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Multimodal positive discourse analysis of national image publicity video

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Abstract: This study employs a revised theoretical framework of multimodal positive discourse analysis to analyze the process of national image construction in a Chinese video. In contrast to original studies focusing mainly on language or text and image, this study considers three interrelated multimodal resources: sound, image, and language. Different modalities play different roles in national image construction, and they also collaborate with each other for a uniform purpose. Specific multimodal working mechanisms contribute to the construction of a positive national image. Multimodal resources are also signs in the sense of semiotics, which are perceived by different sense organs and take effect in producing vivid and impressive senses.

Keywords: image; language; multimodality; positive discourse analysis; semiotics; sound

1 Introduction

Positive discourse analysis was first proposed by Martin (2004a). In his work *Positive Discourse Analysis: Solidarity and Change*, Martin (2004a) claims that discourse analysis deals with a revealing and critical attitude, which not only focuses on the relationship between language and society, power, and ideology, but also adopts a positive and friendly attitude, aiming to build a relaxing, harmonious, and coexistent society (Martin 2009). Positive discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis complement each other to form two complementary perspectives. Zhu Yongsheng (2006) has commented on the backgrounds, motivations, contents, and methods of positive discourse analysis, as well as the similarities and differences between positive discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis. He believes that positive discourse analysis is

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proposed under the background of many shortcomings in critical discourse analysis, so positive discourse analysis can be regarded as a backwash of critical discourse analysis.

At the same time, we must realize that positive discourse analysis is similar to critical discourse analysis in terms of philosophical guiding thoughts and motivations. From a philosophical point of view, researchers of positive discourse analysis represented by Martin (2009) and critical discourse analysis scholars (e.g. Chen 1995; Fairclough 1995a, 1995b; Fowler 1986; van Dijk 1990; 1993; Xin 2005) hold the same view. They believe that both positive discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis are influenced by Western Marxism, which does not regard language as a superstructure, but as a social foundation. From the perspective of motivation, positive discourse analysis does not completely overthrow the theoretical foundation and analytical methods of critical discourse analysis. Instead, it advocates a positive attitude towards various social contradictions and hopes to create a harmonious society. In these two senses, positive discourse analysis can be regarded as a supplement and extension of critical discourse analysis. Hu (2012) points out that Martin's thoughts of developing positive discourse analysis is not aimed at replacing critical discourse analysis with positive discourse analysis, but to emphasize the complementarity of both of them. Tang Qingye (2008, 2012) has analyzed the characteristics of the identity representation of disadvantaged groups in people's livelihood news, and emphasized that the interests and demands of disadvantaged groups should receive more attention from the media. Positive discourse analysis not only reveals the problem, but also tries to find out solutions. Therefore, positive discourse analysis is of great significance to the realization of a harmonious society.

Positive discourse analysis has accumulated valuable theoretical experience from critical discourse analysis, and has borrowed appraisal theory as a theoretical framework, which is proposed by Martin (2009) and developed on the basis of systemic-functional linguistics. Appraisal theory is divided into three systems: attitude system, engagement system, and graduation system. Attitude system is divided into three subsystems: affect, judgment, and appreciation. Among them, the affect system is the expression of human emotion, the judgment system is the evaluation of human quality, and the appreciation system is the evaluation of the value of things. The judgement system divides attitude into two levels: momentum and focus. The engagement system is the source of attitude, that is, where the evaluation comes from. According to the different sources of attitudes, the engagement system is divided into two subsystems: monogloss and heterogloss.

With the development of science and technology, the way of interpersonal communication often involves multiple modes. Traditional discourse analysis based on evaluation theory pays more attention to language, but lacks sufficient emphasis on the evaluation function of other modes of meaning expression. Multimodal discourse analysis makes up for this shortcoming of traditional discourse analysis, and incorporates other expressional meaning symbols outside of language into the analysis category. Halliday's (1994) systemic-functional linguistics adopts the perspective of social semiotics and regards language as a kind of social symbol, which comprises conceptual, interpersonal, and textual functions. Multimodal discourse analysis extends the three meta-functions of language to other modes of expressing meaning. For example, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) extend the three meta-functions of language to visual images, thinking that image modality similar to language can convey meaning, and put forward the concepts of reproduction meaning, interaction meaning, and composition meaning.

