

# Positive Discourse Analysis of Political Thought in *The Analects* From the Perspective of Metaphor

Shujuan Kong

Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai, 201620, China;

Qufu Normal University, Shandong, 273165, China

**Abstract**—Against the query about hierarchical political system of Confucianism, this article tries to identify and analyze the political metaphors reflected in *The Analects* - the master piece of Confucianism based on Positive Discourse Analysis. We have the findings as follows. Basically, political metaphors in *The Analects* include STATE IS FAMILY, PATH, UP-DOWN, and ENTITY which construct a unified and coherent political system of Confucianism. In this political system, Confucius and his disciples intend to emphasize the leadership of virtuous and knowledgeable men and the co-construction of family and state, require people to strengthen personal moral cultivation, follow the social norms and do what they are required to do according to their social identities, and participate in the governance and development of the country actively. Based on positive discourse analysis, the positive meanings of Confucian political thought constructed by metaphors in *The Analects* are revealed.

**Index Terms**—positive discourse analysis, metaphor, *The Analects*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Confucianism is the quintessence of traditional Chinese culture and an important contribution to world cultures. *The Analects*, as the classic and epitome of Confucianism, plays an important role in the development and promotion of Confucianism in the world. It describes the words and deeds of Confucius and his disciples in the themes of learning, personal cultivation, politics, life, and natural laws among which politics is an important part. Confucius was once an official in the State of Lu, and he also had the experience of traveling around other states to put his political ideals to practice, which shows that Confucius himself has a great passion to participate in the governance of the country. Therefore, besides being considered as an excellent educator and philosopher, he is also regarded as a statesman with lofty political ideals and aspirations (Li, 2007). Qian confirms this point, “Confucianism emphasizes humanity the most. Politics is the greatest of humanity” (2007, p. 23). Since Confucius is thought to be a statesman and *The Analects* partly embodies his political thought, what is the ideal society in his mind reflected in *The Analects*? Is it like what is usually described as a severely hierarchical society? How does *The Analects* resort to discourse to describe the political and ideological system of Confucius and his disciples in order to gain the mindshare of the populace and the ruling class as well? These questions are worth discussing. Previous studies on Confucian political ideological system mainly focus on the negative aspects concerning its hierarchy and thought of loyalty to monarch as the result of an insufficiently understood relation between Confucian political thought system and the discourse expressing it in the immediate context (Zhang, 2008; Wang, 2010; Jing & Wei, 2013; Song & Wang, 2014; Zhang, 2015; Xu, 2017). In view of this, we propose a positive discourse analysis (PDA) of political thought in *The Analects* from the perspective of metaphor, trying to reveal the positive meanings of Confucian political thought by exploring the external form of linguistic expressions.

In order to explore the positive meanings of Confucian political ideology by probing into the relation between external forms of linguistic expressions and potential values behind in the immediate context, in what follows, we shall first introduce PDA briefly, and then point out the necessity of metaphorical analysis as one of the important ways of doing PDA research. Then we shall identify and analyze political metaphors in *The Analects* in the light of PDA, trying to reveal the positive meanings contained in Confucian political ideology. Finally we shall conclude with the findings.

## II. METAPHORICAL ANALYSIS IN PDA

Positive discourse analysis (PDA) is a concept proposed against critical discourse analysis (CDA) by J.R. Martin at the International Symposium on Discourse Analysis in Birmingham, UK in 1999. Martin argues that discourse analysis shouldn't just focus on the “bad news” containing unequal phenomena in the society, intending to criticize and reveal the relationship between discourse, power and ideology with deconstructive and negative attitude; it should also pay attention to “good news” advocating peace, equality and solidarity, intending to reconcile, cooperate and coincide through language design with constructive and positive attitude (Zhu, 2006). Therefore, relatively speaking, CDA tends

to emphasize deconstruction, criticism and negation, while the foci of PDA are construction, harmony and community, aiming at constructing a harmonious society through discourse design (Martin, 2006) which is a rebuttal and complement to CDA (Zhu, 2006).

