
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Analysis of the Characteristics of Narrative Types in Contemporary Chinese Political Discourses: Taking Xi Jinping's Discourses on the History of the CPC as an Example

Caixia Wu

School of Foreign Languages, Zhaoqing University, Zhaoqing, China

Corresponding Author: Caixia Wu, **E-mail:** comfly@163.com

| ABSTRACT

Based on the different contents, topics, and characteristics of the history of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Xi Jinping's important discourses on the history of the CPC integrate three narrative types: philosophical narrative, historical narrative, and literary narrative. The integration of the three typical narrative types enables the important discourses on the history of the CPC to contain profound philosophical speculation, heavy historical connotation, and aesthetic and literary conception. The value and significance of exploring the narrative types of Xi Jinping's important discourses on the history of the CPC lie in continuously strengthening the study of Marxist classic works and promoting the Sinicization of Marxism, improving the Party history narrators' theoretical attainment and excellent traditional Chinese cultural literacy, actively participating in various forms of social practice activities, accumulating socialized discourse materials through close contact with people from different social classes, and enriching the "corpus" of discourses of the history of the CPC, thus making the narratives deeper and more concrete.

| KEYWORDS

Xi Jinping; the History of the CPC; Narrative Types; Political Discourses.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 01 December 2023

PUBLISHED: 31 December 2023

DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2023.6.12.23

1. Introduction

As a Chinese old saying goes, "Using copper as a mirror, one can straighten one's clothes and crown; Taking history as a mirror, one can know the rise and fall of the times; Using people as mirrors, one can see gains and losses" (Liu, 1975). History is the most convincing textbook, the most effective sobering agent, and the most penetrating 'telescope'. Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, Xi Jinping, the present general secretary of China, has highly conformed to the important position and unique role of learning the history of the CPC in promoting the great project of Party building. He published a series of important discourses around the most convincing textbook of the history of the CPC. These discourses provide fundamental and scientific guidance for the in-depth learning of the CPC history. Xi Jinping's important discourses on the history of the Party are lofty in intention, rich in connotation and profound in thought, which shows a great Marxist and an outstanding proletarian Party leader's profound thinking and understanding of the centennial history of the CPC. On the occasion of the centenary of the CPC, the Party Central Committee, with Xi Jinping as the core, issued a "General Mobilization Order" for the whole Party to study and educate the Party history, requiring all the CPC members to study history to clarify the truth, increase credibility, uphold morality and implement practice. The "General Mobilization Order" educated and guided the whole Party to study the Party history, understand the ideas, do practical things and start a new situation through the study and education of the Party history. Deeply studying and comprehending Xi Jinping's important discourses on Party history is one of the important essentials of Party history learning and education activities.

Narrative is both an old and new concept that spans multiple disciplines and majors, with obvious differences and divisions in its connotation and direction across different disciplines and majors. Usually, people make and use narratives to understand and

construct the discourse system, political reality, and social landscape in which people live. Unlike other discourse forms, narrative has a unique persuasive and interrelated effect, as well as a deep constructive nature. Therefore, according to specific narrative content, selecting and flexibly using certain narrative methods and techniques for theoretical interpretation and factual narration can often achieve the expected effect of directly reaching and moving people's hearts. Xi Jinping's important discourses on the Party history draw on the advantages and strengths of different narrative types and flexibly utilize different narrative methods and means, making the important discourses on the Party history both theoretically deep and practically broad. Sorting out, analyzing, and summarizing the narrative types contained and reflected in his important discourses on the Party history can provide certain methodological inspiration and reference for the propaganda of the Party history.

2. Narrative types

Narration is a fundamental human innate impulse, and its historical evolution is basically synchronized with the evolution of human history. The emergence of written language has greatly promoted the development and transformation of narrative. Afterwards, with the continuous extension of human knowledge boundaries, the ancient topic of narrative has increasingly given off unprecedented vitality. The emergence and cross integration of different narrative types have shown great potential for "being studied" in academic research. Among numerous narrative types, philosophical narrative, historical narrative, and literary narrative are widely used by narrators in philosophical, political, historical, and literary fields.

2.1 Philosophical narrative

From the perspective of Chinese philosophy, narrative and *Tai Chi* are closely related. From the perspective of traditional Chinese culture, *Tai Chi* is not only an important cultural concept but also an important philosophical concept. In the vast and voluminous collection of ancient Chinese classics and histories, the *Book of Changes* is known as the head of the group of classics and the source of Chinese culture, while *Tai Chi* is the foundation of the *Book of Changes*. *Tai Chi*, as a philosophical category, holds a very important position in the traditional Chinese philosophical system. From the initial appearance of the word, from the germination of philosophical ideas to the initial formation of the philosophical system, the connotation of *Tai Chi* has been continuously enriched, evolved, and developed (Zhao et al., 2019).

