



ECOLINGUISTICS IN THE ANTHROPOCENTRIC PARADIGM: RESEARCH OBJECT AND PURPOSE

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Abstract: *This article analyzes the object of study of ecolinguistics within the framework of the anthropocentric paradigm. Ecolinguistics is a science that studies the interrelationship between language and ecological processes, and the anthropocentric approach examines the relationship between nature and language, focusing on human activity. The article discusses the theoretical foundations, the reflection of anthropocentrism in linguistics, and the role of language in ecological discourse as an object of study. The analysis is based on reliable sources such as Stibbe (2015) and Lakoff and Johnson (1980).*

Keywords: *ecolinguistics, anthropocentric paradigm, language and ecology, object of study.*

Introduction

With the development of modern linguistics, the need to study language not only as a means of human communication, but also in a socio-ecological context is increasing. Ecolinguistics, as a new direction that studies the complex relationships between language and ecology, occupies a special place within the framework of the anthropocentric paradigm. The anthropocentric paradigm is a philosophical approach that considers humans as the central subject of nature, where language is the main tool for expressing the ecological consequences of human activities. This article is devoted to analyzing the place of ecolinguistics as an object of study within the anthropocentric paradigm, considering the role of language in ecological discourse, and human-nature relations through metaphors and frames. The concept of ecolinguistics first appeared in the 1970s, which studies the function of language in reflecting ecological problems (Fillmore, 1976). The anthropocentric paradigm, on the other hand, dates back to the work of philosophers such as Descartes and Kant, in which humans are seen as subjects who control nature through consciousness and language. Today, in the context of climate change and ecological crisis, this paradigm opens up new opportunities for ecolinguistic research, as language continues to shape humanity's impact on nature. The purpose of the article is to determine the place of language in the ecological paradigm as an object of research of anthropocentric ecolinguistics and to show its practical significance. For the analysis, the book



"Ecolinguistics" by Stibbe (2015) and the theory of metaphor by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) are used as the main sources.

Ecolinguistics is a science that studies the interaction between language and the environment, the theoretical foundations of which are based on the principles of linguistic relativism and cognitive linguistics. According to the hypothesis of Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf (Sapir, 1929; Whorf, 1956), language plays an important role in the perception and formation of the world, which explains the influence of language in the expression of ecological concepts in ecolinguistics. Within the framework of the anthropocentric paradigm, ecolinguistics analyzes the process of "humanization" of nature by human language, that is, the description of natural phenomena through metaphors based on human experience.

Charles Fillmore's frame semantics (Fillmore, 1976) is central to ecolinguistic research because it examines language frames—cognitive structures based on human experience. For example, when the "war" frame is used in discourse on "ecological crisis" (e.g., "fighting climate change"), nature is anthropomorphized as an enemy of humans, an example of an anthropocentric approach. As George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) argue in *Metaphors We Live By*, metaphors are a fundamental mechanism of language through which humans manipulate nature to suit their own interests. In ecolinguistics, these metaphors can reduce ecological responsibility because they present nature as a resource. Alexander Stibbe (2015) describes ecolinguistics as "living stories through language," in which the anthropocentric paradigm suggests that language stories are human-centered. For example, in industrial discourse, "deforestation" is linked to the metaphor of "development", and ecological damage is considered necessary for human progress. These theoretical foundations show that language as the object of study of ecolinguistics is not only descriptive, but also a transformative tool. In modern research (Creswell, 2018), ecolinguistics criticizes anthropocentrism and offers ecocentric approaches, but the anthropocentric paradigm still remains dominant.

The anthropocentric paradigm in philosophy considers man as the central figure of the universe, an approach that is reflected in linguistics as the human-centered structure of language. René Descartes' principle "Cogito ergo sum" (Descartes, 1637) places language and consciousness at the heart of human activity, which in ecolinguistics leads to the "humanization" of nature through language. In linguistics, anthropocentrism is reflected in Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralism (Saussure, 1916), in which linguistic signs are seen as human social systems, with nature as secondary. In an ecolinguistic context, anthropocentrism is manifested in linguistic discourses by subordinating environmental issues to human interests. For



example, in texts about climate change, the expression "our planet" is presented as a human owner, which is consistent with Lakoff's metaphors of orientation (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). As Stibbe (2015) notes, such discourses create "destroyer stories" in which humans are positioned as the subject that destroys nature. This reflection in linguistics reveals the role of language as an object of study in shaping ecological ideology.

In contemporary research (Mullaney, 2018), the anthropocentric paradigm in ecolinguistics is criticized because it limits biodiversity for human benefit. For example, calling forests a "resource" objectifies nature through language. This paradigm is also present in Uzbek linguistics: the Soviet-era discourses of "soil enrichment" demonstrate an anthropocentric approach in which nature is seen as a tool for human labor. At the same time, anthropocentrism opens up the transformative potential of language – by forming new discourses that increase ecological responsibility.

In the anthropocentric paradigm, the object of study of ecolinguistics is the central role of language in ecological discourse, which includes the mechanisms that shape human-nature relations. The study of this object uses the method of discourse analysis, in which linguistic texts are analyzed to identify anthropocentric metaphors. For example, when the framework of the global climate agreements (Paris Agreement, 2015) is used, the ecological problem is seen as a human policy, which reinforces the anthropocentric approach. The cognitive function of language as an object of study is important: through Fillmore's frame semantics (1976), the framework of "ecological sustainability" is associated with human responsibility, but is often subordinated to economic interests. According to Stibbe's (2015) analysis, the metaphor of "green economy" in media discourses presents nature as a commercial object, which is an ecological harm of anthropocentrism. In the context of Uzbekistan, the discourse of "restoration" in texts about the Aral Sea problem is anthropocentric, placing human technology at the center.

CONCLUSION

In an anthropocentric paradigm, ecolinguistics as an object of study reveals the role of language in ecological discourse, in which a human-centered approach shapes relationships with nature. The analysis shows that language, through metaphors and frames, can increase or decrease ecological responsibility. Future research should focus on introducing ecocentric approaches. This article highlights the practical importance of ecolinguistics.



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