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A TWO-TIERED ANALYSIS OF CHINESE POLITICAL DISCOURSE: THE CASE OF XI JINPING'S COMMEMORATIVE SPEECH FOR THE CENTENNIAL OF THE CCP*

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1. Introduction

This paper proposes a discourse analysis of the speech delivered by President Xi Jinping during the ceremony celebrating the centenary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) at Tian'anmen Square in Beijing on 1 July 2021. The reasons why this speech deserves a separate in-depth analysis are to be found in the representativeness it displays as both official and political discourse as well as in its significance given the unique occasion on which it was delivered.

The goal of this paper is to shed light on the rhetorical devices and lexical resources employed in this seminal speech. More specifically, we intend to highlight the specific persuasion strategies conveyed by the modal expressions and to identify the semantic and distributional

* Although this paper was collaboratively produced, Sections and Sub-sections 2.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.3, 4.2 and 5 were written by Carlotta Sparvoli only, and Section and Sub-sections 1, 2.2, 3.1.2, 3.2 and 4.1 by Chiara Romagnoli only.

features of the modal verbs and adverbs employed in this seminal political discourse. The crucial role of the modalized expressions visible in the “nine-musts” articulated in the medial part of the speech points to the relevance of modal disambiguation. However, to single out the specific semantics at work, a further level of analysis is in order, aimed at identifying the features of the lexical environment characterizing this speech.

We thus propose a two-tiered analysis that intersects the disambiguation of the modal expressions on necessity and possibility with the identification and scrutiny of the most frequent lexical items, aimed at identifying their specific usages, semantic features and regularities in terms of collocates and collocations. Particular attention will also be paid to the interaction between modals and other operators, in particular evaluative adverbs marking the speaker’s stance.

In order to quantify the occurrences of the vocabulary employed by the speaker, we used the corpus query tool in Sketch Engine and created a corpus consisting of 3606 Chinese words out of the total 7275 Chinese characters comprised in the speech. The small dimension of the corpus justified the type of analysis we have carried out, which is predominantly qualitative. Nevertheless, some quantitative considerations will be also offered to capture the main figures of the words selected. The data so retrieved will then be combined with the modal distribution of 46 modal items across the main rhetoric units (narrative, prescriptive argumentation, conclusion) and further discussed to highlight the pragmatic value of the modalized expressions in the speech.

Section 2 illustrates the theoretical frameworks adopted for the classification of modal expressions and adverbial operators. After a brief synopsis of the speech, Section 3 presents the data, starting from the features of the corpus collected, the target items selected and shows how they are used in political discourse, also including an overview of the modal distribution. Section 4 discusses the data combining the pragmatic role of the modalized proposition in each rhetoric unit with the features of the co-occurring adverbial operators. Section 5 presents the conclusions.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 The modal taxonomy

Modality denotes the state of affairs as *non-factual, non-actualized* (Lü 1942), is paradigmatically related to the notion of possibility and necessity (Van der Auwera and Plungian 1998) and is closely linked to different strategies adopted for convincing someone to prefer something over something else (Portner 2009). Political discourse typically addresses “what is to come” and engages in exhortations to think of a change as ‘possible’ or to accept an unpopular policy as ‘inevitable’. Semantic modal taxonomies, therefore, constitute an effective tool for detecting methods of persuasion and, ultimately, provide essential indicators for intercepting the passage from the discourse on ‘a possible change’ to that on ‘an inescapable future’. Concerning Chinese, the studies already carried out in this field demonstrate how politicians manipulate discourse in order to express their view, although the few works published in English are mainly based on Taiwan political affairs (Cheng 2019). Less has been done on mainland China political discourse, with the exception of Li (2018) which describes how modality is reconstructed in Chinese-English government press conference interpreting and therefore adopts a comparative perspective.

Compared to the above-mentioned studies, we use a more fine-grained taxonomy based on Sparvoli (2012). The latter adopts the framework of Van der Auwera and Plungian (1998) and spells each modal meaning based on Lü Shuxiang (1942). The modal classes and prototypical markers are shown in Table 1¹; the rationale of the primary divisions is clarified in the ensuing paragraphs.

¹ The labels used for each modal meaning and the list of Chinese modal items is based on Sparvoli (2012: 295), for the necessity domain, and Sparvoli (2017: 41) for that of possibility. Each modal meaning is capitalized.

Modality	Subclass	Domain	Modal meaning (learned)	Prototypical items
Participant-internal (Dynamic)		POS	Ability	会 'be able'
		POS	Success	Potential construction, <i>néng</i> 能, <i>nénggòu</i> 能够 'manage, succeed'
Participant-external	Deontic	NEC	Need	<i>xūyào</i> 需要 'need'
		POS	Permission	<i>kěyǐ</i> 可以, <i>néng</i> 能 'can', <i>yǔnxǔ</i> 允许 'allow'
		POS	Permission denial	<i>bùde</i> 不得 'not permit'
		NEC	Duty, obligation	<i>yīnggāi</i> 应该 'should', <i>yào</i> 要 'must'
		NEC	Prohibition	<i>bù yīnggāi</i> 不应该 'should not', <i>bùyào</i> 不要 'must not'
	Anankastic (Circumstantial, Goal-oriented)	POS	Feasibility	<i>néng</i> 能, <i>kěyǐ</i> 可以, <i>nénggòu</i> 能够 'can'
		POS	Impossibility	<i>bù néng</i> 不能 'cannot'
		NEC	Only possibility	<i>bùde</i> 不得不 'cannot but', <i>zhǐhǎo</i> 只好 'can only', <i>bixū</i> ... <i>cái néng</i> 必须 ... 才能 'only if A then B'
		NEC	Practical necessity	<i>bixū</i> 必须, <i>dèi</i> 得, <i>yào</i> 要 'must, have to'
		NEC	Exemption	<i>bùyòng</i> 不用, <i>bùbì</i> 不必 'no need'
Epistemic		POS	Inference	会 'might'
		NEC	Inference	<i>yīnggāi</i> 应该 'should'
	POS	Probability	<i>kěnéng</i> 可能 'probably'	
	NEC	Certainty	<i>yíding</i> 一定 'certainly'	
Post modal usage		NEC	Inevitability	<i>bìjiāng</i> 必将 'inevitably'
		NEC	Futurity	会, <i>yào</i> 要 'will'

Table 1. Taxonomy and modal classification.

In this study, we rely on the deontic vs. anankastic contrast (Wright 1963) and postulate that modals pertaining to duty and necessity are distributed within a semantic domain having two poles (Sparvoli 2012): namely, the deontic, which expresses an obligation (ancient Greek *déon*) and is related to a moral duty, as in (1a); and the anankastic² (from *anánkē*, literally ‘rope, wire’), which indicates a practical necessity, linked to a specific purpose, as in (1b). While the deontic is grounded on the speaker’s belief system, the anankastic’s normative source (Hsieh 2005) is situation-oriented.

