring countries as a priority** in its foreign policy, practicing the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness. China is ③**willing to provide more** public goods to its Asian neighbors through connectivity. We welcome everyone to board the train of China's development.) (Y2014M11D8P2Pr16L1-4)

(2) 前，中方制定的"一带一路"规划基本成形。这包括在同各方充分沟通的基础上正在构建的陆经济合作走廊和海上经济合作走廊。④**这一框架兼顾各国需求，统筹陆海两大方向，涵盖面宽，包容性强，辐射作用大**。At present, "the Belt and Road Initiative" formulated by China has basically taken shape. This includes land-based and maritime economic cooperation corridors being developed through full communication with all parties. ④**This framework takes into account the needs of all countries, coordinates both land and sea directions, covers a wide range, is inclusive, and has a large radiating effect.** (Y2014M11D8P3Pr17L2-3).

The excerpts (1) and (2) belong to the rationalization technique because Xi Jinping attempts to provide logical justification that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has rational foundations and brings benefits to the Asian region. Through these statements, Xi seeks to convince his audience of the speaker's clear commitment and of the BRI's contribution to the economic advancement of participating countries. The use of rationalization is marked by the presence of propositions ①, ②, and ③ in excerpt (1), and proposition ④ in excerpt (2). These represent the speaker's logical reasoning and ideas aimed at convincing other countries that this policy is not a form of Chinese dominance, but rather a cooperative initiative emphasizing mutual existence and shared benefit. The speaker intends to introduce the concept of BRI into the audience's cognitive framework making the BRI appear as a collective regional initiative rather than an instrument of Chinese control. Through these propositions, the speaker provides rational and logical justification (propositions in excerpt (1) present factual logic, while those in excerpt (2) express inclusive reasoning) for the BRI concept he promotes. Although these justifications initially serve as a means to influence and gain the audience's trust, they form the groundwork for subsequent acceptance. The propositions in both excerpts reveal how the speaker constructs logically comprehensible arguments to influence the reasoning and rationality of his audience. Positioning the BRI as a shared initiative among

Asian nations as in data (1) is a rational strategy, as the program originates from Asia, operates within Asia, and prioritizes the prosperity of Asian countries. This can be regarded as a logical reality and a natural necessity.

Excerpt (2) emphasizes balance and mutual benefit to build an impression of objectivity and undeniable factual grounding consistent with Asia's geographical reality as a region comprising both land and sea. Through this reasoning, the speaker seeks to construct rational and logical thinking as a foundation to guide the audience toward agreement with his proposal. The geographical facts of Asia, which necessitate both land and maritime routes, are undeniable realities. Hence, the audience's agreement serving as a form of legitimization of the speaker's proposal reflects a logical and rational thought process grounded in verifiable realities acceptable to both parties.

Therefore, Xi Jinping's strategy in using the rationalization technique is not merely to explain policy but to build China's image as a wise, open, and benevolent leader concerned with Asia's welfare. In this way, listeners can accept and support the BRI concept. By presenting arguments and reasoning that appear logical and highlight mutual benefit, Xi attempts to dispel suspicions about China's strategies in global politics and its geopolitical ambitions.

Identification Technique

The identification technique refers to the speaker's effort to align their message with the audience, particularly in the context of propaganda promoting a certain program or idea, by using a shared common ground (Keraf, 1985:125). The excerpts (3), (4), and (5) below are examples of persuasive texts employing the identification technique.

