Positive Discourse Analysis of the Government Work Report 2023 of China from the Perspective of Appraisal Theory

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Abstract: *The annual Government Work Report (GWR) is an official document released by the State Council of the People's Republic of China. The GWR of the year of 2023 (GWR2023) displays its unique features at discourse level. The Appraisal Theory provides an effective perspective and theoretical basis for discourse analysis. This paper employs the concepts of Attitude, Engagement and Graduationin the Appraisal Theory to make a positive discourse analysis (PDA) of the GWR2023. The research result shows: First, among all the systems, the Attitude system is the most prevalent in the GWR. The useof Judgment was also found to be much higher than Affect and Appreciation within theAttitude system. This shows that Chinese government uses positive action to inspire peopleand promote social development. Second, in the GWR2023, under the Engagement,dialogistic expansion is greater than dialogistic contraction. This reflects the features of inclusiveness and objectivity of the GWR. Third, theGraduationsystem runs through the GWR2023. The use of Graduation aims to reinforce the positive meaning of the discourse by way of enhancing the force andfocus, so as to achieve the purpose of persuasion.*
Keywords: *positive discourse analysis (PDA); Appraisal Theory; Government Work Report(GWR) 2023; Attitude*

I.   Introduction

The annual Government Work Report (GWR) of the State Council of China mainly displays the government's work over the past year, looks forward to the future, proposes the overall and specific deployment of work for the next year, as well as the implementation measures of policies and measures, in order to promote the development of various national work. The GWR is also important means of foreign propaganda and negotiation.In present China, the year of 2023 is the beginning year of fully implementing the spirit of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.The GWR2023 highlights the significance of the work in the critical year.

There is a GWR working group in China specifically for drafting the GWR of the State Council in accordance with legal provisions, understanding the spirit of the central government, clarifying the requirements of the central government, and continuously researching and revising after listening to opinions from all parties. Therefore, the GWR is endowed with extremely high discourse characteristics, namely popularity, comprehensiveness, and authority. It has great significance in regulating social conflicts, inspiring people's hearts, and promoting national development.The GWR of the State Council has a fixed format, which generally consists of a review of the work done in the previous year, the work tasks and priorities of the present year.

Although PDA is a hot research topic in linguistic field, there is still a gap in its research in the academic field of government document discourses. This study takes a different approach to explore the positive information behind the GWR discourses, thereby expanding the scope of discourse research in PDA.

From the perspective of positive discourse, the study explores the positive information within the discourse of the GWR2023, and points out how the GWRconveys positive messages about China's social development to the world. In this sense, the application of AppraisalTheory in PDA of the GWR can not only uncover the positive meaning within the discourse, point out how the GWR motivates the public and promotes ethnic development, but also provide theoretical references for linguistic and applied linguistic studies of the GWRs. Practically speaking, this study provides certain reference and assistance for the writing of the GWRs and related political genres, even the translation of them.

<center>**II.   Literature review**</center>

2.1 The current research status of Appraisal Theory

Appraisal Theory originates from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics(SFL). It is a supplement to the interpersonal function in systemic functions (Halliday, 2008). "Appraisal is concerned with evaluation-the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned"(Martin & Rose, 2003).Martin asserts that the research methods of SFL have not yet involved the interpretation of appraisal meaning, including the speaker's feelings, the appraisals they make, and their value judgments of various phenomena and experiences. Simply put, Appraisal Theory is concerned with the various attitudes negotiated in discourse, the intensity of emotions, the sources of value, and the ways in which readers are aligned.

Attitudes are represented through three aspects, namely Affect, Judgement and Appreciation. They can be positive appraisals or negative ones. Affect reflects the appraisal subject's emotional feelings towards someone or something; Judgment reflects the perception and judgment; Appreciation reflects the perspective and appreciation of things.Attitude is the first system of Appraisal Theory.Figure 1 can demonstrate the whole system.