Many Chinese scholars (e.g. Hu 2007; Li 2003; Tang Qingye 2013; Zhang 2009; Zhu 2007) have given relevant discussions on multimodal discourse analysis from the perspective of theoretical exploration and empirical research. Lv (2011) believes that the para-linguistic features in multimodal discourse and nonverbal communication methods as social symbols also have a certain evaluation function. But so far, due to the lack of a complete theoretical framework and specific operational paradigm, positive discourse analysis, as an important direction of discourse analysis, still stays at the guiding ideology level, or is only an innovation at the "terminology" level, thus few people have conducted systematic research on evaluation resources in multimodal discourse.

At present, there is an urgent need for a clear theoretical framework and analytical paradigm. In order to solve this problem, based on the appraisal theory, this paper constructs a theoretical framework of multimodal positive discourse analysis comprising comprehensive appraisal theory (Martin 2004a, 2004b) and visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996). Through an example analysis of a national image publicity video, this paper clarifies the operation mode of positive discourse analysis in multimodal discourse, so as to expand the application scope of positive discourse analysis. In addition, on the basis of previous studies, this paper describes audio mode in detail from the perspectives of discourse quality, discourse quantity, and discourse status, highlighting the important role of audio mode in constructing the overall meaning of multimodal discourse. Few scholars have described the audio mode from the theoretical level, only emphasizing the role of audio mode in rendering and setting off the meaning of discourse. In what follows, we intend to tackle this issue.

2 Dynamic multimodal positive discourse analysis framework

Dynamic multimodal discourse contains multiple modalities such as sound, image, language, etc., with each modality cooperating with others and exerting its evaluation function. As positive discourse analysis is under the evaluation system, it can be extended to sound modality and image modality so as to be combined with language positive discourse analysis to form a multimodal positive discourse analysis framework. The framework consists of three parts: sound, image and language (as shown in Figure 1). Language and image can be discussed from the following three subsystems: attitude system, engagement system, and graduation system.

Sound is one of the most important modalities in dynamic multimodal discourse (Wang 2019). The sound modality in the national image video “China Enters a New Era” occupies a preeminent position in terms of its evaluation function. To properly classify the sound modalities in the TV program, we make a reference to the method of Wang (2019) in analyzing CCTV’s “Focus Interview” program. Bartlett (2012) believes that sound is “a means to achieve appropriate

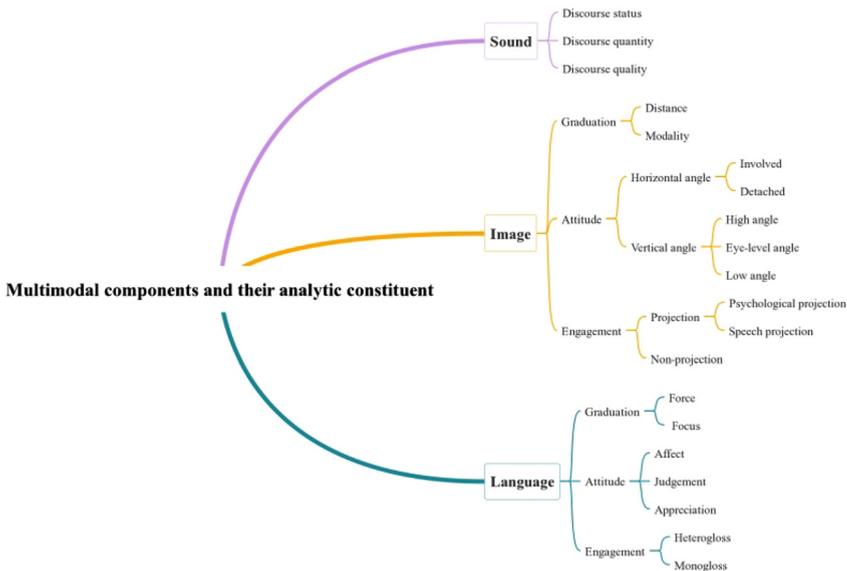


Figure 1: Dynamic multimodal positive discourse analysis framework.

