

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Reports on Alaska Meeting from Chinese and American Mainstream Newspapers

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Abstract

The research aims to conduct a comparative study on the reports of the China-US high-level strategic dialogue in Alaska from *China Daily* and *The New York Times* under the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis. It is found that in the description stage, Chinese journalists mostly use positive words to express friendliness, while American media focuses on its own interests. In terms of transitivity, material processes are the most frequently used in both media. Finally, Chinese media always uses median modals to ensure objective, while American media mainly uses low median modal verbs. In the interpretation stage, through the analysis of news sources and reporting modes, both of them mostly use specific sources and direct speech to ensure the objectivity. In the explanation stage, through comparative analysis, the institutional, political and social-cultural contexts have a certain influence on the choice and expression of news discourse.

Keywords

Critical Analysis Discourse; Alaska Meeting; News Report; Ideology.

1. Introduction

On March 18 and 19, 2021, the China-US High-Level Strategic Dialogue was held in Anchorage, Alaska. As the first high-level meeting between China and US since Biden took office, it has attracted worldwide attention.

The term "Critical Discourse Analysis" was first coined by Roger Flower (1979) in *Language and Control*. As a new method of discourse analysis, it aims to reveal the ideology expressed through language in the text, which provides a new idea for the research of news reports and improve the credibility and objectivity of the research. Fairclough (1989) further proposes the three-dimensional approach of CDA studies: the text, discursive practice and social practice. On this basis, Fairclough proposed the three levels of CDA analysis: description, which is related to the textual structure; interpretation, which shows connection between text and discourse practice; explanation, which studies the relationship between discourse practice and social practice.

Meanwhile, according to Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, language is emphasized as a tool for social communication. The formation of language system is precisely determined by the realization of various semantic functions in the long-term interaction. Similarly, when people make choices in a language system, they also engage in motivational activities based on the functions to be performed. There are three meta-functions of SFG, called ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function. Halliday's SFG functions provide a vital analytical path for discourse analysis on political news reports.

In such a context, this research investigates the news reports of the China-US high-level strategic dialogue in Alaska from *China Daily* and *The New York Times* under the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis with Fairclough's three-dimensional analysis model as the theoretical framework, and Halliday's SFG as analysis tool, aiming to explore the way

ideology controls and influences language in news discourse, and then reveals the dialectical relationship between discourse, power and ideology.

2. Description Stage

According to Fairclough (2003), the stage of description is to determine categories of participant, constructions of participant's identity or relations of the subjects, the positions of subjects and objects, and functions of power in the use of language. The description stage is the first stage in which CDA describes the linguistic features of selected news, the following will be analyzed in detail from these three aspects: classification, transitivity and modality.

2.1. Classification

Classification is an important means to embody the ideational function of language. Fowler (1991) mentions that classification is the most basic cognitive way of human beings, which conceptualizes and classifies the external world by means of language to give order to the external world. The classification of discourse is mainly realized through the choice of vocabulary (Flower, 1979). But lexical choice is influenced by cognitive level and emotional factors. It can be said that the process of constructing text is actually a process of lexical choice, which must be influenced by certain social contexts, ideologies and power relations. Diverse people may choose different words to describe the same event, which can reflect their diversified world views and positions towards the event. To put it another way, the different stances and viewpoints hidden and expressed in news discourse are largely embodied by the word choice. Van Dijk (2008) also points out that lexical choice is an eminent aspect of news discourse in which hidden opinions or ideologies may surface. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the lexical choices of the samples collected from *China Daily* and *The New York Times*, so as to reveal journalists' positions and hidden ideologies in news reports.

It can be seen from Table 1 that *China Daily* and *The New York Times* have different descriptions of the Alaska meeting. Through the diversified choice of vocabulary, it depicts the diversified image of China and exposes the different attitude and political positions of journalists.

China Daily is one of the mainstream media in China, representing and safeguarding China's interests and conveying China's wishes. The *China Daily* reporter aims to build a China's image as a confident, strong and open country. "No conflict", "mutual respect" and "win-win cooperation" were used to describe the goals of the High-level Strategic Dialogue in Alaska Between the US and China, demonstrating China's determination to oppose hegemonism and pursue win-win cooperation.

But there are some prejudices and misunderstandings about the purpose of the Alaska meeting. Like *The New York Times*, it argues that China is ambitious to provoke conflict and undermine the peaceful world order. *The New York Times* reporters used the adjective "dangerous" to spread the "China threat theory", thinking that China is seeking to dominate the world and pursuing unilateralism. As a matter of fact, China has no intention of seeking hegemony and is committed to upholding world peace and order and win-win cooperation. In addition, we can see that *The New York Times* does not provide true information, and even deliberately distorts China's good starting point and intention. In the application of some words or phrases, it deliberately blackens China's image, which may cause dissatisfaction among people of other countries and undermine the unity and cooperation between China and other countries.