The second system in Appraisal Theory is Engagement. Engagement refers to the resource system used by speakers to acknowledge or ignore various different viewpoints, and to gain a space for their own position in the process. The third system in Appraisal Theory is Graduation. Graduation is used to express emotional intensity. The use of Graduation is very common in daily communication, and we frequently meet words that can enhance or weaken emotional attitudes. For example, "*very*" in the statements of "*The film is very boring*" is a representation of Graduation. The emotional intensity is largely enhanced comparing to "*The film is boring*".
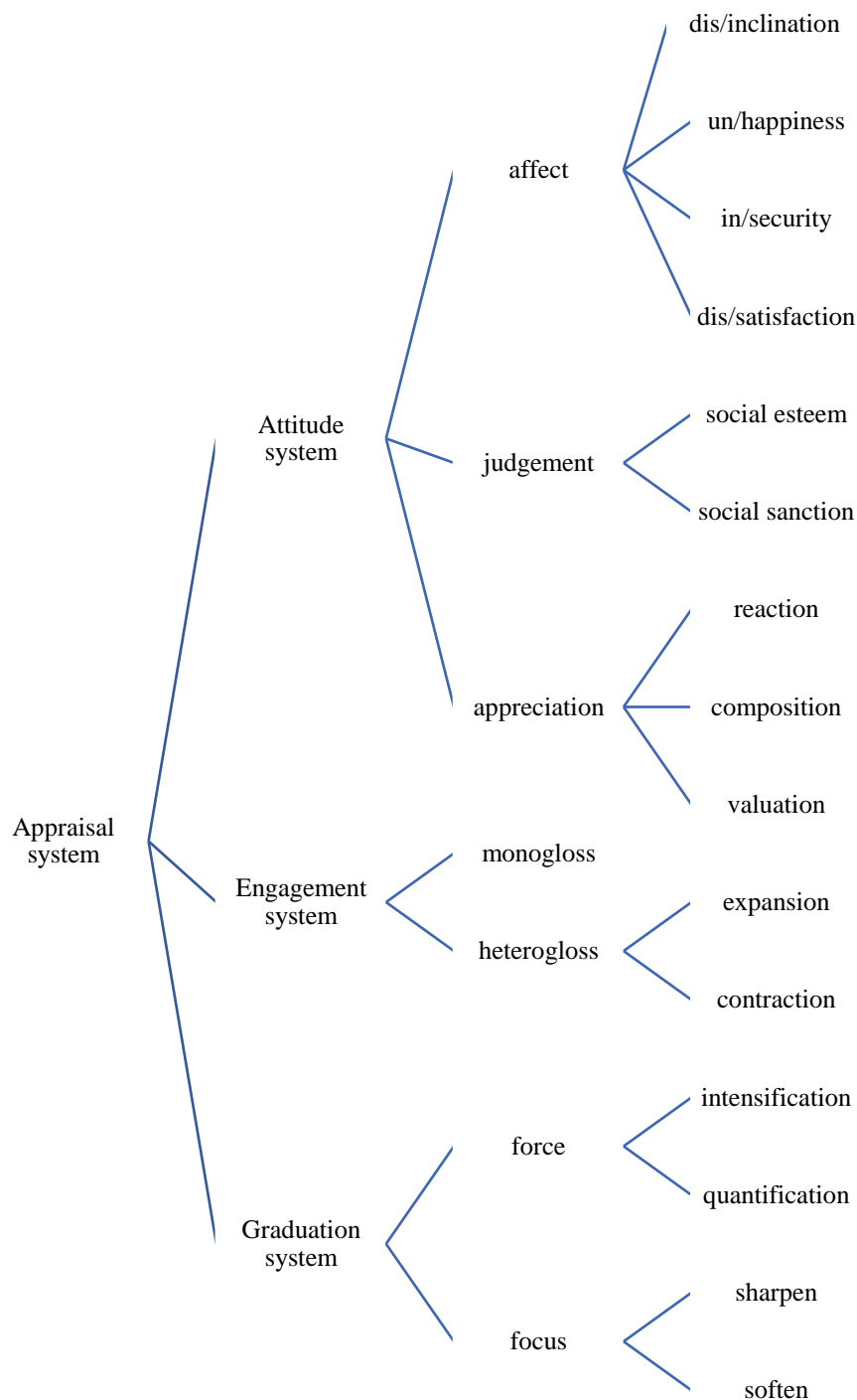
Figure 1. An Overview of Appraisal Resources (Martin & White, 2005)

