

Ecolinguistics: Theoretical Foundations And Interdisciplinary Perspectives

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Abstract: The article examines the formation and development of ecolinguistics, its theoretical and methodological foundations, and its role in interdisciplinary integration. It highlights the concept of language ecology proposed by Einar Haugen and its further development by subsequent researchers. The scientific significance of studying language in ecological, social, and cultural contexts, as well as the role of the new ecological thinking concept in linguistics, is explained.

Keywords: ecolinguistics, language ecology, ecological approach, interdisciplinary integration, new ecological thinking.

Introduction. One of the main trends in the development of modern science is the simultaneous interconnection of different scientific disciplines and the emergence of new sciences at these intersections. This is explained by the constant development of society, the increasing complexity of civilization, and the need for a multidisciplinary approach to solving modern problems. Interdisciplinary research is an integral part of today's scientific research, allowing to update, expand and integrate existing scientific paradigms. The formation and development of the science of ecology in the 20th century caused significant changes not only within the framework of the natural sciences, but also in the humanities, in particular, in the field of linguistics. The concepts and principles developed in biology began to be applied in the study of language. In linguistics, the desire to study language on a systematic basis and to distinguish internal and external linguistics became one of the important directions of scientific research of the 20th century. The idea of "ecosystem", which is a central concept in ecology, in turn, began to be used in other scientific fields. This indicates that many scientific areas include complex, multifaceted and extensive objects of research, and the boundaries between them are becoming increasingly relative. The science of ecolinguistics is being formed as one of the clearest examples of such interdisciplinary integration.

Materials and methods

Ecolinguistics is a new scientific direction aimed at studying the interaction between nature and language, in which language is interpreted as a systemic phenomenon related to the environment. The theoretical founder of this concept is the American linguist Einar Haugen. In his 1970 lecture, he defined linguistic ecology as "the science of the relationship between language and its environment." Haugen understood the language environment to mean the society that uses the language and the social and natural context: "Language ecology views language not only as a phenomenon existing in the minds of individual speakers, but also as a product of their activities in the social and natural environment. This science includes partly physiological (i.e., the language existing in the mind of the speaker and its interaction with other languages), partly social (the relationship of language with society as a means of communication). The main focus of language ecology is on the subjects who learn, use and transmit language to others, and the existence and development of language are closely related to the activities of the subjects." [4, 22] The publication of Einar Haugen's work "Language Ecology" in 1972 was an important stage in the formation of this scientific direction as an independent field. Haugen is one of the first researchers to put forward the concept of language ecology and introduce it into scientific circulation by applying traditional ecological paradigms to linguistics on a metaphorical basis. He notes that language ecology studies the impact of situations determined by psychological and social factors on a particular language. That is, language is interpreted as a phenomenon that is inextricably linked to the social and ecological environment. Haugen compares language to a biological species and explains its life cycle through the following stages: a language arises, develops, changes, lives and, under certain conditions, disappears. Just like biological diversity, the viability of languages can be determined by external and internal factors. Therefore, one of the main tasks of language ecology is to identify endangered languages and develop scientifically based strategies aimed at ensuring their viability. One of the first scientific tasks in the field of

language ecology, as E. Haugen noted, was to determine the social and functional position of language. According to him, it is necessary to determine the typological status of a language in an ecological classification, which is achieved by determining the geographical location of the language and how it interacts and competes with other languages in the world. [5, 60] Such an approach requires studying language not as an isolated system, but as a social phenomenon that is inextricably linked with the sociolinguistic and cultural environment.

The ideas of language ecology, founded by Einar Haugen, laid the foundation for the formation and development of ecolinguistics as an independent discipline. His conceptual approach led to the interpretation of language as a phenomenon inextricably linked to the socio-psychological and cultural environment. Based on Haugen's scientific legacy, ecolinguistic concepts have been developed and further developed by a number of linguists in recent years.