Table 1. The Description of the Aims of the Alaska Meeting in *China Daily* and *The New York Times*

<i>China Daily</i>	<i>The New York Times</i>
China has manifested its willingness to fulfill the principle of no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation. (News 1)	Now that each government has had its say, the United States should take the high ground and find ways to reduce tensions, even if those can partly be blamed on China’s recent actions. (News 3)
We hope that China and the United States can find ways to collaborate on critical issues, notably on climate change, on rebuilding the post-COVID world. (News 2)	The United States had a long history of openly confronting its shortcomings, “not trying to ignore them, not trying to pretend they don’t exist, trying to sweep them under the rug.” (News 2)
Resuming high-level contacts and exchanges is a key precondition for stabilizing China-us ties. (News 3)	The extraordinary rancor aired by China’s top diplomats in Alaska reflected a newly combative and unapologetic China, one increasingly unbowed by diplomatic pressure from American presidential administration. (News 4)
All the agenda items eligible for discussing are on the table, and during the dialogue, Beijing will make clear its position and concerns, he said, reiterating China’s strong will to champion core interests. (News 4)	Afterward, senior Biden administration officials insisted the conversations were useful for providing insight into Beijing’s views, which could help frame a new American strategy for competing with China in a wide range of areas. (News 4)
We hope this can be beginning, and the two sides will start a process of honest, constructive and rational dialogue and communication. If this can be achieved, the dialogue will already be successful. (News 5)	He had opened the talks by asserting a goal to “strengthen the rules-based international order.” (News 5)

2.2. Transitivity

Transitivity is a systematic linguistic term, which focuses on the ideational function of language at the level of clause (Fairclough, 1992). Because of the difference of personal experience and social background, people describe the same event differently. In news reporting, journalists choose different types of processes, different participants and different situations to report an event according to their political positions and ideological tendencies. Therefore, the analysis of transitivity is of great significance for CDA and revealing its hidden meaning.

According to Halliday, people’s experiences can be divided into six different processes, that is, “material process, mental process, relational process, behavioral process, verbal process and existential process” (Halliday, 2000: 107).

In the following part, according to these six processes, the transitivity of selected news samples will be systematically analyzed. And the distribution of the six processes is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows the brief distribution of the six major processes of *China Daily* and *The New York Times*, respectively. Clearly, there are some similarities and differences between the two newspapers.

According to the research results, *China Daily* processed 167 pieces of materials, accounting for 59.4% of the total, while *The New York Times* processed 163 pieces, accounting for 62.7% of the total. In the psychological process, the two newspapers have almost equal numbers, *China Daily* has 8, accounting for 2.8%, and *The New York Times* has 6, accounting for 2.3%. And in the relationship process, *China Daily* has 33 related items, accounting for 11.8%, while in *The New York Times* there are 24, accounting for 9.2%. Neither *China Daily* nor *The New York Times* have a course of action. There were large differences in speech processes, with *China Daily* almost twice as many as *The New York Times*, 68 (24.2%) and 59 (22.7%) respectively. Existential

processes account for 5 (1.8%) and 8 (3.1%) in *China Daily* and *The New York Times*, respectively.

Table 2. The Distribution of Six Processes

Processes	<i>China Daily</i>		<i>The New York Times</i>	
	Number	Proportion	Number	Proportion
Material Process	167	59.4%	163	62.7%
Mental Process	8	2.8%	6	2.3%
Relational Process	33	11.8%	24	9.2%
Verbal Process	68	24.2%	59	22.7%
Behavior Process	0	0%	0	0%
Existential Process	5	1.8%	8	3.1%
Total	281	100%	260	100%

In addition, there are some similarities in the six main processes of the two newspapers. It can be seen in both *China Daily* and *The New York Times* that among these six main processes, the material process is the most frequently used process, followed by the language process and the psychological process, and the behavioral process is the most frequently used process. The two newspapers are the least frequently used. Therefore, the author analyzes the news reports of the Alaska meeting in detail from two aspects: material process, and verbal process.

2.2.1. Material Process

Material process is a process of doing or taking place, usually composed of three elements: actor, process and goal. Actor and Goal are the two main participants in the material process and the process itself is usually represented by dynamic verbs such as break and build. Actor means the logical subject and Goal means the logically direct object which can be presented by nouns like my mother, house and pronouns such as she, he. Who is the actor in this process depends on the journalists' aims and positions, and it can easily be manipulated by the journalist's ideologies.

The table below is a sample of *China Daily* and *The New York Times*. Table 3 is the material process sample of *China Daily*. These actors can be divided into four types: China-related, US-related, China-US-related and other countries-related.

