

Research article

Afroz Shah's Ecosophy on Youtube.Com: An Ecolinguistics Perspective

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Abstract.

Language cannot be separated from the environment where we live by, because they have relationship with one another. When discussing how to protect the environment, it has to do with human wisdom or self-realization, which is influenced by Gandhi's teachings on self-realization and nonviolence, as well as the Mahayana Buddhist distinction between the small ego-self and the expansive Self of Buddha. This research was aimed to describe Afroz Shah's utterances that contains ecosophy on *Youtube.com*. The primary source of data in this research was taken from youtube video, while the secondary data was from books and journals to support to this research. It used a qualitative descriptive method in conjunction with Arne Naess' ecosophy theory. The data was gathered by downloading an Afroz Shah video from Youtube.com, watching it, reading and checking the video script, taking notes and underlining the data, re-watching and re-checking the data, and capturing, coding, and reducing the data. The data were presented, described, interpreted, and concluded using data analysis techniques. Based on the findings and discussion, the researcher came to the conclusion that Afroz Shah's ecosophy can be divided into four categories: norms, rules, postulates, and value priority announcements.

Keywords: ecolinguistics, ecosophy, self realization

1. INTRODUCTION

Commonly, humans as social beings certainly cannot live alone in this world. We need a lot of people in life. The main goal is to communicate either with people we already know or not. When starting a communication, language is presented as its main tool. Language can be used to express our feeling, desire, opinion and many things around us (Nurwahyuni & Samelia, 2021). In society, language as a feedback tool between one person and another, one group with another group even fellow tribes, cultures, or the same races. Language is both an individual and a social possession, it is caused because the only language can be used as a reference for communicating both verbally and non-verbally, with the presence of language, humans are able to understand the aims or purposes of communicating. As Holmes (2013) stated that languages provide a variety

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of ways of saying the same thing such as addressing and greeting others, describing things, paying compliments and many else. Language is not only conveyed through words, but it can through sounds, symbols and body languages that have meaning when delivered. So that through language every human beings know the purpose of conversations and informations as well as to establish a communication and relations between communities in the society. Language has an important role in relationship of human and the world especially the environment where we live by. The use of language has a significant impact on certain things such as the achievement of the main goal that is the intention to be said. In this case, the use of language as a medium to convey messages, desires, and opinions can affect a human's thoughts or perceptions about many things such as nature and environment.

The relationship between language and environment has significances toward humans such as how humans treat each other and the natural world that is influenced by our thoughts, concepts, ideas, ideologies, worldviews, and nature formed through languages. These two cannot be separated due to language influences how we think about the world as well as it inspires people to protect the natural world. When talking about language and environment, there is a linguistic subdiscipline which describe about the relation between language and environment is called ecolinguistic. Ecolinguistic is concerned with the study of language with ecology. As Stibbe (2015) stated that ecolinguistics has been used to describe studies of language interaction and diversity, studies of texts such as signposts which are outdoors, analysis of texts which happen to be about the environment, studies of how words in a language relate to objects in the local environment, studies of the mix of languages surrounding pupils in multicultural schools, studies of dialects in particular geographical locations, and many other diverse areas. The multiplicity of approaches arises from different understandings of the concept of ecology, from a very broad concept of the interaction of some things with others to narrow concepts such as related to environmentalism. In short, ecolinguistics can explore the more general patterns of language that influence how people think about and treat the world.

Every human being has their own way to interact with the surrounding environment by caring for nature due to the wisdom in themselves. Wisdom is openly normative, it contains both norms, rules, postulates, value priority announcements and hypotheses concerning the states of affairs in our universe. As Naess (2008) defined ecological wisdom is not just knowledge and information. It involves intuition and insight that energizes our spirits, minds, feelings, and senses with unified understanding. It gives people an embodied sense for our ecos and place where we live by. Since people has

wisdom in their heart, they would act based on norms and values that occur in society, it is called as ecosophy. Ecosophy is an ecological philosophy that has normative set of principles and assumptions about relationships among humans with other forms of life and the physical environment (Naess, 2008). People are able to read and watch news about the damage of nature that is caused by humans and natural factors. These problems can inspire human's hearts to care and protect nature. The emergence of this study has an effort to mobilize humans to be more concerned with the environment. With the wisdom in a person, then every human being can be responsible for everything that is around them. Wisdom in the context of ecosophy can make humans to better understand deeply and think critically with what is happening around us especially the environment.

