



BOOK REVIEW: Ecolinguistics: Language, ecology and the stories we live by

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Ecolinguistics: language and ecology delivers an overall view and a critical approach on ecolinguistic studies. This book is an excellent resource to students, researchers, linguists and those working in the area of discourse analysis as well as ecology. The book claims presenting a news course for ecolinguistics including a framework for understanding the theory of ecolinguistics, exploration of consumerism, and discourse analysis of texts of different types. In reviewing this book, the principal criteria included content, organization, theories and reference sources.

Arran Stibbe, the author of the book, is a Reader in ecological Linguistics at the University of Gloucestershire where he teaches ecolinguistics, discourse analysis, ethics and language and communication for leadership. His research and teaching examines how language encodes the stories we live by, and shapes how we see ourselves and our relationship with other animals and the earth. This involves linguistic analysis of a wide range of discourses, from advertising which encourages people to buy unnecessary and ecologically damaging products, to the inspirational language of nature writing. He has got PhD in Linguistic in 1996. Stibbe's multifaceted background establishes him in a position to gather, organize and analyze the key concepts of ecolinguistics.

The organization of *Ecolinguistics: Language and ecology* allows the reader to follow easily the course intended. The book is divided into ten chapters. Opening with Introduction, It follows: Ideologies and discourse, frames and framing, Metaphors, Evaluations and Appraisal Patterns, Identities, Convictions and Facticity Patterns, Erasure, Salience and re-minding and Conclusion. The construction of the book meshes well with its organization and lends itself successfully to the study of ecolinguistics. It acts as a springboard towards future research by providing frameworks of ecology and linguistic types as well as a description of previous studies and practical examples of analysis. The detailed bibliography at the end of each chapter provides sources for obtaining more information and motivates the reader to study further on the related issues.

Each Chapter takes one form of story and begins by describing the theory behind it and provides some practical definitions. Introduction provides the divisions of story types illustrated in Table 1.1 on page seventeen. In chapter 2, the author considering ideology “a frame of social cognition” focuses on multiple texts which convey the same ideology. He reflects ecolinguistic analysis of ideology of texts whether they encourage people to preserve or destroy the ecosystem that support the life. The author devotes chapter 3 for discussing frame and framing as mental structures. He believes “the frame” is an important concept in academic disciplines particularly from ecolinguistics perspective. He chooses the framing of “Climate Change as a Problem” and regards it “a story-we-live-by. Chapter 4 develops metaphor as a framework for analysis. Then the author applies this framework to a range of texts to explore metaphors of relevance to ecolinguistics. Appraisal patterns as “linguistic patterns” are of key interest in ecolinguistics which influence whether people think of an area of life positively or negatively. This story influences their behavior and the way they treat the systems which support life. Chapter 5 shows how appraisals reveal the stories in people’s minds and opens them up to question and challenge the issues of ecology and language. Identities can make a real difference to people’s behavior and those features of society that currently shape the environmental problems. This is the issue to which ecolinguistics can contribute. For this reason chapter 6 deals with identities as modals through examining various texts. Some survey respondents make convictions based on the texts that put forward descriptions such as” Human cause climate change” with a range of level of uncertainty. This plays a potential role in influencing readers’ convictions, the stories in people’s minds. This is the point chapter 7 examines by empirical data. The key concern of chapter 8 is the Erasure of the natural world in a wide variety of texts. Workings of erasure, a systematic absence of certain participants from a text, are examined by ecolinguistics, microeconomics, advertisements, agribusiness documents and ecosystem assessments which are analyzed in this chapter. Chapter 9 focuses on linguistic features which can form salience patterns representing participants prominently in a text. These features can be formed widely in the minds of people and/or ignored and lead to over-consumption. The problem of abstraction of environmental discourse and ignoring the concrete reality of individuals and their lives is highlighted, too. Conclusion starts with a question: “Can Linguistics play a role in the reinvention of society along more ecological lines?”. Linguistic analysis could possibly help this task. Emerging fields such as ecopsychology, ecocriticism, ecofeminism, ecopoetics, ecohistory, environmental communication and ecosociology also can contribute ecological issues of our time. But the author considers ecolinguistics an umbrella term for a wide range of approaches with different aims and goals.

The book can be considered as a powerful tentative linguistic framework for studies of this kind. The author’s writing is eloquent yet understandable. He uses the original texts liberally to illustrate his contentions. He provides an organized, well-

documented work whose thesis could be arrived at by others through the use of the texts supplied. The glossary of key terms helps the reader to understand the key concepts intended by the author.

Making a balance between the nature of a textbook and a book of theory, criticism and evaluation is the only problem with the work. However, this weakness is outweighed by the work's strengths. Although Stibbe does provide effective stories for each chapter, for the most part, on the theoretical relation of stories-we-live-by, he could have done a better job of it. The "alienation from nature" mentioned on page three could be supported by various reports from different cultures. Nations, like people of India, that love the nature and animals should be studied, mentioned and encouraged, too.

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Authors Biography



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