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The Construction of National Identity through Reform Discourse in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*

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Abstract

In globalization, national identity discourses shape national image. This study examines the reform discourse in the English edition of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, drawing on pragmatic identity theory and corpus linguistics. It asks what national identities are constructed and what pragmatic motivations underlie them. The analysis identifies four identities: a practitioner and leader of reform and opening-up; a summarizer of experience and explorer; a representative and defender of people's interests; and a guardian of social stability and development. The corresponding motivations are responding to international expectations, securing discourse authority, consolidating domestic consensus, and addressing global uncertainties. The study contributes empirical evidence to pragmatic identity theory and corpus linguistics while offering practical insights for research on Chinese political discourse and national image.

Keywords*: *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, Reform discourse, National identity construction

I. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary globalized world, the strategic management of a nation's image has emerged as a pivotal element in the competitive dynamics among major powers. The manner in which China articulates its reform and development logic to the global community, as embedded in its discourse, is inextricably linked to the national identity it seeks to cultivate. In recent years, the study of national image from a pragmatic perspective has emerged as a prominent research focus in the field (Gong, 2022; Li, 2020; Liang et al., 2024). This perspective regards identity as a dynamic and strategic performative resource rather than a static label (Chen, 2013). From this perspective, the construction of national identity is considered a communicative practice with specific pragmatic motives. Nevertheless, extant research continues to exhibit a paucity of systematic exploration of the type system of identities constructed by Chinese political discourse and the specific motives behind them.

In consideration of this phenomenon, the present study does not merely explore the national image, but rather focuses on the process of discourse construction of national identity itself. The present study focuses on the "reform discourse" in the English version of the work from the perspective of pragmatic identity, exploring how China constructs its national identity. This particular empirical case study is intended to facilitate a more profound comprehension of China's political discourse strategies. Additionally, it is expected to offer significant reference value for research endeavors concerning national image and corpus pragmatics.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section should provide enough detail to enable other researchers to reproduce and extend the study. Authors must ensure that all materials, datasets, software, and experimental procedures are made accessible to readers. Any limitations or restrictions on material or data availability should be

clearly stated at the time of submission. Newly developed methods should be explained comprehensively, while standard techniques can be briefly described and appropriately cited.

2.1 Identity construction

As a foundational concept for understanding the relationship between the individual and society, as well as between the nation and international relations, identity has long been a focal point for interdisciplinary research. Due to differences in theoretical perspectives and research focuses, scholars' definitions and understandings of identity have evolved along a spectrum from "static roles" to "dynamic construction."

In the early stages of research in this field, the prevailing perspective was that identity could be considered a relatively stable and a priori social category. In the field of sociology, Stryker (1987) advanced Identity Theory, proposing that individuals possess multiple identities due to their integration within diverse social networks. These identities are organized into a salience hierarchy, where higher-ranking identities exert greater predictive power over individual behavior. From this perspective, identity is defined by the roles individuals assume within the context of social structures. An individual's social behavior is predominantly shaped not by personal volition, but profoundly influenced by their position within the social structure and the roles they assume. However, this theory exhibits a tendency to underestimate individual agency and lacks a comprehensive explanation of how individuals actively challenge or reshape the identities conferred by social roles during micro-interactions.

In response to these limitations, the research focus underwent a gradual shift toward exploring the interactive and constructive nature of identity. In the domain of communication studies, Hecht (1993) advanced the Communication Theory of Identity, proposing that identity is a dynamic communicative process. He underscored the notion that identity takes shape through the dynamic interplay and collaborative construction between communicators in the context of information exchange. In her seminal work, Tracy (2002) advanced the conceptual frameworks of interactional identity and relational identity from the vantage point of communication studies. It is important to note that both concepts differ from the characteristics or attributes an individual possesses prior to entering a communication interaction. Instead, they refer to the dynamic and variable identities manifested through the negotiation process between communicators within specific communicative contexts. The concept of identity, therefore, cannot be viewed as a static, predetermined attribute of the individual; rather, it is a dynamic and contextual reflection that evolves in response to shifting circumstances. The two concepts under discussion refer to the dynamic identity manifested through negotiation between communicators in a specific interaction context, distinct from the individual's prior characteristics. This shift signifies a fundamental transition in the field of identity research, moving from a focus on "who you are" to a consideration of "how you are becoming through interaction."