Appraisal Theory is one of the greatest new developments of Systemic Functional Linguistics. it is generally believed that its contributions lie in its elaborate studies on the evaluative lexis, constituting an amendment to the traditional interpersonal model. The monograph *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English (Martin & White, 2008)* made a great breakthrough in this respect. The publication of this book has caused a great response in the academic community, making the research on Appraisal Theory a great popularity. Since its establishment, Appraisal Theory has received much attention from the academic community. Among them, the collected papers of the 28th International Conference on SFL, entitled *Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study of Social Changes*, focus on the reflection of the specific applications and achievements of Appraisal Theory. The academic journal *Text* also published a special issue that provides a

detailed introduction of the application and development of Appraisal Theory. Liu Shizhu(Liu, 2010) statistically demonstrates the development of Appraisal Theory in China over the past decade, and identifies the strengths and weaknesses, thus indicating the future development direction of the Appraisal Theory. Xu Yuchen (Xu, 2013)reviewed the development of Appraisal Theory in China in a more macroscopic form, and further pondered on improving this theory. Fang Hongmei's journal paper entitled *On the contributions of appraisal theory to Systemic Functional Linguistics* is also on the list. She argues that Appraisal theory advances interpersonal studies from the traditional perspective of clause grammar to the perspective of discourse semantics, thus focusing on interpersonal meanings in discourses rather than interpersonal grammar in clauses. The interpersonal model has been shifted from exchange-oriented to stance-oriented (Fang, 2014).

Appraisal Theory has attracted great academic attention due to its powerful discourse analysis function (Li, 2004:4; Fang, 2014:303; Li, 2016:94). Appraisal is an important means to achieve interpersonal relationships and has significant implications for constructing interpersonal meanings. Appraisal not only expresses the narrator's attitude, but also strives to construct values shared by the interlocutors. Under the framework of Appraisal Theory, discourse is not only an objective expression of words, but also a means of conveying attitudes and values through language.

2.2 The current research status of PDA

Discourse Analysis was first proposed by Z. Harris in 1952, which opened the door to modern Discourse Analysis. So far, Discourse Analysis has been divided into two disciplinaries: one is the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) represented by British linguists Fowler(1979) and Fairclough(1995), and the other is the Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA) represented by J.R. Martin (1992) from the University of Sydney in Australia. CDA is the deconstruction process of discourse examination, description, and explanation. It emphasizes the relationship between ideology and power, and reveals a certain political stance. PDA, on the other hand, focuses on using positive thinking attitudes to analyze discourse, in order to solve problems and resolve social conflicts. Hu (2012) argues that CDA and PDA are not hierarchical or mutually inclusive, but complementary to each other. Compared to CDA, PDA believes that excessive criticism and negation can easily make people feel in a negative social environment. PDA no longer focuses on "hegemony" and "inequality" issues, but focuses on "harmony" and "coexistence", actively exploring all aspects of the problem. Huang Guowen expands the research path of discourse analysis and insists that in addition to originality, linguistics should also pursue localization and local characteristics (Huang, 2018: 42).

2.3 The current situation of GWR research

As stated above, the GWR of the State Council of China, when taken as a discourse, has its unique features in its content and structure. It is in a fixed format too. With the rise of China since the Reform and Opening up, more and more foreign media have paid great attention to the annual GWR released by the State Council of China, in order to seek a deeper understanding of China. Academic research on the GWRs extends from the interpretation to the discourse translation. Some scholars also focus on analyzing and studying the vocabulary and linguistic features of the GWR. There is relatively few research conducted from the perspective of discourse analysis.

III. Research methodology

With the GWR2023 as the research object, Appraisal Theory as the theoretical framework (see Figure 1), this research conducts a positive discourse analysis of the GWR2023. To ensure the authenticity and credibility of this study, the research data is sourced from the official website of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China (https://www.gov.cn). The English translation version of the GWR2023 is sourced from the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau of the Communist Party of China.

Two research methods are adopted. Firstly, a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative study is employed. Quantitative research is adopted to analyze the discourse positivity of the GWR2023; Qualitative research is adopted to obtain corresponding number and frequency of respective types of positive resources in the GWR2023. Specifically, the study uses WPS to identify and label the Appraisal resources in the GWR2023 manually based on the theoretical framework of Appraisal Theory. Then the research tool AntConc3.5.8 is used to obtain the number and frequency of Appraisal resources in the GWR2023.