As Stibbe (2010) stated that the emergence of ecolinguistics at this point in history is partly a result of advances in human ecology, where interconnections and interdependencies between all kinds of systems (including economic systems, social systems, religious systems, cultural systems, linguistics systems, and ecosystems) are being highlighted and explored rather than being sidelined for disciplinary convenience. Abbamonte & Petillo (2015) defined ecolinguistics investigates the role of language in the development and possible solution of ecological and environmental problems. (Fill, 1997) stated that with the ecolinguistic paradigm, linguistics takes on a new task such as create an awareness of ecological problems and at the same time, to bring back the feeling of togetherness with all living beings. From this statement, it means that through language, someone gets knowledge and tries to solve every problems that occurs especially the environment around us. The role of language has a function as a tool that is used in order to obtain the needs of life as a human being. It is very important, because only with language we can interact with others due to language functions in principle is to accommodate various cultural complexity related to human activity. Without the language, the things that are around us can not be understood by the public.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher analyzes about what are the wisdom ideas such as utterances in the context of ecosophy is shown in Youtube channel by using Arne Naess's theory, that is, ecosophy that contains norms, rules, postulates, and value priority announcements. Ecosophy is a wisdom-spirituality of the earth. Ecosophy is not just between society and earth, but also matter and spirit, spatio-temporality and consciousness.

2. METHODS

The researcher applies the method of qualitative descriptive in order to answer the research question in this research because the data that analyzed in the form is utterances or words on Youtube. there are some procedures of collecting data, downloading, watching, reading and checking the script, make a memo and underline the data, re-watching and re-checking, capturing, coding, and data reduction. While the technique of data analysis are presenting the data, describing and interpreting the data and concluding the data.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Arne Naess classifies five categories of ecosophy. They are norms, rules, postulates, value priority announcements and hypotheses. Based on the finding data that have been analyzed, the researcher finds four categories. Furthermore, the writer presents the discussion of four categories of ecosophy in youtube channel in the following parts.

3.1. Norms

As Rothenberg (1986) has identified two main features of norm. Firstly, self realization does not mean self centeredness because the individual self cannot be isolated from, as well as dissolved into the greater self. Secondly, self realization is a process of expanding oneself to realize that they are a part of nature and others' interest should be her own interests. Finally, since self realization is an active condition, or a process, or a way of life, nobody can ever reach self realization. Norms are social values in a civilized society in which both written and unwritten rules or a standard or pattern, especially of social behavior, that is typical or expected of a group.

Interviewer : What does a person like you feel about this?

Afroz : No no, religion is a very good thing. Many people compare it to Opium, they say religion is a form of recreation. For me, the experience has been good. I respect all religions. When I was 13, I was introduced to quran. I want to share, my mother was catholic. There were Hindu, Muslim and Christian cousins in my family. My mother married a Muslim man. My aunt married a Hindu man. My grandmother was Catholic. Having said that, I was introduced to diversity through Quran. **Quran taught me how to love. Prophet Muhammad's life, and aim was to hug humanity very tight.** I don't know who does the interpretation, but whoever does it please ask them. I read this and I am



Figure 1: Ecosophy that contains norm.

a lawyer. so each punctuation is important to me. I read it thoroughly. Even this ocean work I started after reading a verse of Quran, where it said you aren't the only species on this planet, care for others too. Religion shouldn't be seen in negative light. Every religion is spiritual if you look deep enough. I thought such a huge thing is being said here, why should I stay quiet.

