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Representation of animals in Scarry's children's books: An Eco linguistic analysis

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Abstract--The study of the interactions that occurs between language and ecology is known as ecolinguistics. It studies whether the narratives produced by language are destructive to all of the components of the environment or whether they are beneficial to those components. This paper is effort to find out some bright spots regarding the state of our ecosystem. It focuses on children's books that promote environmental awareness, which in turn encourage the protection of nonhuman creatures and the avoidance of their exploitation. Nonhuman animals are a component of the ecosystem, and the manner in which they are portrayed in language can influence the connection between humans and nonhuman animals. Due to the fact that children's books refer to nonhuman animals as sentient beings, it is essential to examine if the language of these stories articulates their intentions and creates stories that are good for nonhuman species. This paper analyses the stories surrounding nonhuman **creatures in four children's books to Richard Scarry** . It also examines how these stories are shaped and determines whether or not they correspond with the ecosophy of thepro-environmental. The study will take an ecolinguistic stance in its approach. Additionally, the study includes ecosophy, which is described as a personal ecological philosophy of human and nonhuman animal connections, plant life, and the physical environment. According to the findings, the language used in children's books seems to shape certain story: **Salience** in which the perspective that animals other than humans are individuals with their own thoughts, emotions, and experiences. ideology that advocates for a biocentric worldview. An ecolinguistic analysis demonstrated that these stories are generally

helpful in characterizing nonhuman creatures as sentient living beings who are on a par with humans.

Keywords---ecolinguistics ; salience; children's literature; children's book

Introduction

The objective of this research paper is to highlight the significance of language in forming stories **about which** nonhuman animals (species other than humans) are and to investigate how the language of children's books creates stories that is, cognitive structures that are present in children's minds and eventually influence how they think, say, or act in certain situations. These stories are then evaluated from the point of view of ecolinguistics to determine if they are beneficial or damaging to nonhuman creatures, and consequently whether they are beneficial or destructive to the natural world and the ecosystem. Specific emphasis is placed on the representation of Scarry 's children's books. The findings of this research will contribute to the very little body of information that is currently available in the realm of discursive studies of animals that fall under the field ecolinguistics.

The study tries to answer questions concerning the linguistic techniques that associated with the salience of animals in the selected Scarry 's children's books, and the way of identifying.

The Theoretical Basis.

Ecolinguistics

Alexander and Stibbe (2014,p. 105) define ecolinguistics as the investigation of the influence of language on the life-sustaining interconnections among humans, other species, and the physical environment. According to Bang & Trampe (2014,p. 83), the term "ecolinguistics" refers to a wide-ranging term that encompasses, on one hand, traditional linguistic methodologies applied to texts and discourses of environmental significance, and, on the other hand, more profound insights on language theories prompted by the ecological paradigm as a whole. According to Steffensen and Fill (2014), ecolinguistics offers the opportunity to reconcile the realm of living nature and human community.

Children's literature

For Kirsten Malmkjaer (1996)(cited in Lathey, ed. 2006,p.16), children's literature encompasses all narratives created or published for children, including "teen" novels aimed at "young adult" or late-adolescent readers. Bashoor (2013) defines children's literature as writing for children from infancy to adolescence. It's divided by age: 0-8, 8-12, and teenage guys (from 12 to 16 years). Verbal, written, visual, and digital works can help youngsters develop mentally and emotionally. This literary type is distinct from adult literature in that it has two basic characteristics: it is brief and clear; however, these characteristics should not be seen as weaknesses, but rather as strengths, because children's literature is an

integral part of literary art that is generated and formed within the particular rules of literary poetics (Stakić,2014,p.288).

Children's book

Applebee (1978,p.7) says toddlers are visual. This allows them to participate. Children's stories use pictures instead of words. Most children's notifications use pictures. Cain and Oakillj (1990,p.26) claim that youngsters recognize illustrated stories better because abstract notions are difficult to understand when a conclusion is achieved. Marry (1997) sees two types of conversations: one in which the adult speaks and the child listens, and another in which the toddler reads the story.

One of the goals of ecolinguistic analysis is to demonstrate how linguistic elements combine to generate particular worldviews or cultural codes, the collections of "shared values, norms, ethos, and social beliefs" that represent the community's shared sensibilities (Gavriely-Nuri, 2012: 80).

Salience strategy

The current study is predicated on Stibbe's model of analysis (2015), which is essentially a cognitive framework that combines the concept of the stories we live by found in human ecology with critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA). This framework was used as the basis for the investigation. Ideologies, framings, metaphors, identities, evaluations, convictions, and salience are the eight possible shapes that stories can take, as identified by the model. This study focuses on the techniques of salience, as well as the question of whether or not stories about the non-humans world are significant and worthy of consideration.