Language, as the primary medium for identity construction, furnishes sociolinguists with a pivotal analytical instrument. Zimmerman (1998) adopts a linguistic perspective, conceptualizing identity as a contextual element within human discourse and delineating it into three levels: Discourse Identity, Situational Identity, and Transportable Identity. Gee (2001) offers a similar definition, conceptualizing identity as the manner in which an individual is perceived as belonging to a particular category within a specific social context. In this sense, individuals possess multiple identities that are not inherent to their "inner state" but rather are shaped by their performance within society. Bucholtz & Hall (2005) further systematized this, proposing from a relational perspective that identity is "the social positioning of the self and others." It is a relational, socioculturally charged phenomenon generated within linguistic interactions, emerging and circulating within the partial discursive contexts of interaction rather than existing primarily as a stable structure within the communicator's mind. Consequently, identity studies within the discourse paradigm shift the concept of identity from the private domain of individual cognition and experience to the public sphere of discourse and other symbolic systems employed to convey meaning (Benwell & Stokoe 2006; Wetherell 2007). The collective findings of these researchers establish a core perspective: identity is dynamically constructed in communication and flows with changing contexts, rather than being fixed.

The dynamic construction perspective of identity studies has had a profound influence on political science and international relations. In the political domain, Alexander Wendt (1999) posits that the interests of state actors are not inherent but are defined by the identities they embody. Building upon this foundation, Buzan (2004) underscores the notion that the other functions as a reference point, offering both similarities and differences that contribute to the formation of self-identity. Consequently, an individual's self-identity must be established within the context of interpersonal relationships. Vroblevska (2018) further proposes that identity reflects the collective cognitive framework of "who we are," existing within discourse and undergoing constant change and development. These studies elevate micro-level interpersonal identity-construction mechanisms to the macro-level of international politics, revealing that national identities are likewise socially constructed through discourse and practice within international interactions.

In summary, the academic understanding of identity has undergone a profound paradigm shift: from viewing it as a static role predetermined by social structures to recognizing it as a dynamic, ongoing process of negotiation through communication and interaction. This shift has furnished a plethora of theoretical instruments for the analysis of identity construction within discourse. However, extant research has focused predominantly on either macro-level theoretical frameworks or micro-level interactional analyses, lacking a meso-level, operationalizable analytical framework to systematically examine the specific discursive strategies employed in constructing identity within particular text types, such as political discourse. In light of these considerations, the present study aspires to delve into the subject by means of a linguistic examination of the English edition of Xi Jinping: The governance of China, understood as the body of laws and regulations that governs the nation, is examined through the lens of discursive strategies employed within the context of reform discourse. This analysis delves into the construction of Chinese national identity, exploring how it is shaped through these specific discursive practices. This offers an empirical case study for theories of dynamic identity construction.

2.2 Pragmatic identity theory

Conventional identity studies have predominantly focused on its static dimensions. Conversely, identity research from a pragmatics perspective treats it as an active choice—a discursive practice characterized by varying degrees of consciousness—emphasizing its dynamism and mutability (Chen, 2020). Given the overlapping definitions and controversies surrounding the concepts of "image" and "identity," this study does not treat image as a dimension of identity. Instead, it employs an operational approach, conceptualizing identity as an integral component and a fundamental means of constructing national image. The types of discourse practices related to national identity construction are extensive, including but not limited to lexical choices, discourse content, discourse modes, speech acts, and personal pronouns.

Chen Xinren (2018) systematically proposed five pathways for studying pragmatic identity. These pathways treat identity as interpretive resources, performative resources, interpersonal resources, explanatory resources, and evaluative resources. The present study focuses specifically on the path of identity as a performative resource. This approach posits that communicators do not merely passively display their inherent identities, but rather actively and strategically select, construct, or even manipulate specific identities to achieve their communicative goals.

In this paper, the concept of pragmatic identity is explored as a performative resource, with a focus on the English edition of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China employs a series of specific discursive strategies to actively construct national identity, thereby purposefully shaping a positive image of China.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research questions

The present study specifically addresses two research questions:

1) What identity types are constructed in the reform discourse in *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*?

2) What are the pragmatic motivations for constructing these identities through reform discourse?

