Environmental Discourse Criticism and Analysis Based on the Paradigm of Ecological Linguistics

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Abstract: Due to the increasingly serious environmental problems, the environmental discourse has become a research field that has drawn much attention. As a newly emerging interdisciplinary field, ecological linguistics provides a new perspective for the study of environmental discourse. This article aims to explore the definition of environmental discourse, the basic principles of ecological linguistics, and the methods and steps of environmental discourse criticism and analysis based on the research paradigm of ecological linguistics. It also illustrates the specific process of environmental discourse criticism and analysis through examples, hoping to provide necessary assistance for the long-term progress of this field.

1. Introduction

The increasingly serious environmental problems have caused widespread concern worldwide. As a vital component of environmental issues, the study of environmental discourse plays a crucial role in solving environmental issues. Ecological linguistics is a newly emerging discipline, whose research paradigm provides new ideas and methods for the study of environmental discourse. In this context, this article explores the nature of environmental issues and their solutions through the criticism and analysis of environmental discourse based on the paradigm of ecological linguistics.

2. Definition and Category of Environmental Discourse

Environmental discourse refers to the linguistic expression of environmental issues, including environment-related speech and text. Environmental discourse covers various types of linguistic expressions, such as scientific and technological literature, news reports, policy documents, advertising, and so on. These linguistic expressions have a profound impact on the understanding, evaluation, and solution of environmental issues in different social, historical, and cultural contexts [1]. The scope of environmental discourse includes but is not limited to, the following aspects: (1) Description and interpretation of environmental issues: Environmental discourse can describe and explain information about the nature, causes, and effects of environmental issues, thereby helping people better understand environmental issues. (2) Evaluation of environmental issues: Environmental discourse can evaluate environmental issues, including the assessment of the degree of understanding, harm, priority, and other aspects of environmental issues. (3) Solutions to environmental problems: Environmental discourse can propose solutions to environmental problems, including solutions in policy, technology, behavior, and other aspects, and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for solving environmental problems. (4) Advocacy and publicity of environmental protection: Environmental discourse can promote and publicize environmental protection concepts, guide people to focus on and participate in environmental protection activities, and improve environmental protection awareness and quality.

3. Basic Principles of Ecological Linguistics

Ecological linguistics is an interdisciplinary discipline that combines theories and methods from multiple fields such as linguistics, ecology, and anthropology to explore the relationship between

language and environment. The basic principles of ecological linguistics are as follows: (1) Language and environment are interrelated. There is a complex interaction between language and the environment. Language reflects human cognition and attitude toward the environment and also affects human environmental behavior and awareness. (2) Language is a part of culture [2]. Language is a vital component of culture, reflecting the understanding and values of different cultures towards the environment. There are differences in environmental expressions and values between different languages, reflecting differences in the views and treatment of environmental issues among different cultures. (3) Language is a part of the ecosystem. Like ecosystems, language is a dynamic and interconnected system. The evolution and development processes of languages and ecosystems are similar, and both are influenced by the environment and human activities. (4) Language is a vital component of sustainable development. Language and sustainable development are closely related. Language reflects human cognition and attitudes toward environmental issues and also provides theoretical support and practical guidance for sustainable development. Ecolinguistics believes that language and environment are interrelated, and language is a part of culture and ecosystem, as well as a vital component of sustainable development. The research methods and theories of ecological linguistics can provide new ideas and methods for the research and solution of environmental problems [3].

4. Methods and Steps of Environmental Discourse Criticism and Analysis

4.1 Methods of Environmental Context Criticism

Environmental contextual criticism refers to the process of criticizing and evaluating problems existing in environmental contexts. It can discover and solve problems through the use of environmental language, and enhance people's environmental awareness and literacy. The methods of environmental contextual criticism include the following: (1) Text analysis: Explore the problems and contradictions existing in the text used in environmental language through analysis. Text analysis can be divided into surface analysis and deep analysis. The surface analysis focuses on surface phenomena and language forms, while deep analysis explores the underlying issues behind the language. (2) Questionnaire survey method: Through a questionnaire survey, know respondents' attitudes and views on environmental issues and the use of environmental language. Questionnaire surveys can yield objective results through quantitative analysis, and more detailed information can be obtained through open-ended questions [4]. (3) Interview method: Through interviews with relevant people, know their views and attitudes on environmental issues and the use of environmental language. Interviews can deeply explore the problem and obtain more detailed information, which is conducive to discovering the underlying causes of the problem. (4) Field observation method: Through observation of the actual environment, know the problems and contradictions existing in the environment. Field observations can reveal some issues related to the use of environmental languages, such as inappropriate use of slogans, noise pollution, and so on. (5) Comparative analysis method: By comparing the use of environmental languages in different regions and countries, explore the differences and commonalities among them. Comparative analysis can know the differences in environmental concepts and values between different cultures.