Secondly, a research method that combines synthesis and analysis is adopted. For the first step, the study decomposes the Appraisal Theory and applies each system in turn to the discourse of the GWR2023. For the second step, the study analyzes each part of the decomposition one by one through examples. Finally, the results of the analysis are integrated to disclose the positive significance of the discourse of the GWR2023.

IV. Research results and analysis

4.1 Analysis of Attitudesystem in the GWR2023

Attitude system can be analyzed from positive attitude and negative attitude. Positive attitude means being worthy of affirmation, praise; negative attitude means negation and dissatisfaction. Attitude system has three sub-systems, namely, Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation. Based on the Appraisal Theory, this research analyzes the Attitude resources in the discourse of the GWR2023, thus to disclose the positive features of the resources. According to the research result, the Affect resources, Judgement resources, and Appreciation resources can be demonstrated through Table 1.

Table 1. Attitude system in the GWR2023

Attitude	Positive	Negative	Total	Ratio
Affect	120	13	133	9.8%
Judgement	796	60	856	63.2%
Appreciation	321	45	366	27%
Total	1237	118	1355	100%
Ratio	91.3%	8.7%	100%	

From Table 1, it can be seen that in the discourse of the GWR2023, the most frequently used resources are Judgment resources, followed by Appreciation resources, and Affect resources are the least. In the Judgment resources, a total of 796 positive resources appeared, accounting for 63.2% of the entire Attitude system. 321 positive resources appeared in Appreciation, accounting for 27% of the total. In the Affect resources, there are a total of 120 that represent positive Affect, accounting for 9.8% of the Attitude system. It can be seen that the GWR2023 reflects positive attitude and positive action.

4.1.1 Affect resources

Affect can be positive and negative ones. Martin divides Affect resources into 4 kinds based on the classifications (see table 2)

Table 2. Classification of Affect resources

Affect	Intention	Reaction	Environment	Social activity
Positive	inclination	happiness	security	satisfaction
Negative	disinclination	unhappiness	insecurity	dissatisfaction

Positive Affect includes inclination, happiness, security and satisfaction. Negative Affect includes disinclination, unhappiness, insecurity, dissatisfaction. Inclination and disinclination are unreal emotions being attached with some intention which may trigger some real emotion. Happiness and unhappiness refer to the emotions that are instantly generated by certain stimuli. Security and insecurity refer to whether the living environment around us gives us a feeling of stability, comfort, tension, and anxiety. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are social behaviors we engage in that makes us feel satisfied or dissatisfied.

In the GWR2023, the result of Affect analysis can be demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Affect resources analysis of GWR2023

Affect	Dis/inclination	Un/happiness	In/security	Dis/satisfaction	Total	Ratio
Positive	62	10	21	27	120	90.2%
Negative	3	3	1	6	13	9.8%
Total	65	13	22	33	133	100%
Ratio	48.9%	9.8%	16.5%	24.8%	100%	

As demonstrated in Table 3, The positive Affect resources are much more than the negative ones in the GWR2023. From the perspective of Affect classifications, the frequency of inclination and disinclination resources ranks first. They account for 48.9% of the total Affect resources, which indicates that the government has clear inclination when expressing emotions. The attitude it displays is not only the government's desire in planning a certain policy, but more importantly, it shows the government's determination in implementing preferential policies for the nation. The second highest Affect is satisfaction and dissatisfaction, accounting for 24.8% of the total Affect resources. It indicates the government's satisfaction with the achievements made in the past year, and also indicates the specific goals and directions of the government's alignment with the next year's work. The third is security and insecurity, accounting for 16.5% of the total Affect resources. This indicates that the government does not forget to pay attention to the living conditions of the people while developing economic construction, which further reflects the fundamental purpose of the government to ensure that all people live a healthy and stable life. The least Affect resource is happiness and unhappiness which are direct emotional resources. The proportion of them accounts for only 9.8%. It shows that the GWR does not usually directly show off the government's achievement and their pride, but implicitly put them between the lines.