(3) ……中国同很多国家达成了合作协议，亚洲基础设施投资银行协定已经签署，丝路基金已经着手实施具体项目，一批多边或双边大项目合作正稳步推进。..... **China has reached cooperation agreements with many countries, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank agreement has been signed, the Silk Road Fund has begun implementing specific projects,** and a number of multilateral or bilateral large-scale cooperation projects are steadily progressing. (Y2015M11D07P1Pr1L4)

(4) 这是我们深厚友谊和友好合作关系的生动体现，也是大家对中方主办亚太经合组织第二十二次领导人非正式会议的重要支持……。**This vividly reflects our deep friendship and friendly cooperative relations,** as well as everyone's important support for China as the host of the 22nd APEC Economic Leaders' Informal Meeting. (Y2014M11D09P1Pr1L2)

(5) 我们要...。在思考和规划互联互通项目时，需要坚持以人为本，听取基层民众意见，增加基

层民众收入，着力解决他们用电、饮水、医疗、上学、就业、上网等现实问题。 <u>**We need to**</u>....
When thinking about and planning connectivity projects, *we need to* <u>put people first, listen to the opinions of grassroots communities, increase their income, and focus on solving practical issues such as electricity, drinking water, healthcare, education, employment, and internet access.</u>
(Y2014M11D09P2Pr12L3)

Excerpt (3) represents an indirect identification solution technique, in which the speaker offers a solution to a conflict namely, through the use of funds urgently needed by the audience, but the solution is not directly delivered by the speaker. Instead, it is dominated by an indirect appeal as shown in constituent (3), which must go through established procedures and mechanisms according to the bank agreement. This means the speaker's statement cannot yet be considered a final decision, as the intent of constituent (3) is primarily to convince the audience rather than to provide a definitive solution.

Excerpt (4) emphasizes the act of identifying conditions, particularly the relationship between China and regional countries, which the speaker narrates as positive and friendly. By identifying this favorable relationship, the speaker constructs an argumentative framework that underlies the persuasion, aiming to connect with the audience's personal beliefs and moral values. Therefore, the persuasive framework proposed by the speaker must avoid conflict by highlighting the good relationship between the speaker and the audience a form of communication technique used to strengthen persuasion. The speaker assumes that through constituent (4), the audience will perceive alignment between their moral beliefs and personal values with those expressed by the speaker. Once the audience feels represented psychologically, the persuasive argument built by the speaker effectively influences and persuades them, fostering trust and willingness to cooperate. In other words, the identification technique serves as an instrument for the speaker to embed their argument and ideas regarding the BRI program into the audience's perspective.

Through the identification technique in constituent (5), the speaker adopts a common-ground approach between themselves and the audience. By using the phrase 我们要 (we need to), the speaker places themselves alongside the audience and invites them to share the same argumentative framework as expressed in constituent (5). The use of 我们要 (we need to) marks the speaker's effort to establish a general sense of shared understanding and reasoning when addressing key concepts, issues, and

perspectives related to the realization of the BRI program. At this point, the speaker seeks to portray the fundamental issues mentioned in constituent (5) as universally relevant realities, implying that, naturally, all audience members should also engage in these efforts.

Suggestion Technique

Suggestion is an attempt to persuade or influence the audience to accept a particular viewpoint, belief, or stance without providing logical justification to the audience who is the object of persuasion (Keraf, 1985:126). The excerpts (6) and (7) below are examples of persuasive texts that employ the suggestion technique.

(6) 我们**要**塑造更加开放的现亚洲经济格局。面对世界多极化、经济全球化文化多样化、社会信息花的时代潮流，任何国家都不能关起门来搞建设。封闭没有出路球，路开放才能发展。发亚洲国家**要**坚持开放的区域主义，主不搞封闭星集团... We **must** shape a more open economic landscape in Asia. Facing the global trends of multipolarity, economic globalization, cultural diversity, and information-based societies, no country can shut itself off for development. There is no way forward in isolation; only openness leads to progress. Asian countries **must** adhere to open regionalism and avoid forming closed blocs.... (Y2014M11D09P2Pr1L1-4)

(7) 丝绸之路首先得**要**有路，有路才能人畅其行、物畅其流。The Silk Road **must** first have roads; only with roads can people travel freely and goods flow smoothly. (Y2014M11D8P3Pr18L2)