As a special philosophical term, *Tai Chi* was the earliest to explain its relationship with *Yin* and *Yang*. The *Book of Changes: Genealogy* states: "Therefore, there is *Tai Chi* in *Yi*, which generates two opposite states. Two states generate four images. Four images generate eight trigrams. Eight trigrams determine good or bad, and good or bad generates great cause." (Zhou, 2015). The *Tai Chi* Diagram, also known as the "First Picture of China," condenses and expresses the deepest philosophical principles with the simplest symbols, implying magical and mysterious meanings and profound implications. In the *Tai Chi* Diagram, it is recorded that "the infinite is *Tai Chi*. *Tai Chi* generates *Yang* when it is dynamic. Dynamics generates statics. Statics generates *Yin*. Statics generates dynamics ultimately. Dynamics and statics are the roots of each other. *Yin* and *Yang* are separated, and the two opposite states stand together" (Shi, 2016. p290).

Although the discussion on the relationship between *Tai Chi* and *Yin Yang* has never been interrupted since ancient times, the systematic concept of the transformation of all things in the universe is widely recognized and agreed upon by researchers both domestically and internationally, that is, the transformation of all things in the universe is a process of transforming the five elements of all things (metal, wood, water, fire and earth) by *Tai Chi* through the mutual reinforce and neutralization of *Yin* and *Yang*. This is also the original form and sprout of narrative concepts in the context of Chinese philosophy, which mainly refers to the holistic and systematic existence of the five elements of all things that arise from the interaction between *Tai Chi* as well as *Yin* and *Yang*. In short, narrative is the systematic and holistic existence of a specific thing. This is a relatively 'static' concept that emphasizes the 'objective existence' of specific things. Unlike the philosophical views of various schools of thought that originated from the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods in Chinese philosophy, ancient Greek mythology and heroic stories were the initial sources of the development and evolution of Western philosophy. Western philosophical historian Cornford believes that "in the vast majority of questions about origin, history disappoints us; the early connections we seek about tradition are hidden in the darkness of prehistory" (Cornford, 2014.p1). Various myths, legends, and heroic stories are products of prehistoric darkness, but they also provide sufficient nourishment for the development of Western philosophy. Among them, there are many classic mythological stories in ancient Greek mythology, legends, and hero stories, such as the creation of heaven and earth, the birth of gods, the origin of humanity, poignant love, hero salvation, and the battle between good and evil. These classic mythological stories contain many of the simplest perspectives and viewpoints, such as the fact that although gods possess the image and emotions of humans, they possess supernatural power and wisdom, immortality, and control the "code" of social changes and ups and downs, as well as individual misfortunes and fates. It can be said that the reproduction and transmission of ownership of all things in the world are closely related to the supernatural wisdom and power of God. Therefore, scholars generally believe that narrative, in the perspective of Western philosophy, usually refers to the entire process of all forms of reproduction, mutual transformation, and energy transmission of all things in the "primitive" mysterious field. Although there are significant differences between the definition of the above concepts and the understanding of narrative in Chinese philosophy, both reflect the

philosophical concepts of dialectical materialism and materialist dialectics: on the one hand, it emphasizes the objectivity of the existence of all things and the fundamental attribute and mode of existence of all things; and on the other hand, it emphasizes the objective laws of the interconnection of all things in the world. It can be said that dialectical materialism and materialist dialectics are the most distinctive characteristics and symbols of philosophical narrative.

2.2 Historical Narrative

Narrative refers to a discourse system that incorporates a specific sequence of events into a language structure that can be understood and grasped by people in chronological order, thereby giving it meaning (Peng, 2017. p2). Narrative is the original paradigm of historical research; "it is an important factor that is associated with literature and distinguishes history from general science" (Zhang, 2021). "History cannot be written on its own, as the Italian philosopher Croce once said, 'All history is contemporary history', past events need to act on current thoughts in order to revive, and only through coherence with the present can historicity be achieved" (Yu, 2021). Ancient Greek literary works are the source of historical narratives and theories related, especially the classical narrative theory pioneered by Aristotle, the master of ancient Greek philosophy, in his work *Poetics*, which has had a profound impact on later historical narratives and related theories. Literary works such as dramas and epics are the highlights of *Poetics*, so the plot of literary works has become the core issue of classical narrative theory pioneered by *Poetics*. In the 19th century, the classical narrative theory centered around literary plots pioneered by *Poetics* gradually evolved into a traditional narrative view centered around characters. At this time, pure and systematic narrative theory has not yet officially emerged.