4.1.2 Judgement resources

Judgment is the interpretation of attitude through certain behaviors. Judgement can be positive or negative. Positive judgments are often positive and worthy of recognition and praise. Negative judgments are negative and even condemned. Martin (2008) divides judgment resources into two subcategories: social sanction and social esteem. And these two categories can be further divided into several subsets. Specifically, the categories can be seen from Table 4.

Table 4. Classification of Judgement

Judgement	Social sanction		Social esteem		
Positive	veracity	propriety	normality	capacity	tenacity
Negative	inveracity	impropriety	abnormality	incapacity	intenacity

Based on the classification, the result of Judgement analysis of the GWR2023 can be demonstrated in Table 5.

Table 5. Judgement resources analysis ofthe GWR2023

Judgement	In/veracity	Im/propriety	Ab/normality	In/capacity	In/tenacity	Total	Ratio
Positive	15	61	76	606	38	796	93%
Negative	6	9	5	36	4	60	7%
Total	21	70	81	642	42	856	100%
Ratio	2.4%	8.1%	9.5%	75%	5%	100%	

As is shown in Table 1,Judgement resources account for the largest portion in Attitudesystem. In Judgement, the frequency of Capacity and Incapacity resources ranks the most. There are altogether642Capacity and Incapacity resources,accounting for75% of the total.

This indicates the governing capacity of the Chinese government and the overall trend of its future development.Normality and abnormality rank the second, with a total of 81resources in the GWR2023, accounting for 9.5% of the total Judgment resources. This indicates that the Chinese government will enforce the law impartially, know the law and abide by it without knowingly breaking the law. The third most is thePropriety and improprietyresources, with a total of 70 words, accounting for 8.1% of the total. This indicates that while Chinese government is constantly creating innovation in governing the country, it faithfully faces the severe international situation and financial crisisand make steady efforts to overcome them step by step. The fourth one is the resource of Tenacity and intenacity, which indicate the Chinese government's unwavering determination and tenacious will. The last one is the resource of Veracity and inveracity, which demonstrates the credibility of the Chinese government.

From positive and negative perspectives, positive resources accounts for the vast majority, with a total of 796 words, accounting for 93% of the total. As stated before, the Capacity resources in Socialesteem ranks first, with a total of 606 words, accounting for 70.8% of Judgement resources. This indicates that the Chinese government has the ability to build China into a socialist modernized country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, and harmonious. Next is Normality resources, accounting for 8.9% of the total judgments. This emphasizes that the Chinese government has always adhered to the rule of law and the rule of virtue in governing the country.Proprietyresources ranks third, accounting for 7.1% of the total. It can be seen from this that while the Chinese government is striving to maintain its current achievements, its development in all aspects is steadily improving. Tenacity demonstrates the Chinese government's unwavering determination towards development and reform. The last oneis Veracity, which indicates the positive and sincere attitude of the Chinese government.

4.1.3 Appreciation resources

Appreciation belongs to the category of aesthetics. It is the evaluation of text processes and text phenomena. Appreciation can be positive or negative. Appreciation can be approached from three aspects. The first aspect is the Reaction that we have towards things, that is, where the thing is attractive enough to get affirmation and recognition. The second aspect is Composition of things. It's about whether the thing is balanced or complex. The third aspect is the Valuation of things, that is, whether it has the quality of innovation, authenticity, and promptness. From the perspective of SFL, Reaction is oriented towards interpersonal function, Composition is oriented towards discourse function, and Valuation is oriented towards conceptual function.

Based on the classification, the result of Appreciation analysis of the GWR2023 can be demonstrated in Table 6.

Table 6. Appreciation analysis of the GWR2023

Appreciation	Reaction	Composition	Valuation	Total	Ratio
Positive	48	121	152	321	87.7%
Negative	2	30	13	45	12.3%
Total	50	151	165	366	100
Ratio	13.6%	41.3%	45.1%	100%	

There are altogether 366 Appreciation resources in the GWR2023 among which there are 151 Composition resources, accounting for 41.3% of the total. The second is Valuation, with a total of 165, accounting for 45.1% of the total. The last is Reaction, with only 50, accounting for 13.6% of the total number of Appreciation resources.