Legitimization is an important feature of political discourse, namely, political discourse tends to be authoritative, authentic, and well-founded (Chilton, 2004). In order to make the discourse sound more authoritative, truthful and reasonable, the speaker is supposed to choose the words which can not only reflect his way of thinking and satisfy his interests (Charteris-Black, 2004, p. 1), but also arouse the listeners' emotions and then further affect the views of the listeners, achieving the purpose of persuading, conveying ideas and opinions, and promoting social practice. As an important concept in cognitive linguistics, metaphor is not only a rhetorical means, but also a way of thinking and a cognitive operation, which restricts and influences the expressing and understanding of discourse. The selective conceptual mapping of metaphor produces a prominent and hidden function, so that the target domain can be reproduced one-sidedly according to the speaker's intention (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 13), which can provide a unique empirical framework for the construction and understanding of political views and ideologies. In addition, people's attitudes, emotions, beliefs and value judgments based on life experience form a coherent system with metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 21). Therefore, the employment of metaphors in the discourse will arouse the audience's cognitive and emotional resonance. Furthermore, the cognitive models of conventional metaphors and the values they contain often reflect more hidden value judgments that are difficult for the public to discover and widely recognized and accepted, so they can effectively activate the audience's cognition, emotions, and value judgment (Charteris-Black, 2004, p. 12), and can be recruited as a tool to convey ideas. Therefore, in political discourse, in order to make listeners subtly accept their opinions and ideologies, speakers tend to use metaphors to legitimize and rationalize their discourse. Metaphorical analysis becomes an important means for researchers to reveal the hidden meanings in discourse. Based on the idea of PDA, the exploration of the metaphors can reveal the positive values and connotations contained in discourse and the positive role of metaphors in advocating peace, solidarity and equality in discourse.

PDA has attracted the attention of the scholars as a cross-field research, and many related studies have emerged. However, most of these studies focus on the introduction to the idea of PDA and its application in political and media discourse analysis (Martin, 2006; Zhu, 2006; Hu, 2012; Huang, 2018; Dong, 2019; Nartey & Ernanda, 2020), but few apply it in the analysis of traditional Chinese classics. As the epitome of Confucianism, *The Analects* contains the political ideology of Confucius and his disciples. By applying the idea of PDA to political metaphors in *The Analects*, this study intends to explore how Confucius and his disciples describe their ideal society via metaphors, and reveal the positive values and connotations in Confucian political ideology. In the following section, we shall identify and then analyze the political metaphors in *The Analects*.

### III. THE IDENTIFICATION AND INTERPRETATION OF POLITICAL METAPHORS IN *THE ANALECTS*

Since ancient times, Chinese have had the tradition of understanding and describing things based on one's body and the surroundings, that is, understanding one thing in virtue of another thing ranging from one's body as the near source to the surroundings as the far source. The frequent employment of metaphors in discourse is just the reflection of this thought. In *The Analects*, Confucius and his disciples used a lot of metaphorical expressions to describe the poetic and ideal society in their mind which takes "Benevolence" (仁 ren) and "Rituals" (礼 li) as the core. Among them, "Benevolence", interpreted as "loving your fellow men" (12.22) and "fraternizing with the masses" (1.6) in *The Analects*, is the standard of moral life and personal cultivation. It is an idealized personality and a perfect moral quality extending from family love (namely, the natural bonds and ethical relation between members of a family) to universal love (general human relations) (Yang, 2008, p. 62). "Rituals" is the norm of social customs and social behaviors, belonging to the category of social attributes deriving from Confucius' respect for the spirit of valuing virtue and rituals in Zhou Dynasty. By reinterpreting the connotations of rituals, Confucius made them the norm of people's daily behavior. The spiritual essence of reinterpreted Rituals is the conscious recognition of the social order and the maintenance of the social hierarchy. "Benevolence" as the inner moral requirement and "Rituals" as the outer regulations of behaviors constitute a set of social and political ideological system. Therefore, in this article, we will identify, analyze and interpret metaphors revolving around the two core concepts of "Benevolence" and "Rituals".

By reading the text carefully, we mainly identify the following metaphors related to Confucian political ideology: FAMILY-STATE metaphor, PATH metaphor, SPATIAL metaphor, and ENTITY metaphor. In what follows, we shall analyze these metaphors respectively.