4.2 Steps of Environmental Discourse Analysis

Environmental discourse analysis refers to the in-depth analysis and evaluation of texts used in environmental language to explore environmental issues and contradictions. The steps of environmental discourse analysis are as follows: (1) Collect environmental discourse: It is essential to collect text related to the environment, such as promotional materials, advertising slogans, news reports, government documents, etc. These texts can come from different channels, such as the internet, newspapers, television, and so on. (2) Analyze text structure: Analyze the structure of the collected text to understand its components and text structure. For instance, advertising slogans typically contain components such as brand names, slogans, and product descriptions, while government documents typically contain components such as titles, text, and signatories. (3)

Analyze language form: Analyze the language form in the text to understand its language style, expression methods, and rhetorical devices. For instance, promotional materials often use vivid language to attract readers' attention, while government documents often use formal language to express policies and regulations. (4) Explore environmental issues: Through analyzing and understanding the text, know the existing environmental issues and contradictions. For instance, some advertising slogans may have problems with false or exaggerated advertising, and some government documents may have problems with lax enforcement of environmental policies and regulations. (5) Evaluate language use: Evaluate the language used in the text and analyze whether it meets the principles and requirements of environmental protection. For instance, some advertising slogans may promote the environment irresponsibly, and some government documents may ignore environmental protection. (6) Propose advice and improvement suggestions: Based on the analysis results, propose corresponding suggestions to push the improvement and optimization of environmental language use[5]. For instance, for advertising slogans with false or exaggerated advertising issues, suggestions can be made to strengthen supervision and standardize advertising. Environmental discourse analysis requires analyzing the structure and language form of the text, exploring the environmental issues and contradictions that exist therein, evaluating language use, and proposing corresponding advice and improvement suggestions.

4.3 Examples of Environmental Discourse Criticism and Analysis

The following is an example of environmental discourse criticism and analysis. Text: An advertising slogan for a household appliance brand: "Green and environmentally friendly, make your home healthier." Environmental issues: advertising slogans have the problems of false and exaggerated propaganda. Analysis steps: (1) Analyze the text structure: The advertising slogan consists of two parts, the first part being "green and environmentally friendly", and the second part being "making your home healthier".[7](2) Analyze language form: The advertising slogan uses vivid language and formal font design to attract consumers' attention, emphasizing the environmental protection and human health concerns of the household appliance brand's products[6]. (3) Explore environmental issues: There are issues with false and exaggerated advertising in this slogan. Firstly, the brand does not provide any practical environmental protection measures or policy support, but merely promotes its products as "green and environmentally friendly". Secondly, the advertising slogan suggests that its products can make families healthier, but does not provide any scientific evidence or data to support this claim. (4) Evaluate language use: The language use of this advertising slogan ignores and disregards environmental protection principles and requirements. False and exaggerated advertising not only misleads consumers in their purchasing decisions but also has potential negative impacts on the environment. (5) Advice and improvement suggestions: The advertising slogan should strengthen supervision and standardized publicity to ensure that the advertised products truly have environmental and health attributes. Consumer education needs to be strengthened to improve their awareness and understanding of environmental and health products.

In other words, there are problems with false and exaggerated advertising in this slogan, and it is essential to evaluate its language use and propose corresponding advice and improvement suggestions to promote the standardization and optimization of environmental language use[8].

5. Conclusion

To sum up, environmental discourse criticism and analysis have become an indispensable task in the era of increasing awareness of environmental protection. Through criticism and analysis of environmental discourse, it is possible to identify existing problems, assess whether language use conforms to environmental principles and requirements, and propose corresponding advice and improvement suggestions. This not only helps to promote the popularization of environmental awareness and the implementation of environmental protection but also guides people to focus more on the use of language and reduce environmental pollution and waste. Therefore, relevant industries and workers should strengthen research on environmental discourse criticism and analysis, promote environmentally-friendly language use, and jointly create a better environment and future.

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