

# *Study of Animal Discourse in Language Textbooks from the Perspective of Ecological Linguistics*

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**Abstract:** From the perspective of ecological linguistics, this study deeply discusses the representation of animal discourse in language textbooks. Through the analysis of animal-related content in several sets of domestic and foreign mainstream language textbooks, the diversity and accuracy of animal discourse in the textbooks are revealed. It is found that there are various ways of representing animal discourse in the textbooks, but some textbooks are insufficient in the communication of ecological consciousness. To this end, the article aims to put forward some suggestions for improvement, so as to make the language textbooks more scientific, accurate and ecological-friendly, so as to enhance students' ecological awareness and environmental awareness.

## 1. Introduction

With the increasingly serious ecological problems, ecological linguistics, as an emerging interdisciplinary subject, has gradually attracted the attention of academic circles. Ecological linguistics aims to study the relationship between language and ecological environment, and to explore the role and role of language in ecological problems. In language teaching, teaching materials are an important tool for students to learn language, and the selection and presentation of their content have an important influence on the formation of students' values. Therefore, from the perspective of ecological linguistics, it is of great significance to study the representation of animal discourse in language textbooks to improve students' ecological awareness and environmental awareness.

## 2. The role of language textbooks in ecological education

In the face of the increasingly severe environmental problems, the importance of ecological education is becoming increasingly prominent. Ecological education is not only related to environmental protection, but also closely related to the survival and development of human beings. In this context, as an important tool in the field of education, the role of language textbooks in ecological education cannot be ignored.

## 2.1 Language textbooks are the communication carriers of ecological education

As the main tool for students to learn and master knowledge, the contents of language textbooks cover a wealth of knowledge and information. In ecological education, language textbooks can convey ecological knowledge, environmental protection concepts and ecological ethics to students through various forms such as words, pictures and cases<sup>[1]</sup>. For example, prose and poetry can be incorporated into the Chinese textbook, so that students can feel the charm of nature; the English textbook can introduce words, sentences and chapters about environmental protection, allowing students to understand the importance of environmental protection while doing language learning.

## 2.2 Language textbooks are helpful to cultivate students' ecological awareness

Ecological awareness refers to people's understanding, attitude and behavior tendency to ecological and environmental problems. Through the study of language textbooks, students can have a deeper understanding of environmental problems and realize the close relationship between human beings and the natural environment, so as to establish a correct ecological awareness. For example, when reading a text about environmental pollution, students can feel the seriousness and urgency of environmental pollution, and then have a sense of responsibility and mission to protect the environment. The cultivation of this ecological awareness will have a profound impact on students' future behavior choices and lifestyles.

## 3. Research status of eco-linguistics at home and abroad

### 3.1 Status quo of foreign research

The ideological roots of ecological linguistics can be traced back to linguistics and ecology in the early 20th century. Early linguists began to study language from an ecological perspective, emphasizing the symbiosis between language and the environment. In the mid-19th century, scholar Schlescher combined the ideas of linguistics and ecology in Darwin's Theory and Linguistics, and believed that the evolution of language was similar to the evolution of biological beings. At the beginning of the 20th century, Sapir elaborated on the relationship between language and the environment. He emphasized the diversity of the interaction between language and culture, and was considered a pioneer in the study of language ecology. In 1964, Walgreen first used the term "language ecology" and explored the concepts of "interlingual ecology" and "intralingual ecology". In 1970, Hogen formally put forward the concept of "language ecology", which closely linked language with the environment and laid the foundation for the development of ecological linguistics. In 1990, Han further proposed the research idea of linking linguistics and ecology, including linguistics into ecological research and as a component element of ecological research.

The research on ecological linguistics started earlier, and is more in-depth and systematic, involving a wide range of fields, including language and environment cognition, language and environmental behavior, environmental factors and language evolution and other aspects.

### 3.2 Domestic research status

Compared with foreign countries, the research on ecological linguistics started late in China, but it has been gradually valued in recent years.

Research level: The domestic research level is relatively low, but many scholars have begun to discuss and study ecological linguistics, especially in the intersection of linguistics and ecology<sup>[2]</sup>. Domestic research mainly focuses on the basic concepts, theoretical framework and applied practices

of ecological linguistics, and there are relatively few studies on the representation of animal discourse in language textbooks.

### **3.3 Research status of animal discourse representation in language textbooks**

With people's attention to environmental issues, animal protection and environmental protection have become hot social topics. In this context, it is of great significance to study the representation of animal discourse in language textbooks. At present, there are relatively few studies on animal discourse representation in language textbooks, mainly focusing on the following aspects:

We need to analyze the diversity of animal discourse in the textbook, and explore the differences of animal discourse representation in different textbooks. To evaluate the accuracy of animal discourse in the textbook and to explore the accuracy and scientific nature of the textbook in transmitting animal knowledge and information are improved.