As we can see, in the process of China-related, we can see that "securing the bottom line for China-US ties" shows that China attaches great importance to Sino-US cooperation and sticks to the bottom line in order to achieve fairness and justice. Use "have no room" to express China's attitude of sticking to its position, and will never compromise or make concessions on territorial issues. In addition, China is firmly committed because China adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. Therefore, China has also stated its position. While firmly safeguarding its own core interests, it will never infringe on the interests of other countries. These all reflect China's sincerity and unswerving stance in cooperating with the United States and seeking common development.

In the process of US-related, expressions such as "break away" and "realize" mean that the United States still has many misunderstandings about China. China sincerely hopes that this meeting can eliminate misunderstandings and reach a consensus. In addition, China hopes that the United States can correctly view China's current development and growth. In fact, this is

beneficial to the world. China is a country that adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and will actively handle friendly relations between countries.

Table 3. Material Processes in *China Daily*

	Actor	Process
China-related	Chen Dongxiao	underlined the importance of securing the bottom line for China-US ties, which is to prevent miscalculation or misjudgment from leading to military conflicts. (News 1)
	China	has “no room” for compromise and concessions. (News 3)
	Beijing	will make clear its position and concerns, he said, reiterating China’s strong will to champion core interests. (News 4)
US-related	Blinken	took a tough stance on several occasions against China on topic including human being. (News1)
	The US	should realize China’s firm determination to safeguard its own sovereignty, security and development interests. (News 4)
	The new administration	should break away from a Cold War mentality and View China and ties with China in an objective way. (News 2)
	Washington	recently came up with a slew of negative words and deeds regarding China ahead of the dialogue. (News 4)
China-US-related	Both China and the US	bear special responsibility for world peace and development. (News 1)
	The two sides	will start a process of honest, constructive and rational dialogue and communication. (News 5)
	Both sides	should grab the chance for dialogue “with a strong sense of urgency”. (News 1)
Other countries-related	Many countries	have such questions. Some just don’t say it in public. (News 4)
	World leaders and senior scholars	expected Beijing and Washington to fully tap into opportunities created by their upcoming high-level strategic dialogue to mitigate hostility..... (News 2)

In the third category related to both China and US. The use of words and phrases such as "bear special responsibility", "start" fully proves the significance of the existence of this Alaska meeting, which will strengthen Sino-US cooperation and promote the development of both sides to achieve the goal of mutual benefit and win-win. More importantly, the word "should grab the chance" reflects the determination and firm attitude of both sides towards China-US cooperation.

In the last category, the phrase "have such question" shows that other countries also have a great misunderstanding of China, believing that China is trying to dominate the world and put its own interests first, but in fact China insists on coexisting friendly with other countries and working together to build a community with a shared future and seek common prosperity.

Table 4 is the material process sample of *The New York Times*. Unlike *China Daily*, the samples from The New York Daily Times present a different material process. The actors are mainly divided into two aspects: China-related, US-related.

Table 4. Material Processes in *The New York Times*

	Actor	Process
China-related	Yang Jiechi	countered that the United States was the “champion” of cyberattacks and that “many people within the United States actually have little confidence in the democracy of the United States.” (News 3)
	China’s	increasingly authoritarian policies in Hong Kong, its campaign of internment and mass sterilization against Uyghur Muslims and its suspected role cyberattacks against the United States. (News 1)
	Chinese government	was committing “genocide” against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. (News 1)
US-related	Mr. Blinken	Appeared taken aback but tried to keep the discussion on an even keel. He had opened the talks by asserting a goal to “strengthen the rules-based international order.” (News 5)
	The United States	should take the high ground and find ways to reduce tensions, even if those can partly be blamed on China’s recent actions. (News 3)
	Senior Biden Administration officials	had earlier joked that hopes of making much progress in the talks were so low that it would be more efficient for both sides to simply fax over their respective talking points. (News 2)

It is clear from the above example that there are some differences in political news coverage between *China Daily* and *The New York Times*. Through material processes, the hidden attitudes and ideologies in language are revealed.

In the material process of China-related, journalists use words such as "countered", "commit" and "against" to convey China's intention to bully others and attempt political dictatorship, all of which are aimed at smearing China and damaging China's image. In fact, China insists on the integrity of its territorial sovereignty and China has the right to implement policies on its own territory, which are all reasonable and feasible. The word "geocide" is an exaggeration. China has always adhered to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and will never maliciously provoke disputes. *The New York Times* reporter tried to mislead readers into thinking that China is an evil country.

While in the material process related to the United States, reporters use "strengthen" and "reduce tension" to express that the United States plays a major role in maintaining the international order, to promote the United States' efforts and sincerity, and to make readers think that the United States is a reliable country. At the same time, expressions such as "be blamed on China's recent actions" and "joked" indicated that the Alaska meeting was difficult to succeed, and partly or unintentionally blamed China for some of the reasons, believing that some of China's behaviors have had a certain impact on the meeting. *The New York Times* intends to distort the facts and create a negative and aggressive image of China.