- 1) a. 我们**应该/应当**谦虚谨慎。 [deontic]
Wǒmen yīnggāi/yīngdāng qiānxū jīnshèn
 we **should** be.modest be.prudent
 ‘We **should** be modest and prudent.’
 (Translated from Alleton 1984: 200) [deontic]
- b. 去 火车站 **得/必须** 坐 第六六路 公共汽车。
Qù huǒchēzhàn dēi/bìxū zuò dìliùliù lù gònggōngqìchē
 go train.station **have.to** sit 66th CL bus
 ‘To get to the station you **have to** take bus 66.’
 (Van der Auwera and Plungian 1998: 80, Chinese translation
 lightly modified from Li 2004: 107) [anankastic]

Anchored in the notion of ‘inevitability’, the anankastic expresses what ‘cannot be done otherwise’ and allows for identification of a consistent class of expressions often flattened in the ‘deontic’ category. In a positive context, deontic and anankastic modals are mostly interchangeable. However, the classification into either one of the two classes is based on the different interaction with negation displayed by the given necessity modal (cf. Sparvoli 2012, based on Lü Shuxiang 1942). Namely, the negation of a prominent deontic marker produces a Prohibition (necessity + negation), like *bù yīnggāi* 不应该 ‘should not’, while the negation of an anankastic one conveys an Exemption

² Rough equivalents of the anankastic modality are found in the “participant-external non-deontic” (Van der Auwera, Plungian 1998), the “goal-oriented or teleological” and in the “neutral” or “circumstantial dynamic” modality.

(negation + necessity), like *bùyòng* 不用, *bíbì* 不必 ‘no need to’. In the positive form, the modal *yào* 要 typically refers to practical necessity (anankastic), but can also refer to a duty or an obligation (deontic); in the negative form, it can only express a deontic prohibition (similar to the English ‘must’).

Chinese makes use of a wide range of anankastic items expressing different binding force. The strongest type is conveyed via modal suppletion, that is, via a possibility marker in double negation or combined with *zhǐ* 只 ‘only’, here spelled as Only Possibility. The most common anankastic modal is *bìxū* 必须 ‘necessarily’, conveying Practical necessity. Notwithstanding its status as an adverb, *bìxū*’ is considered the equivalent of the English ‘must’ (Li 2004) and has the same force and scopal properties as semimodals like ‘have to, it takes’ (Sparvoli 2012).

In the participant-external possibility domain, the deontic/anankastic contrast appears as either Permission or Feasibility, the latter being a possibility stemming from specific circumstances. Finally, the participant-internal possibility is partitioned into two classes: Ability (or capacity) intrinsic to the participant (typically the subject) and Success, that is, the capacity to actualize the state of affairs notwithstanding a challenging situation or task. In other words, the latter is a possibility “determined by a combination of the inherent properties of the subject and of external factors” (Coates 1983: 93).

2.2 The classification of Chinese adverbs

While seminal studies exist addressing Chinese modal adverbs, such as that of Ernst (2009), the literature on this category as such is less developed. Zhang (2014) is one of the few monographs entirely devoted to Chinese adverbs. According to the author, the semantic and syntactic features of these Chinese words make them a particular lexical class, distinguished from the others both for the internal variety and for the quantity of these items, which greatly outnumber other functional words such as prepositions and conjunctions. The long-standing difficulty in providing a comprehensive definition of Chinese adverbs and the different criteria proposed to classify them, has caused a theoretical standstill on these words, to the point that

“even for basic issues such as nature, scope and classification of adverbs it is still difficult to reach a shared view” (Zhang 2014: 3). The three macro categories proposed are those of descriptive, restrictive and evaluative adverbs.

Macrocategory	Subcategory	Items
1. Descriptive	Manner <i>fāngshì</i> 方式	<i>ruìyì</i> 锐意 ‘dauntless’ (<i>zhēnxīn</i> 真心 ‘sincerely’) ³
	State <i>zhuàngtài</i> 状态	<i>zhúbù</i> 逐步 ‘step by step’ (<i>dāngxià</i> 当下 ‘immediately’)
	Modality <i>qíngkuàng</i> 情状	<i>kǔkǔ</i> 苦苦 ‘persistently’ (<i>yìrán</i> 毅然 ‘resolutely’)
	Comparison <i>bìkuàng</i> 比况	(<i>fēisù</i> 飞速 ‘rapidly’, <i>pīnmìng</i> 拼命 ‘at all cost’)
2. Evaluative		<i>bìxū</i> 必须 ‘necessarily’, <i>yídìng</i> 一定 ‘certainly’
3. Restrictive	Linking <i>guānlián</i> 关联	<i>jiù</i> 就 ‘right’, <i>yě</i> 也 ‘also’
	Negation <i>fǒudìng</i> 否定	<i>bù</i> 不 ‘not’, <i>méiyǒu</i> 没有 ‘not have’
	Time <i>shíjiān</i> 时间	<i>yǒngyuǎn</i> 永远 ‘always’, <i>yǐjīng</i> 已经 ‘already’
	Frequency <i>pínlǜ</i> 频率	<i>lúnfān</i> 轮番 ‘in turn’, <i>bùduàn</i> 不断 ‘continuously’
	Repetition <i>chóngfù</i> 重复	<i>yòu</i> 又 ‘again’, <i>yě</i> 也 ‘also’
	Degree <i>chéngdù</i> 程度	<i>zuì</i> 最 ‘most’, <i>hěn</i> 很 ‘very’
	Scope <i>fànweí</i> 范围	<i>dōu</i> 都 ‘all’, <i>zhǐ</i> 只 ‘only’
	Expressing collaboration <i>xiétóng</i> 协同	<i>yídào</i> 一道 ‘together’, <i>yìqǐ</i> 一起 ‘together’

Table 2. Classification of adverbs (Zhang 2014).

³ The adverbs in brackets are those not included in the text analyzed in this work.

Those of the first type are used as verbal modifiers, their position is fixed and is in the middle of the sentence. They mainly describe the action. The bulk of Chinese adverbs is represented by the second category: they can be used in different positions and are used to restrict and differentiate the state and nature of the action. Restrictive adverbs are further divided into 8 categories: connectives, negation adverbs, time adverbs, frequency adverbs, repetition adverbs, degree adverbs, scope adverbs, and adverbs expressing collaboration.

Evaluative adverbs can have a predicative function, the position is rather flexible and they are mainly used to express the speaker's attitude and evaluation towards the action. Since this category tends to overlap with modal adverbs, we treat them separately, based on the taxonomy outlined in Section 2.1.

Although research has mostly focused on English, the case of Chinese has also been taken into account. In particular, the function of adverbs in expressing speaker's stance has been investigated in a number of studies. Among them, Hsieh (2005) analyses how the notion of "source of involvement" can be applied to distinguish and classify Chinese modal verbs and adverbs. Hsieh (2008) is instead based on newspaper data and verifies how the category of evidentiality is encoded to express stance. The same author also investigates the usage of epistemic adverbs in different categories of news, i.e., local, business and politics, reporting a higher frequency in the first category (Hsieh 2009).

Another attempt to deal with this topic is represented by Ai (2012), which focuses on stance adverbs across different communicative modes, diverse genres, and various media channels. Compared to other studies carried out from the contrastive analysis perspective, Ai (2012) is based on large-scale corpus data, the Academia Sinica Balanced Corpus of Modern Chinese, and it is uniquely focused on the category of adverbs. Following Biber (2006)'s framework, the items have been divided into four main categories: certainty, likelihood, attitude, and style. Research results show how epistemic adverbs (expressing certainty and likelihood) are more frequent than the others and that the distribution of the different adverbs across genres also reveals variety.