behavior through language”, and the core of sound is whether the group or individual effectively expresses their thoughts or demands. Wang (2019) also believes that “different from written discourse, the expression of sound in dynamic multimodal discourse is more direct and specific because sound can be expressed directly through group discourse. The source of sound is clearer because the identity of the speaker and the specific situation can be presented directly on the screen, so the sound analysis of dynamic multimodal discourse can be realized directly through the analysis of the quantity, quality, and prominence of group discourse in the discourse.”

The language and image parts of the analytical framework are based on Martin’s Appraisal Theory. The system is centered on the attitude system, and the engagement system serves the attitude system. The graduation system is the expression degree of attitude and focuses on examining positive attitude. Critical discourse analysis focuses on the dominance of power, that is, how the discourse achieves dominance of one group over another. Positive discourse analysis focuses on alliances, that is, how discourse contributes to the alliance between one group and another. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) point out that there are two types of participants in images: interactive participants and represented participants. The former refers to those who participate in communication, that is, image producers and viewers, and the latter refers to all the things in communication presented in images. Attitude evaluation resources in language are reflected by evaluative vocabulary. The realization of the evaluation function of images is the use of various evaluation resources in the text by the author to promote the alliance between the author, the audience and the represented participants in the discourse. In the image part, the way of attitude display method is image producer, who adopts a different perspective to transfer the rights of the producer to the represented participants, which form an evaluation resource. From a horizontal point of view, a positive perspective shows the attitude of both participants involved in the interaction; an oblique perspective shows a detached attitude. The attitude of involvement can further enhance the alliance between the interactive participants of image. From a vertical angle, a high perspective shows that the image producer gives more rights to interactive participants, an eye-level one shows an equal attitude, and a low angle one shows that the image producer gives few rights to interactive participants. The graduation system is the classification of the attitude system, including distance and modality. Social distance affects social relations. The distance from closeness to public distance reflects the attitudes of image producer to varying degrees, which affects the ability to form an alliance with interactive participants. Modality is a subsystem that realizes gradation through saturation, richness, and brightness of color. In the engagement system,

heterogloss and monogloss are mainly realized through projection. The projection in the image is divided into psychological projection and verbal projection, which mostly occur as speech bubbles and thought bubbles. This projection is mostly embedded in the image with language, becoming a part of the image.

Language plays a fundamental role in dynamic multimodal discourse. Language, image, and sound can all be used as social symbols to express meaning, but they have different choices in expression. Language is selected in different parts of speech and semantic structure, while images are selected in different colors and composition structures, and sound is selected in discourse status, discourse quantity and discourse quality. For the language part, this article takes the appraisal theory as the basic framework from the perspective of lexical analysis, explores the important role of text symbols and further explains the interactive meaning of each modality.

3 Case study

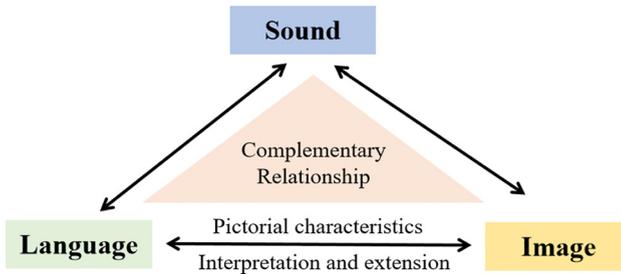
“China Enters a New Era” is a national image video which integrates diverse expressional methods and different symbol resources and becomes a model for showing the integrated functions of multimodal resources in constructing national images. The promo film “China Enters a New Era” has a total duration of 2 min and 58 s. In order to facilitate analysis and interpretation, the author uses the Potplayer screenshot software to follow the setting mode of one screenshot per second, eliminating the repeated and fuzzy screenshots due to short cutoff intervals. After that, a total of 113 screenshots were obtained. According to the division of theme events, we divide the promotional videos into three themes, each of which contains different events. The specific division is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 shows the main content of the promotional film “China Enters a New Era” and the modalities and symbols it comprises. It is not difficult to find that language, image, and sound symbols are coordinated and further supplemented with each other, which jointly show the meaning of the national image video (as shown in Figure 2).