The suggestion technique emphasizes the speaker's ability to represent power and authority as tools to attract sympathy and convince the audience. The use of the proposition 要 (yào) "must" serves as a marker of this persuasive technique. Excerpts (6) and (7) above exemplify how the speaker employs suggestion to convey ideas and perspectives. As the originator of these ideas, the speaker attempts to influence and convince the audience by positioning their ideas as inherently valid and credible. To reinforce this perceived truth, the speaker uses the proposition 要 "must", which implies a strong sense of obligation — something that must be done and cannot be ignored. Through this wording, the speaker indirectly frames the persuasion as a concept possessing absolute truth and necessity. By using 要 "must", the speaker's tone shifts from invitation to instruction, which simultaneously positions the speaker as an authority over the argumentative framework being advanced. Thus, through the suggestion technique represented by arguments perceived as highly accurate and authoritative, the speaker persuades the audience to change their mindset and beliefs, leading them to accept and act upon the BRI ideas in accordance with the speaker's intentions.

Conformity Technique

The conformity technique emphasizes the speaker's effort to adjust, align, or identify themselves with the audience, and to demonstrate the ability to act according to the audience's desires (Keraf, 1985:128). The excerpts (8), (9), and (10) below are examples of persuasive texts that employ the conformity technique in Xi Jinping's speeches.

(8) 这是**我们**深厚友谊和友好合作关系的生动体现，也是大家**对中方**主办亚太经合组织第二十二次领导人非正式会议的重要**支持**……。This vividly reflects **our** deep friendship and friendly cooperative relationship, and also represents *our important support for China as the host* **of the 22nd APEC Economic Leaders' Informal Meeting.** (Y2014M11D09P1Pr1L2)

(9) **一带一路源于亚洲、依托亚洲、造福亚洲**，关注亚洲国家互联互通，努力扩大亚洲国家共同利益。①**The Belt and Road originates from Asia, relies on Asia, and benefits Asia**, It focuses on enhancing interconnectivity among Asian countries and ②**strives to expand their shared interests**. (Y2014M11D09P3Pr4L2)

(10) 未来5年，中国将为周边国家提供2万个互联互通领域的培训名额，帮助周边国家培养自己的专家队伍。中国也愿派出更多留学生、专家学者到周边国家学习交流。In the next five years, **China will provide** 20,000 training opportunities in the field of connectivity **for neighboring countries** to help them cultivate their own teams of experts. **China is also willing to** send more students, experts, and scholars **to neighboring countries** for study and exchange. (Y2014M11D09P3Pr6L4-5)

Constituent (8) represents Excerpt illustrate the speaker's attempt to identify with audience, as indicated by the proposition "我们...对中方...支持" ("our support for China"). The use of the subject 我们 (we) shows the speaker's effort to include himself despite being China's head of state within the same sphere as the audience, positioning himself as a representative and equal participant. By entering the audience's sphere, the speaker attempts to create the impression that he shares the same line of reasoning, thinking framework, and aspirations as his audience. Through this strategy, the speaker hopes to build and strengthen the audience's trust and confidence in the argument being presented.

The speaker further embeds his argument within the audience's sphere, transforming it into a shared ownership framework, as represented in constituent (9). The arguments expressed through BRI programs, though originally conceived entirely by the speaker, are presented as if they also belong to the audience. This rhetorical strategy serves to transfer ownership of the idea to the audience. By doing so, the speaker psychologically conditions the audience's moral responsibility toward the initiative. This conditioning simultaneously functions as a recognition of the audience's

existence and role, while also binding them psychologically and morally to the success of the BRI programs. Once the audience develops a sense of ownership, they are more likely to acknowledge, approve, and commit to implementing the speaker's proposed framework. In this sense, the conformity technique becomes a subtle means of legitimization the audience, often unconsciously, has granted approval and acceptance to the speaker's arguments.