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3.2 Research corpus

The present study retrieved relevant corpora through the multilingual database platform for *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, developed by Professor Hu Kaibao's team at the Institute of Corpus and Applications of Shanghai International Studies University. This platform integrates corpus retrieval, computational analysis, and visualization, providing authoritative and efficient digital support for in-depth academic research based on this text. This study utilizes Volumes I and II of the English edition of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* as its primary corpus. A total of 26 chapters were selected for inclusion in the study, based on a combination of criteria. Specifically, chapters containing tags labeled "reform" and overlapping results from related keyword searches were selected. A highly focused thematic subcorpus was constructed from these selected chapters. This subcorpus contains 32,494 tokens and 4,018 categories. This scale effectively represents the reform discourse in the original text while ensuring the validity of subsequent statistical analysis. This study will fully leverage the platform's built-in analytical tools to conduct in-depth mining and interpretation of this sub-corpus.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Word frequency

The following statistics represent the frequency of occurrence of words in a given text.

In order to gain a macro-level understanding of the core concepts and thematic focus within the discourse on reform, this study first utilized the platform's built-in tools to generate a full corpus lexicon. Filtering functions were employed to remove grammatical function words (including prepositions, conjunctions, interjections, and other function words), leaving only semantically meaningful content words (including nouns, proper nouns, verbs, adjectives, numerals, pronouns, and adverbs). The statistical analysis yielded a word cloud (see Figure 1) and a high-frequency lexical frequency table (see Figure 2). The charts reveal that terms such as "development" (reform), "people," "China," "system," "Party," "economy," "society," and "security" are all high-frequency vocabulary.



Fig.1. Word cloud of reform discourse

单词	频次	占比	词性占比
reform	366	1.01%	
we	285	0.78%	
our	242	0.67%	
We	226	0.62%	
development	222	0.61%	
people	180	0.50%	
China	172	0.47%	
system	171	0.47%	
Party	135	0.37%	
economic	118	0.32%	
social	109	0.30%	
security	101	0.28%	
market	100	0.28%	
national	100	0.28%	

Fig.2. Word frequency table of reform discourse

4.2 Collocations

To analyze the strategies employed in reform discourse, this study will employ collocation analysis and lexical cluster analysis on high-frequency keywords within reform discourse (e.g., reform, development, people, etc.).

To illustrate this methodology, the node word "reform" will be analyzed. Within the platform, a span of L5-R5 will be set, and mutual information (MI) will be utilized to extract its list of significant collocations (see Figure 3). Subsequently, grammatical function words will be manually filtered out to focus on semantically meaningful collocations. Following the acquisition of the collocations, they will undergo categorization and qualitative interpretation. Verb collocations (e.g., helps, prioritize, improve, striving) reveal action patterns and the will to drive reform. Adjective collocations (e.g., arduous, comprehensive, political, structural) present the nature and characteristics of reform. Noun collocations (e.g., opening-up, people, socialist, market, economy, system) delineate the scope and targets of reform. This study will elucidate how these collocations collaborate to endow the core concept of "reform" with specific connotations, thereby constructing concrete dimensions of national identity.