#### A. FAMILY-STATE Metaphor

In FAMILY-STATE metaphor, the management of the family is mapped onto the governance of the country, which shows that Confucians build their ideas of country governance and social communication on the ideas of traditional Chinese family culture. As one of the bases of Chinese culture, family culture contains a set of regulations, behavior norms and views centering on family consciousness based on ties of blood, kinship and geography (Dai, 2008, p. 198). Since family is the basic unit of interpersonal communication in traditional Chinese society, expressions related to familial interpersonal relations can be metaphorically and extendedly used in various social fields such as politics,

economy, and culture. For example, in our daily communication, when we address people who are not related to us by blood, we tend to adopt the terms “uncle X”, “auntie X”, “grandpa X”, “brother X”, etc. to address them based on the differences of surname, gender and age to show intimacy and familiarity; when the teacher-student or classmate relations are mentioned, we can also adopt the addressing terms “venerable father” (师父 shi fu) for “teacher”, “senior sister apprentice” (师姐 shi jie) for “female classmate older than you”, and “junior brother apprentice” (师弟 shi di) for “male classmate younger than you”, etc.; other expressions which could show the influence of family culture can also be found, such as “ren jia” (人家) for “others”, “da jia” (大家) for “everyone”, “guo jia” (国家) for “country” etc. These expressions show that different social organizations are compared to families based on the metaphor SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IS FAMILY.

In *The Analects*, concerning the governance of the country, SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IS FAMILY metaphor, which is extended to STATE IS FAMILY metaphor, is embodied in the following examples.

(1) It is rare that a man who is filial to his parents and submissive to his elder brothers is inclined to commit an affront to his superiors; it is never heard of that he who by no means will commit an affront to his superiors is inclined to set off a rebellion. The gentleman commits himself to fundamentals, for once the fundamentals are established, the Way is accordingly determined. Being a filial child and a submissive younger brother are the fundamentals of benevolence. (1.2)

(其为人也孝悌，而好犯上者，鲜矣；不好犯上，而好作乱者，未之有也。君子务本，本立而道生。孝悌也者，其为仁之本与！)

(2) Mourning duties should be given in an earnest manner for one’s deceased parents and sacrifices should be offered to remote ancestors according to rituals, so that simple sentiments and honesty can find their way into folks’ behavior and their customs. (1.9)

(慎终，追远，民德归厚矣。)

(3) If you respect the elderly and take special care of the minors, you will make yourself the object of being loyal to. (2.20)

(孝慈，则忠。)

(4) According to the spirit of the filial duties, we should be filial to our parents and loyal to our friends. If this spirit is applied to politics, it would mean engaging oneself in political affairs.”(2.21)

(孝乎惟孝，友于兄弟，施于有政。)

In Example (1), “Filial to the parents” (孝 xiao) and “submissive to the elder brothers” (悌 ti), as ethics and moral one should follow in family life, are also basic behavior norms one should follow in social life and the foundation of being benevolent. Confucians believe that one who follows ethics and moral in family life will follow social ethics in communication and in the governance of the country, and won’t defy the superior and start a rebellion. Example (2) connects one’s respect to the deceased parents and ancestors with the moral cultivation of general public which will influence the governance of the country and harmony of the society. In Example (3), Confucians indicate that only those who respect the elderly and take special care of the minors will gain the loyalty from the populace, that is, the loyalty to the supreme ruler from the populace is connected with the supreme ruler’s virtue of “respect to the elderly” and “care of the minors”. Likewise, Example (4) also connects one’s filial piety to the spirit of engaging in political affairs. All these expressions show that in the eyes of Confucius and his disciples, family and country are an integrated whole. That is, only the one who can fulfill his due responsibilities as a son, a husband, a brother, and a father at home will have achievements in politics. Likewise, the king of a country will be respected and supported by his people only if he shows his filial piety to the elders and respect to his ancestors. Therefore, the management of the social relations and the governance of the country are the extension of the “loyalty” and “filial piety” on the basis of family, namely the extension from family love to universal love, which is the very essence of “Benevolence”.

The FAMILY-STATE metaphor reflects the traditional Chinese thought of “co-construction of family and state” on the basis of family culture, which indicates that Confucius and his disciples intend to construct a well-organized and well-ordered harmonious society in which everyone will fulfill his due responsibilities according to the social position he is in, as is described in Example (5),

(5) The king should behave like a king; a courtier should behave like a courtier; a father should behave like a father; and a son should behave like a son.”(12.11).