Through the above analysis, we can conclude that the reporter's position and attitude will more or less affect their choice of verbs in the material process. In *China Daily*, journalists always use commendatory words to establish China's good image as a major country, conveying China's positive attitude towards the Alaska meeting and its firm stance of sincerely wishing to make good relations with the United States to achieve common prosperity. On the contrary, the reporters of *The New York Times* will only use positive words to promote the friendly attitude

of the country in the process related to the country, and use negative words in other areas to distort the sincere intention of China. The reporter attempts to smear China's image and mislead readers into thinking that China is a negative, hypocritical and self-serving country.

2.2.2. Verbal Process

The verbal process is a process of saying, whose participants usually include Sayer, Receiver and Verbiage. The Sayer plays the role of saying and it can refer to anything that gives out a signal, such as the light. Because of which, the verbal process might be considered as the symbolic processes. The Receiver refers to the participants to whom the saying is directed, such as me, my friend. The Verbiage refers to the message directed by the Sayer to the Receiver, which can be presented in the direct or indirect form. Verbs in the verbal processes usually mean an action of saying, such as say, speak. In this process, journalists tend to quote officials, experts and witnesses in an obscure way to make the event more objective and authoritative. Even so, they can still choose their speakers and words for their own purposes, expressing their underlying views and positions through the voices of others. The sample extracted will be analyzed in more detail below.

Table 5. Verbal Processes in *China Daily*

	Sayer	Process	Verbiage
China-related	Zhao Lijian	said	that China’s acceptance of the US invitation to attend the Alaska meeting “manifests our goodwill and sincerity” inn resuming bilateral dialogue and exchanges and improving and developing their ties. (News 2)
	Ambassador Cui	said	that the spirit of equality and mutual respect serves as the most basic prerequisite for dialogue between any countries. (News 3)
	Xi	said	the foreign affairs departments of the two countries may have in-depth communications on wide-ranging matters in the bilateral relationship and major international and regional issues. (News 3)
	Jia Qingguo	said	resuming high-level contacts and exchange is a key precondition for stabilizing China-US ties. (News 5)
	Zhao	added	China-US confrontation does not serve the interests of the international community. (News 2)
US-related	Blinken	said	that “there is no intent that this point for series of follow-on engagement”, and any engagement is contingent on “tangible outcomes” on the issue of concern with China. (News 3)
	Blinken	said	the meeting would be an “an important opportunity for us to lay out in very frank terms the many concerns” with Beijing. (News 3)
Other counties-related	The United Nations	said	on Tuesday the it hopes for “a positive outcome” from the meeting. (News 1)
	Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong	said	We are all hoping and encouraging the two large powers to think very carefully before deciding that the other one is an adversary. (News 2)

As shown in Table 5, speakers can be divided into three categories: China-related, US-related, and other countries-related.

In *China Daily*, China-related speakers are mainly government diplomats. They are China's spokespersons in the diplomatic field, so their words have high authority and recognition, representing and conveying China's wishes to the world. For example, Yang Jiechi is an important and influential figure in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His speech could be better clarified. The true intention of the high-level Sino-US strategic dialogue in Alaska fully demonstrates the absurdity of some misunderstandings and malicious hype. Their speeches well conveyed the spirit of the Alaska meeting and expressed their willingness to work together to achieve a win-win situation, which is consistent with the attitude and political stance of the reporters of *China Daily*. In addition, some people in the West agree with the statement made by the Chinese representative. In conclusion, the diversity of speakers enhances the objectivity and reliability of the report. It also shows China's attitude to actively achieve win-win cooperation and its firm position to safeguard national sovereignty.

Table 6. Verbal Processes in *The New York Times*

	Sayer	Process	Verbiage
China-related	Yang Jiechi	countered	that the United States was the “champion” of cyberattacks and that “many people within the United States actually have little confidence in the democracy of the United States.” (News 3)
	Yang Jiechi	accused	the United States of taking a “condescending” approach to the talks and said that American delegation and had no right to accuse Beijing of human right abuses or give lectures on the merits of democracy. (News 2)
	Wu Qiang	said	“on the whole, this negotiation is only for the two sides to pull all the cards on the table, for the two sides to recognize how big and deep each other’s differences are.” (News 4)
US-related	Blinken	said	that the U.S. government had “deep concerns with actions by China, including in Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Taiwan, cyberattacks on the United States and economic coercion toward our allies”. (News 3)
	Blinken	argued	that simply hearing how differently President Biden and President Xi Jinping of China, who celebrated a wary friendship a decade ago, were now pursuing their priorities was valuable. (News 4)
	Senior Biden Administration officials	insisted	the conversations were useful for providing insight into Beijing’s views, which could help frame a new American strategy for competing with China in a wide range of areas. (News 4)
	Jake Sullivan	said	American officials had expected the talks to be difficult, and that the delegation had laid out its priorities for how the Biden administration would approach diplomatic relations with Beijing. (News 5)

In addition, the verbs used in the speech process are also worth exploring to reveal the reporter's point of view. Through analysis, it is found that most of *China Daily* reporters use the verb "said" to directly quote the views of others, which increases the objectivity and neutrality of news reports. It will help readers view the meeting correctly and understand the real news events.