Salience is defined by Stibbe (2015,p.162) as a conception in people's thoughts that a particular aspect of life is significant or worthy of consideration.

The above definition refers to salience technique as when stories in the mind strongly show something as significant and deserving of regard.

Similarly, patterns of linguistic elements might combine to generate salience patterns that prominently showcase certain individuals in a text. By investigating a variety of language characteristics, such as abstraction levels, transitivity, and metaphor. When these patterns are shown to be pervasive, they could build in salience in the minds of individuals or in the collective consciousness of a community.

So , salience patterns refer to language patterns that highlight(or foreground) a certain aspect of life . Linguistically, the techniques of salience can be accomplished by :

1-Activation: Referring to participants as activated when they have the freedom to act, think, feel, and express themselves, rather than when they are merely acted upon. Thus , activation is considered as an effective tool in determining which Participant are foreground in a text. Animals are usually activated when

they are depicted as Actors of Material Processes, or as being engaged in deliberate behavior.

1- *"They glided towards me – no hurry, just riding the wind, sliding across the eddies"*(Stibbe,2015,p.168).

The transitivity of a sentence is the method through which it is utilized to classify happenings and circumstances as belonging to particular categories (Fowler 1991, pp.70- 71). Because of transitivity, agents, actions, and patients are all placed in distinct relationships with one another.

Van Leeuwen (2008,p. 33) demonstrates how persons (or members of other species) might be foregrounded in language by activation:

"Activation occurs when social actors are represented as the active, dynamic forces in an activity, passivation when they are represented as 'undergoing' the activity. [Activation] may be realised by ... transitivity structures in which activated social actors are coded as actor in material processes, behavior in behavioural processes, sayer in mental processes, sayer in verbal processes, or assigner in relational processes ... [when activated] the social actor in question is most clearly foregrounded."

2- Individualisation: Individualisation is the depiction of a thing as a single, distinct individual in a group. Pigs are given significance in the following example by being given individual names. While this does border on anthropomorphism, it would be much more difficult to conceive of mistreating a pig named "Nigel" than a "cull pig" whose single purpose in life is to die.

Naming is one facet of individualisation, which is the representation of individuals as distinct and irreplaceable, as opposed to homogenisation, which is the representation of individuals as indistinguishable components of a greater group or mass.

3- Homogenisation : which is the representation of individuals as indistinguishable components of a greater group or mass. The following is an example of homogenizing language, as it explains the general physical traits of a certain breed of pig:

"The Gloucestershire Old Spot is a large meaty animal with a broad and deep body and large hams. Its white coat has large clearly defined black spots"(Stibbe,2015,p.167)

The use of the definite and indefinite articles 'The X is a Y' in this description assumes all individuals as equivalent., as the physical qualities mentioned apply to all breed members. The significance of homogenizing language is that it diminishes the individual's significance as a unique individual in favor of representing them as one of a set of equivalents(Stibbe,2015,p.169).

4- Personalization: When a social agent is depicted as a distinct individual by being named or vividly portrayed, this is referred to as Personalization. It can be

used to investigate salience (ibid., p.205). The primary focus is on pronouns, particularly personal and relative pronouns. According to Gupta (2006: 2), the English language allows the speaker (or writer) to choose between the personal pronouns he/she/it and the relative pronouns who/which when referring to non-human animals. He/she/who are considered gendered terms for humans, whereas it/which are inanimate and genderless. Using human language to describe animals can help bridge the gap between humans and non-humans.

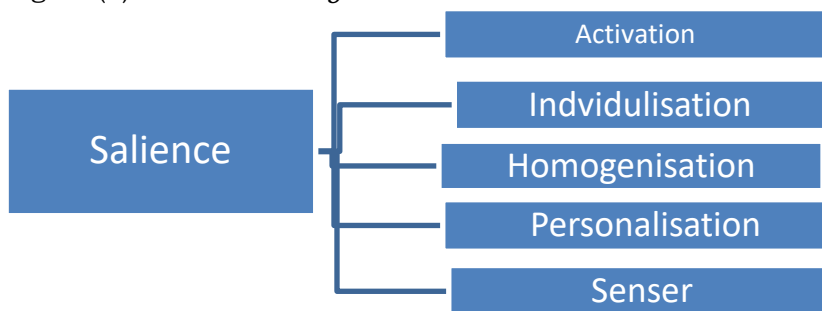
5. Senser: In a clause, a participant is that who is thinking, feeling, or sensing something (Halliday, 1985, p.44).

It is helpful in determining which individuals are depicted as having mental lives and which participants are not.