We need to discuss the situation of animal discourse in the textbook and analyze the role of the textbook in promoting ecological education and cultivating environmental awareness.

## **4. Characterization analysis of animal discourse in language textbooks**

### **4.1 Diversity analysis of animal discourses**

The diversity of animal discourse is reflected in the detailed description of animal behavior, habits and emotions in the language textbooks. Different kinds of animals have different life habits and ways of expression, which are vividly reflected in the textbook<sup>[3]</sup>. For example, when describing birds, textbooks may mention their melodious calls, elegant flying gestures, and elaborate nesting skills, or emphasize their deep emotions, complex social behavior, and unique survival strategies. This diversity not only enriches the content of the textbook, but also gives students a more comprehensive understanding of the wonderful and colorful animal world. At the same time, the diversity of animal discourse is also reflected in the description of the relationship between animals and humans. The textbook will show the role of animals as human friends, partners and assistants, as well as the harmonious symbiotic relationship between humans and animals. This description not only enhances the interest of the textbook, but also enables students to think more deeply about the relationship between humans and animals, and cultivate their ecological awareness and environmental awareness.

### **4.2 Accuracy analysis of animal discourse**

Textbooks need to use accurate language when describing animal characteristics and behavior. For example, in describing the morphology of animals, professional terms should be used to accurately describe their body structure, hair color, size and other characteristics; in describing the behavior of animals, appropriate verbs and adjectives should be used to vividly show their behavior and characteristics. This accurate language use allows students to have a clearer understanding of animal characteristics and behaviors, and to enhance their cognitive ability and understanding ability. In addition, when citing data and facts, writers ensure the reliability and authority of source.

Textbook writers should consult a large number of authoritative data and research results, and strictly verify every data and fact. This rigorous scientific attitude can make students trust the content of the textbook more, and improve their learning effect.

### **4.3 Ecological awareness communication and analysis of animal discourse**

Through the representation of animal discourse, the textbook can convey ecological awareness,

environmental protection and moral concepts to students, and cultivate their awareness of environmental protection. When describing animals, textbooks can emphasize their important position and role in the ecosystem. For example, when describing insects, they can emphasize their role in pollination, decomposition of organic matter and maintaining ecological balance, and their contribution in maintaining Marine ecological balance and biodiversity. This description allows students to have a deeper understanding of the role and value of animals in the ecosystem and cultivate their ecological awareness.

## **5. Discovery and discussion**

### **5.1 An overview of the main findings**

In the course of studying the representation of animal discourse in language textbooks, we found several remarkable characteristics and trends. First, most textbooks tend to use a traditional, anthropocentric perspective, emphasizing the use or value of animals to humans, rather than from the perspective of ecological balance. Secondly, although some textbooks began to try to introduce the concept of ecological and environmental protection, the specific expression and context setting are still relatively stiff and lack of depth, which is difficult to arouse students' resonance and thinking. Furthermore, significant differences in animal discourse representation were observed across disciplines. For example, natural science textbooks are usually more scientific and accurate, but may be weak in the transmission of ecological awareness, while humanities and social science textbooks, although emphasizing values and humanistic care, may be too subjective or one-sided in specific expression.

### **5.2 Lack of ecological awareness communication in the textbook**

First, the textbooks often lack of systematization and coherence in the transmission of ecological awareness, and the relevant knowledge points are scattered in multiple chapters or texts, so it is difficult to form a complete ecological education system. This makes it difficult for students to form a comprehensive understanding of ecological problems in the learning process. Second, most textbooks still use traditional and monotonous expressions when describing animal and ecological problems, which lack innovation and attraction. This makes students prone to boredom when reading, and it is difficult to stimulate their interest in ecological issues. In addition, the cultivation of ecological awareness requires students' personal participation and practice. However, the current textbooks often lack practicality and interactivity in the communication of ecological awareness, which makes it difficult for students to apply what they have learned to real life and form a profound experience of ecological problems.

### **5.3 Analysis of influencing factors**

The current education system and policy guidance affect the performance of textbooks in conveying ecological consciousness to some extent. For example, if education policies emphasize students' scientific literacy, the textbook may be more scientific and innovative in the transmission of ecological awareness; otherwise, if the policy orientation pays more attention to the examination and enrollment rate, the textbook may be relatively weak in the transmission of ecological awareness.

The level of ecological consciousness of textbook writers has an important influence on the effect of ecological consciousness. If the textbook writers lack ecological awareness or do not have a deep understanding of relevant issues, then it is difficult for them to integrate ecological awareness into the textbook, and it is difficult to ensure the scientific nature and accuracy of the ecological awareness transmission of the textbook.