At the beginning of the 20th century, with the transformation of Western historical theories and the transformation of historical philosophy research paradigms, historical synthesis, mainly focused on analyzing narrative structures, gradually became mainstream. In the 1970s, new historicism emerged and became popular, effectively promoting the development of historical narrative theory and historical narrative philosophy. Since the 1980s, New Historicism has swept the cultural and literary circles of Europe and America, and the core of this theory is "what exactly happened" in history (Zhang, 1993). Hayden White, a representative figure of Western New Historicism, believes that "all historical narratives presuppose the metaphorical characteristics of the events they intend to express and explain" (ibid). This means that the recording and description of history depend not only on objective historical facts but also on the narrator's narrative style and value stance (Zeng, 2021). Therefore, subjective factors such as the narrator's knowledge structure, political stance, values, moral standards, and aesthetic tendencies can have an undeniable impact on the historical narrative. In this sense, pure and objective history is only an idealized existence. This is probably the main reason why "history is like a girl who can be willingly dressed up by others" (Hu, 1919).

As a member of the narrative family, historical narratives have the common characteristics of general narratives; that is, they are similar in structure and function, but historical narratives also have their particularity; that is, they are composed of real historical figures and events. Authenticity is the nature of historical narrative. The emphasis on the authenticity of historical narrative lies in how it fills the gaps in historical existence to a certain extent. Multidimensionality is a distinct characteristic and prominent feature of history. For historical narrative, the more comprehensive the narrative perspective is, the closer it is to real history. Authentic, credible, and reliable historical narratives prompt people to think about their own grand propositions and ultimate concerns related to their own human future and destiny, such as "who I am", "where I came from and where I went", why I am "like this" now, and what possibilities are there in the future. This further examines the appropriate positioning and future direction of the "self" in society and the times in history. So, the historical narrative is not about creating opposition but about seeking the interactive relationship between action and structure (Jiao & Ma, 2021). Famous works of the era about comparative narrative include Xu Zidong's *To Forget Collective Memory: Interpreting 50 Cultural Revolution Novels* (Xu, 2000) and Nan Zhigang's *The Carnival of Narration and Aesthetic Variation: Narrative Studies and Contemporary Chinese Vanguard Novels* (Nan, 2006), among others.

2.3 Literary Narrative

Literature is an aesthetic ideology. The aesthetic ideology essence of literary narrative not only restricts the content of the narrative but also restricts and influences the form of the narrative. The intrinsic nature of literary narrative makes it different from everyday narrative language. Generally speaking, the focus of a literary narrative is on the entire process of social life events, that is, the social behavior and consequences of the subject of social life - "human being" - in this process, rather than the static "human" and "thing" themselves.

Tan Junqiang proposed in *Time and the Expression of Time in Narrative Works* (Tan, 2018) that there are significant differences in the narrative of time in narrative works. He made a detailed comparison between Western narrative works and Indian narrative literature. He found that Western narrative works place great emphasis on timing and are more inclined towards linear narrative, emphasizing the causal logic between events to develop the plot. Indian narrative writing, on the other hand, places more emphasis on spatiality and pays less attention to time: the chronicles of works are chaotic, the time when classic works were written cannot

be confirmed, and there are countless ambiguous aspects of time. Therefore, many narrative texts are more like “legends”. The difference between them reflects not only the question of who is the primary narrator in terms of time and space but also the deeper meaning of different worldviews: how the West and India view the world. China also has a long and excellent tradition of handling narrative time. Li Fu’s *Autumn Mountain Essay* divides narrative methods into nine categories: sequential, reverse, categorical, retroactive, covert, borrowed, supplementary, and special narratives, all based on the treatment of narrative time. It also involves two categories of time: the events experienced by actual events in the world of narrative fiction and the time expressed in narrative works. (Tan, 2018)

The development process of literary narrative indicates that the significant value of literary narrative lies in truthfully recording the development and changes in social life and objectively and fairly evaluating the significance of this process. It is generally believed that literary narrative consists of three levels: narrative content, narrative discourse, and narrative action. Specifically, the content of the narrative is the story (histoire) told by the particular subject of the narrative discourse, the narrative discourse is the statement itself that presents the story, and the main purpose of the narrative action is to dominate the narrative discourse of the narrative itself. Among them, the content of the narrative mainly refers to “what”, that is, the raw material of the story and events; the narrative discourse mainly refers to “how”, in other words, presenting a particular storyline and the full picture of the events, with different narrative types and narrative ways. The fictional and hypothetical nature of narrative discourse is a prominent feature of literary narrative. The enrollment of narrative action makes this feature more specific. Therefore, the combination of narrative discourse and narrative action makes the narrative types and narrative ways of literary narrative more flexible, skillful and varied. A rough estimate indicates the most common narrative types and ways of literary narratives include the sequence of time, the changes in person, the shift of perspectives, the conversion of space and time, the regulation of time span, the frequency level, the “pun” of dialogues, and the use of many Chinese rhetorical methods. Undoubtedly, the use of the above narrative methods effectively makes literary narratives more contagious and expands the content of literary narratives. The transformation of time and space is one of the common methods used in many literary narratives.