From the perspective of positive and negative, there are 321 positive Appreciation resources, accounting for 87.7% of the total. This is far greater than 12.3% of negative ones. Among positive Appreciation resources, the proportion of Valuation comes the highest, Composition comes the second, and Reaction ranks the last. Among them, the application of Valuation reflects the profound significance and enormous value of the Chinese government in policy formulation and implementation, which is a manifestation of a positive attitude. In terms of Composition, the extensive use of positive resources indicates that all policies and guidelinesin Chinese government system are being carried out in a good and orderly manner. Reaction involves interpersonal functions, and the various policies introduced by the government can effectively connect with reality, timelyresponding the voices from the people, and solving social hot issues quickly.

4.2 Analysis of Engagement system in the GWR2023

Engagement in Appraisal refers to the resource system used by speakers to acknowledge or ignore various different viewpoints, and to gain a space for their own position in the process. In this sense, Engagement is based on concept of dialogue (Martin & White, 2008).

Like what Dialogue indicates,Engagement has the characteristics of heterogloss. Engagement is realized through four channels, namely Disclaim, Proclaim, Entertain and Attribute. Disclaim is an expression of disagreement or rejection of a certain opinion. Proclaim is to consider a certain opinion as legitimate. Entertain is the expression of an individual's subjective opinion. Attribute is the attribution of an opinion to external subjects. Disclaim and Proclaim belong to Contraction, whereas Entertain and Attribute belong to Expansion. Based on the classification, the result of Engagement classification and Engagement analysis of the GWR2023 can be demonstrated in Table 7.

Table 7. Classification of Engagement

Engagement	Contraction		Expansion		Total
	Disclaim	Proclaim	Entertain	Attribute	
Total	33	102	377	0	512
Ratio	6.4%	19.9%	73.6%	0%	100%

As is shown in the table, Dialogistic expansion accounts for 73.6% of the total Engagement resources, which is greater than the use of dialogistic contraction. In dialogistic contraction, there are a total of 33resources related to Disclaim, accounting for 6.4% of the total, and 102resources related to Proclaim, accounting for 19.9% of the total. By comparison, there are more Expansion resources used, with 377 of them being Entertain resources, accounting for more than half of the total. This is fair and reasonable. The GWR is not the government's monogloss, but a "dialogue window" for listening to the voices of the people and expressing public opinion. Therefore, for the GWRs, it is not a monogloss of the government, but a way of expressing multiple voices(heterogloss) through Disclaim, Proclaim, and Entertain.

4.2.1 Disclaim

Disclaim is the direct rejection or replacement of certain discourse positions or voices. Denial can be further divided into two subcategories: Deny and Counter. Deny refers to resources that have negative meanings, such as *no, not, never, neither*, etc. Counter is to replace or oppose one proposition with another. Counter is generally realized by conjunctions, such as *although, however, yet* and adverbs with transitional meanings, such as *even though, still, just, only*. In Disclaim resources of the GWR2023, there are 15 Deny resources, accounting for 45.5% of the total. There are 18resources related to Counter, accounting for 54.5% of the total. It can be seen that Deny and Counter are roughly equal, each accounting for approximately 50% of the Disclaim resources in the GWR2023.

In the GWRs, the application of Deny resources can better demonstrate the government's adherence to principles and fulfillment of responsibilities. Secondly, the expression of Deny is not simply a negation, but more importantly, it leads to the conversational implications of government affirmation through Deny. Thirdly, assuming the existence of a third party and the speaker's differing views on the third party, the application of Deny can effectively bridge the gap between the speakers and the receivers, pulling them to their own side and forming an alliance. In this sense, Deny can highlight the dialogical nature of the GWR.

4.2.2 Proclaim

Proclaim is a process of treating one opinion as completely legitimate and meanwhile opposing other opinions. It refutes and excludes other opinions through modification, emphasis, intervention, and other means. Proclaim is further divided into three subcategories, namely Concur, Pronounce, and Endorse. Concur means that the speaker openly agrees with a certain viewpoint or opinion. Pronounce expresses a certain opinion deliberately emphasized by the speaker. Endorse means the speaker agreeing with external voices and viewing external opinions as correct and effective. The GWR is a document type discourse that constantly expresses opinions and opinions, so the Proclaim resources involved in the system will also be well reflected in the discourse.