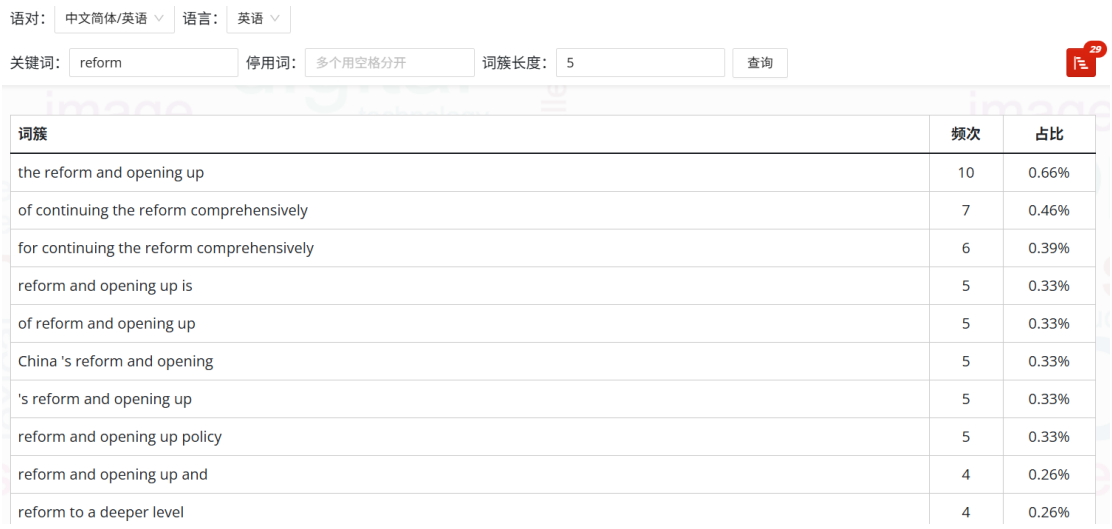


搭配词	MI	总计	左侧	右侧	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	中间	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
Reform	2.55	2	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
and	3.42	227	76	151	24	15	13	20	4	-	78	16	20	19	18
opening	6.21	59	1	58	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	56	-	1	1
up	5.63	59	3	56	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	42	13	1
is	3.45	33	9	24	3	2	3	1	-	-	11	2	2	6	3
a	3.32	51	19	32	4	7	2	2	4	-	2	11	4	5	10
long	2.28	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
-	3.94	45	27	18	-	2	10	15	-	-	1	-	13	3	1
arduous	4.63	1	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Fig.3. Significant collocates with "reform" as the node

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The present study employs a corpus analysis of high-frequency nodal words (e.g., reform, development, Chinese dream) to reveal the recurrent and formulaic expression patterns within reform discourse. The platform's N-gram functionality is employed to identify recurrent clusters consisting of 3 to 6 words (3~6-grams). These clusters are then filtered based on their frequency and significance. The objective of this study is to identify the core "discourse modules" that construct identity by analyzing these clusters. Analysis of the "reform" cluster yielded expressions such as: reform and opening up; continuing the reform comprehensively; reform to a deeper level.



词簇	频次	占比
the reform and opening up	10	0.66%
of continuing the reform comprehensively	7	0.46%
for continuing the reform comprehensively	6	0.39%
reform and opening up is	5	0.33%
of reform and opening up	5	0.33%
China 's reform and opening	5	0.33%
's reform and opening up	5	0.33%
reform and opening up policy	5	0.33%
reform and opening up and	4	0.26%
reform to a deeper level	4	0.26%

Fig.4. Word clusters with "reform" as the keyword

The findings from collocation analysis and lexical cluster analysis will corroborate and complement each other. Collocation terms reveal the semantic characteristics of core concepts, while lexical clusters demonstrate how these characteristics are organized into stable, transmissible slogan-like discourse. These formulaic units are repeatedly employed in discourse, efficiently and consistently conveying and reinforcing specific identity claims.

The study utilizes word clusters generated by high-frequency terms and associated trending topics to identify four primary pragmatic identities constructed within the discourse of reform. These identities are as follows: practitioners and pioneers of reform and opening-up; summarizers of experience and explorers; representatives and defenders of people's interests; and guardians of social stability and development.

4.3 Pragmatic identity types

4.3.1 Practitioner and Leader of Reform and Opening-up

This role simultaneously fulfills two functions: "hands-on advancement (practitioner)" and "direction design (leader)." On one hand, it drives reform and opening-up through continuous, intergenerational policy actions; on the other, it sets the path and pace through top-level design, coordinated planning, and pilot breakthroughs.

(1) Reform and opening up is a long-term and arduous cause, and people **need** to work on it generation after generation. **We should** carry out reform to improve the socialist market economy of China, and adhere to the basic state policy of opening up to the outside world. **We must** further reform in key sectors with greater political courage and vision, and forge ahead steadily in the direction determined by the Party's 18th National Congress.

(2) To live up to the new expectations of our people, **we must**, with firm confidence in reform and opening up, greater political courage and wisdom, and stronger measures to advance reform and opening up, free our minds, unleash and develop social productivity, and unlock and enhance the creative forces of society .

(3) If China is to make progress , **it must** drive all-round reform and opening up to a deeper level.

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(4) Therefore, **we must** have the courage and breadth of vision to seek self-improvement.

(5) Third, reform and opening up is a systematic project, which **should be** pushed forward in an all-round way with all kinds of reforms well coordinated .

(6) Wading across the river by feeling for the stones and top-level design are two component factors for our reform effort. Reform and opening up in a region at a certain stage **should be** subject to top-level design; top-level design **should be** strengthened on the basis of progressive reform and opening up in the region at a certain stage.