Some scholars believe that time, as an important dimension of literary narrative, plays an important role in the historical transformation of modern Chinese novels from “traditional” to “modern” in terms of its content, form, structure, etc. The time contains unique aesthetic significance. The dimension of time in modern novels lies in the specific historical time and space. The temporal elements of modern novels can reflect the specific historical time and space of narration. As a special way for readers to learn history, it is also injected with the new vitality of the value of time (Wang, 2018. p110). In some literary narratives, there are many examples of using the shift of space as a clue to create gripping stories. Thus, “space” has developed into a research category integrating humanities and natural disciplines, far beyond the previous perception that space refers to the concept of natural science.

Among the numerous methods of literary narration, the one that has fascinated literary narrators throughout the times and has been heavily utilized is probably Chinese rhetoric, which is profound and has distinguished Chinese language characteristics. Chinese rhetoric has developed into an important branch of language science, and there are independent courses on Chinese rhetoric in literature majors in colleges and universities. Due to the limitation of the topic under discussion, the Chinese rhetorical methods mentioned in this paper mainly refer to such techniques as metaphor, parallelism, quotation, contrast, irony, metonymy, allusion, puns, epigram, hyperbole, anadiplosis, *two-part allegorical saying*, homophone, symbolism and euphemism, etc. The proper use of the above Chinese rhetorical methods turns on the artistic charm of literary narratives and makes literature an indispensable spiritual food and habitat for human beings. Che Jinshan proposed in *The Imagination of Comparative Narrative Studies* (Che, 2006) that by comparing narrative texts and theories, cultural similarities and differences, as well as their causes, can be revealed, ultimately demonstrating that each language, literature, and culture divides and explains the world with their own unique structure in tradition. They are homogeneous and are a way and form of interacting with the world.

3. An analysis of the narrative types of Xi Jinping’s important discourses on the history of the CPC

Xi Jinping’s important discourses on the Party history have a long-time span, a wide spatial dimension, a high political stance, a deep theoretical dimension, strong internal logic, vivid expression forms, and strong ideological, political, directional, and artistic qualities. It is also considered an indispensable “mentor” for publicizing the history of the CPC. It stems from Xi Jinping’s effective utilization of philosophical narratives, historical narratives, and literary narratives according to the contents, topics, and characteristics of CPC’s history. The three types of narratives are integrated into the discourses, thus making the discourses fairly insightful, logical, powerful and sentimental.

3.1 Philosophical narratives in Xi Jinping’s important discourses on the history of the CPC

Dialectical Materialism and Materialist Dialectics are the most distinctive characters of philosophical narratives, as well as the principles that philosophical narratives have to follow. Therefore, when applying philosophical narratives, the narrator is objectively

required to be familiar with the logic of materialism and dialectic embedded in the objects of the narrative and concisely present them to the receiver so that the receiver can perceive and learn what has been said in the philosophical narrative discourse. Xi Jinping has effectively employed philosophical narratives when discussing the advantages of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics and how to properly understand the two historical periods before and after the Reform and Opening-up. His words are concise yet rich in meaning, showcasing a profound philosophical and speculative essence.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the first generation of central leadership, with Mao Zedong at its core, led the entire Party and people of all ethnic groups in "carrying out the socialist revolution, promoting socialist construction, and laying the fundamental political prerequisites and institutional foundations for realizing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" (*The People's Daily*, 2021). In the new era of Reform and Opening-up and socialist modernization construction, the second generation of Chinese central leadership, with Deng Xiaoping at its core, put forward the significant task of "building socialism with Chinese characteristics" and guided the nation to achieve this goal. The national conditions at that time indicated that the socialist system with Chinese characteristics was the most suitable political system that reflected the common interest of the whole nation.