(君君，臣臣，父父，子子)

But this ideal is distorted by later generations into the so-called Three Cardinal Guides, that is, ruler guides subject, father guides son, and husband guides wife. Actually the hierarchy and ethical constraints are not what Confucians want to emphasize. What they want to emphasize is the due responsibility everyone should take by realizing his identities in different positions, which is the integration of ethics and moral (Fan, 2013, p. 128) in politics. Example (6) shows the same idea.

(6) As a young man, one should be filial to his parents at home, and submissive to his elder brothers in society; be cautious in speech and actions, and true to his words; fraternize with the masses and stay close to the kind-hearted people. (1.6)

(弟子入则孝，出则悌，谨而信，泛爱众，而亲仁。)

This example also indicates that everyone should fulfill his due responsibilities and behave properly both in the management of the family and in the governance of the country. It is proposed that the construction of a harmonious society requires a well-organized and well-established social order and interpersonal relations with everyone scrupulously abiding by his duties by following Rituals (Liu & Shi, 2015, pp. 185-186).

FAMILY-STATE metaphor which shows the idea of “co-construction of family and state” embedded in Confucianism is rooted in the mind of the populace, making people realize that state affairs are the same as the affairs everyone should handle at home, thus motivating people to participate in the building and the development of the country actively.

### B. PATH Metaphor

In *The Analects*, “Dao” (道), as a metaphorically expressed thought in Confucianism, is an important and frequently mentioned political concept. The original meaning of the Chinese character “道” (dao) is “to guide” or “to lead” which describes the process or action of leading or guiding in the journey according to the analysis of the its glyph. Based on the exploration of the meanings of “dao” in *Etymology* (He et al., 2015, p. 4045), we find that the meanings of “dao” are expanded metaphorically or/and metonymically on the basis of this original meaning “to guide” or “to lead”. Since “path” is the space where the guiding happens, “to guide” is extended metonymically to refer to “path”, namely PROCESS FOR SPACE (PROCESS FOR PATH), which is considered as the primary meaning of “dao” in most of the contemporary Chinese dictionaries. Then it is further mapped onto the field of thought referring to the meaning of “the goal or the object of philosophical exploration and spiritual pursuit” (Shi, 2004, p. 109) metonymically and metaphorically, that is, WHOLE FOR PART (PATH FOR GOAL), and THE GOAL OF PHILOSOPHICAL EXPLORATION AND SPIRITUAL PURSUIT IS THE GOAL OF A PATH. “Dao” in Confucianism is the goal that Confucians devote themselves to achieve for the whole lifetime. According to our life experience, in order to reach the destination, the right route is necessary. Likewise in order to achieve the goal in life, the right way or means is very important. When it is further extended metonymically and metaphorically, “dao” gets the meaning “the way or the means of reaching the pursued goal”, namely THE WAY OR THE MEANS OF ACHIEVING THE PURSUED GOAL IS THE ROUTE OF REACHING THE DESTINATION OF A PATH.

Based on the above discussion of the semantic expansion of “dao” (path), the connotations of “Dao” in *The Analects* will be explored. The analysis of the connotations contained in “Dao” shows that for Confucians, “Dao” is not only the goal to pursue, but also the means to achieve the goal. As the goal and the means of the philosophical pursuit, it usually contains three aspects: learning, moral cultivation and the governance of the country, which reflects the following metaphors: LEARNING IS MARCHING ALONG THE PATH, MORAL-CULTIVATION IS MARCHING ALONG THE PATH, COUNTRY-GOVERNANCE IS MARCHING ALONG THE PATH, which can be illustrated in the following examples.