3. Data and analysis

3.1 The target speech

3.1.1 Historical significance

The historic relevance of the speech is visible from both the grandiosity of the commemorative setting, which strikingly echoes the mass gatherings of the Maoist era, and the international media reaction. Delivered from the same location of Mao Zedong's historical speech of 1949, in front of an audience comprising 70,000 party members and accompanied by a majestic military parade, the commemoration marked the zenith of modern national celebration. Described by a Chinese internal analyst as “a tough talk” delivered in “response to U.S. and western efforts to ‘contain’ and ‘suppress’ China” (cf. Tian and Woo 2021), the speech “articulated the full agenda for China and the path the country will take in the next 100 years” (Kimura 2021). This commemorative address is mentioned in the Chinese media using the expression *jiǔ ge bìxū* 九个必须 ‘the nine-musts’. This label refers to the nine requirements representing the milestones in the roadmap set by Xi Jinping towards the realization of national rejuvenation. Not surprisingly, the invitation to study, implement and “firmly grasp” (*láo láo bǎwò* 牢牢把握) the nine-musts has been pointed out by the *Zhōngguó Jiàoyù Bào* 中国教育报 (*Chinese Journal of Education*) and disseminated by the Chinese Ministry of Education (CMOE 2021).

3.1.2 Synopsis

Before analysing the usage of modal words in the text, it seems useful to briefly provide a synopsis of the speech. After the initial greetings, the speaker retraces Chinese history quoting the main actors of the key period between the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century and describes the role of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the realization of national rejuvenation. The speech then mentions the changes brought about since the Party's 18th National Congress, with the election of the new Central Committee of the CCP and continues by reviewing the achievements attained over the past hundred years of struggle and quoting the contributions of

past leaders to the cause of China's revolution. After a passage expressing gratitude, the second half of the speech changes perspective, from the past to the future, and clarifies what has to be done in nine parts, each introduced by the evaluative adverb expressing anankastic necessity, *bixū*. The conclusion of the speech expresses belief in the ability to fulfil the Chinese dream and the standard augural greetings to the Chinese Party and people. The speech displays many of the features of the language labelled as *post-Mao official Chinese* in terms of lexicon and metaphor, grammar, rhythm, moral weight, goal orientation and status of truth (Link 2013).

3.1.3 The rhetoric structure

The text under scrutiny is a speech⁴ lasting one hour at a very solemn pace. It consists of 7,260 Chinese characters, equivalent, in the official translation, to 5,200 English words and belongs to the genre of commemorative speeches. The latter are consent-oriented texts typically uttered by high-profile political representatives and are aimed at the formation of public attitudes, opinions and will (Reisigl 2008: 253). Its content is analysed here through the lens of the typical rhetorical macro-structures, namely: (1) introduction, (2) narrative, (3) prescriptive argumentation, and finally (4) conclusion (*ibid.*). Adopting Longacre's (1974) division of genres (Table 3), each rhetoric unit can be further described using the notion of prescriptivity, a feature found only in the argumentative part.

Non-prescriptive	Prescriptive argumentation	
Narrative	Hortatory	Procedural
First or third person	Second person	Non-specific person
Actor-oriented	Addressee oriented	Goal oriented
Accomplished time (encoded as past or present)	Commands, suggestions (encoded as imperatives or "soft" commands)	Projected time (encoded as past, present or future)
Chronological linkage	Logical linkage	Chronological linkage

Table 3. Longacre's genres (slightly modified from Van Leeuwen 2008: 347).

⁴ For the definition of speech, we rely on Reisigl (2008: 243): "A speech is a structured verbal chain of coherent speech acts uttered on a special social occasion for a specific purpose by a single person, and addressed to a more or less specific audience".

Moreover, the prescriptive argumentation can have either a procedural or a hortatory orientation. The former aims at highlighting the means to reach a given goal (know-how-to-do-it), the latter aims to “conduct influence” to get people “to feel or think or do in certain ways” (Van Leeuwen 2008: 347). Table 4 shows our subdivision of the texts into six parts: introduction, narrative, transition to argumentation, prescriptive argumentation (procedural and hortatory), and conclusion.

Rhetoric unit		Char. No.	%
Introduction		290	3.99%
Narrative		2679	36.90%
Transition		120	1.65%
Argumentation	Procedural	3228	44.46%
	Hortatory	799	11.01%
Conclusion		144	1.98%
Total		7260	100%

Table 4. Sequence and length of the rhetoric units in the speech.

The rhetorical structure of the text is organized in a very consistent and logical sequence. After the introduction, the speech content is developed in a sequence of nine pragmatic units, as shown in (2). It mentions the goal of building a strong modern and socialist country, the historical need of rescuing the county after the experience of semi-colonialism, the role of socialism as the only possibility for redemption, the roadmap to success based on the nine-musts, future commitments, the exhortation to all Chinese people across the Taiwan Strait, the injunction to external forces, another exhortation to the youth, and finally, the promise that the Great Chinese Dreams can certainly be realized.

2) Goal > Need > Only possibility > Roadmap > Commitment > Exhortation > Injunction > Exhortation > Promise

3.2 Lexical features

As for the lexicon, whereas we do not find many occurrences of those abstract nouns (such as *xíngshì* 形势 ‘circumstance’ and *júmiàn* 局面 ‘situation’) and verbs (such as *jiāyǐ* 加以 ‘apply’ and *jìnxíng* 进行 ‘conduct’) that are typical of bureaucratic language, we find many

repetitions of some key lexical words and phrases, such as *Zhōngguó* 中国 ‘China’, *rénmín* 人民 ‘people’, *wěidà* 伟大 ‘great’, *Gòngchǎndǎng* 共产党 ‘Communist Party’ and *Zhōnghuá Mínzú* 中华民族 ‘the Chinese Nation’, i.e., the top five lexical words. To give an example, the nominal modifier *wěidà*, with 53 occurrences, can be found throughout the speech since it mostly precedes the noun *fùxīng* 复兴 ‘rejuvenation’ which is one of the topics frequently mentioned by President Xi since the speech given in November 2012 presenting the Chinese dream. Repetition of words and phrases is aimed at fulfilling different functions: it provides rhythm; it is used as a device to connect fragments of discourse; and it also reinforces the truthfulness and salience of what is repeated. The most frequently repeated phrases are listed in Table 5. To quote Link, it is this repetition that “in combination with rhythm, can enhance the implicit sense that ‘this is right, there is no need to think about it’” (2013: 264).

Repeated phrases	No.
同志们、朋友们! <i>Tóngzhìmen, péngyǒumen</i> “Comrades and friends,”	8
为了实现中华民族伟大复兴 <i>Wèile shíxiàn Zhōnghuá mínzú wěidà fùxīng</i> “In order to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”	4
中国共产党和中国人民以英勇顽强的奋斗 <i>Zhōngguó gòngchǎndǎng hé Zhōngguó rénmin yǐ yīngyǒng wánqiáng de fèndòu</i> “Through tenacious struggle, the Party and the Chinese people...”	4
新的征程上，我们必须/要 <i>Xīn de zhēngchéng shàng, wǒmen bìxū/yào</i> “In the journey ahead, we have to/must...”	8+1
以史为鉴、开创未来，必须 <i>Yǐshǐwèijiàn, kāichuàng wèilái, bìxū</i> “As we learn from the mirror of history to create our future, it is necessary to...”	9

Table 5. Repeated phrases in the speech.

Concerning the modal distribution, the text includes 46 modal markers. As shown in Table 6, their distribution reveals the predominance of participant-external modalities, and among them a striking majority of goal-oriented (56.52%), over morally connotated necessity

(8.70%), that is, a remarkable predominance of anankastic vs. deontic modals.

