



Econarrative in Ecolinguistics: A Stibbean Stance

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Abstract

Drawing Arran Stibbe's account of econarrative, the present study investigates into how ecolinguistics with an ecological framework can replace older narratives with econarratives which in turn can reshape people's thinking, thereby can promote "ecological behaviour." Ecolinguistics deals with *stories* to address socio-ecological issues as it studies the impact of language or texts on the natural environment. Econarrative, one of the nine forms of Stibbean story in ecolinguistics, gets embedded in an ecological framework involving not only humans but also other species and the entire physical environment (Stibbe, 2024). Econarrative is based on the structure of narrative, which is a form of story. Stories, in an ecolinguistics sense, are the mental models which are based on the cultural and societal paradigms. In the words of Stibbe (2024), narrative, having a cognitive structure, exists deeply in people's minds and therefore, it can influence how they think, act and behave. Narratives arise from the uses of language or texts and get spread in the form of novels, magazines, cinemas, advertisements, newspapers, etc. Such narratives may be oriented towards anthropocentrism as they erase connection between humans and nature, causing ecological issues. To counter and replace such narratives, Stibbe advocates econarrative in ecolinguistics. A careful reading of Stibbean literature reveals that econarrative, without resolving social issues cannot endeavour address wider ecological issues. The present study while dwelling on Stibbe's version of econarrative, however, focuses on the primacy of social ecology in the context of econarratives' role in addressing ecological issues. To carry on with the aim of the study, it takes the theory of social ecology of Murray Bookchin (1993) within ecolinguistics to show that ecological issues directly or indirectly are based on social issues. Like narrative, econarrative can create strong influences on people's worldviews or perceptions and therefore, in the long run it can impact how they "behave" towards the natural ecosystem. Thus, the study, besides highlighting the behavioural changes in people's attitude in the context of econarratives, which is the key factor in causing socio-ecological issues, will also argue that in order to deal with socio-ecological issues through human behaviour ecolinguistics must be a transdisciplinary domain.

Keywords: Ecolinguistics, econarratives, socio-ecological issues, social ecology, ecological behaviour, ecosystem