

鼎新北科外语学者丛书



语言中的人与场所

——生态话语分析模式研究

People and Place in Language
—A Framework for Ecological Discourse Analysis

张瑞杰 著



对外经济贸易大学出版社
University of International Business and Economics Press

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中国·北京

图书在版编目（CIP）数据

语言中的人与场所：生态话语分析模式研究：英文 /
张瑞杰著. —北京：对外经济贸易大学出版社，2020.9

（鼎新北科外语学者丛书）

ISBN 978-7-5663-2205-0

I. ①语… II. ①张… III. ①话语语言学—研究—英文 IV. ①H0

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字（2020）第 171574 号

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责任编辑：郭玉红

出版发行：对外经济贸易大学出版社
社 址：北京市朝阳区惠新东街 10 号
网 址：www.uibep.com
资源网址：www.uibepresources.com

邮政编码：100029
邮购电话：010-64492338
发行部电话：010-64492342
E-mail：uibep@126.com

成品尺寸：170mm×240mm
印 张：14.25
字 数：264 千字
ISBN 978-7-5663-2205-0

印 刷：北京九州迅驰传媒文化有限公司
版 次：2020 年 9 月北京第 1 版
印 次：2020 年 9 月第 1 次印刷
定 价：69.00 元

本书为北京科技大学中央高校基本科研业务费
专项基金（ Fundamental Research Funds for the
Central Universities ）资助项目（ 项目编号
FRF-BR-19-007B 和 FRF-TP-18-085A1 ）

总 序

AI时代加速到来，外语学者仿佛走到绝壁悬崖，纷纷探寻出路。

我们的信念是，提倡人文，坚持鼎新。智能时代固然无法抗拒，但科技无法给予人性的温度，无法产生人文的光辉。唯有与人声相应、与文气相通，才能共生未来。因而，外语学者必须是人文的、人性的、人味的。他们应以独特的个体思考，“标新理于众家之表”“立异义于众贤之外”。最终，从人文出发，达于鼎新之境，立于不被时代淘汰的先声之地。

奉人文鼎新为圭臬，北京科技大学外国语言文学学科砥砺前行、蓬勃发展。2006年获批外国语言文学一级学科硕士点，2011年获批外国语言文学一级学科博士点，已成为本硕博齐全、特色明晰、规模适度、注重质量、在国内具有一定实力和影响的外语人才培养单位和研究单位。纵观英、日、德三个语言文学学科，无不以“人文”思想贯之，展现了解放思想、力求突破的鼎新理念。

人文教育关心人类的终极目标。它不仅关注人类的人性和命运，也关注人类境况的不同和统一。本套丛书就是这一人文思想的结晶，该丛书囊括了英语、日语和德语世界的多维度研究成果。凭栏静听，世界各国皆有所思；沧海横流，英雄各路方显本色。这些著作有助于我们认知人类知识多样的呈现方式，探索人类命运的整体性和同一性，如此方能知其利弊得失所在，形成我们自己权衡取舍的广阔视野。

鼎新理念乃北科外语学者之教研风尚，催生了新一代之学术思想——求知更要求智，蜕故更要孳新。这套丛书无疑是这一学术思想的最佳体现，皆为我院不同学科背景的教师近年来最新的探索之作。事实上，人文鼎新之于我们，不仅仅是理念，不仅代表一种客观的知识，告诉我们“是什么”；更重要的，它还是一种实践，让我们学会如何辨认、形成和追问种种价值性的问题，去探寻“为什么”和“应该怎么做”。唯有如此，才能从“求知”上升到更高一层的“求智”，

在 AI 时代重返“挚爱真善美，关切天地人”的精神家园。

春江水暖，鼎新者当作先知；继往开来，人文者当为人先。让我们共勉。

北京科技大学外国语学院

2019 年 4 月

Preface

This book explores ecological meanings realized through the interplay of people and place in discourses, culminating in a holistic approach termed *Ecological Discourse Analysis*. The fundamental belief of the book is that meaning concerning human-place relationships is encoded in discourses and discourses have the power of enacting ideas and actions concerning the ecology. The book mainly develops its discussions to answer the question of “what kind of relationship between human and nature contribute to the lasting existence of human in nature” and “how does language contribute to this kind of relationship”. To achieve this, the book develops a framework to help explain through what ways a text reflect the speaker/writer’s own ecological preference, which in the scope of this book, pertaining the relationship between human and its surrounding places.