In Table 6, the speakers of *The New York Times* during the speech process can also be divided into two categories: China-related, US-related.

In China-related processes, in order to maintain authority and objectivity, reporters will also quote Chinese officials. Of course they will speak for China and safeguard China's interests, so journalists must report the news truthfully, without negative comments about China in the process. But *The New York Times* reporters, intentionally or unintentionally, portrayed China's representatives as aggressive. Journalists used the verbs "countered" and "accused" to express the unfriendly attitude of the Chinese diplomatic delegation to the United States, believing them to be arrogant and unreasonable. Such news reports inadvertently misled readers and made readers feel bad about the Chinese spokesperson and even the country. There has been a great misunderstanding, and of course they will use "said" to directly quote their speech, making the news more objective and neutral.

As for the processes of US-related, however, they tended to use the words that promotes Chinese dictatorship. The verb "insist" refers to not giving up and continuing to do it. *The New York Times* reporter wanted to use this to establish the image of the United States as a great power, expressing that the United States intended to have a good relationship with China, and at the same time implying that the failure of the meeting was mostly attributable to China. Both are quoted in an indirect way, implying that journalists have embedded their ideology to some extent in news discourse.

2.3. Modality

Table 7. Distribution of Modal Verbs in *China Daily* and *The New York Times*

	Modal verbs	<i>China Daily</i>		<i>The New York Times</i>	
		Frequency	Total	Frequency	Total
High	Have to	2	3 (6.8%)	0	0 (0%)
	Cannot	1		0	
Median	Will	26	38 (86.4%)	13	33 (71.7%)
	Should	10		7	
	Would	2		11	
	Will not	0		2	
Low	Can	3	3 (6.8%)	3	13 (28.3%)
	Could	0		5	
	May	0		5	
Total		44	100%	46	100%

According to Asher (1994), modality can be seen as speaker's attitude to a state from the perspective of cognition, emotion and intention. Modality is the speaker's attitude towards the truth of things, which can be realized by modal verbs, modal adverbs and modal adjectives. In news reports, journalists intentionally use modality to express their attitude, evaluations and ideologies. In addition, since modal verbs are more obvious than other characteristics of

modality, this part is mainly analyzed. Table 7 shows the distribution of modality in *China Daily* and *The New York Times*.

Through the detailed analysis of modal verbs, we can find that modal verbs can be used to express the speaker's position and the degree of certainty of position. In *China Daily*, journalists prefer to use median modal verbs in order to pursue objectivity of news reports, because compared with the other two modal verbs, median modal verbs are not imperative as high modal verbs, but they are more certain than low modal verbs. However, *The New York Times* journalists use more median and low modal verbs, which indicate their uncertainty about something. In addition, *China Daily* reporters intend to convey China's firm position and positive attitude towards the Alaska meeting, while *The New York Times* reporters advocated defending the interests of the United States. Finally, it also can be seen that journalists convey their own ideologies through news reports, which will more or less affect reader's judgement.

3. Interpretation Stage

Interpretation, which focuses on the way that discourse is produced, distributed and consumed, is the second stage of the three-dimensional framework. According to Fairclough (1989: 26), "interpretation involves the relationship between text and interaction, which regards text as a product of the creative process and a resort within the process of interpretative stage." In other words, any text is a kind of absorption and transformation of other texts. This stage involves the relationship between text and discourse, and will analyze the news text from two aspects of news sources and reporting modes to reveal the hidden ideology of journalists.

3.1. News Sources

News sources refers to the information provider who provides news materials for journalists. As we all know, journalists may not witness the whole event, so they often quote the opinions of those who are consistent with their own views and positions, so that their ideology and positions can be embedded in the news discourse and transmitted to the actors. Therefore, the analysis of news sources is helpful to excavate the ideology hidden in news discourse.