Among the initial methodological foundations of ecolinguistics, the scientific views of R. Harre, I. Brockmeyer and P. Mühlgeusler occupy a special place. Their approach is expressed in the following main thesis: language and language structures, including metaphors, should be considered not only as self-contained, independent systems, but also as a system of dynamic and open individual structures that are inextricably linked with the environment. This approach emphasizes that in the study of language, it is impossible to consistently analyze it in isolation from its natural and cultural environment. [3, 42] Thus, the ecolinguistic approach creates the basis for studying language in a broader - ecological, social and cultural context. This allows for a deeper understanding of the place of language in the complex relationship between man and nature.

Results and discussion

This methodological perspective scientifically substantiates one of the main principles of ecolinguistics - the need to analyze the interaction between language and the environment. Language, while being a product of the human mind, is also an active shaper of the ecological and cultural context in which it lives. Therefore, studying language in isolation from its ecological context cannot fully reveal its true essence.

The analysis of these factors serves as an important tool in determining the status of language in society, its trends in change and development. The application of the ecological approach in linguistics has made it possible to view language not only as a system of linguistic units, but also as a component of the socio-cultural environment in which it exists.

The works of Elvin Fill play a special role in the formation of ecolinguistics as a new, independent scientific direction. His scientific views not only clarified the conceptual framework of ecolinguistics, but also made a significant contribution to the formation of a terminological system for this field. Fill proposes the main directions of ecolinguistics through the following terms:

- a) Ecolinguistics - is proposed as a general scientific term for all research areas that study ecology and linguistics in an integrated manner;
- b) Language ecology - is aimed at studying the interaction between languages, covering issues of preserving language diversity and ensuring the sustainable development of languages;
- c) Ecological linguistics - uses the methods and principles of ecological science in the study of language, in particular the concept of "ecosystem". This approach involves analyzing language as a living system;
- d) Linguistic (language) ecology - studies the complex interrelationships between language and ecological problems, that is, it studies how language can be a means of forming ecological consciousness, expressing and solving environmental problems. [6, 88] This classification serves as an important theoretical basis for defining the internal structure of the science of ecolinguistics, clarifying its research objects and methodological approaches.

According to the philosophical approach that studies the general laws of scientific development, any new scientific direction or theory is based on previously existing scientific principles and previously put forward ideas. The evolution of scientific knowledge proceeds according to a spiral development model: according to this model, scientific thinking at certain stages returns to previous theoretical views, but emerges at a new

stage in terms of content, in a new scientific context. This situation reflects the internal dynamics and continuity of the development of science.

This principle is also clearly manifested in the formation of new scientific directions such as ecolinguistics or ecological linguistics. According to N.N. Lykova, the terms "ecolinguistics", "language ecology" and "ecological linguistics", which have been used relatively recently in linguistics, indicate a new stage of reshaping the science of linguistics and a new approach to historical ideas. The scientist notes that this is a scientific reflection of the naturalistic concepts that interpreted language as a living organism in the 19th century at the modern stage. [1, 26] Thus, the formation of the ecolinguistic approach involves not only an approach to ecological problems through language, but also, relying on the historical and philosophical foundations of linguistics, attempts to reinterpret the existing scientific heritage in the context of modern problems. The uniqueness of this approach lies in its desire to create a new paradigm in scientific thinking by analyzing the interrelationship between ecological thinking and language.

It should be noted that in the conditions of the 21st century, the principles of ecological safety, sustainable development, and the harmonious coexistence of humanity with nature require the formation of a new type of thinking in society - New Ecological Thinking (NET). This concept, in essence, means that the safe existence and development of humanity is possible only if the ecological purity of the living environment is restored. New ecological thinking is aimed at forming harmonious and stable relations between man and nature, and language is the main tool for this process. [2, 56]

Conclusion

The examined perspectives underscore the integral role of language in shaping and reflecting the ecological and cultural environments in which it exists. Ecolinguistics, as clarified by the works of scholars such as Elvin Fill and rooted in the pioneering ideas of earlier linguistic traditions, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding language not merely as a system of signs but as a dynamic participant in ecological processes. Thus, linguistic research in the ecological direction is taking shape as one of the relevant and socially significant areas of modern linguistics.

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