Language can have image characteristics by means of printing or typesetting, and the image is a further interpretation and extension of the language to a certain extent. In addition, sound, language, and image present a complementary relationship in the process of constructing the meaning of the entire text. The author will analyze the positive attitudes conveyed in the national image video “China Enters a New Era” from the perspective of sound, image, and language in the following subsections.

Table 1: The division of three themes.

Theme	Event	Modality	Symbol	Duration
Personage Introduction	Ciyang Lamu Xie Yuanli Guo Bozhi Ji Kuisheng Li Xujun Chen Zeshen Li Qiang	Visual Auditory	Texts Images Character voice Background music	1'06"
My Chinese Dream	Seven Chinese dreams with different characters	Visual Auditory	Texts Images Character voice Background music	1'11"
The Chinese Dream	Report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China	Visual Auditory	Texts Images Character voice Background music	42"

**Figure 2:** Complementary relationship.

3.1 Sound

Sound is mainly about the speech right in dynamic multimodal discourse. Sound expression mainly depends on how much and what kind of speech right is given to the group by the producer of the national image video. The speech right of the group in discourse is mainly reflected in three aspects: discourse status, discourse quantity, and discourse quality (Wang 2019). In dynamic multimodal discourse, the discourse status of the group is realized through the priority of discourse, that is, which group gets the right to speak first. In this case, its

voice is preconceived and foregrounded and the voice expressed by such group discourse occupies a dominant position. In the national image video “China Enters a New Era”, the ones who first get the right to speak are those from all walks of life, including children (students), the elderly, farmers, scientific research talents, soldiers and so on. From the arrangement of the discourse sequence of the national image video, the voice of the masses of the people is foregrounded and expressed first, and the discourse status of the masses of the people is higher than the government and the country they belong to. The promotional video expresses the intention to ally with the people by giving the people a higher discourse status.

As Table 1 shows, there are two types of auditory mode in the national image video “China Enters a New Era”: character voice (primary) and background music (secondary). In a multimodal discourse, images perform an indispensable role in explaining and extending the meaning of the text. Similarly, the auditory modes are also instrumental in rendering, contrasting and enhancing language expression and its expression and speech effect will thus be enhanced. In the promotional video, the sound modes (character voice + background music) run through the three themes, which strengthen and exaggerate the promotional video’s tendency to regard the benefits of the masses as the highest benefits and realize the alliance between the country and the people.

Dynamic multimodal discourses are often developed in chronological order or in the sequence of the events’ development, and the duration of the speech is a direct reflection of discourse quality. According to the statistical results, the first two themes are both centered around seven mass representatives, and the last one is General Secretary Xi’s speech on the “Chinese Dream” at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In the first two themes, the total duration of the people’s speeches is 2’17”, and in the third theme, the duration of the speeches of General Secretary Xi is 42”. The former takes more time and the number of words is relatively large, which reflects the promotional video’s desire to promote an alliance with the people.

3.2 Image

Attitude evaluation resources in language are evaluative vocabulary. However, image realizes its evaluation function through the use of various evaluation resources in the text, thereby facilitating the alliance between the producer, the represented participants and the audience in the image discourse.