News sources can be divided into three categories: specific sources, semi-specific sources and unspecific sources. Specific sources provide specific personal information of the speaker, such as name, identity, organization, etc. semi-specific sources mean that the reporter only provides some specific information but does not provide detailed information about the speaker. When reporters are uncertain about specific information or deliberately omit relevant information and use expressions like "it is said/reported", the source of information is often unspecific. Next, this study will make a detailed analysis of the distribution of news sources of the selected news reports, which will be presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Distribution of News Sources in *China Daily* and *The New York Times*

	Specific Sources	Semi-specific Sources	Unspecific Sources	Total
<i>China Daily</i>	57(91.9%)	5(8.1%)	0	62(100%)
<i>The New York Times</i>	34(55.7%)	27(44.3%)	0	61(100%)

As shown in Table 8, the specific sources of both media account for the largest proportion, with *China Daily* accounting for 91.9% and *The New York Times* accounting for 55.7%. This increases the veracity and reliability of news reports because specific sources specify the provider's information. Another similar point was that no unidentified sources were used in the two newspapers, which avoided ambiguity and made reporting more objective and convincing. In

addition to these common characteristics, we can also find that *China Daily* uses more specific information sources than *The New York Times*, and *The New York Times* uses more semi-specific information sources than *China Daily*. It is well known that the less specific the news source, the more subjective the news discourse. Journalists tend to use semi-specific sources for certain purposes. Due to the lack of details of some providers, readers will focus more on the words and opinions than the speakers. So it can be concluded that *China Daily's* reporting is more objective and more reflective of facts, while *The New York Times* reporting is more subjective.

It is also important to choose which speakers' words to report. Xin (2000) argues that on any issue, journalists have the right to decide whose voice is heard, and this decision is rooted in ideology. In order to better express their position and safeguard their own interests, journalists often quote the remarks of some authoritative figures they serve or support. For example, *China Daily* reporters often quote Foreign Minister Wang Yi. Through his speech, we have clearly seen China's positive attitude and position on the Alaska meeting. At the same time, the credibility and authority of the report has also been improved. On the contrary, the sources of *The New York Times* mainly come from their own country, especially representatives who have misunderstandings about China and even oppose the rise of China. Journalists cited their speeches to paint a negative and selfish image of China, condemning China's rudeness and refusal to peacefully coexist, showing *The New York Times'* prejudice against China.

3.2. Reporting Modes

In addition to news sources, reporting modes are also a way to CDA. There are three kinds of reporting modes: direct discourse (DD), indirect discourse (ID) and slipping. Among these three kinds of modes, direct discourse is regarded as the most authentic and objective one because the speeches and remarks are fully quoted without any changes in the words or phrases. The purpose of utilizing the direct discourse for the reporters is to show their own attitude towards some events. Comparatively speaking, indirect discourse means that the reporters attempt to express their idea by paraphrasing others' speeches and remarks. Indirect speech witnesses some alteration and adjustments of the original speeches or remarks. Direct and indirect discourse belong to the most fluently used modes in the news reports. With regard to the slipping, it refers to the mixture of direct discourse and indirect discourse, where only a small part of discourse in the news reports are cited to show the original speeches or remarks. It is worth noting that the reporters attempt to show their own idea and ideology in the news reports no matter what kinds of reporting modes are employed. Among them, the first two are used more, so this study will analyze from these two aspects. The reporting mode implies the journalist's position and point of view on the event, and journalists tend to combine it with their own words when reporting the news. Table 9 shows the distribution of reporting modes in *China Daily* and *The New York Times*.

Table 9. Distribution of Reporting Modes in *China Daily* and *The New York Times*

	Direct Speech (DD)	Indirect Speech (ID)	Total
<i>China Daily</i>	52(65%)	28(35%)	80(100%)
<i>The New York Times</i>	49(84.5%)	9(15.5%)	58(100%)

It is clear from the distribution of reporting modes in Table 11 that both media outlets used both direct and indirect speech to make news reporting more objective and convincing. In both media, indirect speech is in the majority, far outnumbering direct speech. The total number of reporting methods in *China Daily* is 80, of which direct reports account for 65% and indirect reports account for 35%. Compared with *China Daily*, *The New York Times* has a total of 58, of

which 84.5% are direct speeches and 15.5% are indirect speeches. Proportionally speaking, *China Daily* is more direct than *The New York Times*, which means that *China Daily* reporters are, to some extent, more inclined to report first-hand information. The specific analysis is as follows:

Example 1

"We hope that China and the US can find ways to collaborate on critical issues, notably on climate change, on rebuilding the post-COVID world," said Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. (News 1, *China Daily*)

Example 2

Both countries share duties in tackling climate change and promoting global post-COVID recovery, he said. "China-US confrontation does not serve the interests of the international community." Zhao added. (News 2, *China Daily*)

Example 3

Blinken, who would stop off in Alaska from a trip to Tokyo and Seoul said last week that the meeting would be "an important opportunity for us to lay out in very frank terms the many concerns" with Beijing. (News 3, *China Daily*)