(7) To continue the reform comprehensively, we **should** strengthen planning at the top level and adopt a holistic approach.

A close examination of the linguistic features of this corpus reveals a repeated use of modal verbs such as "must," "should," and "need to." These verbs are employed to underscore phrases such as "we must" and "we should," thereby emphasizing the inevitability and sense of responsibility associated with reform. This emphasis serves to highlight the historic mission that is being undertaken. Concurrently, the corpus frequently utilizes material process verbs, such as "carry out," "forge ahead," "unleash," "unlock," and "drive." These verbs underscore action and practice, highlighting reform and opening-up as an ongoing dynamic endeavor. Furthermore, the discourse incorporates numerous abstract nouns such as "political courage," "vision," "expectations," "productivity," and "creative forces." These terms point to strategic heights at the political level and value-oriented goals at the societal level, thereby tightly linking reform practices with the nation's long-term development. The corpus also exhibits expressions of duality and balance, such as the following: "wading across the river by feeling for the stones and top-level design." This contrasting phrasing demonstrates both pragmatic exploration in reform and the strategic coordination of top-level guidance, further reinforcing the dual identity of "practitioners and leaders."

In this corpus, the discourse subject positions itself as both "practitioner and leader of reform and opening-up." On the one hand, the discourse defines reform and opening-up as a long-term endeavor requiring intergenerational continuity. It emphasizes the need to advance implementation in key areas "with greater political courage and wisdom." On the other hand, as leaders, the discourse explicitly follows the strategic direction established at the 18th CPC National Congress. It coordinates the overall situation through top-level design and systemic integration. Concurrently, they promote the initiation of pilot programs and the attainment of breakthroughs, thereby establishing a closed-loop between institutional design and policy implementation. This approach is intended to propel reforms in a more profound and extensive manner.

4.3.2 Summarizer of Experience and Explorer

This identity embodies a dual mission: to preserve historical experience and to chart future paths. On the one hand, it systematically synthesizes the historical patterns and practical insights of reform and opening-up, forming a methodology system that can serve as a reference. Conversely, through theoretical innovation, practical exploration, and institutional breakthroughs, it paves new avenues for the continuous deepening of reform.

(1) We must review and apply the useful experience we have gained in reform and opening up.

(2) we need to review reform and opening up, better understand its historical necessity, conscientiously master its laws, and firmly assume the responsibility of extending it.

(3) Second, reform and opening up is a cause that has never before been pursued. We must adopt the right methods and advance this cause through continuous exploration and practice.

(4) To continue reform and opening up, we need to strengthen our macroscopic thinking and top-level design, and make sure that reform is systematic, integrated and coordinated. At the same time, we must still encourage bold experiments and breakthroughs.

(5) We should review and sum up our experience in housing reform and development, learn from other countries in solving their housing problems, study the rules of housing supply, emphasize top-level design, and speed up the establishment of a uniform, standardized, mature and stable housing supply system.

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(6) Looking to the future, there is no alternative to continuing reform and opening up if we are to solve all sorts of difficult problems hindering our development, defuse risks and meet challenges in all aspects, give better play to the advantages of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and promote the steady and healthy development of the economy and society.

With respect to linguistic characteristics, this corpus manifests distinguishing features in terms of summarization and methodology. Initially, a close examination of the text reveals the presence of a recurring pattern in which verbs denoting review and synthesis, such as "review," "sum up," "learn," and "master," are utilized with high frequency. This linguistic phenomenon can be interpreted as a reflection of the discourse subjects' tendency to draw upon and contemplate their prior experiences. Secondly, the corpus utilizes adjectives such as "systematic," "integrated," "coordinated," "standardized," "mature," and "stable" to underscore the holistic and institutionalized orientation of reform, thereby unveiling the presence of robust rational thinking and macro-level design characteristics. Furthermore, expressions such as continuous exploration, bold experiments, and breakthroughs are present in the corpus, reflecting the exploratory and innovative nature of the reform process. These expressions form a logical chain of "experience summarization—method exploration—institutional design." Concurrently, declarations emphasizing uniqueness—for example, "there is no alternative to continuing reform and opening up"—attain a pragmatic effect by negating other possibilities. Consequently, these declarations reinforce the historical inevitability and future orientation of reform.