(7) You should hold firm and fervent belief in your core values of the philosophical view, retain fast and fiery passion for knowledge and unwaveringly adhere to Dao, the Benevolence, until the end of your life. (8.13)

(笃信好学，守死善道)

(8) Dao is what I determined to follow; the moral integrity is the stronghold with which I defend against fierce assaults of external forces; the benevolence is the yardstick by which I measure everything; and artistic activities are the pastime I derive great pleasure from. (7.6)

(志于道，据于德，依于人，游于艺)

(9) In performing the rituals, we aim at fostering harmony. Former kings set us a perfect example in this respect, for they never failed to set harmony as the goal in both trivial matters and major issues. (1.12)

(礼之用，和为贵。先王之道，斯为美；小大由之。)

(10) People with different principles and values should not put heads together to seek common ground or find a common solution to a certain problem. (15.40)

(道不同，不相为谋)

(11) A gentleman goes after Dao or the career rather than elementary skills for a living...A gentleman is worried about how far he is from obtaining Dao instead of being concerned about the poverty he is in at the moment. (15.32)

(君子谋道不谋食。君子忧道不忧贫。)

Example (7) lays particular emphasis on the way of learning. In Example (8), “Dao” mainly refers to the way of being a moral human. In Example (9), it refers to the way of governing the country. Example (10) and (11), however, are seemingly the combination of the three aspects, which partly shows that the three aspects seem independent, but in Confucianism, they are interdependent and mutually penetrant. In other words, learning is to achieve one’s personal accomplishments academically and morally, which can further enhance the governance of the country if virtuous and knowledgeable person can participate in the construction of a prosperous country and a harmonious society; in turn, in the practice of governing a country, the knowledge and moral cultivation of the active participators will be further promoted and enhanced with the realization of their ideals. The idea of mutual enhancement is described in the following example,

(12) If a person still has extra energy after taking good care of his work as an official, he should spend his leisure learning. If a person still has extra energy having completed the learning as required, he should devote himself to some official work. (19.13)

(仕而优则学，学而优则仕。)

Therefore, in Confucianism, these three aspects are interconnected. Confucians surely value the cultivation of personal morality and knowledge, but they regard the governance of the country and advancement of the society on the basis of academic and moral achievements of the ruling class more important, which is the reflection of the idea of meritocracy in Confucianism. That is why the Confucians actively devote themselves into the political practice one after another. They believe that it is the responsibility and duty for knowledgeable and virtuous people to participate in the governance of the country since they could give the potentate more reasonable and appropriate advice in state affairs. Hence, what Confucians pursue is not the sacred philosophy of life, but the secular way of applying the philosophy of life into practice, namely they intend to solve the practical social problems and state affairs for the purpose of constructing an ideal and harmonious society.

In sum, PATH metaphors highlight the idea of meritocracy and the spirit of practicing in Confucianism by advocating the knowledgeable and virtuous people to serve in the governance of the country and for the welfare of the common people.

### C. SPATIAL Metaphor

SPATIAL metaphor, as a basic metaphor in the formation and development of concepts, is also employed in *The Analects*, such as UP-DOWN metaphor, HIGH-LOW metaphor, and NEAR-FAR metaphor, etc. Among them, expressions related to “up-down” and “high-low” which describe the verticality are metaphorically employed to indicate the concepts in more abstract domains, such as time, state, social status and personal traits; expressions related to “near-far” which describe the distance are frequently used to indicate the concepts expressing likes and dislikes, similarities and differences, right and wrong, etc. Considering that UP-DOWN metaphor is the most basic and frequently employed metaphor in *The Analects*, we will focus on the exploration of UP-DOWN metaphor. By sorting out and analyzing UP-DOWN metaphor, we find that it mainly involves the following metaphors: HIGHER SOCIAL STATUS IS UP, PROFOUND KNOWLEDGE IS UP, WISEST PEOPLE IS UP, GENTLEMAN IS UP, FOOLISH PEOPLE IS DOWN, PETTY MAN IS DOWN which are presented in the following examples.

(13) If the supreme ruler and high-ranking officials customarily are in the habit of doing things according to rituals, then they will find it easy to exercise power over the populace at large. (14.44)

(上好礼，则民易使也。)

(14) Since the sovereign rulers have deviated from the righteous ways, the populace has been disenchanted for a long time. (19.19)

(上失其道，民散久矣。)

(15) To those with average intelligence and above, we can talk about profound knowledge; to those with intelligence less than the average, we should not talk about profound knowledge. (6.21)

(中人以上，可以语上也；中人以下，不可以语上也。)

(16) I start with the basic and physical level of knowledge in order to understand the elevated and metaphysical doctrines. (14.37)

(下学而上达)(14.37)

(17) Only the wisest people with superior intelligence and the most foolish people with inferior intelligence are unalterable. (17.3)