The sentence in the first example comes from Stephen Dujarric, spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. He believes that Sino-US cooperation is conducive to solving the problems of climate change and rebuilding the post-COVID-19 world, and hopes that China and the United States can find the key to solving the problem in this meeting. The second example is a speech by Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian, he thinks. Both China and the U.S. have inescapable responsibilities in addressing climate change and promoting global recovery in the post-pandemic era. Confrontation between China and the U.S. is useless. As long as we all work together, shoulder our responsibilities, and strengthen cooperation, we can make great progress. Create a better future together. This is consistent with the real purpose of the Alaska meeting. The third is a speech by U.S. Secretary of State Blinken. Blinken clearly stated that the starting point and main purpose of the China-US meeting in Alaska is to achieve a win-win situation, which is both in China's interests and in line with it. The current development goals of the United States. Journalists directly cite authoritative sources to express their views and positions, which makes reporting more authentic and convincing. To convince readers that the creators of the news articles stood on a fair, unbiased stand and had a good, objective view of the Alaska meeting.

Example 4

"This strategic exchange was frank, constructive and helpful," China's top diplomat, Yang Jiechi, said in comments broadcast on Chinese state television. "Of course, there are major disputes between us. China will firmly defend national sovereignty, security and development interests, and China's development and growing strength are unstoppable." (News 4, *The New York Times*)

Example 5

"The alternative to a rules based order is a world in which might makes right and winners take all," Mr. Blinken said. "And that would be a far more violent and unstable world for all of US." (News 2, *The New York Times*)

Example 6

"I don't think the overwhelming majority of countries in the world would recognize the universal values advocated by the United States, or that the opinions of the United States could represent international public opinion," Mr. Yang said through an interpreter. "And those countries would not recognize that the rules made by a small number of people would serve as the basis for the international order." (News 2, *The New York Times*)

The above three examples are taken from *The New York Times*. In the first and third examples, the reporter quoted Yang Jiechi, China's top diplomat, and pointed out that the Alaska meeting was frank and meaningful, which represented China's position and conveyed the national will. Then he also pointed out that the universal value of the United States does not really apply to all countries in the world, and most countries will not recognize this international order that only applies to a few countries. The second example comes from the speech of US Secretary of State Blinken. He pointed out that China's development and growth is obvious to all, and China also has enough confidence and strength to safeguard its own interests, which is inevitable. Because these three examples are all direct quotations and need to be faithful to the original text, the reporter cannot change the context too much, so this part of the report is comparatively objective and true.

Example 1

Ambassador Cui said that the spirit of equality and mutual respect serves as the most basic prerequisite for dialogue between any countries. (News 3, *China Daily*)

Example 2

During that phone call, Xi said the foreign affairs departments of the two countries may have in-depth communications on wide-ranging matters in the bilateral relationship and major international and regional issues. (News 3, *China Daily*)

Example 3

The United Nations said on Tuesday that it hopes for a positive outcome from the meeting. (News 2, *China Daily*)

The above three examples are indirect quotes in *China Daily*. In the first example, the reporter quoted Cui Tiankai, the Chinese ambassador to the United States, who pointed out that equality and mutual respect are the most basic prerequisites for any country to conduct dialogue and exchanges, which conveyed that China is willing to have a better friendly attitude with other countries. The second sentence comes from the point of view of Chinese President Xi Jinping. He emphasized the need for in-depth communication between the foreign ministries of the two countries. This represents China's will, reflects China's position, and shows that China is fully prepared for the Alaska meeting. detailed planning. The third example conveys the hopes of the United Nations, and shows that this conference has attracted worldwide attention and has great significance. By citing speeches of national and international importance, the reporter clarified the positive significance of the meeting in Alaska, and reflected the reporter's own attitude and position on the meeting between China and the United States in Alaska.

Example 4

In an implicit contrast with China, Mr. Blinken said the United States had a long history of openly confronting its shortcomings, "not trying to ignore them, not trying to pretend they don't exist, trying to sweep them under the rug." (News 2, *The New York Times*)

Example 5

Mr. Blinken told journalists after the Chinese diplomats left the venue without making any public statements or answering questions. (News 4, *The New York Times*)

Example 6

Speaking to reporters on Friday, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken said that U.S. officials had raised numerous issues with their Chinese counterparts-including human rights in Hong Kong and Xinjiang, the status of Tibet and Taiwan, and cybersecurity - which caused tension. (News 5, *The New York Times*)

These three examples are examples of indirect speeches in *The New York Times*. We can find that the reporters have all relayed the words of US Secretary of State Blinken. Blinken believes that China is reluctant to accept communication and takes defensive measures against the

United States. He believes that the United States is in exercising its legitimate rights and interests, the United States will cooperate with China in a friendly way, while China is arrogant and unreasonable and refuses to talk. From this, it can be seen that the reporters incorporated their own views into the reports when they recounted, even if they did not necessarily correspond to the facts, *The New York Times* reporter portrayed a negative image of China, which would mislead readers.