In Proclaim resources of the GWR2023, there are 83 Pronounceresources. Pronounce is the largest portion in Proclaim, accounting for 81.4% of the total. There are 14 Endorse resources, accounting for 13.7% of the total. The smallest portion falls on Concur. There are only 5resources in the GWR2023, accounting for only 4.9% of the total Proclaim.

The GWR emphasizes the publication of opinions. Simply put, the GWR aims to convey a precise, reliable, and undeniable viewpoint and attitude to the outside world. From the perspective of positive discourse, the resource of Proclaim resources reflects the correctness and authority of the government, thereby solidifying its position in the hearts of the people.

4.2.3 Entertain

Entertain is a dialogistic Expansion resource. It opens up the space for dialogue. It asserts its position while also entertaining other differing opinions. Entertain is usually expressed by modalities, such as modal verbs *must, can, would, should, may,* etc., modal adverbs, and inferential clauses. From the perspective of the main structure of the GWR2023, the first part of the GWR is a basic review of the work in 2022, the second and third parts are a summary of the work arrangement and the focus of work in 2023. Therefore, a large number of modal verbs will appear in the second and third parts of the discourse. The survey shows that, *will/would, must, should, can/could* are the most frequently used modal verbs, among which *will/would*is used 299 times, accounting for 79.3% of the total. It is the largest portion of all the modalities. This is because the main content of the second and third parts of the GWR is to convey the government's next governing decisions and work tasks to the outside world, so a considerable number of modalities are used to indicate future speculation. Next are the applications of modal verbs such as *must, should*, and *can*, respectively accounting for 9.1%, 7.3%, and 4.3% of the total. For the GWRs, the application of modalities indicates that the content and information conveyed by the government are relatively objective. Besides, some modalities can convey non-absoluteness, which can leave room for the boundary setting of the discourse.

4.3 Analysis of Graduation system in the GWR2023

Graduation is used to show the strength level of Attitude, and can also show the degree of Engagement of the speaker. Graduation runs through the entire Appraisal Theory, and Attitude and Engagement are within the research scope of Graduation system. Graduation system has two subsystems: Force and Focus. Force is an evaluation of the strength or quantity (size) of Attitude and Engagement. Therefore, Force involves two aspects: Intensification and Quantification. Focus refers to the description of categories that cannot be classified as strong or weak. Focusis not graded, but certain categories with clear boundaries.

The application of Graduation system in the GWR2023 can be demonstrated in Table 8.

Table 8. Classification of Graduation system in the GWR2023

Graduation	Force		Focus	Total
	Intensification	Quantification		
Total	386	195	21	602
Ratio	64.1%	32.4%	3.5%	100%

Based on the statistics in Table 8, the application of Force resources in the GWR2023 is far greater than that of Focus, with a total of 516 applications, accounting for 96.5% of the total Graduation system. The use of Intensification in Force is the most frequent, accounting for 64.1% of the total. Secondly, the application of Quantification accounts for 32.4% of the total Graduation system. The last one is Focus, accounting for only 3.5% of the total.

The data shows that the GWR2023 is good at using the Intensification in Graduation to strengthen the tone. Quantification is used to verify and enhance the authenticity and objectivity of the GWR. Finally, Focus is employed to express the firm position, thus achieving the goal of appeasing and appealing.

4.3.1 Force

Force is an evaluation of the strength or quantity (size) of Attitude and Engagement.

Force can be divided into two categories: Intensification and Quantification. Intensification is the evaluation of strength, mainly involving quality and process. *Slightly foolish，extremely foolish*, etc. can be good examples of Intensification of quality. *slightly hinder* or *greatly hinder* are examples of Intensification of process. Quantification involves the study of entities, which is the physical evaluation of categories such as size, weight, distance, etc. In the GWRs, speakers will use Intensification to strengthen force and emphasize attitude. Quantification will also be used to describe specific data, making the discourse more objective and specific. In the GWR2023, the application of Intensification is more than that of Quantification, with the former accounting for 66.4% of the total. This indicates that the GWR 2023 focuses on evaluating the Intensification of discourse, thereby strengthening the infectivity of the discourse and making the discourse more authentic. Quantification emphasizes more on the evaluation of specific data, enhances the authenticity of discourse, and improves the credibility of discourse.