The socialist system with Chinese characteristics is deeply rooted in the vast land of China. Growing with the excellent political genes of the 5,000-year-old Chinese civilization, it has laid a solid institutional foundation and provided strong institutional guarantees for the development and progress of Chinese society in the new era. Xi Jinping has comprehensively reviewed the development, logic and laws of different socialist systems around the world. He concluded the features and advantages of a socialist system with Chinese characteristics in comparison to other countries. He also pointed out that the socialist system in China is not simply "a 'template' that classical Marxist writers proposed, not a 'model' that follows the traditional national system of China, not a 'copy' of other socialist systems or Western systems. Instead, it is a "new version" that conforms to China's conditions, reflects the nature of the country, ensures the people's role of managing the country, enhances the people's democratic dictatorship and enjoys considerable support nationwide. It is a great creation made by the whole nation (He, 2021. p36). Through horizontal connections and comparisons, this discourse examines the relationship between the socialist system with Chinese characteristics and the traditional state system of China, socialist practices in other countries, and the systems of Western countries. It provides insights into the advantages and disadvantages of systems, as well as similarities and differences, fully reflecting the basic viewpoint of dialectical materialism on connections and also highlighting the theoretical dimension of dialectical materialism.

The initiation of the Reform and Opening-up policy in the late 1970s was a pivotal move that has determined the fate of contemporary China. It propelled China's economic and social development onto the fast track, allowing China to catch up with the times. Over the past four decades of the Reform and Opening-up, China has achieved remarkable accomplishments in economic and social development, enhancing its comprehensive national strength. China's international status and influence have reached unprecedented levels, making it a crucial player on the world political stage and gradually approaching the center of the world stage. With the great historic achievements and far-reaching changes that the country has achieved since the Reform and Opening-up, there has been a "back flow" of historical nihilism initiated by those who have ulterior motives. They distort, defame, and even completely deny the achievements of our socialist revolution and construction in the first thirty years of the Reform and Opening-up. They believe that the first thirty years were a "dark period" in the history of socioeconomic development, especially the ten years of the "Cultural Revolution", which resulted in significant stagnation or even regression in China and is seen as the primary reason why China has not caught up with Western developed countries and achieved modernization. In response to the various misconceptions and negative ideological trends in society regarding the two historical periods before and after the Reform and Opening-up, Xi Jinping clearly argued that "although these two historical periods differ significantly in the ideological guidance, policy principles, and practical work of socialist construction, they are by no means disconnected from each other, let alone fundamentally opposed...The historical period after the Reform and Opening up cannot be used to negate the historical period before the Reform and Opening up, nor can the historical period before the Reform and Opening up be used to negate the historical period after the Reform and Opening up" (Xi, 2021. p4). The important discourse by Xi Jinping eloquently analyzes the inseparable and interconnected dialectical relationship between the historical periods before and after the Reform and Opening-up. It rectifies the misunderstandings of the two historical periods and highlights the power and charm of philosophical narratives.

3.2 Historical narratives in Xi Jinping's important discourses on the history of the CPC

The past one hundred years of the CPC have been a century of unwavering commitment to its original mission, a century of laying the foundation and achieving success through arduous efforts, and a century of creating brilliance and forging the future. Xi Jinping

often quotes real historical stories, examples, and facts to discuss the Party's magnificent century-long history, aiming to reveal the truth of history, reflect reality, and map out the future.

Adhering to the principle of serving the people and relying on the people is the underlying reason why the CPC has developed from small to large in size, from weak to strong in power, and has been historically chosen to rely on by the people. Only the CPC, which constantly thinks about the hardships of the people and constantly strategizes for their prosperity, can derive the loyal support of the public and form a close relationship with the masses. In 2016, at the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Red Army's Long March, Xi Jinping told the story of the "half a quilt". It is said that in November 1934, during the Long March of the Red Army, three female Red Army soldiers were looking for lodging in a countryside household. The family was so poor that they didn't even have enough quilts in the home. When the soldiers left after the lodging, they cut their only quilt in half and left one half for the villager landlord. The villager was so moved that she said the CPC members are the kind of people who cut half of their own quilt and give it to the poor and needy.

