

Ecological Discourse Analysis for Attitude Resources in President Xi Jinping's Discourses

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Abstract. Nowadays, ecological problems arouses the universal concern of people all over the world. President Xi Jinping's discourses can fully reflect the ecological value orientation of China's policy. Based on the EDA paradigm and following the ecosophy view of "diversity and harmony, interaction and symbiosis", this paper conducts an in-depth study on the attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses, and probes into the ecological idea and ecological value orientation embodied by the attitude resources. The findings are as follows: (1) In President Xi Jinping's discourses, the judgment resources are the most, the appreciation resources the second, the affect resources the least; (2) The attitude resources of President Xi Jinping's discourses show beneficial and ambivalent ecological value orientation, but no destructive one; (3) The attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses reflect the ecological idea of "ecological priority and harmonious coexistence".

1 INTRODUCTION

With the continuous development of human society, ecological problems have gradually intensified, making everyone have to think about how to protect it. China, as the second largest economy in the world, has high impact on its ecological policies. Halliday (1990) pointed out that linguistic research needs to shoulder the responsibility of responding to ecological problems¹. It can be seen that the EDA for Chinese President Xi Jinping's discourses on ecology has certain theoretical and practical significance for expanding the research scope of eco-linguistics and understanding the ecological value orientation of China's policies.

In recent years, after reviewing relevant literature, the author finds that there are two main aspects of the research on President Xi Jinping's discourses from the perspective of linguistics: systemic functional linguistics (Huang Guowen 2017⁷; Yan Fei 2018⁸; Xi Wang 2021⁵) and cognitive linguistics (Zhou Zhiyuan & Shao Yanchun 2017¹⁴; Zhou Zhiyuan 2020¹⁵; Zheng 2021⁶; Sun Yi 2022¹³). Both of them focus on the analysis of the linguistic characteristics of President Xi Jinping's discourses, and then explore its role in the construction of discourse system with Chinese characteristics. However, the author finds that the emphasis of the existing researches is on qualitative analysis while quantitative analysis is inadequate and researches on the integration of other theories with EDA for President Xi Jinping's discourses still needs to explore and expand.

The attitude resource in the Appraisal Theory proposed by Martin and White (2005)² expresses the significance of evaluation by speakers, which contains

three subsystems: affect, judgement and appreciation. By referring to the EDA paradigm proposed by Stibbe (2015)³, this paper uses qualitative and quantitative research methods to analyze the three subsystems of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses, and tries to solve the following three research questions: first, what are the distribution characteristics of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses; Second, what ecological value orientation and ecological idea is reflected in the attitude resources; third, what kind of ecological idea is conveyed by the attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses.

2 THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTION

2.1 EDA paradigm

With the ecological problems increasingly prominent, the eco-linguistics comes into being. Up to now, there are mainly two research paradigms in this field, the Haugen paradigm and the Halliday paradigm (He Wei & Zhang Ruijie (2017)⁹. Stibbe (2015)³ divided ecological discourses into beneficial, ambivalent, and destructive ecological value orientation. He Wei (2018)¹⁰ further pointed out that EDA refers to the analysis of the ecological value orientation of discourse from the perspective of linguistics based on a certain ecosophy view.

In 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro marked that the idea of sustainable development and harmonious coexistence between man and nature has been gradually recognized by the world. Therefore, this paper adopts the ecosophy view

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of "diversity and harmony, interaction and symbiosis" ¹¹ (He Wei & Wei Rong 2018) to judge the ecological value orientation in President Xi Jinping's discourses and further analyze its beneficial, ambivalent and destructive attributes.

2.2 EDA framework of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses

President Xi Jinping's discourses reflects his ecological idea and China's ecological policy to a certain extent. Thompson ⁴(2014) pointed out that Appraisal Theory is an important tool for discourse meaning analysis. Affect resources can reflect the speaker's psychological response, judgment resources reflect the attitude toward specific behaviors, and appreciation resources can convey the evaluation attitude toward phenomena or things ² (Martin & White 2005) .

The final objective of this paper is to carry out a detailed EDA of the attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses, so as to realize the judgment of the ecological value orientation of China's policies. Accordingly, the author tries to construct an EDA framework of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses, Fig 1.