Modality	No.	%	Chinese	Modal meaning	No.
PARTICIPANT-INTERNAL NECESSITY	2	4.35%	<i>xūyào</i> 须要 need	Need	2
PARTICIPANT-INTERNAL POSSIBILITY	3	6.52%	<i>shànyú</i> 善于 be good at	Ability	2
			<i>nénggòu</i> 能够 manage, succeed	Success	1
PARTICIPANT-EXTERNAL POSSIBILITY	3	6.52%	<i>nénggòu</i> 能够 can	Feasibility	2
			<i>kěyǐ</i> 可以 can, be sufficient		1
PARTICIPANT-EXTERNAL ANANKASTIC NECESSITY	26	56.52%	<i>zhǐyǒu ...cái néng</i> 只有...才能 only if A then B	Only possibility	2
			<i>bìxū ...cái néng</i> 必须...才能 only if A then B		1
			<i>bìxū</i> 必须 must (have to)	Practical necessity	20
			<i>yào</i> 要 must	Necessity	3
PARTICIPANT-EXTERNAL DEONTIC NECESSITY	4	8.70%	<i>yào</i> 要 should	Moral duty	2
			<i>bùyào</i> 不要 must not	Prohibition	1
			<i>bùyǔnxǔ</i> 不允许 do not allow	Permission denial	1
EPISTEMIC	4	8.70%	<i>bìjiāng</i> 必将 inevitably	Inevitability	2
			<i>yídìng</i> 一定 certainly	Certainty	2
FUTURITY (POST MODAL USAGE)	4	8.70%	<i>yào</i> 要 should	Commitment	2
			<i>búhuì</i> 不会 will not	Negative futurity	2
	46	100%			46

Table 6. Modal distribution by modal categories.

Given the chameleonic nature of *yào* (expressing both deontic and anankastic necessity, futurity and participant-internal Need) we will comment each occurrence in the speech (and the relevant modal classification) in Sections 4.2.3, 4.2.4. Other modalities (participant-internal and participant-external possibility) are also represented, while expressions of epistemic certainty, futurity, and inevitability are scattered throughout the speech. To identify the relevance and usage of each modality, we need to observe their distribution in each rhetoric unit. However, before doing this, we also need to single out the features of the evaluative adverbs disseminated in the speech, often co-occurring with the modals. We will address this task in the next section.

4. Discussion

4.1 Speaker's stance markers: evaluative adverbs

4.1.1 Distribution and features

An initial look at the raw occurrences suggests that the most frequently used lexical words are nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. As for the last two lexical classes, we find more adjectival (296) than adverbial tokens and more adverbial (97) than adjectival (81) lexical types, suggesting that although used less frequently, the internal variety of adverbs is higher than that of adjectives.

Lexical word tokens	
Lexical class	# tokens
Noun	1585
Verb	839
Adjective	296
Adverb	236
Lexical word types	
Lexical class	# types
Noun	495
Verb	379
Adverb	97
Adjective	81

Table 7. Lexical distribution by grammar category.

As for the adverbs, we can see that only a small portion of them belong to those traditionally included in the category of modal adverbs. The speaker rarely expresses obligatoriness, doubt or certainty towards the sentence through modal adverbs. What we more frequently find is a set of different adverbs usually classified as degree, manner, time or scope which nonetheless contribute to express the speaker's engagement towards the statement. To have an idea of the "weight" of this lexical class within the corpus, rank and frequency of the top 10 adverbs are given in Table 8.

The first column indicates the rank of the item within the category of adverbs, the second shows the rank within the entire corpus and the third the number of occurrences: the values for the negation adverb *bù* 不 for instance indicate that this item is the most frequently used within the adverbs and ranks 28 within all words of the corpus occurring 26 times. As we can see, among the top 100 words of the corpus, six are adverbs.

Rank 1	Rank 2	Frequency	Item
1	28	26	<i>bù</i> 不
2	31	20	<i>bìxū</i> 必须
3	34	14	<i>quánmiàn</i> 全面
4	64	10	<i>bùduàn</i> 不断
5	66	10	<i>shǐzhōng</i> 始终
6	77	8	<i>jiù</i> 就
7	94	6	<i>shēnkè</i> 深刻
8	105	6	<i>dōu</i> 都
9	111	6	<i>zuì</i> 最
10	114	6	<i>gèngwéi</i> 更为

Table 8. Lexical ranking by frequency.

As mentioned previously, using the function wordlist we obtained the list of 97 different adverbs. Nevertheless, although these words are used in adverbial function, they do not belong to the adverbial lexical class, being either an adjective, verb, noun or even phrase used as verbal modifier and labelled by the query tool as *adverb*. For this reason, we selected only those items that are labelled as adverbs in the most recent edition of the *Xiàndài hànyǔ cídiǎn* 现代汉语词典 and the

number dropped from 97 to 43. We then classified them according to the three macrocategories proposed by Zhang to have a quantitative picture of these items.

For those adverbs belonging to more than one category, they were classified according to the function they play in each occurrence. One such case is *jiù* 就, which, according to Zhang, can be labelled as a time, scope, evaluative or connective adverb.

Among the adverbs classified as evaluative by Zhang are: *jué* 绝, *juéduì* 绝对, *yě* 也, *cái* 才, *jiù*, *dōu* 都, *qià* 恰, *yídìng* 一定, *bìxū*, and *gēnběn* 根本. Moreover, *qià* 恰 is included only in the reduplicated form but we will consider it within the other items. The analysis of occurrences will start with those items uniquely labelled as evaluative.

Another adverb, not included in Zhang's classification, is composed of *bì* 必 and *jiāng* 将, and we believe that it can also be interpreted as evaluative, as they express a strong epistemic nuance.

4.1.2 *Bìxū* and the nine-musts

The evaluative adverb most frequently used is *bìxū*, which expresses necessity and could be rendered as “necessarily”, although in the English version of the speech it is translated by the verb “must”. In six out of 20 occurrences, *bìxū* modifies the verb *jiānchí* 坚持 to redundantly express the mandatory feature of “persist in” upholding the firm leadership of the Party, the overall leadership of the Party, Marxism-Leninism, socialism with Chinese characteristics, the Party's basic theory, great unity and solidarity. In the other occurrences, we find either verbs expressing the meaning of implementing something (usually a theory), such as *guànchè* 贯彻, *tuījìn* 推进 and *jìnxíng* or verbs suggesting the meaning of adding force or speed, such as *jiākuài* 加快, *zēngqiáng* 增强, and *jiāqiáng* 加强. The necessity expressed by *bìxū* is linked to actions whose features are conveyed by other adverbs which, despite not directly expressing necessity, nonetheless provide the meaning of doing something strictly (*jǐnjǐn* 紧紧), in a comprehensive way (*quánmiàn* 全面) and continuously (*bùduàn* 不断). Among the adverbs most frequently used in this text we also find *gèngwéi* 更为 which, like *gèng* 更, intensifies the degree of a quality or state. We find six occurrences of this item, which is always used to modify an adjective, and twice after the sentence introduced by *bìxū* before the two synonyms adjectives *jiānjù* 艰巨 and *jiānkǔ* 艰苦 ‘arduous’.

3) (...) 同时必须准备付出更为艰巨、更为艰苦的努力。

Tóngshí bìxū zhǔnbèi fūchū gèngwéi jiānjù,
simultaneously necessarily prepare invest **even.more** arduous
gèngwéi jiānkǔ de nǜlì
even.more hard DE effort

‘At the same time it is necessary to prepare to invest **even more** arduous, **even greater** effort’⁵

The rendering of *bìxū* as the English “must” is justified by the lack of other verbs in the same utterance as in (4).