3.2.1 Analysis of image attitude system

In the image part, the image producer adopts a different perspective to transfer the producer's rights to the represented participants, thus forming an evaluation resource, which serves as a way for the image producer to show his attitude. From a horizontal perspective, a frontal perspective shows the attitude of both participants involved in the interaction, and an oblique perspective shows a detached attitude. The attitude of involvement can further promote alliances among image interactors, as shown in Figure 3.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) hold that "(t)he represented participants and the interactive participants in the picture are connected by their eyes, which lead to the emotional connection of the interactive participants." It is a frontal eye-level perspective that shows the attitude of both parties involved. The promo film kicks off with the eyes of the little girl, which express the connection between the eyes of the audience and the eyes of the little girl, and allow them to interact with each other through "gazing". The selection of "Little Girl's Eyes" as an important symbolic resource in the promotional video is based on the principle of semiotics proposed by Bateman et al. (2017), that is, "to make meaning possible, there must be a choice, and without choices there is no meaning". Children are chosen as image symbols because of their status. They are the future successors of the country and a sign of hope. The purity and brightness of "children's eyes" are connected with the overall context of the promotional film "China Enters a New Era", and further through the docking of "eyes". The two sides of the interaction can reach an emotional resonance, thus facilitating alliance between the image interactive participants.

From a vertical perspective, the image producer shows an attitude of empowering interactive participants through a high perspective. The eye-level angle shows an equal attitude. The low angle of view manifests that the image



Figure 3: A frontal eye-level perspective image.

producer gives fewer rights to the interactive participants. The promotional video “China Enters a New Era” mostly adopts the high and eye-level angles. The high angle reflects the promotional video producer’s desire to show respect for representatives of the masses in all walks of life through such a shooting perspective. The peaceful perspective expresses the equal and friendly relationship between the participants in the image interaction, as shown in Figure 4.

In the third theme “The Chinese Dream”, the promotional video uses a quick flash to present the “smiles of seven people”. They represent ethnic groups, children groups, worker groups, high-level elite talent groups, poor households, military personnel, and foreign personnel groups in China, endowing the audience with empathy and resonance. The coherence between the image symbol “bright smile” and the text symbol “building a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way” and the interaction between text and image symbols shows the close relationship between the “happy life of the people” and “building a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way”. The meaning of the text is more specific, not only narrowing down the distance between the audience and the meaning the political publicity discourse wants to express, but also making the Chinese Dream under the theme of “China Entering a New Era” in the context of the discourse more concrete.

3.2.2 Analysis of image graduation system

A graduation system is a hierarchy of attitudes, including distance and modality (Martin and White 2005). Social distance affects social relations. The distance from closeness to public distance reflects the varying degrees of attitude changes of the



Figure 4: Smiles of representatives.

image producer, which affects whether they can form alliance with the interactive participants, as shown in Figure 5.

The producer of the promotional video adopts the method of long-distance shot to present the “overall spirit of the honor guard” to the audience. From the interactive meaning, the audience in the image is alienated from the military in terms of distance, reflecting their awe for the soldiers. The estranged social distance allows emotions to be more rationally and objectively expressed, whereas close-distance shooting runs to the contrary.

The two screenshots in Figure 6 are close-up shots of characters from shoulders to heads and the image shots are all selected from the promotional film “Character Introduction”. Among them, the image symbol “smile” shows the character’s “happy life in the new era”, and the character’s smile narrows down the distance from the audience. The face of the character is enlarged and processed so as to appear more cordial, which can trigger the resonance of both sides in the interaction, thereby promoting the alliance between the producer and the viewer. Modality is a subsystem that achieves graduation difference through saturation, richness and brightness of color (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996). The picture of the entire promotional film has high color saturation, with rich and bright colors, which make the audiences have a strong emotional resonance visually.



Figure 5: A long-distance shot.

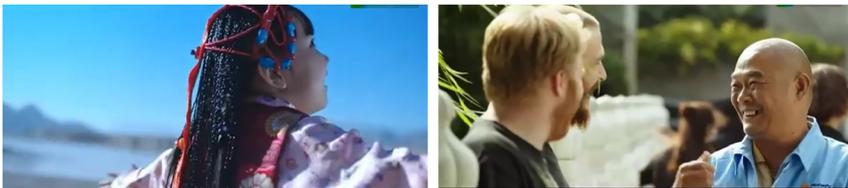


Figure 6: Close-up shots.

3.2.3 Analysis of image engagement system

In engagement system, heterogloss is mainly realized through projection. The projection in the image is divided into psychological projection and speech projection, where dialogue bubbles and thought bubbles mostly appear. This projection is mostly embedded in the image with language, constituting a part of the image. In this promotional video “China Enters a New Era”, the language appears on the screen in the form of Chinese and English subtitles, and language and image interact and convey the same meaning, as is shown in Figure 7.

