



# Eco-discourse Analysis of Attitudinal Resources in the Discourse of Government Work Report

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**Abstract:** The Chinese government has made a series of important discourses in the government report, which provide a fundamental guideline for China's green ecological development in the new era. In this study, the ecological discourse analysis paradigm is used to determine the ecological attributes embedded in the discourse of the government work report, and try to explore and explain the ecological value orientation of the attitude resources, following the ecological philosophical concepts of pluralism, harmony and interaction. This study aims to further prove the operability and practicability of the ecological attitude system in the analysis of ecological discourse, and to promote the development concept of harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature.

**Keywords:** government work report; ecological discourse analysis; attitude resources; ecological value orientation

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years, ecological and environmental problems have become more and more prominent globally, which has attracted extensive attention from the international community. The worsening of ecological problems and the long-term demand for sustainable development have fundamentally promoted the development of eco-linguistics. Using ecological discourse analysis, linguists try to solve the ecological environment problems from the perspective of ecolinguistics, explore the relationship between language and ecology, and reveal the influence of language on different ecological relations, so as to realize the harmonious development between human beings and ecology. Our government attaches great importance to ecological environmental protection and governance, and has introduced a series of policies and measures, which have achieved remarkable results. However, ecological problems are still complex and diverse, and require continuous attention and in-depth research. Based on this, from the perspective of evaluation theory, focusing on the construction of green environment and following the ecological philosophical outlook of pluralism and harmony, interactive symbiosis (He Wei and Wei Rong 2018), it analyzes the ecological discourse of China's leaders in the government work report on the ecological environment in 2022-2024, aiming to reveal the ecological discourse contained in the government's work report. work report is to reveal the ecological discourse orientation embedded in the government work report.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Ecological Philosophy

Ecosophy refers to “a philosophy that examines the interrelationships between living and inanimate beings, including human beings, and the natural environment” (Stibbe 2015:11). He Wei and Weigrong (2018) proposed the eco-philosophical concept of “pluralism and harmony, interactive symbiosis”, which is a universal guiding principle, in line with the principles of ecology, and can be applied to all ecosystems. Under the effect of eco-philosophy, people's ecological awareness can be improved, and the discourse can be more harmonious, which will lead people to implement ecologically beneficial behaviors, and ultimately promote the good development of ecosystems. Similarly, good ecological behavior will in turn promote the improvement of discourse, which will be reflected in ecological consciousness and counteract the eco-philosophical outlook. Therefore, in order to objectively assess the ecological value orientation of discourse, ecological discourse analysts need to explore the ecological orientation of each type of discourse based on a specific ecosophy and integrate and innovate with the actual situation and specific problems. The ecological civilization construction discourse in China's government work report promotes universal ideas such as strengthening ecological environmental protection and promoting the ecological civilization concept of harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature. Accordingly, this study will follow the eco-philosophical view in the field of ecological environment construction to determine the ecological attributes embedded in the discourse, so as to effectively screen the beneficial, ambiguous and destructive discourses.

## 2.2 An ecodiscourse analytic framework for attitudinal resources

Evaluative systems (Martin, 2000; White, 2003; Martin & White, 2005) characterize the functions of language used to negotiate and regulate social relations, and speakers express their attitudes, emotions, stances, etc. through the use of evaluative vocabulary. Attitudinal resources, as the core of evaluative theory, can effectively assess the attitudinal tone embedded in discourse. The attitude system includes the speaker's affect, judgment and appreciation of things or events. In recent years, eco-discourse analysis has become a new development direction of evaluation theory, and many scholars have used evaluation theory to analyze different types of discourse in eco-discourse. Based on this, He Wei and Ma Zijie constructed an evaluation system under the perspective of eco-linguistics, in which the ecological orientation first determines the type of ecosystems involved in the discourse, and then determines what kind of ecosystems are affected by the evaluations sent out by the speaker by clarifying their impact on the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.

Eco-discourse analysis, as a major research paradigm in eco-linguistics (Alexander & Stibbe 2014), extends the object of discourse analysis to cover the entire ecosystem of the social system, aiming at identifying the ecological factors that are not conducive to the harmonious development of human beings and nature, so as to enhance the awareness of ecological protection and help the balance of the ecosystem. Following the ecological philosophical concept of “pluralism and harmony, interactive symbiosis”, this study applies the framework of ecological discourse analysis of attitudinal resources to carry out specific and in-depth ecological discourse analysis of attitudinal resources in the discourse, so as to realize independent judgment of ecological information.

## 3. Research design

### 3.1 Research questions

This study adopts a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, takes the attitude system under the perspective of eco-linguistics as the theoretical framework, follows the eco-philosophical outlook of “pluralism and harmony, interaction and symbiosis”, and analyzes the eco-discourse analysis of the ecological environment discourse of the government's work report, aiming at answering the following two questions:

- (1) What are the distribution characteristics of each resource of the attitude system in the government work report?
- (2) What kind of ecological orientation is implied in the analysis of the attitude resources in the government work report?

### 3.2 Corpus Building

The corpus of this paper is selected from the government work reports on ecological environment construction and other related texts from 2022-2024, with a total word count of 2,633. Due to the small size of the corpus of this study, manual annotation is adopted. After the corpus annotation is completed, the attitudinal resources in the government work reports are statistically analyzed, and the frequency of the occurrence of each sub-resource and the proportion they account for in the total are counted.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Overall Distribution of Attitudinal Resources

Through corpus analysis, the distribution statistics of attitudinal resources in the discourse. The order of the three subsystems of attitudinal resources is judgmental resources (58%) > appreciation resources (19%) > emotional resources (16%). It can be seen that judgmental resources are the most prominent. In the government work report, the Chinese government tends to convey positive voices, showing China's desire to emphasize the harmony between human beings and nature, and calling for the sustainable development of ecological civilization, which is exactly the embodiment of the eco-philosophical outlook of “harmony in diversity and interactive coexistence”.