The framework is developed using a metafunctional approach to reveal human-nature relations following the basic theories of Systemic Functional Linguistics. In particular, experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings are explored concerning a set of concrete examples. This book represents an effort to reveal the potential of the Chinese language in construing ecological relations in discourses and proposes ecological discourse analysis as a powerful tool for raising ecological awareness and addressing ecological issues.

This is essential reading for students and researchers interested in the ever-growing ecological issues and the part human beings can play in the game. It provides a critical approach featuring discourse analysis, human-place relations and ecological ideologies.

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Foundations

1.1 People, Place and Ecology

In 1866, German biologist Ernst Haeckel proposed the science of ecology to express the idea that the whole earth is a vast, interrelated household and that the place of an organism within the whole earth is essential to the understanding of his/her forms, evolution, and behavior. The subsequent development of ecology has fallen into an immeasurable sphere that includes basically all fields of studies, such as ecology, geography, aerography, environmental science and sociology. As Chapman and Reiss (1998, pp. 2-3) comments, “we have a picture of ecology as a subject full of complexity ... there is an almost infinite amount to be discovered about the ecology of the world.” However, further development of ecology has provided fundamental insights that human beings are not unique and that “human can only change their way of life if they take into account their natural capacities and their complex relationship with their environments” (Marshall, 1993, pp. 338). Among all the discussions, the essential parties are always surrounding human beings and their environment. However, as there is never enough environmental talks about the human-nature relationship, there is a major problem in our awareness of the ecology itself.

On a balmy September afternoon, about a hundred students at one of the finest public universities in the nation are gathered under a sprawling Monterey pine. “What kind of tree is this?” a professor asks. Silence. “How many of you don’t know any more than that it’s a tree?” Most students raise their hands. They can converse knowledgeably about

chlorofluorocarbons and the ozone hole, but most can't tell a pine from a fir, or even an oak. The professor is perturbed. "I don't think we have a chance of changing our relationship to the natural world if you don't know what's around you," he says. (Heise, 2008, p. 28)

This is from a course taught by a Berkeley professor to articulate the importance of reconnecting with the natural world by knowing the details of the ecosystems that are most closely to an individual. In fact, it is not surprising to find many people, even environmentalists, talk about ecological issues such as climate change, air pollution or deforestation more often than they talk about the most immediate surrounding environment they live in. But there is an alienation existing in most people's understanding of ecology and their understanding of the basic units that constitute ecology. This alienation probably results from a fully comprehensive immersion of human beings in the grand ecological system. Evidently, if we look around us, we will find everything and everywhere is marked by the existence of humans. We live in houses built by humans, eat food produced by humans from the earth, wear clothes made by human beings and use tools invented by humans. Stepping outside of our houses, we will find people everywhere, on the streets, in malls, at schools speaking various kinds of languages around us. Up in the air, we have planes and on the ground, there are trains and automobiles made by humans and carrying people around. Even for nature reserves, they are places carefully protected by humans and for humans. This strong existence of human beings inevitably leads to an ignorance of the proximate environment and of the place that is so embedded in daily life.

People and place are inextricably linked to each other, creating all sorts of living experiences. It is safe to say that place is bound up in people's sources of meaning and experience while people and places are mutually constructed and constituted (Harvey, 2001). In this mutual constructing process, the establishment of self is impossible without the context of place and "there is no such thing as an individual, only an individual-in-context, individual as a component of place, defined by place" (Evernden, 1978, p. 103). Shepard (1977, pp. 22-32) has similarly claimed that "knowing who you are is impossible without knowing where you are" and that the relationship to place serves to "both reflect and create an inner geography by which we locate the self". Through the intricate biological and

social-cultural processes that take place while people experience (namely by interacting, knowing, perceiving or living) the physical environment (Hausmann et al., 2016), people develop a sense of place that represents perception and interpretation of the environment in an emotional, spiritual and cognitive way (Tuan, 1977; Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006).