The visual modalities in the picture include the Chinese and English versions of the image symbol element 1 “The Great Wall”, element 2 “the rolling green mountains” and the text symbol “to strive for the great success of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era”. The images of “to strive for the great success of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era” and “The Great Wall” interact with each other to show the people’s determination to win the victory and their hard work to realize the Chinese Dream. In addition, the promotional video also chooses the image symbol: turquoise rolling mountains as the image background, using “turquoise” as a metaphor for China’s state of being full of vitality and endless life after entering the new era.

3.3 Language

In this section, the author will use Appraisal Theory as the basic analytical framework, analyzing vocabulary, and text symbols through three aspects:



Figure 7: A sample of image engagement system.

attitude, engagement, and graduation, and further explaining the interactive meaning of each modality.

3.3.1 Analysis of language attitude system

According to Martin's Appraisal Theory (2005), attitude refers to the judgment and appreciation of human behavior, process, and behavior phenomenon after the psychology is affected. It can be divided into three subsystems: Affect, judgment, and appreciation. As the core content of the attitude system, affect is the foundation of the adjudication system and the appreciation system. Affect is the positive or negative psychological process of behavior and phenomenon. Examples include:

- (1) Our Chinese dream is that the high-speed rail we produce is faster, more stable, and safer. (quality vocabulary list attributes)
(我们的中国梦是, 让我们生产出的高铁更快、更稳、更安全。)
- (2) The country is getting stronger and the people's life is getting happier (quality vocabulary list attitudes)
(祖国越来越强大, 人民生活越来越幸福。)

The three quality adjectives of *fast*, *stable* and *safe* explain the quality of high-speed rail and express the expectations of workers for high-speed rail through text. *Strong* and *happy* show the positive and optimistic attitude of the Chinese people who continue to pursue their Chinese dream with firm steps. "China Enters a New Era", as a publicity discourse, shows the positive life of the contemporary Chinese people and uses quality words to express positive emotions.

- (3) I will go to Beijing to see Tiananmen Square when I grow up. (Behavioral process)
(我长大了要去北京, 看天安门。)
- (4) I feel extremely honored and proud of being an honor guard. (Psychological process)
(我为自己是一名仪仗兵, 感到无比的光荣和自豪。)

The promotional film also uses vocabulary that can show behavioral and psychological processes to express positive emotional fluctuations. *Go* shows the Tibetan child Lamu's determination to get out of the mountain through his unremitting efforts; *Feel* shows Li Qiang's internal emotion of pride as an honor guard.

- (5) My Chinese dream is to hope that China can maintain a relatively good development. (Verb to express wish)
(我的中国梦是希望中国可以维持一个比较好的发展。)

Hope is used as a verb to express a certain expectation or purpose in the heart. The promotional film uses verbs expressing wishes and hopes to show Ji Kuisheng's positive emotions that China will develop better and better.

The judgement system refers to judgements that make positive or negative evaluations on people's behavior and character based on certain social norms or ethics, such as:

- (6) At present, China's development strategy of the "One Belt One Road" in the future has begun to transform from a relatively passive role to a relatively active role.
(现在中国对未来“一带一路”的发展的策略，感觉到其实中国是从本来一个比较被动的角色，已经变成一个比较主动的一个角色。)

Example (6) comes from Ji Kuisheng's positive judgment and positive evaluation of China's current economic status. The transition from *passive* to *active* enables the audience to have a basic positive attitude judgment on China's economic development.

Wang (2001) believes that, as opposed to affect and judgment, appreciation system mainly studies things rather than emotions or behavior, such as:

- (7) The country is getting stronger and the people's life is getting happier.
(祖国越来越强大，人民生活越来越幸福。)

Getting stronger and *getting happier* are selected from the fragments in the second theme "My Chinese Dream", expressed as words of degree. The two sentence patterns can deepen the people's general perception of the Chinese Dream to a large extent.