### 4.2 Attitudinal Resource Analysis

#### 4.2.1 Emotional Resources

Emotions belong to reactions, which are people's emotions towards behaviors, texts/processes and related phenomena (Wang Zhenhua, 2001), involving both positive and negative aspects.

Example (1) Launching the national carbon emissions trading market. Positively responding to climate change

Example (2) Promote the construction of a nature reserve system with national parks as the main body, to make the home we live in greener and more beautiful.

The use of emotional resources in the discourse of leaders' speeches can directly affect the empathic ability of the audience,

and help to establish emotional connection and trigger resonance. The expression of tendency in emotional resources shows that China takes ecological problems seriously, carries a sense of reverence, and thinks deeply about solutions. The Chinese government strongly expresses its opposition to the waste of ecological resources from the perspective of righteousness. The words “positively” and “to make” in the example are a reflection of the leaders' affective-attitudinal resources, which call for compliance with and protection of nature, promote the implementation of China's environmental governance approach, and call for the involvement of more people in the process of environmental protection. Emotional resources mainly reflect China's emotional tendency and emotional expression of ecological development, showing China's serious and earnest attitude towards ecological issues, helping to build a national image that adheres to the concept of harmonious symbiosis and reverence for nature, which belongs to the ecologically beneficial discourse.

#### **4.2.2 Judgment Resources**

Judgment refers to the use of a series of institutional norms to evaluate human behavior, which can be divided into two categories: social esteem and social sanction.

Example (3) Resolutely curbing the blind development of high-energy-consumption, high-emission and low-level projects, and enhancing the carbon sink capacity of the ecosystem.

Example (4) Promote the shift from “dual control” of energy consumption to “dual control” of carbon emissions, improve incentive and constraint policies to reduce pollution and carbon emissions, develop green finance, and accelerate the formation of a green and low-carbon production and living style.

The resources of talent/capability in the corpus are often used to express the meaning of “enhance, push forward, promote development, strengthen”, etc. (such as enhance, advance, etc.), and its extensive use can highlight China's initiative in the process of environmental governance, reflecting the fact that China has enough ability and wisdom to strengthen the maintenance of the ecological environment and the protection of biodiversity. The extensive use of this term can highlight China's initiative in the process of environmental governance, reflecting China's ability and wisdom to strengthen the maintenance of the ecological environment and the protection of biodiversity, and to actively strengthen cooperation and coordination with other countries, and to actively practise and promote the global process of environmental governance. The words “improve” and “enhance” in the government work report belong to the category of positive judgment on the ability of the target of evaluation, reflecting the Chinese government's adherence to the righteousness-based principle. This reflects the Chinese government's adherence to a “righteousness-based” perspective and respect for the internal operating laws of the ecosystem, which is conducive to the benign development of the social ecology. The attitude of “green, low-carbon and sustainable development” reflects the speaker's positive judgment of events that follow the eco-philosophical viewpoint from the perspective of nature, adhering to the policy of a beautiful China with sustainable development, and bringing favorable benefits to people all over the world, which is an ecologically beneficial judgment.

#### **4.2.3 Appreciative Resources**

Appreciation system includes reaction, composition and value, and reaction includes impact and quality. Reaction is mainly the appreciation of personal perception of things; composition is mainly the appreciation of certain qualities inside or outside things; and value is mainly the appreciation of the social value of things.

Example (5) Deeply practicing the concept that green water and green mountains are golden mountains, collaborating to promote carbon reduction, pollution reduction, green expansion and growth, and building a beautiful China in which human beings coexist harmoniously with nature.

Example (6) Developing green industries and the circular economy, and promoting the research, development and application of energy-saving and environmental protection technologies and products. It has actively participated in international cooperation to address climate change, and made Chinese contributions to promoting global climate governance.

Evaluative words such as “green water and green mountains”, “energy-saving” and “recycling” express positive attitudes towards the construction of a beautiful China and belong to positive appreciation. The Chinese government has made Chinese contributions to the promotion of global climate governance and insisted on dedicating Chinese power to the promotion of the sustainability of ecological civilization. This initiative is not only conducive to the establishment of a harmonious and friendly relationship between human beings and nature, but also conducive to the development of the international ecosystem as a whole, as the Chinese side has taken the righteousness-based initiative of green development and common development among countries. The speaker's position shows the ecological philosophical view of “harmony in diversity and interactive symbiosis”, which belongs to the appreciation of ecological usefulness.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the eco-philosophy of “harmony of diversity and interaction”, this study analyzes the eco-discourse of the

government's work report on the ecological environment with the help of the attitude system under the perspective of ecolinguistics. It is found that the attitudinal resources contained in the ecological discourse of the government's working report are in line with the ecological philosophy of harmony of plurality and interactive symbiosis, and belong to the ecologically beneficial discourse. Under the current situation of environmental deterioration, the Chinese government is determined to develop a green and sustainable ecological environment, promote the concept of harmonious coexistence between human beings and nature, and promote the construction of a community of human destiny. At the same time, it shows that, based on a specific eco-philosophical view, it is operational and practical to analyze eco-discourse by using the attitudinal system under the perspective of eco-linguistics constructed by He Wei et al.

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