Within this corpus, the discourse subject positions itself as both the "summarizer of reform and opening-up experiences" and the "explorer of these experiences." This identity is constructed through frequent reflection and summarization, establishing the subject as both inheritor of experience and discoverer of patterns. Concurrently, emphasis is placed on "exploration," "top-level design," and "systematicity" to demonstrate its role as a methodological pioneer and institutional coordinator. This identity type ultimately portrays reform and opening-up as a process requiring both historical experience and continuous exploration and institutional innovation. In this way, the discourse subject's role is highlighted as one that bridges historical continuity and future advancement.

4.3.3 Representative and Defender of People's Interests

This identity is characterized by a dual role, serving as both the "representative of the people's will" and the "defender of the people's interests." On the one hand, it positions the people as the primary driving force of reform and opening-up, emphasizing respect for their pioneering spirit and responsiveness to their developmental needs. On the other hand, it ensures that the fruits of reform and development benefit all people more extensively and equitably through institutional safeguards and policy guidance, thereby manifesting the essential requirements of socialist fairness and justice.

(7) The fundamental reason why our reform and opening up has won the people 's wholehearted support and vigorous participation all along lies in the fact that from the very beginning we let the cause strike deep roots among the people .

(8) Fifth, reform and opening up is a cause of the Chinese people. We must respect the people 's pioneering spirit and advance this cause under the leadership of the Party.

(9) We should be adept in formulating and implementing sound guidelines and policies and use them to direct the people forward , and be good at improving our policies through the work and experience of the people and their demands for development .

(10) We must ensure that more fruits of reform and development are shared by the people in a fairer way , and secure solid popular support for continuing reform and opening up .

(11) Accelerating housing supply is important for meeting the people 's basic need for housing and ensuring that all of them have access to housing . It is a requirement for social fairness and justice as well as an important measure for the people to share the fruits of reform and development.

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(12) We must respect the people's pioneering spirit and advance thiscause under the leadership of the Party.

(13) It is the essential requirement of socialism to eradicate poverty, improve the people 's livelihood and achieve common prosperity.

With respect to linguistic characteristics, this corpus manifests a marked tendency toward a "people-centered" orientation. First, the discourse frequently employs the term "the people" and related expressions (e.g., wholehearted support, vigorous participation, pioneering spirit, livelihood, common prosperity), repeatedly emphasizing the central role of the people in reform and opening-up. Secondly, the discourse subjects employ a series of positive terms—fairer, sound, stable, justice—to construct a positive vision in which the achievements of reform and opening-up benefit the people and advance social fairness and justice. Furthermore, the corpus frequently utilizes logically rigorous phrasing (e.g., "the fundamental reason," "the essential requirement," "a requirement for social fairness") to underscore the foundational and inevitable nature of this people-centered approach, thereby conferring legitimacy and justification upon the reform discourse. In essence, these linguistic characteristics underscore the inherent linkage between reform and opening-up, and the populace. Moreover, by accentuating value orientations, they further delineate the discourse subject's identity as a "defender of the people's interests."

This set of discourse materials collectively constructs the identity of the discourse subject as both the representative of the people's interests and the guardian of the people's cause. On the one hand, the discourse subject emphasizes that "reform and opening-up is the cause of hundreds of millions of people themselves," "we must uphold respect for the pioneering spirit of the people," and "be adept at refining policy proposals based on the people's practical innovations and developmental demands." This underscores the legitimacy of reform, as it originates from the people. Conversely, the discourse subject has repeatedly asserted that "the fruits of reform and development should benefit all people more extensively and equitably," "ensuring the people share in the fruits of reform and development," and "eliminating poverty, improving people's livelihoods, and achieving common prosperity are essential requirements of socialism." These assertions serve to further delineate the discourse subject's role as guardian of the people's interests and promoter of social fairness and justice. A close examination of this corpus reveals a pronounced people-oriented orientation, underscoring the inherent link between reform and the populace. The discourse on reform is further enriched by the accentuated significance of the people's interests, a concept seamlessly integrated within the "Party-People-Reform" logical framework. The text's repeated references to "the pioneering spirit of the people," "improving people's livelihoods," and "responding to the people's strong aspirations" reveal the people-centered approach of the Party and the state in reform discourse. This approach is designed to ensure that the benefits of reform and development are distributed more equitably among all segments of society, aligning with the discourse's identified characteristics of people-centeredness, service orientation, and reliance on the masses.

