

The Mechanisms of the Representation of Ecology in Folk Poems of Mamasani Variety of Lori: A Discursive - Cognitive Approach

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1. Introduction

One of the most important problems facing humans today is ecological crisis. Ecolinguistics is a relatively new branch of linguistics aiming at studying the relationship between language and environment. Together with other branches of science, ecolinguistics tries to have a role in solving the crisis.

Ecolinguistics, or Language Ecology was introduced in 1972 by Einar Haugen as "the study of interactions between any given language and its environment" (Haugen, 2001, p.57). A different type of link between language and ecology was established in 1990 when Michael Halliday, stressed the connection between language on one hand and growthism, classism and speciesism on the other, admonishing applied linguistics not to ignore the role of their object of study in the growth of environmental problems (Fill, 2001:43).

The aim of this study is to investigate the mechanisms of the representation of ecology in folk poems of Mamasani variety of Lori within a discursive- cognitive approach based on Stibbe's (2015) model. Stibbe proposes eight forms of stories, namely: ideologies, framings, metaphors, evaluations, identities, convictions, erasure and salience. The collected data were analyzed through Stibbe's ecolinguistic framework and within the limitations and objectives of critical discourse studies.

This research intends to answer the following questions using ecolinguistics: (1) which mechanisms are used to represent the ecology in folk poems of Mamasani variety of Lori? (2) How much are the positive or negative (constructive or destructive) impacts on minds and functions of informants about environment?

2. Materials and Method

In the present study, the mechanisms of the representation of ecology in folk poems of Mamasani variety of Lori within a discursive- cognitive approach is investigated. This study is a descriptive- analytical research. The methodology of this research is field and library survey in which a number of 268 folk poems of Mamasani variety of Lori were gathered from informants of Mamasani villages and also textbooks, articles and previous studies. The informants were forty years and more and from

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different levels of education. Then the elicited discursive – cognitive mechanisms were analysed based on Stibbe's (2015) model. At the end, the findings of the research were analysed quantitatively using tables and diagrams.

3. Results and discussion

The findings of the study revealed that all mechanisms in ecolinguistics are found in data. The most frequent ones were metaphors with more than 38 percent. It seems that one of the reasons is that this variety is extremely metaphorical. Another reason is that metaphor may act as an instrument for representing other stories including ideology, framing or salience. Lakoff and Johnson (2003:147) believe that many of our experiences and activities are metaphorical in nature and that much of our conceptual system is structured by metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003: 147). Maybe one of the main findings of this research is that metaphor is not at the level of other stories but it acts as an underlying device.

The findings also indicated that the ratio of the use of the mechanisms for positive representation of nature elements is higher than the negative and destructive one. The frequency of positive mechanisms has been more than 64 percent in comparison with negative ones with the frequency of about 34. This is originated from the style of tribal and rural life and their dependence to nature to earn a livelihood throughout history. Of course some aspects of this dependency lead to the immethodical use from resources and hurting animals as food, the subject that is observed clearly in folk literature of Mamasani.

Another point is that in salience, all examples are positive and constructive while erasure is totally negative and destructive through the deletion of human agents, objectification, metonymy and hyponymy. Interestingly, for the sake of unidirectionality of these two mechanisms, they have less frequency in comparison to other stories.

The final point is that the shadow of culture, life style and historical and ethnic background play a prominent role in representing the nature in Mamasani variety of Lori. Analysing the data revealed that how the life style of migration, the type of natural elements, herbal covering, the culture of hunting and positive evaluations in relation to it have led to cognitive and discursive bias in informants and its reflection in folk literature in particular folk poems in Mamasani variety of Lori.

4. Conclusion

The present study's findings illustrated that all mechanisms mentioned by Stibbe (2015) in ecolinguistics are found in data. Also, it implied that the shadow of culture, style life and historical and ethnic background play a prominent role in representing the nature in Mamasani variety of Lori. The results derived from this inquiry can be effective in codifying textbooks, leaflets and educational materials in order to change human attitudes and culture toward the protection of nature and prevention of its destruction. It is assumed that findings of this research can also assist the cultural and social organizations toward the planning in changing attitudes and destructive stories and reinforcing the strengthening attitudes for the environment. In addition, it can be utilized in line with language planning and using proper language in relation to environmental issues by networks and organizations so that the results and consequences of it can be used toward the propaganda, green thinking and generating the environmental thought.

Keywords: discursive-cognitive mechanisms, ecolinguistics, folk literature, Mamasani variety of Lori, representation