Conformity is also indicated by the speaker's expression of willingness or ability to act according to the audience's needs. In constituent (10), the speaker presents arguments that demonstrate readiness to take concrete actions that align with what the audience desires or requires. These arguments include components identified as relevant to the audience's needs, such as the development of training centers, the dispatch of experts and scholars, and the exchange of students all of which are essential for many Asian countries. By identifying and addressing these needs, the speaker strengthens the audience's trust and confidence in his sincerity and commitment. Thus, the argument framework offered by the speaker fulfills the audience's expectations and needs, ultimately convincing them to endorse and legitimize the proposed ideas.

Compensation Technique

The compensation technique refers to an act or message that emphasizes improvement or movement toward a better outcome than before. It involves expressions of change, improvement, or progress and typically uses propositions such as "better," "more," "prioritize," and similar forms as primary indicators (Keraf, 1985:129). This technique aims to persuade or influence the audience to believe that the current situation or the changes carried out by the speaker will bring better and more beneficial results. The use of the compensation technique in President Xi Jinping's speech can be seen in excerpts (11), (12), and (13) below.

(11) ①伊朗位于亚洲东西交通要冲，区位优势明显。中方愿同伊方在公路、铁路、海路、网路领域深化合作，推进亚洲东西通道建设，并以此带动沿线国家贸易和投资便利化，②**降低人员、商品、资金跨境流动成本**，巩固扩大能源资源和产业合作。①**China is willing to deepen cooperation with Iran in the fields of highways, railways, maritime, and digital connectivity, and to promote the construction of the East-West corridor in Asia,** thereby facilitating trade and investment among countries along the route, ②**reducing cross-border costs for people, goods, and capital, and consolidating and expanding cooperation in energy and industry.**(Y2016M01D22P1Pr1L5)

(12) ①**丝绸之路首先得要有路**，②**有路**才能人畅其行、物畅其流。①**The Silk Road must first have a road;** ②**with a road, the movement of people and goods can become *freer and smoother*.** (Y2014M11D8P3Pr18L3)

(13) "一带一路"是中国和亚洲邻国的共同事业，中国将周边国家作为外交政策的①**优先方向**，践行亲、诚、惠、容的理念，愿意通过互联互通为亚洲邻国②**提供更多**公共产品，欢迎大家搭乘中国发展的列车。The "Belt and Road" is a shared project between China and its neighboring Asian countries. China ①**prioritizes** neighboring countries in its foreign policy, practicing the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness, and is willing to ②**provide** *more* public goods to its Asian neighbors through connectivity, welcoming all to board the train of China's development. (Y2014M11D8P2Pr16L4)

In excerpt (11), proposition ① serves as a cause or condition, while proposition ② serves as an effect or compensation, representing a new experience or capability the interlocutor would gain by following the actions stated in ①. This causal relationship is used by the speaker to construct the listener's logical reasoning, helping them understand the cause-and-effect framework of the proposed program. The phrases "降低人员**...**" (reduce costs...) and "扩大合作**...**" (expand cooperation...) indicate a shift toward better conditions more affordable, efficient, and inclusive.

Similarly, in excerpt (12), proposition ① functions as a prerequisite or cause for the realization of proposition ②. The cause-and-effect relationship emphasizes progress or improvement *from no road → having a road → smoother economic activities → better economic growth*. This represents the core of the compensation technique, where the act of construction (building a road) is presented as the solution that improves prior conditions. Xi uses the logic "with roads→conditions improve" to persuade his audience to support infrastructure development the core agenda of the BRI.

In excerpt (13), proposition ① "优先方向" (prioritize) and proposition ② "提供更多" (provide more) mark the use of the compensation technique. These propositions convey the idea of "change for the better." Before connectivity, cooperation was limited, but through connectivity, China offers broader cooperation and greater mutual benefits signifying improvement in both relationship quality and shared prosperity. Through these propositions, the speaker constructs a positive perception toward the audience, implying that they are being prioritized and valued. In other words, through excerpt (13), China is portrayed as an active contributor to regional welfare improvement through economic connectivity and joint development. This strategy not only reinforces China's role as a regional growth driver but also builds a moral image that participation in the Belt and Road Initiative is a collective solution that brings mutual progress and prosperity.