Therefore, in approaching the grand topic of ecology and its most relevant and urgent topic of ecological awareness and activism, a sense of place is a prerequisite. And it is particularly necessary to discuss the ecological implication of people's immediate experiences of the living places.

1.2 Ecolinguistics and Discourse Analysis

Human beings exist in the world as social groups, and our social activities give rise to language and basically exist through language. It is safe to say that language is an indispensable part of the ecology of the planet. Einar Haugen established the first link between ecology and language by referring metaphorically to the *ecology of language*, in which he “compared the interplay between languages in the human mind and in a society with biological ecology” (Fill, 1996, p. 11). In a paper published in 1971, Haugen (1971, p. 19) told of the ecology of language, also known as *language ecology*, as the “interactions between any given language and its environment”. Haugen proposed an analogy of the language with the natural world and defined environment as the social and cultural setting in which the language is used. Haugen's ecological metaphor enjoyed remarkable popularity in the 1980s as it embraces the cause of linguistic diversity and have saved many endangered languages. But these efforts “did not yet result in the formation of an ecological school of linguistics” (Fill, 1998, p. 11).

In 1985, French linguist Claude Hagège used the term *ecolinguistics* (écolinguistique) for the first time to represent the study of linguistic representations of natural phenomena, which became an umbrella word for all linguistic studies that are related to the ecology. In the 1990s, ecolinguistics gained its momentum when M.A.K Halliday delivered his keynote speech “New Ways of Meaning: The Challenge to Applied Linguistics” given at AILA IX in Thessaloniki. In this speech, Halliday made strong assumptions about the influence of language on ecological thinking and environmental issues and emphasized the role of applied

linguists in the study of the growing of environmental problems. He further offered revolutionary ideas for the study of interrelationships between language and ecology by distinguishing *institutional ecolinguistics* and *systemic ecolinguistics* (Halliday, 2007, p. 14), the later one concerning the impact of language on human decision making and consequently on actions taken to the environment.

Haugen and Halliday's seminal works triggered two different approaches to ecolinguistics: metaphorical ecolinguistics and non-metaphorical ecolinguistics. Though being complementary rather than exclusive, the two theories are gradually being used in different researches. Linguists who are interested in the investigation and protection of linguistic varieties rely on Haugen's theory, while others who are more devoted to the research of human-environment relationships draw on Halliday's theory. With a primary concern for the people-place relationship and its effects on ecology, this research will take a non-metaphorical ecolinguistic approach (or the Hallidayan approach) to study "the impact of language on the life-sustaining relationships among human, other organisms and the physical environment" (Alexander & Stibbe, 2014, p. 118).

The Hallidayan approach bases their studies mostly on discourse analysis, with existing research following approaches such as critical discourse analysis (CDA), multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) and positive discourse analysis (PDA). Given their differences in research targets and perspectives, they have a shared character that all target discourses under inspection are related directly or indirectly with ecological issues, or in Stibbe's words (Stibbe, 2014, p. 105), "construct either explicitly, or more likely implicitly, standpoints on a problem". So far, among the various studies discussing ecological discourses, the coverage range from environmentalism and the concept of nature (Coupland et al., 1998; Benton & Short, 1999; Harré et al., 1999; Hansen, 2006; Alexander, 2008; Knight, 2010; Stibbe, 2012b; Harper, 2016; etc.), natural resources (Meisner, 1995; Schultz, 2001; Kurz et al., 2005; Russell et al., 2011; etc.), advertising and commercials (Mühlhäusler, 1999; Slater, 2007; Hogben, 2008; Jones, 2013; etc.), ecotourism (Mühlhäusler & Peace, 2001; Stamou & Paraskevopoulos, 2003, 2004, 2008; Trčková, 2016; Atieno & Njoroge, 2018; etc.) and plants or animals (Glenn, 2004; Goatly, 2006; Stibbe, 2012a; Cook, 2015; etc.). These researches represent the major themes and approaches of existing ecolinguistic studies and also have been the primary focus of ecolinguistics.