In the conversation above there is norm or social value expressed by Afroz Shah when he says that he gets or knows the life of the Prophet Muhammad in the Qur'an which is spelled out. The sentence is a norm in which the Prophet Muhammad tells on his people to care about the environment, even though this statement is not written constitutionally. This is what triggers him to be closer to the environment, especially when he cleans the Versova beach and invites others to take a part with him with the initial goal of building awareness and unity of the importance of protecting the surrounding environment, because not only humans occupy this earth, but there are other species for the sake of a survival balance based on his statement **“Quran taught me how to love. Prophet Muhammad's life, and aim was to hug humanity very tight”**. This is about the norm that is shown in his religion as a foundation for doing good because the characteristic of norm is we as human beings have to live based on the announcements or provision that has been made. As well as in his religion there is a Surah named Al-Araf:56 written as “Do no mischief on the earth, after it has been set in order, but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the Mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good”. Furthermore from the Qur'an, Afroz realize he should be more concerned about the environment as well as according to Afroz, every

religion teaches good deeds not only between fellow human beings and that is the reason why he decides not to stay quiet seeing the natural conditions in India.

3.2. Rules

Rules are provisions made to limit the behavior or binding a person or society and any such policy must be implemented. it can be said a rule is a guideline so that humans can live regularly because if there are no rules, then people in social life can act arbitrarily according to what they want without distinguishing between good and bad.



Figure 2: Ecosophy contains rules.

Afroz : **The problem is that people don't understand that the philosophy in our constitution says people's involvement is important, not just court orders and laws.** It is the highest form of love. We need to train people, who else will train them? Every slum, every beggar should be trained. Plastic management in the home, circular economy, how to reduce waste, if you have brought this [tub]... maximise the use of the tub till it's life is completed. Now if I bring it and break it in one day, would it make sense to you? We need waste reduction, not waste generation. Generated waste needs to be recycled. Who is going to do this, Richa? Should I? should you? Should the government, the judiciary?

Interviewer : Everyone needs to work together.

From the conversation above, it contains of an anxiety from Afroz Shah towards the people who still do not care to the problems they are facing. In this conversation he is a saying "**people don't understand that the philosophy in our constitution says people... involvement is important, not just court orders and laws**". In this case, there

is a philosophy in India which states that it is not only from government agencies that must contribute to solving this problem, but all people must unite for the achievement of one goal, that is a clean environment. But some Indians do not know the rules that is applied from the constitution and cause them to care less about the environment. As stated in Indian Constitution Article 51A that “every citizen has an obligation to protect and improve the environment which includes forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife”. Because basically the characteristics of rules are something that is used as a guideline and which is the result of decisions that have been agreed in an institution that is binding, directing and regulating and must be obeyed and must be done to avoid sanctions with the aim of creating what is desired, namely comfort and order. Moreover, this is what causes the majority of Indian to care less about nature because they do not follow or apply the philosophy made by the constitution in their country.

3.3. Postulate

According to oxford dictionary a postulate is to suggest or accept that something is true so that it can be used as the basis for theory. In short, the postulated relation of derivation between a norm of moreleisure time and a norm of more investment presupposes hypotheses about how leisure time is to be increased. Moreover, the postulate is a way or act of someone to express their opinions that are believed to be the truth with the evidence.



Figure 3: Ecosophy contains Postulate.

Interviewer : Afroz, the last time I heard you, you said something beautiful when you defined 'Love', how do we love.....our country, what is the real patriotism. I really want you to share this with all my viewers.