Based on these three excerpts, it can be concluded that Xi Jinping consistently employs the compensation technique as a persuasive tool to build China's image as a positive agent of change in the Asian region. Through this technique, Xi constructs a narrative to gain legitimacy for his ideas and proposals so that the audience perceives the BRI as a concept that brings greater and more positive transformation to global and regional conditions compared to before representing the essence of the compensation technique.

Projection Technique

The projection technique is a persuasive method in which something that originally functions as a subject is transformed into an object. According to Keraf (1985:131), it involves shifting the subject into the object, where the speaker positions themselves as good and attributes negative qualities to others. In other words, a person's characteristics or actions are projected onto others. Examples of the projection technique can be seen in excerpts (14), (15), and (16) below.

(14) 我们要塑造更加开放的亚洲经济格局。面对世界多极化、经济全球化文化多样化、社会信息花的时代潮流，①<u>任何国家都不能关起门来搞建设。</u>②<u>封闭没有出路球，路开放才能发展。</u>③<u>发亚洲国家要坚持开放的区域主义，主不搞封闭星集团</u>…We must shape a more open Asian economic landscape. Facing the global trends of multipolarization, economic globalization, cultural diversity, and social informatization, ①**no country can build in isolation.** ②**Closed doors lead nowhere—only openness brings development.** ③**Asian countries must adhere to open regionalism and avoid forming closed groups**…. .(Y2014M11D09P2Pr1L1-4)

(15) 比如，我们在上海、广东、天津、福建设立4个自由贸易试验区，采取准入前国民待遇加负面清单的管理模式；在北京市开展金融、旅游、医疗等6个服务业领域对外资开放试点，等等。"④<u>一带一路"欢迎包括美国在内的世界各国积极参与</u>。这些措施将为中美地方合作创造机遇。For example, we have established four pilot free trade zones in Shanghai, Guangdong, Tianjin, and Fujian, adopting a management model combining pre-establishment national treatment with a negative list. In Beijing, we have opened six service industries finance, tourism, healthcare, and others to foreign investment on a pilot basis. ④***The Belt and Road Initiative welcomes the active participation of all countries in the world, including the United States.*** These measures will create opportunities for China‑US subnational cooperation. (Y2022M09D22P1Pr1L3-5)

(16) 实现互联互通，要以亚洲国家为重点方向，以交通基础设施为突破口。⑤<u>中方在铁路、电力、通信、工程机械、冶金、建材等领域优势明显、竞争力强</u>，并于2014年出资400亿美元成立丝路基金，以支持"一带一路"沿线国家有关合作项目。⑤**China has significant advantages and strong competitiveness in railways, electricity, communications, construction machinery, metallurgy, and building materials.** In 2014, China invested 40 billion USD to establish the Silk Road Fund to support cooperation projects in countries along the Belt and Road. (Y2016M01D22P1Pr1L3-4)

According to Keraf (1985:131), the projection technique is a form of persuasion in which the speaker transfers attributes, attitudes, or actions that should apply to themselves or their group onto others. The speaker positions themselves (or their group)

as good, correct, and positive, while shifting negative, incorrect, or undesirable traits to others. Thus, there is a subject–object role reversal: the speaker appears "objective," while actually projecting their own perspective. The speaker positions themselves or their group as positive, while others are depicted as inappropriate, closed-minded, misguided, or incapable. The goal is to convince the audience that the speaker's position is correct and worth following.