3.3.2 Analysis of language engagement system

White (1998) believes that engagement system refers to evaluation resources used by language users to negotiate positions between subjects and adjust the dialogue space. It includes two types: Monogloss and heterogloss.

The national image video "China Enters a New Era" does not use narrations or monologues in the speech. Instead, it is presented through the expressions of 7 representative people and General Secretary Xi. Therefore, the entire text of the film is a heterogloss. The language modality involved in the promotional video

includes the undisputed and expected words of the people and the authentic, reliable and authoritative external words, such as:

- (8) All comrades in the party must always breathe with the people, share the same destiny, and be heart to heart. They must always take the people's yearning for a better life as their goal of struggle, and continue to strive for the decisive victory in building a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way, the great victory of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, the realization of the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and the realization of the people's yearning for a better life.

(全党同志一定要永远与人民同呼吸、共命运、心连心，永远把人民对美好生活的向往作为奋斗目标，为决胜全面建成小康社会、夺取新时代中国特色社会主义伟大胜利、实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦、实现人民对美好生活的向往继续奋斗)

Example (8) selects authoritative and representative speeches to consolidate the publicity concepts of “China Enters a New Era” and “Chinese Dream”, and can arouse the resonance of the audience, make the audience recognize the reality and convince the audience in the text, so as to make its publicized concepts more deeply rooted in the hearts of the people.

- (9) The dream of a big airplane is an integral part of the Chinese dream. China's commercial aircraft is that airlines are willing to buy, pilots are willing to fly, and passengers are willing to sit.

(大飞机梦，就是中国梦的组成部分，航空公司愿意买，飞行员愿意飞，乘客愿意坐的，中国的商用飞机。)

- (10) The country is getting stronger and stronger, and the people's lives are getting happier. This is a dream.

(祖国越来越强大，人民生活越来越幸福，这就是梦啊。)

- (11) The Chinese dream is that there will be no more impoverished households in all of China, and all of them must live a good life.

(中国梦就是，全中国贫困户不是贫困户，全部要过到好生活。)

- (12) Our dream is to stick to our post, to be determined to the cause of honor, and to contribute our strength to the realization of the goal of strengthening the army.

(我们的梦想就是，立足本职岗位，矢志仪仗事业，为实现强军目标，贡献自己的力量。)

The above examples are selected from the theme of “My Chinese Dream”, which introduces the Chinese dreams of several protagonists in their respective fields. They represent different groups, but have the same Chinese dream of expecting China to become better and stronger. All the key notes in the narration are building the impression of a vivid Chinese dream for all the people.

3.3.3 Analysis of language graduation system

White (1998) defines the graduation system as the growth and weakness of attitudes and engagement, including the “Force” on strength and quantity and the “Focus” on accuracy and typicality. Among them, the forcing resources are represented by the degrees of reinforcement and expressive vocabulary in the text modes, which are more frequently presented in the promotional film, such as:

- (13) Our Chinese dream is to make our high-speed rail faster, more stable and safer, connect the world and benefit mankind. (Degree of reinforcement)
(我们的中国梦是, 让我们生产出的高铁更快、更稳、更安全, 连接世界, 造福人类。)
- (14) The Chinese dream is that there will be no more impoverished households in all of China, and all of them must live a good life.
(中国梦就是, 全中国贫困户不是贫困户, 全部要过到好生活。)

The application of the three comparative structures (*faster, more stable and safer*) manifests the “high-speed rail dream” through words, intensifying the “high speed” by means of intensifying linguistic structure. The wording of *no more impoverished* and *all of them*, from two opposing perspectives, reinforce the government’s determination of eradicating poverty and leaving nobody behind on the way to a good life.