According to Stibbe (2015, p. 188) salience is to “represent something prominently, as important and worthy of consideration”.

Activation, Individulisation, Homogenisation, Personalisation and senser can all be examples of salience patterns.

Figure (1) *Salience strategies*



Data and Methodology

The data that used in this study is made up of 20 texts which are taken from the selected children's books written by Richard Scarry. This study uses the descriptive qualitative analysis of data to trace the linguistic and discursive elements that result in the salience of animals.

Analysis and Discussion

The current analysis is predicated on Stibbe's (2015) analytical mode, which is primarily a cognitive framework that combines ecology with CDA. The model identifies different patterns. The paper is primarily involved with one of these patterns which is the salience strategies.

The following texts, which are extracted from Scarry's children's books, serve as representative examples of the salience strategy, as it brings attention to the plight of animals:

(i) Scarry, Richard. (1953). *Rabbit and his friend*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

1- *"My goodness gracious," said Rabbit. "Mrs. Hen must have lost one of her eggs. I must push it up out of this deep, dark, muddy hole for her." So he got behind the little roly-poly... Mrs. Hen jumped up, all excited. Cack, cak cak, where is it?" she cackled.*"

2- *"He doesn't look like any animal I have ever seen before," said Rabbit. "He has a big beak and little webbed feet just like Duck." "He has a tail and a fur coat just like Beaver," said Mrs. Hen. "And he is very shy, like Squirrel." "And he came out of that roly-poly egg," said Rabbit. "My oh my!" "What are you, my dear?" asked Mrs. Hen. But the roly-poly animal said, "I don't know."*

3- *"My oh my," said Duck. "He certainly does have a beak and webbed feet just like mine. Tell me," Duck asked the roly-poly animal, "are you related to the ducks?" "I don't know," said the little animal shyly. "My oh my," said Squirrel to himself, "it is plain to see he is shy as a squirrel."*

4 -*"Squirrel was too shy to say anything."*

Examples 1,2 and 3 illustrate the use of the appropriate personal pronoun when the animal's gender is known. This pattern is evident across the data, demonstrating that referring to hen, rabbit and squirrel favors gendered representations, and pronouns are selected accordingly. In addition, the sex of the animal is crucial to the subject matter in Examples 1 and 2; Example 1 "she" refers to hen, which are the animals used to impregnate female pigs, and in Example 2 "he" refers to squirrel. However, when the animal's gender is irrelevant to the subject, he/she is selected in reference to notable humans. It's possible that bridging the gap between humans and other species can be as simple as referring to animals using human terms. This is verified by the selected data: there is a considerable tendency to refer to pigs with the personal pronoun he/she when the animal's sex is known or easily discernible. The animal is portrayed as a gendered individual by the use of pronouns, which are determined by principles analogous to those that govern the representation of people. In texts 3 and 4, an entity and personification of the squirrel is offered in these texts, and it is capable of a variety of mental activities, such as thinking, shying, telling and asking.

(ii) Scarry, Richard. (1994). *I am a Bunny*. New York: Western Publishing Company, Inc.

5- *"I am a bunny. My name is Nicholas. I live in a hollow tree."*

6- *"In the spring, I like to pick flowers. I chase the butterflies, and the butterflies chase me."*

7- *"In the summer, I like to lie in the sun and watch the birds. When it rains, I keep dry under a toadstool."*

8- *"I blow the dandelion seeds into the air."*

9- *"I watch the animals getting ready for the winter."*

10-*"Then I curl up in my hollow tree and dream about spring."*

Saliency is also generated through deploying sense images that appeal to the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch. The animals, as part of the environment, are represented through linguistic choices that appeal to the senses of human people. In this sense, the linguistic features of saliency strengthen the good link between man and the environment.

In extract 5, the bunny is elevated to a position of prominence by being designated with individual name ' Nicholas'. Stibbe (2015:166) asserts that Individualization, as opposed to homogenization, emphasizes the uniqueness and irreplaceability of each individual, and naming is just one aspect of this . The bunny is further described by three hobbies: (picking flowers, watching birds and animals , and blowing the dandelion seeds). The writer establishes a pattern of language through individualisation that makes the bunny 'Nicholas ' extremely salient - worthy of attention and consideration.

Activation technique is also used in the above extracts (5,6,7,8,9,10), the bunny is given an entity in this extract 10 as a sentient animal capable of performing numerous mental functions, most notably like , think, watch. and dream. This is an example of a saliency strategy that, from an ecolinguistic standpoint, highlights the intrinsic value of animals.

(iii) Scarry ,Richard.(1997) *Father Cat's busy Day*. New York: J.B Communications.