Afroz : Definition of love is different for everyone, some say I will hoist the flag on 15 august and 26th January. Some will write 'I love India' on facebook, twitter, whatsapp. I am new to social media. I didn't know this is how people express love for their country. And this definition of 'love' is that when you love, then love truly and express it honestly, there should be an external manifestation of this love. For instance, Richa if you love your husband and you just keep writing that on Facebook and twitter, he will say to you "So then spend some time with me, have tea with me, have dinner with me, talk to me". It is the same for loving the country. **"Give time to your country. If you don't, things will remain the way they have been for 70 years. So this is my definition of 'love' for your country, environment, and oceans. Spend time with them because if you don't connect with them, then there will be no depth in your patriotism"**

The conversation above describes how each person has a different perception of the definition of love. Everyone of course states that they love their country. However, Afroz Shah stresses people out there especially in India, if people really love their country, then spend time with nature. Build awareness of the importance of caring for nature in accordance with the existing constitutional philosophy, because in the absence of relations between humans and the environment, then they do not have a patriotism in themselves. Patriotism is an attitude that must exist in a person by having a brave attitude, never giving up and also willing to sacrifice for the sake of the nation and also the country. If this attitude does not exist in a person, then the state will be destroyed because of self-awareness of the importance of the country being ruled out. This is a postulate, because the utterance that uttered by Afroz Shah does not need proof that if a person or the society care about the nature around them, they will love their own country. Because this is already known and accepted by most people.

3.4. Value Priority Announcements

Value Priority Announcements are principles that shows a way for people to know what they have to do and what kind of society they will be so they can live as well as possible by considering the surrounding environment. Because priority values give people a way to know what is the most important and less important to be happy for everyone and themselves.



Figure 4: Ecosophy that contains Value Priority Announcement.

Interviewer : But from the other perspective, out of the many people who know about you, if atleast some – for instance...even if 10 people out of a 1000 are inspired – the work is well done!

Afroz : When I first started this work, I never thought about all of this and to this date I don't. **For me, every Saturday-Sunday means working for this planet. I started with 2 hours, now I devote all 48 hours. Sometimes even more than 48 hours. I ask students in schools and colleges, "Will you hold my hand and work for the future of the country? Will we love the country as it should be loved?"**

The data above contains priority values such as the phrase "**For me, every Saturday-Sunday means working for this planet. I started with 2 hours, now I devote all 48 hours. Sometimes even more than 48 hours.**" In this sentence it shows that at first Afroz only used 2 hours to care for the environment, but over time he prioritized protecting nature for around 48 hours or even more than that to get maximum results. In the sentence "**I ask students in schools and colleges, Will you hold my hand and work for the future of the country? Will we love the country as it should be loved?"**" also contains a priority value that is by inviting other people to take part in resolving or minimizing the symptoms of the ecological crisis that occurred in India. In this case, the ecosystem makes our feelings better able to understand nature due to self-realization which results in a deeper sense of care for other beings and nature.

In accordance with the theory of ecosophy, those two sentences above contains value priority announcements because Afroz acts wisely or uses the wisdom that exists between humans and nature by inviting students and others communities or society to take part in solving problems. Moreover, with the wisdom in a person, then the initial

goal will be achieved with the condition that all humans jointly for making improvements, so there is a balance of the nature on earth and as a result, they can get benefit from nature. Moreover, the statements or sentences above are match to the presence of an ecosophy which aims to create a natural balance on earth and also minimize the ecological crisis built from self realization which is an important factor according to Arne Naess.

4. CONCLUSION

After analyzing Afroz Shah's ecosophy in *Youtube.com* by using Arne Naess's theory, the researcher finds some utterances that contains ecosophy used descriptive qualitative method, there are four categories such as norm, rules, postulates and value priority announcement. The reason why the hypotheses category is not found in this research because there are no statements which are still presumptive because they still needed to be proven. From language, Afroz shah tells society to create their own ecosophies inspired by commitment to the deep ecology platform principles. People do not have to wait for the experts and mainstream organizations in order to act on their own. People can do something of long term importance on a regular basis, starting today. Many people and groups are developing their personal ecosophy as their way to live richly in harmony with others and the natural world. There is a diversity of ecosophies that reflects the individual and ecological diversity of the self organizing creative powers found in people and other beings everywhere because people are more effective when we have a sense of wholeness through an integrated total view. Nowadays many people have coincidentally developed ecosophies very similar to Naess's. Their ecosophies are based on the practice of extended identification, increased awareness, and care for their ecological self.

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