In excerpt (14), Xi Jinping employs the projection technique through phrases ① and ②. Although he appears to speak generally about "any country," he implicitly alludes to specific nations (particularly Western countries) that resist *openness* toward China. Phrase ③ projects positive values onto himself (China) as a promoter of openness and cooperation, while negative traits (*being closed, forming exclusive groups*) are subtly projected onto others without direct mention. Through this, Xi positions China as "open and inclusive," while others are portrayed as less advanced or inconsistent with modern trends. Thus, phrases ① and ② represent the projection technique, as Xi places other countries (closed ones) as negative objects (*closed, stagnant*) while positioning China as a positive subject (*open, progressive, solution-oriented*).

In excerpt (15), Xi highlights China's positive initiatives (*the Belt and Road*) while projecting openness and goodwill toward the world even toward countries that often compete with China (such as the U.S.). The phrase ④ exemplifies projection, (15) as Xi positions China as open and inclusive while implicitly suggesting that other nations (especially the U.S. and the West) tend to reject global cooperation. Thus, the sentence "一带一路'欢迎包括美国在内的世界各国积极参与。" (*The Belt and Road Initiative welcomes the active participation of all countries in the world, including the United States*) projects the image that China is the open, cooperative actor, while subtly implying that others are less willing to cooperate. Through this projection, Xi shifts negative attributes (closed, exclusive) to others while constructing China's image as an open and inclusive global leader.

In excerpt (16), Xi highlights China's strengths and capabilities through the phrase "优势明显、竞争力强" ("clear advantages and strong competitiveness") ⑤ in statement (16). Additionally, he emphasizes China's positive role in supporting other

countries via funding and infrastructure. Implicitly, he projects China as the "supporter and leader of development," while positioning other Belt and Road countries as "recipients of aid and support." Hence, the statement "China has significant advantages and strong competitiveness in various sectors" represents the projection technique, as Xi projects positive traits (strong, capable, superior) onto China while indirectly projecting weakness or dependency onto others receiving its support.

All three excerpts (14), (15), and (16) thus contain statements categorized as the projection technique according to Keraf's framework. Xi Jinping highlights positive attributes of himself/China (open, strong, superior, inclusive) while subtly transferring negative attributes to others (closed, exclusive, weak, underdeveloped). The rhetorical goal is to construct China's image as a moral and economic leader of the world worthy of respect and emulation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the six persuasive techniques found in Xi Jinping's speeches on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), it is concluded that the rhetorical strategies employed serve not merely as tools of political communication but also as instruments for shaping China's image and legitimacy on the global stage." Xi combines rational, emotional, and moral elements to present the BRI as a cooperative project that is rational, inclusive, and beneficial for the Asian region. Next, the identification technique is used to build emotional closeness and a sense of commonality with BRI participants. The use of expressions such as "我们要" (we need to) and references to "deep friendship" reflects Xi's effort to position himself on equal footing with the audience, emphasizing empathetic and participatory communication. This strategy presents the BRI as a collective endeavor that fosters a sense of shared ownership and responsibility, while subtly facilitating China's efforts to secure international support.

Through the suggestion, conformity, and compensation techniques, Xi extends persuasion into emotional and moral dimensions. Participation in the BRI is presented as a moral duty for collective progress." The conformity technique demonstrates China's readiness to provide training and technical assistance, reinforcing its image as a caring and equal partner. Meanwhile, the compensation

technique constructs a cause–effect logic suggesting that participation in the BRI will lead to economic efficiency, connectivity, and regional prosperity creating an optimistic narrative particularly appealing to developing nations.

The projection technique, on the other hand, strengthens China's image as an open and inclusive global power. Statements such as "no country can develop behind closed doors" portray China as a model of openness and a moral leader in the emerging global economic order.

Overall, these six techniques form a comprehensive rhetorical strategy. Xi's speeches are not merely informative but function as instruments of diplomatic hegemony building international legitimacy for the BRI and reinforcing China's position within the global economic architecture through a blend of logic, empathy, and moral values.

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