Xi Jinping cited the real historical stories of "half a quilt" and the death of the logistics officer during the march to illustrate a simple truth. That is, Communist Party members, especially the leaders at all levels, must prioritize the people and truly ensure that the people's interests are of utmost importance, above all else. In addition to the story of "half a quilt", Xi Jinping also told the story of the director of the Military Supplies Department, who was frozen to death during the Red Army's crossing of the Jiajin Mountain in June 1935. In the march of crossing the snow mountain, a Red Army soldier lost his life due to his insufficient clothing in the severe coldness, and this soldier was proved to be the director of the Military Supplies Department of the army. This embodies the spirit of dedication and kindness of the Red Army, balancing the greater good and sacrificing oneself for others. It is with this selfless spirit that the Chinese workers' and peasants' Red Army supported the weak and those who couldn't walk, overcoming a magnificent 25,000-mile Long March and shaping the spirit of the great journey that transcends time and space. "Political consciousness may seem invisible, but it manifests as a powerful force in critical moments. Our Party has won numerous fierce struggles with the selfless dedication of millions of advanced individuals with strong political consciousness." (Xi, 2019. p15). For the CPC members, maintaining a high level of political consciousness at all times is an essential prerequisite for strictly adhering to political discipline and rules and sincerely serving the people. When emphasizing the importance of belief and the enormous power it generates, Xi shared the story of Chen Wangdao's translation of "The Communist Manifesto" to illustrate that "the taste of truth is sweet" and the immense strength that firm belief can unleash. True historical stories, examples, and facts are superior to all empty preaching and admonitions. Many truths are self-evident in the face of facts, many crooked truths are self-evident in the face of examples, and many truths are embedded in the story plots. This is the charm of historical narrative.

In addition, Xi Jinping's important discourses on the history of the Party are filled with real and concise historical facts. In December 2017, while visiting the Huaihai Campaign Memorial Museum, Xi Jinping remarked, "The victory of the Huaihai Campaign was achieved by pushing small carts." During his visit to the Yangtze River Crossing Campaign Memorial Museum, Xi Jinping stated, "The victory of the Yangtze River Crossing Campaign was achieved by the people using small boats." These incontrovertible facts reveal the political logic of the CPC rooted in the masses, as well as the vivid portrayal of the unity between the army and the people. Over the past forty years of the Reform and Opening up, the Party has led the nation with all the ethnic groups to overcome various obstacles, composing a new chapter in the volume of the Reform and Opening up and socialist construction with Chinese characteristics. In his speech at the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Reform and Opening Up, Xi Jinping noted, "In the past 40 years, we have always adhered to the central position of economic development, continuously liberated and developed social productivity. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of China increased from 367.9 billion RMB to 82.7 trillion RMB in 2017, with an average annual growth rate of 9.5%, far exceeding that of the world economy at around 2.9% during the same period. The proportion of China's GDP to the world's total GDP has risen from 1.8% at the beginning of the Reform and Opening to 15.2%, contributing more than 30% to the world economic growth for many years (Xi, 2021). Facts speak louder than words, and numbers prove authenticity. Perceiving the pulse of the historical beat from the truth of the historical narrative, exploring the context of historical development, summarizing the gains and losses of historical development, and learning from history are probably the most precious gifts that historical narrative gives us.

3.3 Literary narratives in Xi Jinping's important discourses on the history of the CPC

In his important discourses on the history of the CPC, Xi Jinping skillfully make use of literary narratives, endowing the history of the CPC with an imaginative literary color and artistic conception. Through the works constructed by literary narrative, people can learn about the Party's history, comprehend the ideology, strengthen their determination to accomplish tasks and enhance their confidence in breaking new ground.

On November 29, 2012, General Secretary Xi Jinping led the newly elected members of the Politburo Standing Committee of the CPC to visit the "Road to Revival" exhibition, summarizing and describing the past, present, and future of the Chinese nation with three lines of poetry, "Idle boast the strong pass is a wall of iron" (Mao, 1935), "The right path in the world is the vicissitudes of life" (Mao, 1949), and "A time will come to long winds and breaking waves" (Li, 744AD) respectively standing for the past, present and future. These lines carry profound meanings and provoke deep thoughts. "Idle boast the strong pass is a wall of iron" refers to the 109 years of intense national suffering and the desperate fight of the Chinese people for national independence and liberation since the First Opium War in 1840. "The right path in the world is the vicissitudes of life" refers to the fact that China finally found and established the development path of socialism with Chinese characteristics after extensively exploring various possibilities and systematically evaluating the historical experience of socialist modernization construction under the guidance of the CPC since the Reform and Opening up. "A time will come to long winds and breaking waves" means that after more than 170 years of struggle, there is a bright prospect of national rejuvenation. When it comes to beliefs, Xi Jinping stressed, "With firm beliefs, one's bones are strong. Without beliefs or with weak beliefs, one's spirit will be 'calcium deficient' and will suffer from 'osteoporosis'. It may lead to political degradation, economic regression, moral degeneration, and personal corruption." Xi employed the metaphor of 'calcium deficiency' and 'osteoporosis' to warn of the negative consequences that Party members may face if they do not cling to the belief of lofty ideals of Marxism, communism, and socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Xi Jinping employed a lot of Chinese cautionary rhetorical devices. These rhetorical devices can maximize the audience's reflection and alertness, providing them with enlightening insights. At the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC, Xi Jinping stated that "the CPC always represents the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people... It has no special interests of its own and never represents the interests of any interest group, any power group, or any privileged class. Any attempt to separate and oppose the CPC from the Chinese people will never succeed! Over 95 million members will not agree! Over 1.4 billion Chinese people will not let it happen!" (Xi, 2021) The resounding and stern discourse carries a strong warning tone and a powerful alertness.