4) 强国必须强军

Qiáng guó bìxū qiáng jūn
powerful country **necessarily** strong army

‘A strong country **must** have a strong army’

Moreover, *bìxū* is used nine times impersonally with the meaning of “it is necessary to” preceded by the motto *yǐ shǐ wèi jiàn, kāichuàng wèilái* 以史为鉴、开创未来 “put conscious effort into learning from history to create a bright future” and nine times with the first-person plural pronoun preceded by the phrase *xīn de zhēngchéng shàng* 新的征程上 “On the journey ahead” (see Table 5). In this case the last occurrence can also be preceded by another modal, *yào*, used to underline the necessity to remember the argument at issue⁶.

The two *incipit* in the alternate pattern repeat nine times as follows:

⁵ When there is no reference to the official translation of the speech, namely, Xi (2021a), the translation in English is by the authors.

⁶ The replacement of *bìxū* with *yào* might be due to the fact that in this segment another motto is quoted, cited from the Maoist repertoire, and including the modal *bìxū*: “*Xīn de zhēngchéng shàng, wǒmen yào láojiè dātiě bìxū zìshēn yìng de dào*” 新的征程上，我们要牢记打铁必须自身硬的道理。On the journey ahead, we **must** keep firmly in mind the old adage that **it takes** a good blacksmith to make good steel” (Xi 2021a).

5) a. 以史为鉴、开创未来，必须 (...)

Yǐ shǐ wèi jiàn, kāichuàng wèilái, bìxū
 use history as mirror create future **necessarily**
 ‘As we learn from the mirror of history to create our future, **it is necessary to...**’

b. 新的征程上，我们必须/要 (...)

Xīn de zhēngchéng shàng, wǒmen bìxū/yào
 new DE journey on we **necessarily/must**
 ‘In the journey ahead, we **have to/must...**’

4.1.3 Adverbs conveying certainty

Among the items contributing to conveying the certainty of the utterance, we mention the negative polarity item *jué* ‘absolutely’ and the epistemic adverb *yídìng* ‘certainly’. We find five occurrences of *jué*: in three cases it modifies the negation *bù* intensifying the degree, in two cases it is instead used in conjunction with *duì* 对 but as a nominal modifier, and therefore will not be taken into account. This is also the case of *gēnběn*, always used as a nominal modifier.

As for the adverb *yídìng*, we only find two occurrences at the end of the speech to provide certainty regarding the possibility of achieving the goal specified (6a) and realizing the Chinese dream (6b).

6) a. 全面建成社会主义现代化强国的目标**一定能够**实现

Quánmiàn jiànchéng shèhuìzhūyì
 in.all.respects build socialist
xiàndàihuà qiáng guó de mùbiāo
 modernize strong country DE goal
yídìng nénggòu shíxiàn
certainly can realize
 ‘The goal of building a strong modern and socialist country **can certainly be realized**’

b. 中华民族复兴的中国梦**一定能够**实现!

Zhōnghuá mínzú fùxīng de Zhōngguó

Chinese nation rejuvenation DE Chinese

mèng yídìng nénggòushíxiàn

dream **certainly** **can** realize

‘The Chinese dream of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation
can certainly be realized!’

Another adverb labelled as evaluative is *qià*, which occurs only once at the end of the speech and expresses is the timeliness of the appearance or existence of something, in this case the centennial of the CCP (7).

7) 百年**恰**是风华正茂

Bǎi nián qià shì fēng huá

hundred year **exactly** is wind splendid

zhèng mào

just luxuriant

‘One hundred years **exactly** is the best time’

4.1.4 Other adverbs

As for the adverbs displaying more than one function, *jiù*, which occurs nine times in the corpus, can be considered as belonging to the evaluative category five times. In each occurrence the adverb signals that what is expressed is deemed to be evident and obvious as in (8).

8) 江山**就**是人民、人民**就**是江山

Jiāngshān jiù shì rénmin rénmin jiù shì jiāngshān

country **just** is people, people **just** is country

‘This country is its people; the people are the country’

Another adverb displaying more than one function is *dōu*, but according to the analysis of its six occurrences, it is always used as a scope adverb. This is the case also when this adverb is used to signal

that *all* the attempts⁷ to save the nation have failed in contrast with the fight conducted by the Party, the only one which was successful (9).

9) (...) 都以失败而告终

Dōu yǐ shībài ér gào zhōng
all be failure for reach.an.end
 ‘(...) but **all** of these ended in failure.’

The same can be said about the four occurrences of *cái*, where the adverb is used always before *néng* 能 to express the conditions under which something can occur, both in the construction with *zhǐyǒu* 只有 and without, as in (10a) and (10b).

10) a. 弄明白未来我们怎样才能继续成功 (...).

Nòng míngbái wèilái wǒmén zěnyàng cái
 make clear future we how **only**
néng jìxù chénggōng (...)
can continue successful
 ‘We can understand how **we can** continue to succeed in the future.’

b. 只有社会主义才能救中国，只有社会主义才能发展中国！

Zhǐyǒu shèhuìzhǔyì cái néng jiù Zhōngguó,
only socialism **only can** save China,
zhǐyǒu shèhuìzhǔyì cái néng
 only socialism only can

⁷ The preceding passage reads as follows: “Wèile zhèngjiù mínzú wéiwáng, Zhōngguó rénmin fènqǐ fǎnkàng, rénrenzhìshì bēnzōu nàhǎn, tàipíngtiānguó yùndòng, wùxū biànfǎ, Yìhétuán yùndòng, Xīnhài gé mìng jiēlián ér qǐ, gè zhǒng jiùguó fāng'àn lúnfān chūtái, dàn dōu yǐ shībài ér gào zhōng 为了拯救民族危亡，中国人民奋起反抗，仁人志士奔走呐喊，太平天国运动、戊戌变法、义和团运动、辛亥革命接连而起，各种救国方案轮番出台，但都以失败而告终。To save the nation from peril, the Chinese people put up a courageous fight. As noble-minded patriots sought to pull the nation together, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Movement, the Reform Movement of 1898, the Yihetuan Movement, and the Revolution of 1911 rose one after the other, and a variety of plans were devised to ensure national survival” (Xi 2021a).

fāzhǎn Zhōngguó!

develop China

‘**Only** socialism **could** save China, and only socialism could develop China.’

The last adverb displaying more than one function is *yě* 也. As we mentioned in 3.2, repetition is one of the rhetorical devices used in official language to reinforce the speaker’s illocutionary force.

It is therefore difficult to separate the function of a restrictive adverb from that of an evaluative adverb, expressing the speaker’s stance.

In the five occurrences of *yě* in the text, the repeated item is introduced by *yě* in the second occurrence, either in the construction *bùdàn* 不但...*yě* 也...(11a) or to connect separate sentences which are nonetheless semantically linked (11b).

- 11) a. 中国人民不但善于破坏一个旧世界、也善于建设一个新世界 (...).

<i>Zhōngguó rénmin</i>	<i>bùdàn</i>	<i>shànyú</i>	<i>pòhuài</i>
China people	not only	be.good.at	to destroy
<i>yī gè jiù</i>			
one CL	cold		
<i>shìjiè yě shànyú</i>	<i>jiànshè</i>	<i>yī</i>	
world also be.good.at	to build	one	
<i>gè xīn shìjiè (...)</i>			
CL new world			

‘the Chinese people **were capable** of not only dismantling the old world, but also building a new one.’ (Xi 2021a)

- b. 中国人民从来没有欺负、压迫、奴役过其他国家人民 (...). 同时, 中国人民也绝不允许任何外来势力欺负 (...).