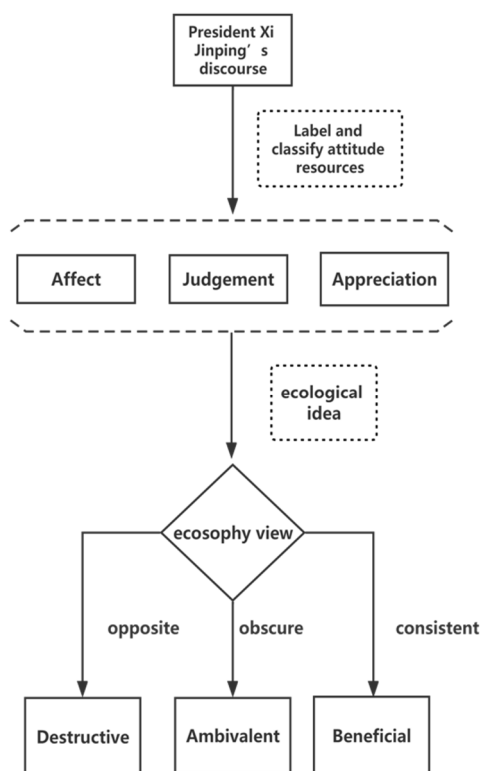


Fig 1.EDA framework of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses

3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Based on the database including a series of speeches by President Xi Jinping on the CPC News Network, the author sorted out President Xi Jinping ' s replies,

speeches and reports on ecology from 2012 to 2022. Total of 55 pieces are found out including 89872 characters. The author sets the codes of ecological value orientation in attitude resources, Table 1, and labels the three subsystems of attitude resources and the corresponding ecological value orientation by BFSU Qualitative Coder 1.2 software, a corpus marking tool developed by the Corpus team of Beijing Foreign Studies University.

Table 1. Codes of ecological value orientation in attitude resources

Attitude Resources	Codes	Ecological Value Orientation and codes
Affect	ATT-AFF	Beneficial——B1
		Ambivalent——A1
		Destructive——D1
Judgement	ATT-JUD	Beneficial——B2
		Ambivalent——A2
		Destructive——D2
Appreciation	ATT-APP	Beneficial——B3
		Ambivalent——A3
		Destructive——D3

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Distribution of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses

After analyzing corpus and statistics, the author marks 391 attitude resources and finds that their distribution characteristics are as follows: judgment resources account for 47%, appreciation resources 31%, and affect resources 22%, namely judgment resources > appreciation resources > affect resources , Fig 2.

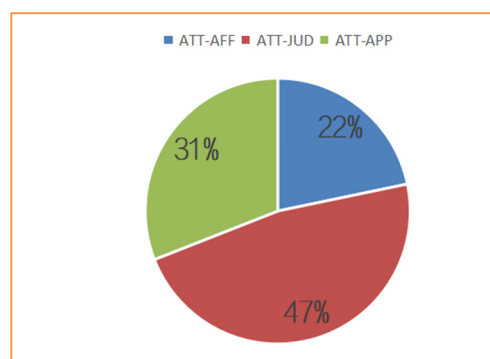


Fig 2.Distribution of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses

As can be seen from Fig 2, the proportion of judgment resources is the first, which reveals that President Xi Jinping often explicitly expresses the ecological policies that the Chinese government adheres to, takes the initiative in the international arena to clarify the position for the global ecological environment protection, and actively offers suggestions. Appreciation resource proportion takes the second place, showing that President Xi Jinping mainly discusses the great significance of ecological environment itself in his speeches and tends to

understand and convey the importance and urgency of protecting ecological environment objectively and rationally. Affect resources accounted for the least, mainly including President Xi Jinping's concern about the destroyed ecological environment, his appreciation of some remarkable cases, and his pragmatic attitude towards ecological protection.

4.2 The ecological value orientation reflected in the attitude resources of President Xi Jinping's discourses

By comparing with the ecosophy view of "diversity and harmony, interaction and symbiosis"¹¹ (He Wei & Wei Rong 2018), this paper finds 343 beneficial ecological value orientation and 48 ambivalent ones, but no destructive ones, Fig 3.