(唯上智与下愚不移)

(18) A gentleman aspires after the high morals of gracious kind-heartedness, justice, and the Way, while a petty man chases wealth, benefits and gains.” (14.24)

(君子上达，小人下达。)

In Example (13) and (14), the word “up” (上 shang) refers to people who has high social status, namely, the supreme ruler, whose words and deeds will influence the attitudes of the populace towards him. While in Example (15), (16) and (17), the words “up” and “down” (下 xiang) refer to the higher level and the lower level of academics respectively. In Example (18), the word “up” reflecting the higher level of moral cultivation and the word “down” reflecting the lower level of moral cultivation are related to gentleman (君子 jun zi) and petty man (小人 xiao ren) respectively. Although “jun zi” is translated into gentleman in English, it contains more meanings in Confucianism. With the influence of family culture, the relationship between the king and his officials is similar to the relationship between father and son in the family. Therefore, “jun zi” was once used to refer to the dukes or princes of the small countries under the rule of the royal family in Zhou Dynasty, implying the meaning of “the son of the king” (国君之子) with “jun” referring to the king and “zi” referring to the son (Feng, 2013, p. 41). In *The Analects*, it is extended by Confucius and his disciples to refer to moral models with noble character. Therefore, “jun zi” in *The Analects* usually refers to people with high political positions and high moral character as in Example (19).

(19) The virtues of a man of great place are like wind, while the virtues of the populace are like grass. When the wind blows over the grass, the grass bends itself towards the direction of the wind.” (12.19)

(君子之德风，小人之德草。草上之风，必偃。)

Example (19) shows that those in high political positions should be virtuous people, and virtuous people should be

put in high positions since they can exert a positive influence on the populace. Therefore it can be inferred that the words “up” and “down” which are related to “jun zi” (gentleman) and “xiao ren” (petty man) respectively contain at least two interconnected aspects: social status and moral level, which is basically in accord with what was revealed in PATH metaphor. PATH metaphor and UP-DOWN metaphor indicate that a qualified supreme ruler should be knowledgeable and virtuous. Confucius and his disciples’ political ideology is further confirmed that the governance of the country is closely related to the moral quality and academic accomplishment of the ruling class, that is, those in high positions should have the corresponding knowledge of governing the country, and should be an example and role model on morality.

In sum, although expressions relating to UP-DOWN metaphor in *The Analects* partly reflect the hierarchical ideology of Confucians, they mainly highlight the idea of governing the country by the virtuous, benevolent and knowledgeable people.

#### D. ENTITY Metaphor

Confucius and his disciples also employ ENTITY metaphor to promote the social and ethical order of Rituals. It is mainly manifested in comparing abstract concepts related to Rituals to concrete and pictorial objects.

In Confucianism, Rituals is a powerful tool to govern the country and cultivate one’s personality. As the social norm, the role of Rituals is similar to that of the laws and regulations. Confucius and his disciples hold that Rituals is more important and effective than laws in the governance of the country. They believe that the laws can only be in effect after the crimes happened, so it is negative and passive; while Rituals can be in effect before the crimes might happen by regularizing one’s behaviors and promoting one’s personality and morality, so it is positive and active. This can be shown in the following expression,

(22) If people are governed by regulations and systems and the social order is kept by laws and penalty, they may stay away from the ruler and avoid committing crimes, but with no sense of shame. If people are governed by morality and the social order is kept by rituals, they may keep a sense of self-esteem and give their full allegiance to the ruler and go on the righteous track. (2.3)

(道之以政，齐之以刑，民免而无耻；道之以德，齐之以礼，有耻且格。)

Example (22) shows that through the standardization and implementation of Rituals, the proactive and conscious habits of moral and academic self-enhancement will be cultivated with and also for the development of the country and the improvement of the society. The obedience to the ritual system is not only reflected in the code of conduct, but also manifested in the preservation of various ritual utensils used in different ritual sacrifices.

