



# Xi Jinping's Evolution Towards Personalism

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A Study in Metadiscourse

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# Table of contents

O1

## **Introduction**

Why is this particular topic relevant?

O2

## **Literature Review & Definitions**

Personalism and Metadiscourse

O3

## **Methodology**

Metadiscourse Analysis

O4

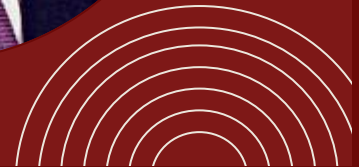
## **Data – Analysis and possible conclusions**

Tables and interpretations



# Introduction

In 2012, Xi Jinping was elected as Chinese President Hu Jintao's successor. Since then, it seems that most Western expectations that he would democratise the communist state have been refuted. Not only that, but he also appears to have returned to a more authoritarian type of leadership, which has not been seen since the time of Chairman Mao Zedong.



# Literature Review

- Personalist authoritarianism – **PRESENT**
- Metadiscourse analysis – **PRESENT**
- Speech analysis of Xi Jinping – **PRESENT**
- Some articles on metadiscourse on Xi Jinping – **PRESENT**
- Personalism & Metadiscourse in Xi Jinping's speeches – ***NONE!***

# Key Definitions

## Personalism

the domination of the political realm by a single individual (Frantz et al.)

## Metadiscourse

the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community (Hyland)

## Ethos

one of Aristotle's three modes of persuasion; preoccupied with creating "a credible, confident and authoritative image" of the speaker (Mai, Stanford Encyclopedia)

# Methodology

1. Metadiscursive interpersonal model – Ken Hyland (2005, 2018)
  - **Evidentials** – Indicate the source of textual information which originates outside the current text
  - **Hedges** – Mark the writer’s reluctance to present propositional information categorically
  - **Boosters** – Express certainty and emphasise the force of propositions
  - **Self-mentions** – Suggest the extent of author presence in terms of first-person pronouns and possessives
2. Adapted interpersonal model – Hongyu Mai (2016)

<b>Ethos</b>	<b>Pathos</b>	<b>Logos</b>
Evidentials	Attitude markers	Transitions
Hedges	Engagement markers	Frame markers
Boosters		Code glosses
Self-mentions		

# Data Collection

- Data set: three speeches (2013, 2018, 2023) at the National People's Congress (NPC)
- Software: Orange
- Manually compiled word libraries for the four studied categories (*evidentials*, *hedges*, *boosters*, *self-mentions*)
- The frequency of each word in the data libraries is calculated and then its relative share (%) of the resource proportional to the total self-mentions located in each speech is calculated



# Evidentials Table

Ethotic Resource	NPC 12		NPC 13		NPC 14	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Evidentials</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100,00%</b>
socialist	4	22,22%	9	18,75%	2	20,00%
socialism	6	33,33%	9	18,75%		0,00%
strategy	1	5,56%	2	4,17%	4	40,00%
theory	2	11,11%	4	8,33%		0,00%
epic		0,00%	4	8,33%		0,00%
Deng Xiaoping	2	11,11%	1	2,08%		0,00%
plan		0,00%	2	4,17%	1	10,00%
philosophy		0,00%		0,00%	2	20,00%
song		0,00%	2	4,17%		0,00%
Hu Jintao	2	11,11%		0,00%		0,00%
accordance		0,00%	1	2,08%	1	10,00%
Mao Zedong	1	5,56%	1	2,08%		0,00%
Han Feizi		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
prose		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
poetry		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
book		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
Confucius		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
Laozi		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
Mencius		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
drama		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
Sunzi		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
Marxism-Leninism		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
Zhuangzi		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
Marxist		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
mythologies		0,00%	1	2,08%		0,00%
mythology		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
asserts		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
novel		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
party		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
according to		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
argues		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
quotes		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
songs		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
states		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100,00%</b>



# Hedges Table

Ethotic Resource	NPC 12		NPC 13		NPC 14	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Hedges</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100,00%</b>
moderately	2	100,00%	1	100,00%		0,00%
about (!)		0,00%		0,00%	1	100,00%
possibly		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
perhaps		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
might		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
roughly		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
about		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

# Boosters Table

Ethotic Resource	NPC 12		NPC 13		NPC 14	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Boosters</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100,00</b> %	<b>68</b>	<b>100,00</b> %	<b>39</b>	<b>100,00</b> %
will	8	25,81%	40	58,82%	8	20,51%
must	12	38,71%	9	13,24%	17	43,59%
fully	2	6,45%	4	5,88%	4	10,26%
resolutely	3	9,68%	2	2,94%	3	7,69%
actively	1	3,23%	2	2,94%	3	7,69%
steadfastly	3	9,68%		0,00%		0,00%
unswervingly		0,00%		0,00%	3	7,69%
definitely		0,00%	3	4,41%		0,00%
absolutely		0,00%	2	2,94%		0,00%
relentlessly	1	3,23%		0,00%		0,00%
profoundly		0,00%	1	1,47%		0,00%
imperative		0,00%	1	1,47%		0,00%
certain		0,00%	1	1,47%		0,00%
unceasingly		0,00%		0,00%	1	2,56%
keenly	1	3,23%		0,00%		0,00%
extremely		0,00%	1	1,47%		0,00%
dauntlessly		0,00%	1	1,47%		0,00%
absolute		0,00%	1	1,47%		0,00%
clearly		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
it is clear		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
have to		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
in fact		0,00%		0,00%		0,00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100,00</b> %	<b>68</b>	<b>100,00</b> %	<b>39</b>	<b>100,00</b> %

# Self-mentions Table

Ethotic Resource	NPC 12		NPC 13		NPC 14	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Self-mentions</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100,00%</b>
we	34	37,36%	53	51,46%	27	40,91%
our	27	29,67%	22	21,36%	15	22,73%
party	12	13,19%	10	9,71%	11	16,67%
I	3	3,30%	10	9,71%	3	4,55%
my	2	2,20%	4	3,88%	7	10,61%
us	5	5,49%	1	0,97%		0,00%
me	4	4,40%	1	0,97%	1	1,52%
ourselves	2	2,20%	2	1,94%	1	1,52%
myself	2	2,20%		0,00%	1	1,52%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

# Data Analysis - Hypotheses

## Evidentials

The later the speech takes place, the fewer evidentials are present in the discourse percentage-wise.

## Hedges

The later the speech takes place, the fewer hedges are present in the discourse percentage-wise.

## Boosters

The later the speech takes place, the more and more varied boosters appear in the discourse percentage-wise.

## Self-mentions

The later the speech takes place, the more first-person, singular pronouns are used percentage-wise.

The later the speech takes place, the more prominent the presence of the party becomes percentage-wise.

# Observations & Possible conclusions

## Evidentials

Increase then decrease in the use of evidentials; distinct linear decline in the mentions of other Chinese leaders; Cultural references are noteworthy;

## Hedges


Distinct lack of hedges;

## Boosters

Emphasis on “must” and “will”; great variety of adverbs;

## Self-mentions

Non-linear development of the use of first-person plural pronouns; linear increase in the use of the first-person singular pronouns; linear increase in the use of “party”



Thank you for your attention!  
Looking forward to your questions!

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