The warning tone and powerful alertness stemmed from Xi Jinping's keen observations and strong aversion towards corruption within the Party, such as "paying homage", "seeking protection", and "recruiting followers". If these corrupt phenomena are not timely restrained and eliminated, they will eventually degenerate into interest groups, power groups, and special classes within the Party. This will lead to the deterioration of the Party-mass relations and cadre-mass relations, culminating in irreparable damage. When celebrating the centenary of the CPC, Xi Jinping noted that "The nation is built by the people, and the people are the foundation of the nation. Safeguarding the nation means winning the loyalty of the people" (ibid). The intention is to admonish the entire Party that the people's loyalty is the most crucial aspect of politics and that the Party's survival depends on the support of the people. All the CPC members must unite with the masses, work together to face challenges and difficulties, share the joys and sorrows of the people, and strive hand in hand to achieve the great Chinese dream of the rejuvenation of the nation.

4. Conclusion

The narrative types implied and reflected in Xi Jinping's important discourses on Party history stem from his profound understanding of Marxist theory, his Chinese cultural literacy, as well as his rich work practice and social experience. The purpose of sorting out and summarizing the narrative types implied and reflected in Xi Jinping's important discourses on the history of the CPC is to provide methodological enlightenment and references for activities of learning the Party history. However, the premise is that the Party history narrators need to carry them out from the following three dimensions.

First, the Party history narrators should keep studying Marxist theory, especially the classical Marxist works, continuously extending their theoretical knowledge to ensure that the Party history discourses are based on both facts and theory with solid evidence. In a speech at the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of Marx's birth, Xi Jinping pointed out that "the CPC members should take reading Marxist classics and understanding Marxist principles as part of life, and make it a spiritual pursuit. The CPC members should use the classics to cultivate integrity, refine their thinking, elevate their realm, and guide their practice" (Xi, 2018). The Marxist classics are the essence of the treasure trove of Marxist theory. The classics should be widely shared and learned. When studying the Marxist classics, one needs to carefully consider each word and phrase, repeatedly study and understand, and transform them into his own thoughts and language, constructing his own framework of Marxist theory. Only in this way can they constantly strengthen the theoretical foundation of Marxism, enhance confidence and courage, and elevate the theoretical connotation and height of the Party's historical discourses.

Second, the Party history narrators should constantly broaden their knowledge of Chinese excellent traditional culture, integrating wisdom and inspirational stories into the entire process of the Party history discourses. The Chinese excellent traditional culture has a long and profound history, rich in profound life philosophy, profound social thinking, and deep insights into the relationship between humans and nature. Xi Jinping effectively employed proverbs and inspirational stories from excellent Chinese traditional culture in the Party history discourses, which is due to his passion for reading and learning. "I have many hobbies, and my biggest hobby is reading. Reading has become part of my life" (Xi, 2013), he said in an interview with the media of the BRICS countries in 2013. As a role model himself, Xi Jinping also demands that CPC members and cadres at all levels regard reading and learning as a way of life and take it as part of work responsibility and spiritual pursuit. Therefore, the Party history narrators should keep reading and learning and get familiar with the classics of excellent Chinese traditional culture. As composed by the great Chinese poet Su Shi in the Song dynasty, "People who have read poetry and books have a dazzling temperament, and only books can help them go further."

Third, the Party history narrators should actively participate in various social activities to accumulate socialized linguistic materials through close contact with people from different social classes, enriching the "corpus" of the Party history discourses. Xi Jinping's important discourses on the Party history are popular and widely accepted; one of the important reasons is that the language and materials connect with the local atmosphere, making the audience easy and willing to accept. Xi Jinping spent seven years in Liangjiahe, Yan'an, where he accumulated firsthand experiences of rural life. He was proficient in using rural slang, dialects, and proverbs when speaking in the "local language". After graduating from university, Xi Jinping worked at different levels of the Party committees until serving as the highest leader of the Party and the country. His rich work experience and social experience allow him to flexibly use personalized and warm words to interact with people from all walks of life in China, making the Party's history discourses both popular and full of human touch. Therefore, the Party history narrators should be good at learning and summarizing language materials in social practice and apply them to different occasions and objects of the Party history discourses, making them more targeted and directional.