4.3.2 Focus

Focus is the classification of Attitude categories that cannot be classified. It can be divided into two aspects: Sharpen and Soften. Sharpen means to maximizes the value position of the proposition expressed, thus to attracts the audience to reach consensus with themselves. Soften is to weaken the value stance of a certain proposition to achieve a certain soothing effect. Focus can be positive or negative with Sharpen being positive and Soften being negative. In the GWR2023, the proportion of Focus resource is not significant, only accounting for 3.5% of the total Graduation system. This paper will not elaborate on this issue.

V. Conclusion

PDA adopts a positive stance to analyze discourses. It turns the long-term advocated critical and negative ways of thinking into affirmative and positive ones, thus to build a harmonious and equal linguistic ecology (Huang, 2018). The GWRs of the State Council is an official document issued by the government of the People's Republic of China to the outside world, and its elaboration has great and far-reaching significance for the future development of the country. In this study, the author selects the GWR2023 as the research object and adopts Appraisal Theory as the basic theoretical framework to analyze the positivity in the discourse of the GWR2023, aiming to grasp the trend of China's development and show the world the tremendous changes and development of contemporary China and showcase China's image as a great power in the world.

Through a comprehensive qualitative analysis of the GWR2023, the research results are as follows:

First, the distribution of the three subsystems of Appraisal Theory, namely Attitude system, Engagement system, and Graduation system, in the GWR2023shows a certain pattern but not evenly. Firstly, the application of Attitude system is particularly prominent, and itsoccurrence is much higher than that of Engagement system and Graduation system. This reflects the GWR displays a positive side in conveying work information. Secondly, the three subsystems are integrated with each other and do not exist independently.

Second, in Attitude system, the proportion of Affect resources is not high, because the GWR is an extremely formal official document discourse in its nature. In order to highlight the typicality and objectivity of the discourse, the expression of personal emotions is avoided as much as possible. Judgement and Appreciation resources are the main means of expressing attitudes in the discourse of the GWR2023. The extensive use of positive Judgment resources reflects the government's positive measures in administration. The GWR also aims to maintain and establish a good image of the government in the hearts of the people. Therefore, from a positive perspective, the extensive use of Attitude system can not only express the positive voice of the government, but also maintain the authoritative image of the government and establish public confidence in the government.

Third, the application of Engagement system can be reflected through Disclaim, Proclaim, Entertain resources in the GWR2023. Entertain resources open up the spaces for the discourse. Firstly, the application of a large number of modal verbs in the discourse reflects the characteristics of inclusiveness, negotiation, and interactivity of the GWR 2023. Secondly, the use of Entertain resources can make the content of the report better accepted by the audience, and subtly influence the audience, thereby achieving ideological resonance. The application of Disclaim resources in the GWR 2023 is also limited. Disclaim is not a simple disclaimin its nature, but rather a conversational implicature that leads to an affirmation through Disclaim. Proclaim resources highlight the government's firm stance and principles and enhance the discourse power in the GWR2023. From the perspective of positive discourse, the application of Engagement system effectively enhances the authority, objectivity, and authenticity of the GWR2023, reflecting the positive image of adhering to principles and fulfilling responsibilities in the government's governance process.

Fourth, Gradation system runs through the entire GWR2023, with the use of Force far exceeding Focus. This indicates that the GWR2023 is more willing to use Force to strengthen its tone and clarify attitude, rather than using Focus to weaken discourse attitude. Force resources play the role in the GWR2023 from two perspectives:

Intensification and Quantification. Intensification can enhance the contagion between utterances, making the discourse more powerful. Quantification focuses on evaluating data, continuously enhancing the authenticity and credibility of the GWR2023 through statistical data.

The limitations of the study exist in the following aspects. Firstly, this study only selects one single GWR, namely the GWR2023 for research, which makes the representativeness of the discourse characteristics summarized in this article insufficient. Secondly, the research data in this article were manually collected and statistically analyzed by the researcher, which may result in omissions and errors. Thirdly, this study did not provide examples from the report to illustrate the research argument, which affects the intuitiveness and vividness of the research results.

Future research can fall on contrastive studies of a series of the GWRs over the years, both of the Chinese version and the English version, to interpret the discourse features of the GWRs more comprehensively and accurately.

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