Focusing resource is used to show the speaker’s attitude towards things through vocabulary. Attitudes can be vague or violent, as in:

- (15) My Chinese dream is to hope that China can maintain a relatively good development.
(我的中国梦是希望中国可以维持一个比较好的发展。)
- (16) Our dream is to stick to our post, to be determined to the cause of honor, and to contribute our strength to the realization of the goal of strengthening the army.
(我们的梦想就是, 立足本职岗位, 矢志仪仗事业, 为实现强军目标, 贡献自己的力量。)

Ji Kuisheng, the protagonist of the scene, uses the phrase *relatively good* to express his desire for China's economic development. The use of soft words can ease his views and allow the audience to resonate with his hope, thereby obtaining an objective evaluation. *Determine* is a verb that expresses willingness. From the focus of the vocabulary, we can see that in order to convey the abstract concept of the "Chinese Dream", the promotional video uses various effective language resources to concretize it. In the image, the soldier image of Li Qiang interacts with the verbalized *be determined* to express his firm belief of realising his Chinese Dream.

4 Multimodal resources as signs

Sound, image and language are all forms of signs that transfer meaning. According to Turner, to qualify as a sign, "it must have a physical form, it must refer to something other than itself, and it must be recognized as doing this by other users of the sign system" (1992, p. 17). This definition of the notion of sign is in agreement with the one proposed by Zhao Yiheng, who expresses in rather concise terms that "a sign should be regarded as a kind of perception that carries a certain meaning" (2016, p. 1). As long as something is regarded as a sign, it must be perceived on the basis of its physical form, and meanwhile it must mean something. In more specific terms, a sign "should be something that can be seen, heard, touched, smelt or tasted" (Al-Sharafi 2004, p. 86). So, in TV programs sound, image and language are all important semiotic resources.

However, sound, image and language are semiotic resources of quite different natures: sound is audio, image is visual and language is both audio and visual. Thus, they have different roles to play in meaning expression. In previous literature, most studies focus on the relation between language and image, or text and image, having reached a general consensus. A major study of image-text relations was conducted by Barthes (1997), who proposed logic of three possibilities: Text supporting image (also called 'anchorage'), image supporting text (also called 'illustration'), and the two being equal (also called 'relay'). In terms of anchorage, language has a function of elucidation; in terms of illustration, the image elucidates or realizes the text. In terms of relay, both text and image have distinct roles to play, or, in other words, both of them stand in a complementary relationship. In contrast to the ordinary view of treating language as a relatively independent and predominant meaning producer, language or text is regarded as constituting "a parasitic message designed to connote the image...in other words...the image no longer illustrates the words; it is now the words which, structurally, are parasitic on the image" (Barthes 1977, p. 25). Despite all the studies

concerning text and image, the modality of sound has to a large extent been overlooked in meaning construction, especially when sound is represented in the form of speech and background music. In this sense, this study has pushed the multimodal research further by incorporating the three modalities of sound, image, and language in the revised framework of multimodal positive discourse analysis.

National image construction is a process of integrating various multimodal resources, and these resources are represented as distinct semiotic resources that stand relatively independently but collaborate smoothly with each other. National image is intended to be positive, especially in the context of China; it is a similar case in most other countries as long as the country concerned cares about its positive image in the global context. No doubt, national image can also be studied by focusing on its negative part for the purpose of degrading or staining its image or finding solutions to improve its image-building process. Different research purposes call for different strategies in selecting the analytical framework. So, it is quite natural and reasonable for this study to take the positive discourse analysis framework.

This research is a preliminary exploration of the multimodal resources in the process of building national image. Only a limited number of data have been analyzed based on the analytical framework, and the data-based discussion should be strengthened by, for example, introducing some plausible analytical perspective. Considering this, we find the following study by Halliday to be insightful. When talking about the unequal relationship between two sentences, Halliday (1994) proposes the concept of ‘expansion’ to treat the related but distinct sentence roles. That is to say, when neither sentence is able to deliver enough adequate information, it has to be ‘expanded’ in terms of function by introducing another sentence to fill the information gap. Expansion can be further divided into three key interrelated concepts: elaboration, extension, and enhancement: “A clause elaborates on the meaning of another by a more detailed description of it. One clause extends the meaning of another by adding further, related information. Finally, a clause enhances another by qualifying it in terms of time, place, cause, and other such circumstantial meanings” (Martinec and Salway 2005, p. 342). The three concepts, together with their roles, can be applied to the analysis of multimodal resources, to know how each helps the other to achieve the final integrated meaning.

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