Since Confucius was born in Spring and Autumn period which he considered as an era when the social order and established hierarchical system was under challenge, and the ritual system of Zhou Dynasty was destructed, he was once sighed with regret,

(23) When *gu*, a wine vessel, does not look like *gu*, we can hardly consider it as the wine vessel *gu*, can we? (6.25)

(觚不觚，觚哉！觚哉！)

Gu, as the wine vessel in ancient times, was also used as the ritual vessel in sacrificial activities during the Shang and Zhou Dynasties. There were four edges in both the middle part and the bottom of the vessel. However, in the era of Confucius, the edges of *gu* disappeared, and it was rounded up and turned into a round vessel. Confucius takes *gu* as a metaphor, namely THE CHANGE OF THE SHAPE OF GU IS THE DESTRUCTION OF THE RITUAL SYSTEM, to indicate the mismatch between the entity and its name, implying his dissatisfaction to the destruction of ritual system and his criticism to social situation, which he describes in the following example,

(24) A king fails to do what is required of a king; a courtier fails to do what is required of a courtier; a father fails to do what is required of a father and a son fails to do what is required of a son. (12.11)

(君不君，臣不臣，父不父，子不子)

Faced with this situation, Confucius proposes the idea of rectification of names, as is quoted in the previous subsection, “the king should behave like a king; a courtier should behave like a courtier; a father should behave like a father; and a son should behave like a son.” Just like the ritual vessel should conform to its original shape and structure, everyone should perform his social role well according to his social position in the society. To govern the country better, the supreme ruler should also have the talent and virtue required of him according to his social position and make conscientious efforts to perform his social role well. In this way, everyone will do well by taking his due responsibilities and obligations conforming to his social position, and then the stability and development of the country will be achieved.

ENTITY metaphor emphasizes the idea of rectification of names in Confucianism, which is an effective way to maintain social order, and has positive influence on the building of a stable society.