However, it should be noted that these discourses just account for a small portion of the vast majority of discourses that can exert influence on the ecology. In fact, when Halliday addressed the discipline of ecolinguistics, he did not talk about the language of the environmental issue but questioned the aspects of grammar, therefore proposing *systemic ecolinguistics* (Halliday, 2007). Halliday outlined, one might consider, the ultimate goal of ecolinguistics, which is an upturn of the general grammar and a reconstruction of it. There are a few research that have tried to carry out an ecological analysis of discourse, such as Nerlich, Hamilton and Rowe (2002), Pierson (2005), Beckett (2013) and Faridah, Sinar, Meko and Setia (2014).

At this current status, ecolinguistic practitioners should probably firstly find out the drawbacks of the current grammar based on a comprehensive analysis of the existing discourses. In other words, focusing on the clustering of grammatical and semantic features of various discourses under a sophisticated framework will be a promising level for the current ecolinguistic study. Therefore, a transformation from the analysis of ecological discourses to the ecological analysis of discourses or *Ecological Discourse Analysis* (EDA) is in great demand. This research attempts to contribute to this line of research by proposing one analytical framework to reveal how a cluster of linguistic features reflects and reshapes the relationship between human beings and the environment.

1.3 Ecolinguistics and Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), devised by M.A.K Halliday, is a functional-semantic approach to language, exploring how people use language in different contexts and how language is structured for use as a semiotic system. SFL is regarded as applicable linguistics as Halliday (2006, p. 19) officially proposed the term to suggest that language has “the general property that it can be put to use in different operational contexts”. Later Halliday (2008, p. 203) further describes applicable linguistics as “a theory and a body of method that can be drawn upon in those areas of human activity in which language is critically involved” and emphasizes the role of theory as a resource for solving practical issues.

Halliday also addresses SFL as socially accountable linguistics as he states that linguistics should be put out in the social environment and show its instrumentality and that studies detached from practical analyses should be criticized for its lack of social accountability. Halliday (1990/2003) explicitly acknowledges that linguistics, as well as the language itself, is a mode of action and a way to intervene in social and political processes. Therefore, linguists should not only analyze and describe texts but also play a part in the creation of texts. Being an applicable and socially accountable linguistics, SFL offers the fundamental premise for ecolinguistic studies.

As Hallidayan approach of ecolinguistic studies takes on its momentum in recent decades, functional linguists are making efforts in exploring the strong applicability of systemic functional grammar and its strong interpretative power in discourse analysis, such as Alexander and Stibbe (2014), Stibbe (2014, 2015), Huang (2017), He and Wei (2017), He and Zhang (2017), Zhang and He (2018), Zhang and Huang (2019), etc. Some studies have explored the potential of the metafunction networks in doing ecological discourse analysis, such as He and Zhang (2017) and Zhang (2018). As Zhang and He (2018) provides an ecological interpretation of the interpersonal meaning in Chinese, Wei and He (2019) and He and Ma (2020) constitute together a network of appraisal resources. With respect to the transitivity system, He and Wei (2017) describe the international ecological discourse based on an ecosophy of harmony in diversity, reciprocity and mutual benefit. These system networks have enriched the theoretical reserve for the current ecolinguistic research and especially contributed to the explore of ecological discourse analysis. Yet there is still a great deal to study in terms of methodologies, ideologies and analytical frameworks for this line of research.

1.4 Ecolinguistics and Ideologies

Within the broad range of discourse analysis studies, the term *ideology* is most frequently mentioned in the field of critical linguistics as something derived from the taken-for-granted assumptions, beliefs and value-systems which are shared collectively by social groups (Simpson, 1993). Ecolinguistic studies, especially those following the Hallidayan approach, rest heavily on ideologies about ecology. Decisions about whether particular features of discourse are ecological or not are based more or less on researchers' ideologies about ecology, or ecosophy (short for