Student group and market demand: student group and market demand are also important factors affecting the communication of ecological consciousness of teaching materials. If students lack interest or pay little attention to ecological issues, the textbook may be difficult to arouse their resonance and attention in the communication of ecological awareness. Meanwhile, if the market demand lacks attention or support for ecological education, the textbook may be difficult to fully reflect and play the ecological awareness communication.

## **6. Suggestions and measures for improvement**

With the popularity of the concept of ecological education, language textbooks, as an important tool to cultivate students' comprehensive quality, play a more and more important role in ecological education. Especially in the representation of animal discourse, language textbooks not only need to convey the diversity and accuracy of animals, but also should deeply convey the ecological consciousness. Therefore, this paper puts forward the following improvement suggestions and measures, aiming to improve the ecological awareness of the textbook writers, optimize the representation of animal discourse in the textbook, and strengthen the penetration of ecological education in the textbook.

### **6.1 Improve the ecological awareness of the textbook writers**

First of all, as the direct creator of the content of the textbook, the strength of the ecological consciousness directly affects the quality of ecological education in the textbook. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the ecological education and training of the textbook writers, so that they can deeply understand the connotation and significance of ecological education, and clarify the important position of ecological education in the teaching materials<sup>[4]</sup>. Secondly, in the process of compiling textbooks, ecologists can be invited as consultants or participate in the compilation to ensure that the ecological content in the textbooks is scientific, accurate and cutting-edge. At the same time, ecologists can also provide professional guidance for ecological education for the textbook writers, and help the writers to better integrate ecological education into the textbooks. Before the publication of the teaching materials, the evaluation mechanism of the ecological education teaching materials should be established to strictly check the ecological content in the teaching materials. Through the evaluation mechanism, the ecological errors in the textbook can be found and corrected, and the ecological education value of the textbook can be improved.

### **6.2 Optimize the representation mode of animal discourse in the textbook**

In the textbook, different species of different ecological niches should be introduced as much as possible to show the rich diversity of the animal world. At the same time, we should pay attention to the description of animal behavior, so that students have a deeper understanding of the living habits and behavior characteristics of animals; to describe animals, we should ensure that the language used is accurate and scientific, and avoid using vague, inaccurate words or descriptions to mislead students. In addition, attention should be paid to the standard use of animal names to ensure that students master the correct knowledge of animal classification and naming; when describing animals, we should emphasize the role of animals in the ecosystem to guide students to realize the close relationship between animals and the environment. At the same time, the importance of protecting wildlife and maintaining ecological balance should also be conveyed to students through animal stories and cases.

### **6.3 Strengthen the penetration of ecological education in teaching materials**

First, the ecological practice activities are designed in the textbook, so that students can feel the charm of ecological education in practice. For example, practical activities such as "observing campus

plants" and "recording wild animals" can be designed, so that students can understand the ecological environment and understand the ecological problems in practice. Second, practice activities strengthen the education of ecological values in the textbook, and guide students to establish a correct ecological concept. By telling the stories of environmental heroes and introducing environmental protection policies, students can realize the importance of protecting the environment and maintaining ecological balance. At the same time, we should also emphasize the individual responsibility and mission in ecological protection, and guide students to start from themselves, start from small things, and contribute their own strength to ecological protection. These activities can strengthen the interdisciplinary integration of language teaching materials and other disciplines (such as biology, geography, environmental science, etc.). Through interdisciplinary integration, students can understand ecological issues in a broader perspective, and also help to improve students' interest and participation in learning. For example, when introducing an animal, we can introduce knowledge about the location and function of the ecosystem, the geography, and geography. In addition, modern technology (such as multimedia, Internet, etc.) should be used to enrich the ecological education content in the teaching materials. Through video, pictures, audio and other forms of ecological phenomena and ecological problems, so that students can feel the charm of ecological education more intuitively. In short, improving the ecological awareness of the textbook writers, optimizing the representation of animal discourse in the teaching materials, and strengthening the penetration of ecological education in the teaching materials are the key measures to enhance the value of ecological education in the language teaching materials. Through the implementation of these measures, we can better cultivate students' ecological awareness, improve students' environmental literacy, and lay a solid foundation for students' all-round development.

## 7. Conclusion

In short, the paper makes an in-depth analysis of the representation of animal discourse in the language textbook, reveals the problems in the communication of ecological consciousness in the current textbook, and puts forward corresponding suggestions for improvement. It is hoped that this study can provide useful reference for textbook writers and promote language textbooks to play a greater role in ecological education. At the same time, it is also expected that more scholars will pay attention to the application of ecological linguistics in the field of language teaching in the future, and jointly promote the development of ecological education.

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