<i>Zhōngguó rénmin</i>	<i>cónglái</i>	<i>méiyǒu</i>	<i>qīfù</i>	<i>yāpò</i>	<i>núyì</i>
China people	ever	not	bully	oppress	enslave
<i>guò qítā guójiā rénmin</i>					
GUO other country people					
(...). <i>Tóngshí,</i>	<i>Zhōngguó</i>	<i>rénmin yě</i>	<i>juébù</i>		

at.the.same.time China people **also absolutely.not**
 yǔnxǔ rèn hé wàilái shì lì qī fū (...).
 allow any external force bully
 ‘We have never bullied, oppressed, or subjugated the people
 of any other country (...). By the same token, **we will never**
 allow any foreign force to bully, oppress, or subjugate us.’ (Xi
 2021a)

4.2 Modal distribution and rhetoric structure

The distribution of modals in each rhetoric unit of the speech (Table 9) appears to be consistent and uniform. For instance, modals pertaining to practical necessity and moral duty uniformly instantiate in two separate parts of the argumentation: modals expressing practical and goal-oriented necessity are used in the medial part of the speech (Procedural argumentation), while deontic modals occur in the section preceding the conclusion (Hortatory argumentation).

While the semantics of necessity covers the argumentative part of the speech, the semantics of possibility is mainly distributed in the opening narrative and in the conclusion. Participant-internal necessity (need), epistemic certainty and only possibility are encountered much more sporadically, however their inclusion is crucial for the topic introduction in the narrative, the transition to the argumentation and the conclusion.

4.2.1 The semantics of possibility and inevitability

The expressions of possibility, though not numerous, convey a strong message in the opening and closing of the speech. In the narrative section, two occurrences of participant-internal ability (‘be good at’ 善于 *shàn yú*), having the CCP and the Chinese people as agents, are emphasized by the correlation of *bùdàn* ‘not only’ and *yě* ‘but’, as shown in (11a) in Section 4.1.4. Immediately after, the mention of “only possibility” refers to the role of socialism in saving and developing the country (*zhǐyǒu shèhuìzhǔyì cái néng* 只有社会主义才能 ‘only socialism can ...’).

Modality and domain		Modal item	Semantic Notion	No.	Collocation
<i>Part. Int.</i>	Necessity	<i>xīnyào</i> 须要 need	Need	2	Introduction
	Possibility	<i>shānyú</i> 善于 be good at	Ability	2	
<i>Part. Ext.</i>	Necessity [Anankastic]	<i>zhīyǒu ... cái néng</i> 只有...才能 only if A then B	Only Possibility	2	Narrative
<i>Epistemic</i>	Necessity	<i>bìjiāng</i> 必将 inevitably	Inevitability	1	
<i>Part. Ext.</i>	Possibility	<i>kěyǐ</i> 可以 can, be sufficient	Feasibility	1	Transition to Argumentation
	Necessity [Anankastic]	<i>yào</i> 要 should	Practical Necessity	1	
<i>Part. Int.</i>	Possibility	<i>nénggou</i> 能够 can, be sufficient	Success	1	
	Necessity [Anankastic]	<i>...cái néng ...才能</i> only if A... then B	Only Possibility	1	
<i>Part. Ext.</i>	Necessity [Anankastic]	<i>bìxū</i> 必须 must (have to)	Practical Necessity	20	Prescriptive Argumentation (Procedural)
	<i>Futurity</i>	<i>búhuì</i> 不会 will not	Negative Futurity	2	
<i>Part. Ext.</i>	Possibility [Deontic]	<i>bìyǔnxǔ</i> 不允许 do not allow	Permission Denial	1	Prescriptive Argumentation (Procedural)
<i>Epistemic</i>	Necessity	<i>bìjiāng</i> 必将 inevitably	Inevitability	1	
<i>Part. Ext.</i>	Necessity [Anankastic]	<i>yào</i> 要 should	Practical Necessity	2	Prescriptive Argumentation (Horrtatory)
	<i>Futurity</i>	<i>yào</i> 要 will	Commitment	2	
<i>Part. Ext.</i>	Necessity [Deontic]	<i>bùyào</i> 不要 must not	Prohibition	1	Prescriptive Argumentation (Horrtatory)
	<i>Epistemic</i>	<i>yào</i> 要 should	Moral duty	2	
<i>Part. Ext.</i>	Necessity	<i>yīdìng</i> 一定 certainly	Certainty	2	Conclusion
	Possibility	<i>nénggou</i> 能够 can, be sufficient	Feasibility	2	
				Total	46

Table 9. Modal distribution by occurrence in the text.

On the other hand, the two modalized propositions at the end of the speech (*yídìng nénggòu shíxiàn* 一定能够实现 ‘... certainly can be achieved’) have a non-agentive reading and thus are here classified in the participant-external (feasibility) category. As shown in (6a-b), they are marked by an epistemic adverb and have non animate subjects (the Chinese dream, the building of socialism) getting a passive reading. Their participant-external nuance is also shown by two existential sentences providing the necessary conditions for the achievement of the current goal of China. Such preconditions are, namely, the presence of ‘strong leadership’ (*jiānqiáng lǐngdǎo* 坚强领导) by the CCP and ‘close unity’ (*jǐnmì tuánjié* 紧密团结) by the nation. In other words, in comparison to participant-internal slogans such as ‘Yes, we can’, the catchphrases at the end of the speech draw attention to the conditions that make the goal feasible. The optimistic push to the statement (needed for a well-formulated slogan) is given essentially by the stress on the epistemic certainty of achievement.

The narrative subdivision also includes the first modal expressing epistemic inevitability, conveyed by the evaluative adverb *bìjiāng* 必将 ‘inevitably’ (see Section 4.1.1) and in reference to the path opened by the CCP in the last one hundred years.

12) 必将载入中华民族发展史册、人类文明发展史册！

Bìjiāng *zàirù* *Zhōnghuá mínzú fāzhǎn* *shǐcè*,
inevitably record Chinese nation development annals
rénlèi *wénmíng* *fāzhǎn* *shǐcè!*
 mankind civilization development annals
 ‘(...) will be **inevitably** recorded in the annals of the development of the Chinese nation and in the annals of the development of human civilization.’

In the procedural argumentation, at the end of the sixth must, there is a phrase that suggests the inevitability of failure, expressed as “any attempt to divide the Party from the Chinese people is bound to fail”. This negative futurity expression is reinforced by the evaluative adverbs *dōu* and *jué (bù)* (see Section 4.1.3).

- 13) 任何想把中国共产党同中国人民分割开来、对立起来的企图，都是**绝不会**得逞的！

<i>Rèn hé</i>	<i>xiǎng</i>	<i>bǎ</i>	<i>Zhōngguó</i>	<i>gòngchǎndǎng</i>
any	think	BA	China	CCP
<i>tóng</i>	<i>Zhōngguó</i>	<i>rénmín</i>	<i>fēngē</i>	<i>kāi lái</i>
with	China	people	divide	depart
<i>duìlì</i>	<i>qǐlái</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>qìtú,</i>	<i>dōu shì</i>
oppose	QILAI	DE	attempt	all
jué	bù	huì	<i>déchéng</i>	<i>de!</i>
absolutely	not	will	prevail	DE

‘Any attempt to divide the Party from the Chinese people or to set the people against the Party **will by no means** prevail.’