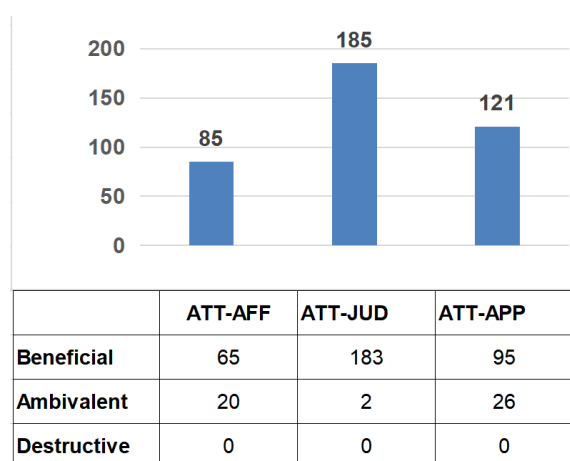


Fig 3. Distribution of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses

At first, it can be seen that the beneficial and ambivalent ecological value orientation reflected in affect resources relatively account for 76.5% and 23.5%. The beneficial ecological orientation is obviously higher than the ambivalent one, which shows that President Xi Jinping attaches great importance to the protection of ecological environment, firmly resizes the destructive behavior, and has a sincere attitude towards the construction of a community with a shared future between man and nature. For example, in the following corpus marked as affect resources (example 1 to example 3), President Xi Jinping uses words such as "hope", "should", "immediately", "keep concern", to convey his attitude towards ecological environment. The emotional tone of the discourse is sincere, pragmatic and attentive.

(1) I **hope** that the whole society **will** take action to **actively** spread and practice the concept of ecological civilization, and **do real work**, so as to leave a beautiful homeland with blue sky, green land and clear water for future generations.

(2) We must work together and act **immediately** to implement the concept of ecological protection in the course of development, and build a beautiful home that is harmonious to all things.

(3) I always **keep concerned** about the ecological protection of the Yellow River Basin.

Secondly, the beneficial and ambivalent ecological value orientation reflected in judgement resources accounts for 98.9% and 1.1%. The beneficial ecological orientation is significantly higher than the ambivalent ecological orientation, which indicates that President Xi Jinping on various occasions highly advocates the beneficial ecological protection policies. For instance, in the following corpus marked as judgement resource (the bold front in example 4 to example 6), President Xi Jinping points out the close relationship between ecological environment and national prosperity, and stresses that Chinese modernization must adhere to the ecological concept of ecological priority and harmonious coexistence between man and nature. The judgement resources highlight the distinct beneficial orientation of China's ecological policy.

(4) China has **made great efforts** to promote ecological progress and **put into practice** the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature. We are ready to **continue to** work with other parties to build a community of life between man and nature and jointly build a clean and beautiful homeland for future generations.

(5) In recent years, China has **adhered to** the concept of "clear waters and green mountains are as good as mountains of gold and silver", **insisted to** the systematic management of mountains, rivers, forests, fields, lakes and grasslands, and implemented the national park system.

(6) From the traditional Chinese wisdom of upholding nature and integrating man with nature, to the new development concept of innovation, coordination, green, open and shared development, China **has given ecological progress a prominent position and integrated it into all aspects and the whole process of China's economic and social development**, striving to build a modernization featuring harmonious coexistence between man and nature.

Thirdly, the beneficial and ambivalent ecological value orientation reflected in appreciation resources accounts for 78.5% and 21.5%. The beneficial ecological orientation is obviously higher than the ambivalent ones. This shows that President Xi Jinping often conveys his understanding of the value of ecological environment itself to arouse people's attention. For example, in the following corpus labeled as appreciation resources (example 7 to example 9), President Xi Jinping points out that a good ecological environment is the basis for development and the premise for the continuation of civilization, and clearly clarifies the economic value and development significance of ecological environment.

(7) Ecological progress will **benefit** both the present and future generations.

(8) clear waters and green mountains are as good as mountains of **gold and silver**.

(9) Ecology is a unified natural system, an interdependent and closely linked organic chain. The lifeblood of man is in the field, the field is in the water, the water is in the mountain, the mountain is in the soil, and the soil is in the forest and grass. This community of

life is **the material basis** for the survival and development of mankind.

4.3 The ecological idea conveyed by the attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses

Through a large number of judgment remarks, President Xi Jinping firmly confirms the goal of China's green and harmonious development, conveys the ecological concept of "ecological priority and harmonious coexistence" to the world, and calls on the world to jointly build a community of human and natural life.

5 CONCLUSION

Following the EDA framework of attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses, this paper studies the attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses, and finds that the attitude resources reflect beneficial and ambivalent ecological value orientation, but no destructive one. It is found that the attitude resources in President Xi Jinping's discourses contain the ecological idea of "ecology as priority, harmonious coexistence". This paper appeals that ecological problems can be properly solved with the joint governance in the world.

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