There exist limitations to the study due to the scope of the author's attention. This article only points out the narrative types of these political discourses and analyzes their respective characteristics, regretfully, without conducting a critical analysis of them. This study does not indicate which narrative types are more suitable for which political discourses or which narrative types have stronger and more effective discourse consequences under certain circumstances. What's more, this study is only a limited analysis in the name of political discourses. The case selected in this study is the political discourse of the highest leader of the country, and the author did not explain its uniqueness compared to other political discourses, nor did it point out the limitations of using Xi Jinping's discourses solely as cases for analysis of narrative types of political discourses.

On account of these, future research may fall upon amending the above limitations. Besides, with the changes in social ideology, people's interpretation and acceptance of narrative types have undergone significant changes. Improper narrative types in political discourses can lead to misreading and even weaken the narrative power of political discourses. This is a direction for future research. Currently, the excessive popularity and utilitarianism of mass media have led to poor narrative effectiveness of traditional political discourses. Therefore, meeting audience needs, changing the way narratives are told, and stimulating the narrative vitality of political discourses is also the direction of future research.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

References:

- [1] Che, J. (2006). The Imagination of Comparative Narrative Studies. *Chinese Comparative Literature*, (2).
- [2] Cornford, F.M. (2014). *From Religion to Philosophy: A Study of the Origin of Western Thought*. (Zeng, Q.& Wang, T. Trans). Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House.
- [3] He, X. (2021). Four guarantees for the Chinese nation to create a "new path of Chinese path to modernization". *People's Tribune*. 9.
- [4] Hu, S. (1919). On Pragmatism. *New Youth*. 6 (4).
- [5] Jiao, R., Ma, Z. (2021). Rethinking the Relationship between the State and Society in Historical Narrative. *Journal of Jinan University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 3 (12).
- [6] Liu, S. (1975). *Old Book of Tang Dynasty: Biography of Wei Zheng*. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- [7] Nan, Z. (2006). *The Carnival of Narration and Aesthetic Variation: Narrative Studies and Contemporary Chinese Vanguard Novels*. Beijing: Huaxia Publishing House.
- [8] Peng, G. (2017). *The Turn of Narration: An Examination of Contemporary Western Historical Theory*. Beijing: Peking University Press.

- [9] Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party's Hundred Years of Struggle. (2021). *The People's Daily*, 2021-11-17, (1st ed.).
- [10] Shi, Y. (2016). *The Pioneering Work of New Confucianism: Notes on Shi Youbo's 'Zhou Zitong' Theory and 'Tai Chi Diagram' Theory*. Beijing: China Federation of Industry and Commerce Press.
- [11] Tan, J. (2018). *Narrative Studies: Multiple Perspectives*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Publishing House.
- [12] Wang, X. (2018). *The Transformation of Narrative Art in Modern Novels from the Perspective of Time*. Nanchang: Jiangxi Social Sciences. Vol (4).
- [13] Xi, J. (2019). Consistent implementation of the new great project of promoting party building. *Seeking Truth*. (12).
- [14] Xi, J. (2021). *On the History of the Communist Party of China*. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press. (1st ed.).
- [15] Xi, J. (2021). Speech at the Congress of Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Founding of the CPC. *The People's Daily*, 2021-7-1, (1st ed.).
- [16] Xi, J. (2022). Uphold the Cause of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, Unite and Strive for the Comprehensive Construction of a Socialist Modernized Country. *The People's Daily*, 2022-10-17, (1st ed.).
- [17] Xu, Z. (2000). *To Forget Collective Memory: Interpreting 50 Cultural Revolution Novels*. Shanghai: Joint Publishing Company.
- [18] Xi Jinping's interview with the media of the BRICS countries. (2013) <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/0320/c64094-20845747-3.html>.
- [19] Xi J (2018) Speech at the commemoration ceremony of the 200th anniversary of Marx's birth. http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-05/04/c_1122783997.html.
- [20] Yu, X. (2021). Six People - Chinese Survivors on Titanic. *China Film News*, 2021-5-7, (1st ed.).
- [21] Zhang, X. (2021). The Significance and Limits of Historical Narrative. *Chinese Social Sciences Weekly*, 2021-4-13, (1st ed.).
- [22] Zhao, Z., Yuan, C., Li, Q. (2019). Research on Tai Chi Philosophy from the Perspective of Traditional Chinese Culture. *Chinese Medical Culture*, 4 (21).
- [23] Zhou, P. (2015). *The Book of Changes*. Beijing: Beijing United Publishing Company.