To sum up, we can see that reporters incorporate their own views into the report when citing speeches. They tend to use useful words that fit their position and ideology.

In short, no matter whether the reporting method is direct or indirect, news discourse is inevitably embedded in the journalist's ideology.

4. Explanation Stage

Explanation concerns about the relations of discourse with struggle processes and power relations. The aim of explanation stage is to represent discourse as social practices and a component of social processes. It reveals how social structures have the influence on discourse and what reconstructive effects discourses can have on these social structures. As the last stage in the three-dimensional framework, it reveals the relations among the interaction and the social context, the discursive practice and the social practice.

4.1. Institutional Context

Institutional context affects discourse from the perspective of social practice. Mass media have always advocated that news reports should be objective and fair, but in fact they have a close relationship with the government, especially the authoritative and dominant media, which is not only the voice of the state or government, but also the carrier of social ideology. The media integrates the national ideology into the news reports, thus imperceptibly affecting the people. *China Daily* and *The New York Times* enjoy a dominant position and prestige in their perspective countries. By elaborating on the role of these two newspapers in demonstrating social ideology. *China Daily*, the first and the unique national English newspaper in China, functions as an important channel between China and the world to acquaint each other. As China is the socialist country, the Chinese media might show a little difference from those in capitalist countries. *China Daily*, a state-owned newspaper, strictly abides by the norms and news values formulated by the Chinese government which represents the interests of the citizens. It must follow the government's policy and management so as to stabilize society and to survive. Based on the guidance and support of the Chinese government, *China Daily* shoulders the responsibility of expressing China's national spirit and safeguarding China's interests.

The New York Times is a daily newspaper published in New York, The United States. It is distributed all over the world and has quite high influence. It is the representative of senior American newspapers and serious journals and has long enjoyed good credibility and authority. Its news value was mainly determined by government policies, which greatly influenced the generation of political news reports and the dissemination of ideology. The ruling class must rely on mass communication to obtain public consent and consensus through persuasion, because the implementation of any policy cannot be carried out without public support. The Political coverage of *The New York Times* greatly reflects the government's interests and exposes its ideology and positions.

From the analysis of the relevant reports of *China Daily* and *The New York Times*, it is obvious that under different institutional backgrounds, the two media pay different attention to the reports related to the Alaska meeting. Therefore, the institutional context is worth considering in the comparative discourse analysis of political news reports.

4.2. Political Context

Political context plays an unavoidably important role in the political news reports in China and the United States. As for the reports on the Alaska meeting, both Chinese and American newspapers have described China-US relations, which deserves elaboration.

The United States and China see their political systems in fundamentally different ways: The United States sees democracy and human rights as the pinnacle of human development, while China sees its current form of government only as a means to achieve larger national goals. America's ideological hubris has led to a deep-rooted anti-communist mentality. For a long time, the United States cast itself as a champion of democracy and freedom and was wary of communism because it was alien to the American political system. As a result, American journalists tend to portray China in a negative light as an authoritarian communist state by emphasizing China's central authority.

4.3. Social-cultural Context

The differences in social and cultural contexts between China and the United States also lead to the differences in political news coverage between *China Daily* and *The New York Times*.

In term of economy, China's economy is developing rapidly, and its international status and image are constantly improving. The West, especially the United States, used to lead the world. The rapid development of The Chinese economy is not only beneficial to the Chinese people, but also conducive to the recovery of the world economy, especially after the economic crisis. China paints a picture to the world of long-term economic growth and rising living standards for its people. By contrast, the superpower, the United States, has always been the most developed country in the world. The political coverage of *The New York Times* implicitly shows the attitude of the United States towards China's development and China policy. *The New York Times*, an authoritative and influential newspaper in the United States, reported some of the remarks in the American media.

As for culture, China values collectivism while the United States emphasizes individualism. As the voice of the government, it covered the Alaska meeting it from the perspective of the U.S. government. *China Daily*, which represents the Chinese government and its citizens, mainly showed its positive attitude and goals towards the conference and its contribution to the event. All in all, the analysis of the social background of the two countries also helps to reveal the ideology hidden in the political news reports.

5. Conclusion

Through the analysis of the reports related to the Alaska meeting, it can be found that there are similarities and differences in the news reports of the mainstream media in China and the US. In the description stage, Chinese journalists mostly uses positive words to express friendliness, while American media focuses on its own interests. In terms of transitivity, material processes are the most frequently used in both media. Finally, Chinese media always uses median modals to ensure objective, while American media mainly uses low median modal verbs. The different choices of these words express the different ideologies of journalists. In the second stage, through the analysis of news sources and reporting modes, both of them mostly use specific sources and direct speech to ensure the objectivity and fairness. As for the explanation stage, through comparative analysis, the institutional, political and social-cultural contexts have a certain influence on the choice and expression of news discourse, which explain the ideological differences between the two countries.

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