The reference to inevitability also occurs in a set of noun modifiers distributed in all the main rhetoric units:

- 14) a. 不可磨灭的贡献 [NARRATIVE]

<i>Bùkě</i>	<i>mómiè</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>gòngxiàn</i>
not.possible	obliterate	DE	contribution

‘Indelible contributions’

[of China towards world civilization]

- b. 不可逆转的历史进程 [PROCEDURAL ARGUMENTATION]

<i>Bùkě</i>	<i>nìzhǔn de</i>	<i>lìshǐ</i>	<i>jìnchéng</i>
not.possible	reverse	DE	history course

‘Inevitable historical course’

[referred to China’s national rejuvenation]

- c. 不可战胜的强大精神力量

<i>Bùkě</i>	<i>zhànshèng</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>qiángdà</i>	<i>jīngshén</i>
not.possible	win	DE	formidable	spirit

lìliàng

strength

‘Invincible strength of the formidable spirit’

[referring to the CCP]

- d. 不可阻挡的步伐迈向伟大复兴

[HORTATORY ARGUMENTATION]

<i>Bùkě</i>	<i>zǔdǎng</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>bùfá</i>	<i>màixiàng</i>
not.possible	stop	DE	pace	march.towards

wěidà *fùxīng*
 great rejuvenation
 ‘**Unstoppable** pace marching toward the great rejuvenation’

Other possibility markers in subordinated position are found in the last of the nine-musts (“We must continue to advance the great new project of Party building”) with reference to the achievement of the one hundred years of struggle by the CCP, who succeeded to:

- 15) 团结一切可以团结的力量、调动一切可以调动的积极因素
Tuánjié yīqiè kěyǐ tuánjié de lìliàng, diàodòng
 unite all **can** unite DE trength mobilize
yīqiè kěyǐ diàodòng de jījī yīnsù
 all can mobilize DE positive factor
 ‘United all the forces **that can be** united, mobilized all positive factors **that can be** mobilized’

4.2.2 Semantic of only possibility in the transition to procedural argumentation

We need now to focus briefly on the modal distribution in the transition between the starting narrative and the procedural argumentation including the nine-musts. While the distribution of the modal in each stage is relatively uniform, the passage leading from the narrative to the roadmap is the one having the highest number of modal items. As seen in the following excerpt, a full four modals are included in 120 characters, that refer to anankastic possibility (*kěyǐ* 可以), anankastic necessity (*yào*), participant-internal ability (*nénggòu* 能够) and only possibility (*cái néng* 才能). This sequence (*feasibility > necessity > success > only possibility*) strongly foreshadows the procedural argumentation based on the nine-musts.

Yǐ shǐ wèi jiàn, kěyǐ zhī xīngtì. Wǒmen yào yòng lìshǐ
yìngzhào xiànsí, yuǎn guān wèilái, cóng Zhōngguó
gòngchǎndǎng de bǎinián fēndòu zhòng kàn qīngchǔ
guòqù wǒmen wèishéme nénggòu chénggōng, nòng míng-
bái wèilái wǒmen zěnyàng cáinéng jìxù chénggōng
 以史为鉴，可以知兴替。我们要用历史映照现

实、远观未来，从中国共产党的百年奋斗中看清楚过去我们为什么**能够**成功、弄明白未来我们怎样**才能**继续成功

‘Rise and fall **can be understood** by learning from the mirror of history. We **must** use the mirror of history to find where we currently stand and gain foresight into the future. From the Party’s 100-year struggle, we see why we **were able** to succeed in the past, and we figure out the **only possible** way to succeed in the future.’

4.2.3 Commitment expressions opening the hortatory argumentation

The roadmap presenting the practical requirements to success – the nine-musts discussed in Section 4.1.2 – is followed by the hortatory argumentation. The latter is opened with two occurrences of *yào*. Concerning the classification of these tokens, it must be noted that, with first-person subjects, identifying the appropriate reading of *yào* (from among obligation, futurity, promise, and intention) can be challenging (Li 2004: 188). This is because in such instances, *yào* expresses a commitment for the future (a meaning that somehow encompasses the deontic and futurity reading). This “commitment reading” is also seen in the main predicate of the modalized proposition including the commissive verbs *guànchè* ‘implement’, *luòshí* 落实 ‘carry out’, *wéihù* 维护 ‘safeguard’, *bǎochí* 保持 ‘maintain’, in the first occurrence (16a), and the commissive verb *jiānchí* ‘persist’, in the second occurrence, shown in (16b).

- 16) a. 我们要全面准确贯彻“一国两制”、“港人治港”、“澳人治澳”、高度自治的方针，

<i>Wǒmen</i>	yào	<i>quánmiàn</i>	<i>zhǔnquè</i>	guànchè
we	will	totally	accurately	implement
		<i>“yīguóliǎngzhì”,</i>	<i>“gǎngrén</i>	<i>zhì</i>
		one.country.two.system	Hongkonger	administer Hong Kong
		<i>“àorén</i>	<i>zhì</i>	<i>ào”,</i>
		Macanese	administer	Macao
			<i>gāodù</i>	high-degree
		<i>zìzhì</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>fāngzhēn,</i>
		autonomy	DE	policy

‘We **will** completely and accurately **implement** the policy of One Country, Two Systems, the people of Hong Kong administer Hong Kong, the people of Macao administer Macao, and the policy of a high degree of autonomy.’

- b. **要坚持**一个中国原则和“九二共识”，推进祖国和平统一进程。

<i>Yào</i>	<i>jiānchí</i>	<i>yīgè</i>	<i>Zhōngguó</i>	<i>yuánzé</i>
will	uphold	one-CL	China	principle
<i>hé</i>	<i>“jiǔ’èr</i>	<i>gòngshì”</i>	<i>tuījìn</i>	<i>zǔguó</i>
and	’92	consensus	promote	advance
<i>héping</i>	<i>tōngyī</i>	<i>jìnchéng</i> .		
peace	unification	course		

‘We **will uphold** the one-China principle and the 1992 Consensus and promote the course of peaceful national reunification.’

4.2.4 Instances of deontic necessity

As highlighted in Section 4.1.2, the most frequent modal is *bìxū* expressing anankastic necessity, that is, conveying a type of necessity that is anchored to the achievement of a given goal in a given situation. The occurrences having a fully-fledged deontic meaning are instead only four: two are negative injunction addressed to the West, while the other two are directed towards two distinct addressees, namely, “all of us” compatriots living in the two shores of the Taiwan strait (17a), and Chinese youth (17b). In the latter, the deontic moral nuance is strengthened by the noun *jīrèn* 己任 ‘responsibility’ in the modalized sentence and *yào* is used, conveying a prescription typically uttered by someone in a position of power towards a weaker addressee (cf. Allerton 1984: 286ff), as suggested also in the official English version, rendered as “our young people”. The difference between the deontic and the anankastic occurrences of *yào* is visible in the comparison between (17a-b) and (17c). The former are related to a morally oriented duty, whereas in the latter *yào* denotes a practical requirement anchored to a given goal. Finally, the participant-external reading of (17c) is due to the impersonal construction, similar to English ‘it takes’, or Italian ‘ci vuole, occorre’.