4.3.4 Guardian of Social Stability and Development

This identity serves to unify the dual responsibilities of being both a "guardian of social stability" and a "promoter of development." On the one hand, it underscores that stability is the indispensable prerequisite for reform and development, thereby fortifying the foundation of national progress through institutional development and security safeguards. On the other hand, it promotes stability through development, thus fostering a virtuous cycle of reform, development, and stability by improving people's livelihoods and advancing institutional innovation, thereby building a comprehensive and sustainable social governance system.

(14) First, stability is a prerequisite for reform and development.

(15) We must make sure that reform , development and stability proceed in tandem . Social stability makes it possible for us to carry out reform and development which in turn provide a solid foundation for social stability .”

(16) National security and social stability form the basis for further reform and progress.

(17) We will ensure and improve standards of living on a priority basis , promote social equity and justice , achieve higher quality employment ,

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further the reform of income distribution , and improve social security and basic public services .

(18) ...the property rights of both the public and non-public sectors are inviolable.

This corpus demonstrates a pronounced linguistic emphasis on the dual themes of "stability" and "development." First, the texts frequently employ foundational and prerequisite expressions, such as "stability is a prerequisite" and "form the basis." They use logically consequential phrasing to emphasize stability's fundamental role in national development. Secondly, the discourse frequently utilizes parallel structures and circular reasoning, as evidenced by the following examples: "reform, development, and stability proceed in tandem"; "stability makes it possible... which in turn provides a solid foundation for stability." These rhetorical devices form a progressive and self-consistent semantic chain that reinforces the interdependence between stability and development. Additionally, the corpus extensively employs vocabulary related to institutional safeguards—terms like "social security," "justice," and "inviolable property rights"—leveraging solemn legal and policy language to construct a secure, equitable, and sustainable social order. Collectively, these linguistic features underscore the rigor, legitimacy, and authority of state discourse.

From a pragmatic identity perspective, this discourse underscores the speaker's role as the "guardian of social stability and development." On the one hand, the speaker repeatedly asserts that "stability is the prerequisite" for reform and development. In so doing, the speaker grounds the legitimacy of reform and development in social stability and national security. By emphasizing their role as a protector and guarantor within the macro-strategic framework, the speaker underscores the importance of stability. Conversely, by addressing issues such as people's livelihoods, employment, social security, and property rights protection, the discourse expands the concept of "stability" from macro-level security to everyday life, demonstrating a comprehensive, multi-tiered protective stance. This identity positioning confers dual legitimacy to the reform and development process, both from an institutional perspective and among the populace. Moreover, it reinforces the central role of the governing body in maintaining social order and ensuring the nation's enduring stability and security.

V. PRAGMATIC MOTIVATIONS FOR IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

In summary, the reform discourse in the English edition of *Xi Jinping: The governance of China* is characterized by the presence of four distinct identities: practitioner and leader, summarizer of experience and explorer, representative and defender of the people's interests, and guardian of social stability and development. These identities are not static; rather, they are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, collectively forming a multidimensional, layered national identity system. From a pragmatic perspective, these actions aimed at identity formation reveal significant strategic intentions and communicative purposes, with their pragmatic motives manifesting primarily across four dimensions:

Firstly, the nation must respond to international expectations regarding the shaping of its image as a responsible major power. Since the implementation of reforms and the initiation of economic and political openness, China's global relations have undergone significant transformations. The international community anticipates an augmentation of China's international responsibilities, while concurrently expressing apprehensions regarding the nation's developmental trajectory. By underscoring the identity of "practitioner and leader," the discourse subject endeavors to convey to the international community China's unwavering commitment to its foundational policy of reform and opening-up, with a view to advancing reforms with heightened political resolve and sagacity. This commitment is not merely a matter of China's domestic development; it also signifies a grave international obligation. The employment of high-modality verbs, such as "must" and "should," serves to construct, at the pragmatic level, an unquestionable level of commitment, thereby enhancing the credibility and predictability of China's reform and opening-up policies in the eyes of the international community.