11-*"Father Cat realizes he has forgotten Mother Cat...."*

12- *"Meanwhile ,back at the Cat Family house"*

13- *" But instead Mother Cat is wondering what has happened to poor...."*

14-*"Father Cat looks with surprise at the driveway. I know I left the boat in the driveway. Father cat tells"*

15- *"Well before you begin to look , " says Mother Cat , " perhaps you first want to change out of your pyjamas !"*

Extracts 11,12,13,14 and 15 show that Father cat and Mother cat can realize, think, wonder, surprise and know. This passage depicts Father cat and Mother cat as sentient animals with a variety of mental abilities. This is an example of a beneficial discourse that emphasizes the inherent value of animals from an ecolinguistic perspective. According to Stibbe (2015,p.168), "saliency can be increased by emphasizing participation in clauses." On the other hand, these extracts depict Father cat and Mother cat as activated actors. Both are brought to the forefront in the most conspicuous way possible. In extract 13, Mother cat is activated when she is shown as, thinking, asking, or wondering rather than being acted upon. It's clear that the cats are the subject of all the verbs in this extract. They are the actors of the material activities of 'change out their clothes' which display them leading their own life for their own purpose.

(iv) Scarry, Richard. (1998) *Polite Elephant*. Richard Scarry's Best Story Book Ever. New York: A Golden Book

16- "Everyone likes the polite elephant. He knows the right things to say and do."

17- "*When the polite elephant waits for the bus, he takes his place in line. He never pushes or shoves.*"

18- "*The polite elephant is a good guest. He knows that some rooms are for sitting . . . and others are ...' for playing,*"

19- "The polite elephant' is polite at home, too. He always washes his hands and face before sitting at the table."

20- "*The polite elephant is a good playmate. He shares his toys with his friends.*"

The portrayal of the animals in this book generates pro-environmental ideals. The elephant lives as a human in a house with having meals at a table. At home, 'the elephant' is just as courteous. Before sitting down to eat, he makes a point of washing his hands and face. This personification conveys that the story is about more than just an elephant.

The extract above shows that 'polite' is used with animal (elephant). As it was suggested that having a distinct vocabulary for humans and animals promotes isolation, the well-being and proximity of animals to people may be improved by addressing them linguistically like people (Gupta, 2006:109).

The pronoun which is used to refer to elephant is 'he'. According to Gupta (2006:2), utilizing personal pronouns she/he/it or relative pronouns which/who when referring to non-human animals is an option in the English language. Humans use the gendered pronouns he/she/who, whereas inanimate objects are referred to with the ungendered pronoun it/which. Human-animal relations can be bridged by using human language to describe animals. In above extract, it could be found that elephant is frequently referred to as he/his when the animal's sex was known or easily discernible. Thus, salience is achieved by using personalization technique.

Activation technique is also used in the above extract to demonstrate salience of animals.

Discussion

The primary purpose of this study has been identified linguistic techniques that are associated with the salience of animals in the selected Scarry's children's books. The author uses several linguistic devices to show the salience strategy in the selected children's books. The natural world is depicted in these texts through the use of salience patterns. The salience patterns in these texts increase readers' awareness of the natural world—represented by the animals—and establish nature as something deserving of thought. Among the linguistic devices

that contribute to salience are activation, senser, individualization, personalization and both material and mental processes. These linguistic techniques establish the animals as the actors of a series of processes.

It would appear that Scarry has a superior command of the art of rhetoric. The commoner usage of he , his ,she ,her and who by the writer , particularly in referring to the animals (buddy, elephant...), conveys a personalizing of the them, a respect for non-human animals, and an emotional closeness to the animals. Proponents of animal rights might want to take into consideration that using personalized pronouns in a consistent manner may help indicate to the reader that the animals are sentient and may express an emotional connectedness to the reader.

In Scarry's children's books, it is common practice to give human characteristics to nonhuman characters. And despite the fact that virtually any inanimate object may be given a personality, most characters in the targeted stories can speak and engage in human-like actions. Using language to treat nonhumans as humans does three things: it elevates the nonhuman's animacy status, signals its existence as a sentient being, and brings the nonhuman closer to humans.

Conclusion

According to the findings of the ecolinguistic analysis that was performed in this research project, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the strategies of salience makes it possible for the author to disseminate cognitive-linguistic structures. In accordance to the first question posed by the research, it has been discovered that linguistic techniques such as activation, senser, individualization personalization and both material and mental processes are employed to promote salience strategy in discourse of these children's books. Specific emphasis is placed on the representation of Scarry 's children's books. The findings of this research will contribute to the very little body of information that is currently available in the realm of discursive studies of animals that fall under the field ecolinguistics.

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