- 17) a. 包括两岸同胞在内的所有中华儿女，**要**和衷共济、团结向前，

Bāokuò liǎng'àn tóngbāo zàinèi de
 comprise both.shores compatriot included DE
suǒyǒu Zhōnghuá érǎi,
 all Chinese sons.and.daughters
yào *hézhōnggòngjì,* **tuánjié xiàngqián**
must work.together.with.one.heart **unite forward**
 ‘[All of us], compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait,
must come together and move forward in unison.’ (Xi 2021a)⁸

- b. 新时代的中国青年**要**以实现中华民族伟大复兴为己任，

Xīnshídài de Zhōngguó qīngnián
 new.era DE China youth
yào *yǐ shíxiàn Zhōnghuá mínzú*
must take realize China nation
wěidà fùxīng wéi jǐrèn,
 great rejuvenation make.as responsibility
 ‘In the new era, our young people **must** make it their mission to
 contribute to national rejuvenation.’ (Xi 2021a)

- c. 实现伟大梦想就**要**顽强拼搏、不懈奋斗。

Shíxiàn wěidà mèngxiǎng jiù yào wánqiáng
 realise great dream then **need** tenacious
pīnbó, bùxiè fèndòu.
 strive untired struggle
 ‘Realizing our great dream **will require** hard work and persis-
 tence.’ (Xi 2021a)

⁸ For these two examples, we used the official English translation (Xi 2021a) wherein the addressee is explicitly mentioned, as in first-person “all of us” in (17a) and the third-person “our young people”, in (17b). Similarly, (17c) is impersonal also in the English official translation.

As we saw in (11b), Section 4.1.4, a very strong negative deontic expression (*jué bù yǔnxǔ* 绝不允许 ‘absolutely not allow’) is addressed to “external forces” (*wàilái shìlì* 外来势力) who might like to oppress the Chinese people. The second instance of deontic prohibition is addressed to whomever might like to prevent the mission of reunification of China, with reference to Taiwan (18); the binding force of the negative injunction is emphasized by the scope adverb *dōu* ‘all’.

- 18) 任何人都**不要**低估中国人民捍卫国家主权和领土完整的坚强决心、坚定意志、强大能力!

*Rènherén dōu **bùyào** dīgū Zhōngguó rénmin*
 any.person all **must.not** underestimate China people
hànwèi guójiā zhǔquán hé lǐngtǔ wánzhěng de jiānqiáng
 protect country sovereignty and territory integrity DE strong
juéxīn, jiāndìng yìzhì, qiángdà nénglì!
 determination firm will formidable ability
No one must underestimate the strong determination, the firm will, and the formidable ability of the Chinese people to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity.’

Finally, another implicit injunction is conveyed by *jué bù* (presented in Section 4.1.3) combined with the non-agentive verb *jiēshòu* 接受 ‘accept’. Without resorting to a fully-fledged modal, a negative command is expressed here by suppletion strategy. Instead of uttering a negative prescription to the addressee, “don’t preach to us”, the speaker commits to “not accepting any preaching from the addressee”. The case in point is (19).

- 19) 但我们**绝不**接受“教师爷”般颐指气使的说教

*Dànwǒmen **jué** bù jiēshòu “jiàoshīyē”*
 but we **absolutely** **not** accept arrogant.lecturer
bān yízhǐqìshǐ de shuōjiào
 manner arrogant.and.bossy DE preaching
 ‘But we **absolutely do not** accept the sermons by arrogant and bossy “lecturers”.’

NARRATIVE		ARGUMENTATION		CONCLUSION
		PROCEDURAL	HORTATORY	
Problem > Goal >		Roadmap >	Commitment > Injunction >	Promise of fulfillment
Need >	Ability >	Practical necessity >	Futurity > Prohibition >	Certainty > Feasibility
<i>xūyào</i>	<i>shàn yú</i>	<i>bìxū/yào</i>	<i>yàol/bùbù > (bù)yào</i>	<i>yíding nénggōu</i>
'need to'	'be good at'	'must'	'will/will not' > 'should (not)'	certainly can
ACTORS		ADDRESSEES		ACTORS
China >	Chinese people >	Non-specific/1st person >	1st/3rd person >	CCP/ Chinese people of all ethnic groups
	Socialism			

Table 10. Modal meaning per rhetoric unit.

In conclusion, the modal distribution per rhetoric unit is given in Table 10, which shows the consistency and logical progression of the speech and also the crucial role played by prescriptive argumentation, in the form of claim for actions aimed at a purpose (procedural) and, to a lesser extent, also in the form of claim addressing the listeners to persuade them to embrace a specific course of action (hortatory).

5. Conclusions

The results of this study can be summarized in the following six observations.

- (I) The predominance of the procedural subdivision (in terms of length and modal density) over the hortatory one, hence the abundance of modals of practical necessity (anankastic) and the scarcity of modals resorting to moral necessity as a form of persuasion.

Out of four deontic expressions, two of them are injunctions to the West; moreover, a further negative injunction to foreign forces is conveyed through the negative evaluative adverb *jué bù* 'absolutely not'. The scarcity of deontic modals (and, notably, the absence of the prototypical deontic marker *yīnggāi* 应该 'should') does not imply the lack of a system of values. As highlighted in the numerous references to modern Chinese history, and in the repeated motto about learning from history (*yǐ shǐ wéi jiàn* 以史为鉴) the value system is the one already outlined, from the liberation of 1949 up to the present.

- (II) The speech itself is structured as a roadmap to the attainment of the given goal. Thus, the prevalence of goal-oriented items, as *bìxū*, in the nine-musts (anankastic).

As shown in Section 4.1.2, in impersonal constructions, *bìxū* gets a clear goal-oriented reading. In personal ones, it involves the speaker and the addressee (*wǒmen bìxū* 我们必须) and expresses a binding and unavoidable duty shared by the entire nation "on the new journey

ahead” (*xīn de zhēngchéng shàng*), as suggested by the motto introducing the nine-musts in personal construction.

- (III) The participant-external modalities are far more numerous than participant-internal ones, as shown also in the final slogan recalling the feasibility of goal achievement rather than the agent’s success.
- (IV) The role of multifunctional adverbs is more relevant compared to the evaluative ones.

The full significance of the procedural argumentation is better understood through the analysis of the evaluative adverbs occurring in the speech. While modal usage follows a specific design of the speech and is designed to attain a given rhetorical and persuasive goal, the occurrence of adverbs conveying the speaker’s stance might reveal nuances and attitudes that are not consciously planned by the speakers. As reported above, we do not find in this speech many occurrences of evaluative adverbs. Among them, we have those typically used to express necessity and certainty but also multifunctional adverbs conveying degree (*zuì* 最, *gèng* 更, *gèngwéi* 更为) as well as scope (*dōu*), and linking adverbs (*jiù*). These multifunctional adverbs contribute to buttressing the core theme (in this speech, the ‘only possibility’ related to the role of the Party) and strengthening the sense of urgency in the implementation of the programme.

- (V) The frequent use of adverbials emphasizing the meaning of continuity.

Other lexical items frequently used in adverbial function are those reinforcing the meaning of continuity as *bùduàn* ‘continuously’ and *shǐzhōng* 始终 ‘all along’ and those specifying the manner of performing actions as *quánmiàn* ‘comprehensive’ and *shēnkè* 深刻 ‘deep’. All these words, although not directly contributing to express the speakers’ stance, are nonetheless strongly evocative of the commitments in “the journey ahead”. Research results also show how epistemic adverbs (expressing certainty and inevitability, *yídìng* and *bìjiāng*, respectively) are more frequent than the others and that the distribution of the various adverbs

across the genres also reveals variety. More specifically, the theme of inevitability, in the Chinese tradition *birán* 必然, is pervasive.

- (VI) Inevitability is expressed in two ways: as ‘only possibility’, implying that the goal can only be accomplished under the guidance of the CCP; and as the historical inevitability of the realization of the Chinese dream (and inevitable failure of any attempt to stop it).

Further research (based on a significantly sampling of texts) is needed to test whether such features constitute a pattern in Chinese political discourse from a cross-linguistic perspective. This study contributes in shedding light on the linguistic devices, implicit intentions, and implications at work in this seminal speech.

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