Secondly, the objective is to achieve international discourse power and enhance institutional discourse authority. In the contemporary international discourse landscape, the West continues

to maintain a predominant influence. The discourse subject has constructed an identity that positions them as both a "summarizer of experience and explorer." This identity signifies an ongoing battle for discourse supremacy. On one hand, the discourse subject acknowledges the complexity and significance of the task, likening it to "crossing the river by feeling the stones," alluding to the necessity of navigating challenges with a hands-on approach. On the other hand, the discourse subject emphasizes China's current grasp on the principles and methodologies governing reform and opening-up, suggesting a systematic and nuanced understanding of these processes. The pragmatic motivation underlying this discourse strategy is to demonstrate the uniqueness and effectiveness of the Chinese path. This objective is threefold: first, to disrupt the monopoly of Western modernization discourse; second, to provide alternative development models for developing nations; and third, to ultimately elevate China's institutional voice in international affairs.

Thirdly, it is imperative to fortify domestic public recognition and establish a consensus on reform and development. As the process of reform and opening-up progressed, it encountered numerous challenges and resistances. The discourse subject constructed the identity of "representative and defender of the people's interests" to achieve multiple pragmatic objectives. First, the term "the people" and related expressions were frequently used to build emotional resonance with the public and strengthen the popular foundation for reform. Secondly, the emphasis on "ensuring that the fruits of reform and development benefit all people more extensively and equitably" established a discourse framework for the legitimacy of reform. Thirdly, the utilization of the logical structure of "Party-People-Reform" serves to reinforce the legitimacy of the Party as the primary agent of reform. The implementation of these pragmatic strategies is collectively aimed at consolidating consensus on reform and mitigating resistance to it.

Fourthly, the provision of stability as a public good is a means of addressing global uncertainty. In the context of prevailing global uncertainty, the discourse actor establishes an identity as the "guardian of social stability and development," thereby transmitting a unambiguous message to the international community: China's role in maintaining global stability and development is of paramount importance. The employment of expressions such as "prerequisite" and "basis" to denote foundational elements engenders a pragmatic commitment to certainty. The demonstration of systemic governance wisdom is evident in the emphasis placed on the synchronized progression of reform, development, and stability. The pragmatic motivation underlying this identity construction extends beyond the maintenance of domestic stability; it serves as a signal to the global community that China's stable development itself constitutes a vital contribution to global stability, thereby positioning China as a stabilizing force in a turbulent world.

A more profound level of analysis reveals that the pragmatic motivations underlying these identity constructions are indicative of China's strategic positioning within the global landscape. Firstly, they are indicative of China's endeavors to surpass Western modernity discourse by establishing a political discourse system with Chinese characteristics. This endeavor entails the presentation of Chinese solutions for global governance. Secondly, it exemplifies China's endeavors to maintain equilibrium among manifold identities: concurrently a developing nation and a global power, both a participant in and a reformer of the international system, dedicated to safeguarding its own interests while providing global public goods. This delicate balancing act of identities, in and of itself, represents the pragmatic wisdom expected of a global power.

From a pragmatic standpoint, this identity-building strategy provides substantial insights for China's foreign discourse system. First, emphasis must be placed on the systematic and coordinated nature of discourse strategies, ensuring that different identity types mutually reinforce rather than contradict each other. Secondly, discourse must be rendered more inclusive and open, thereby enabling China to articulate its own position and resonate with the international community. Finally, discourse must be made more action-oriented, transforming rhetorical advantages into tangible international influence and institutional power.

In summary, these intertwined pragmatic motivations collectively drive the multi-faceted identity construction of reform discourse. It fulfills two objectives: first, to present China's narrative in a compelling manner, and second, to promote the long-

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term aspiration of establishing a community that shares a collective future for humanity. The initiative is rooted in China's domestic reform and development practices while aligning with the overarching global trend of transforming the global governance system. This approach of deeply integrating pragmatic strategies with strategic objectives provides a crucial pathway for China to enhance its international discourse power and offers a new perspective for understanding China's diplomatic discourse in the new era.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study systematically elucidates how the English edition of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* employs discursive strategies to construct a multidimensional, three-dimensional national identity system through an analysis of its reform discourse. The findings indicate that these four interconnected identity types collectively serve a grand strategic narrative. This narrative is designed to present to the world an image of a responsible major power that steadfastly follows the socialist path while boldly pursuing reform and opening-up, upholds the people's central role while maintaining social stability, and builds upon historical experience while forging new paths for the future. This meticulous identity construction profoundly reflects China's strategic intent and pragmatic wisdom to bridge domestic and international perspectives, foster mutual understanding, and enhance its global discourse authority. Future research could further explore the identity-affirming effects of these discourses among different audiences to create a more comprehensive assessment.

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