From the above analysis of the political metaphors in *The Analects*, we find that the Confucian political system is not exactly a remnant of feudalism of severe inequality and hierarchy as is criticized. It is undeniable that Confucianism has the limitations of the times, but the holistic view of co-construction of family and state, the spirit of practicing, political meritocracy, and the thought of rectification of names expressed by political metaphors in *The Analects* have been radiant after thousands of years and have become the driving force for the rejuvenation, development and advancement of the Chinese nation.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the idea of PDA, this article has revealed the positive meanings of the unified and coherent political ethic system of Confucianism reflected in STATE-FAMILY metaphor, PATH metaphor, SPATIAL metaphor, and ENTITY metaphor concerning family-state relation, the way of governing the country, the requirements of the ruling class, and the preservation of Rituals. We have found that in political discourse, metaphor is a useful tool to convey and legitimize the political ideas. In *The Analects*, Confucius and his disciples metaphorically express their abstract political thought with the help of concrete objects and images in a subtle and latent manner. Based on the idea of PDA, the positive aspects of Confucian political system are revealed, such as the idea of co-construction of family and state, the spirit of practicing, political meritocracy, and rectification of names, which might be the reason why their political ideas are recognized by the populace and the supreme ruler as well, and also the reason why they still have strong vitality and adaptability till now.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by the Supervisor Academic Guidance Program of Shanghai International Studies University under Grant No. 41004264.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Charteris-Black J. (2004). *Corpus approaches to critical metaphor analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- [2] Chilton, P. (2004). *Analyzing political discourse: Theory and practice*. Routledge.
- [3] Dai, F. (2008). Jia wen hua shi jiao xia de gong gong can yu [Public participation from the perspective of family culture]. *Guangxi Social Science*, (4), 198-201.
- [4] Dong, D. (2019). Ping jia li lun shi jiao xia zhu liu mei ti shi jiu da bao dao de ji ji hua yu fen xi [The positive discourse analysis of the 19th National Congress of the Italian mainstream media from the perspective of evaluation theory]. *Foreign Languages*, (4), 17-23.
- [5] Fan, H. (2013). Lun yu lun li dao de si xiang de jing shen zhe xue quan shi [The spiritual and philosophical significance of ethics and morality in *The Analects*]. *Chinese Social Sciences*, (3), 125-140.
- [6] Feng, Y. L. (2013). *Zhong guo zhe xue shi* [History of Chinese philosophy]. Jiangsu Literature and Art Publishing House.
- [7] He, J. Y., Wang, N. & Dong, K. (Ed.). (2015). *Ci yuan* [Etymology]. Commercial Press.
- [8] Hu, Z. L. (2012). Ji ji hua yu fen xi he pi ping hua yu fen xi de hu bu xing [The complementarity of positive discourse analysis and critical discourse]. *Contemporary Foreign Language Studies*, (7), 3-8.
- [9] Huang, G. W. (2018). Cong sheng tai pi ping hua yu fen xi dao sheng tai hua yu fen xi [From ecological critical discourse analysis to harmonious discourse analysis]. *Foreign Languages in China*, (4), 39-46.
- [10] Jing, Y. & Wei, S. S. (2013). Xian qin ru jia dao de de zheng zhi zhi jia zhi li xiang ji qi dang dai yi yi [The value and contemporary significance of the pre-Qin Confucian "moral politics"]. *Political Science Studies*, (5), 120-128.
- [11] Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. University of Chicago Press.
- [12] Li, L. (2007). *Sang jia gou – wo du lun yu* [Homeless dog: Interpretation of *The Analects*]. Shanxi People's Publishing House.
- [13] Liu J. C. & Shi, W. (2015). *Lun yu jing hua – kong zi de zhi hui* [The essence of *The Analects*: Confucius' wisdom]. Beijing Normal University Press.
- [14] Martin, J. R. (2006). Positive discourse analysis: Solidarity and change. *The Journal of English Studies*, 4 (4), 21-35.
- [15] Nartey, M. & Ernanda. (2020). Formulating emancipatory discourse and reconstructing resistance: A positive discourse analysis of Sukarno's speech at the first Afro-Asian conference. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 17 (1), 22-38.
- [16] Qian, M. (2007). *Lun yu xin jie* [A new interpretation of *The Analects*]. Sanlian Bookstore.
- [17] Shi, Z. L. (2004). Yin yu: lun yu de biao da ji qi jie du – yu kong zi dui hua – xin shi ji quan qiu wen ming zhong de ru xue [Metaphor: The expression and translation of *The Analects* - "With Confucius: Confucianism in global civilization in the new century"]. *Proceedings of the Second Confucianism Symposium of Shanghai Confucian Temple*, (10), 108-117.
- [18] Song, Q. Y. & Wang, D. R. (2014). Quan li de si zhang mian kong – ji yu xian qin ru jia zheng zhi si xiang de yan jiu shi jiao [The four facets of power: Based on the perspective of pre-Qin Confucian political thoughts]. *Journal of Theory Guide*, (11), 110-112.
- [19] Wang, J. (2010). *Xian qin ru jia zheng zhi si xiang lun gao* [Pre-Qin Confucian political thoughts]. People's Publishing House.
- [20] Xu, S. Y. (2017). Ru jia zheng zhi si xiang zhong de zheng zhi zhong cheng guan [Political loyalty in Confucian political thought]. *Journal of Yanshan University* (Philosophy and Social Science Edition), (5), 9-11.
- [21] Yang, P. (2008). Lun yu he xin gai nian Ren de ying yi fen xi [An analysis of the English translation of the core concept of "Benevolence" in *The Analects*]. *Foreign Languages and Foreign Language Teaching*, (2), 61-63.
- [22] Zhang, F. T. (2008). Yin yang zhe li yu ru jia zheng zhi si xiang de ming ti zu he jie gou: yi jun zhu yu chen min guan xi lun wei dian xing te zheng [The combination structure of YinYang philosophy and Confucian political ideology: A typical feature of the relationship between the monarch and the subjects]. *Humanities Magazine*, (5), 139-145.
- [23] Zhang, J. (2015). De dao, li qi, fa zhi: ru jia she hui zhi li si xiang de qi di [Moral guidance, etiquette, rule of law: The enlightenment of Confucian social governance thoughts]. *Confucius Studies*, (2), 13-20.
- [24] Zhu, Y. S. (2006). Ji ji hua yu fen xi: dui pi ping hua yu fen xi de fan bo yu bu chong [Positive discourse analysis: Backwash and supplement to critical discourse]. *English Studies*, (4), 36-42.

**Shujuan Kong** was born in Qufu, Shandong, China in 1980. She is a PHD candidate of School of English Studies at Shanghai International Studies University in Shanghai, China.

She is currently lecturer in the College of Foreign Languages, Qufu Normal University, Qufu, Shandong, China. Her research interests include cognitive linguistics and philosophy of mind.