

# Climate Change and Linguistic Assistance to Overcome Its Risks: An Eco Linguistic Analysis of Greta Thunberg Speech

Nazish Naz<sup>1</sup>, Aqsa Atta<sup>2</sup>, & Ahdi Hassan<sup>3,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M.Phil Scholar, Department Area Study Centre, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup> Department of English, University of Sialkot, Sialkot, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup> Researcher, Global Institute for Research Education & Scholarship: Amsterdam, Netherlands

<sup>4</sup> Researcher, "Vanishing Languages and Cultural Heritage", Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

Correspondence: Ahdi Hassan, Researcher, Global Institute for Research Education & Scholarship: Amsterdam, Netherlands. E-mail: ahdi Hassan441@gmail.com

Received: August 20, 2022

Accepted: October 21, 2022

Online Published: October 25, 2022

doi:10.5430/wjel.v12n7p117

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n7p117>

## Abstract

Climate change, like many other pressing issues in today's society, is being scrutinized by the linguistic community as well under the subcategory of Eco linguistics. In this context, the present study tries to illuminate this new field by critically or Eco linguistically analyzing Greta Thunberg's most recent (selected) speech. In particular, by using the theoretical framework given by Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional discourse model, the study analyzes the way how Greta draws on different linguistic devices or adopts highly selected use of language to convey an ecologically beneficial perspective and ideology. It also examines the use of figures of speech in her speech and it explores how the selection is made for conveying an ecologically beneficial perspective. The findings revealed her careful selection of vocabulary items, use of direct and dominant language, extensive use of metaphors, ironic expressions and lack of euphemistic expressions. Besides that, her use of conjunctions adheres to coherence, her inductive style of argumentation focuses on reasoning. The findings showed the use of transitions throughout her speech between pessimistic and optimistic expressions. The result presented that her manipulation through the use of sensitive and emotionally triggered words have influenced people to a great deal to the point of shaping their distinct ideology regarding climate change and thus to pursue an agenda based on action. The study also provides implications to develop understanding of climate related discourses as it stresses the role which language or linguistics play in encouraging and influencing people to safeguard the systems that sustain life.

**Keywords:** Eco linguistics, climate change, figures of speech, ideology

## 1. Introduction

Climate change has become a hot spot topic in recent years accompanied with risks involving the entire ecosystem. An issue on which not only the scientific world is pondering over, rather Eco linguists are also trying to add solutions with linguistic assistance (Grimm et al., 2008). Therefore, considering this problem of climate change at hand this paper aims to demonstrate the importance or significance of language to persuade people to act upon/to take action against one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century. Though climate scientists have been working on this issue, however, a strong need for public action to combat this climate crisis. This crisis may be resolved or reduced through use of language as it is a powerful tool to shape people's thinking. Language shapes the thoughts, and it modifies ideologies, assumptions, stories, myths, worldviews, and ideas. Apart from that, it also influences how we act, behave or treat others in our surroundings. Considering that, it can be argued that language can manipulate people's actions. Hence, it can be argued that language as a tool can be used for the sustainability or protection of the environment as well as the ecosystem in any desired way. Eco-linguistics is a medial field which incorporates both ecology and linguistics.

Greta Thunberg is a 15-year-old Swedish girl, who went viral on social media in 2018 as a young climate activist or environmentalist and is inspiring people, specifically youth from all across the globe to speak up and play their part in climate justice movement through her strikes and campaigns. This paper aims to analyze her selective speech and to check if the linguistic choices she has used in her speech are playing ecologically beneficial or destructive role in

the community.

Though different studies have been conducted to analyze discourse critically related to environmental issues, few have explored climate issues regarding Eco-linguistic and its pertaining theories. The exclusion of this term “Eco-linguistic” all along from critical discourse studies in related works has placed the focus of current research completely on this term. This is an emerging field thus it requires new frameworks of study which can only be explored by first analyzing the discourse from different perspectives. Hence, this study incorporates the use of CDA analysis model given by Fairclough to analyze Greta’s speech from three perspectives i.e. textual, processing and social analysis.

Leung (2020) has also analyzed her speeches using the theoretical framework of Fairclough but his target was only the discourse of youth. There is a clear lack of linguistic knowledge, whereas the current study focuses on the general impact or effect created on people through use of language on any specific age group. The current research will also focus on exploring the use of metaphors, euphemism, and irony in her speech. The current research work has analyzed Greta’s selected speech from three different analytical perspectives with respect to ecologically beneficial discourse. It has also explored and examined the use of figures of speech or linguistic devices i.e. metaphors, euphemism and irony in Greta’s selected speech. More specifically, the current study answers the following questions:

1. How does Greta utilize linguistic assistance to convey ecologically beneficial perspective/ideology?
2. How does Greta use figures of speech/linguistic devices such as metaphors, euphemism and irony in her speech?

The current study will help the readers to get a better understanding of ecolinguistics especially related to the examination of aspects of climate change discourse which has been explored very less even though is crucially in need of consideration and reappraisal regarding the need of present time. This study will help contribute to developing an understanding of climate related discourses as it stresses the role which language or linguistics play in encouraging and influencing people to safeguard the systems that sustain life. This research also raises awareness to promote or utilize ecologically beneficial language use along with inculcating resistance, criticism and opposition for ecologically destructive attitudes or discourses with a hope of putting pressure on the authorities or political leaders to change their way of addressing this sensitive issue. Not only this, it places responsibility of taking action on each individual being a part of this ecosystem and thus sheds light to how we can take inspiration (as well as can better comprehend their motives, intentions or ideologies) from public speakers or climate activists as to identify or explore certain linguistic choices which can actually help make a difference. This will add knowledge to the existing body of literature as there is relatively less work done on Greta Thunberg’s speeches in the context of Eco linguistics.

## 2. Literature Review

Eco linguistics is a relatively new field of study and is ever-emerging since the 1990’s and it is given the status of a whole new branch of linguistics and its future scope and dimensions are being explored and looked into by Eco linguists (LeVasseur, 2015; Stibbe, 2015; Chen, 2016; Fill & Penz, 2017). There is not any fixed definition of it, rather it accommodates a lot of meanings into it both related to ecology and linguistics. Discussing the evolution or growth of this field is not a focus of this paper, so we will let its understanding develop by the reader as they indulge in reading this paper. For the time being we can go on with the perspective of Michael Halliday which brought about a critical turn in linguistics as he wrote a paper entitled as “New ways of Meaning: the challenge to Applied Linguistics” where he claimed environmental issues are not just the problems for biologists or environmentalists rather they should be of concern for linguists in applied linguistics as well (Dash, 2019). Halliday further suggested the need to question the existing use of language and to ponder if that is ecologically beneficial or destructive overall.

Arran Stibbe wrote a book named “Language, ecology and the stories we live by” which provided this field a sort of critical framework, discussed theories particularly related to Eco linguistics, and explored the diversity or range of ideas that it accommodates. Moreover, he also shed light on the future course or practical application of this field. The idea of current research was also taken from Stibbe’s recommendation of the future research that can be done in this field where it was recommended that we can critically analyze the texts or discourses which are related to environment or ecology (e.g. Climate change, deforestation, pollution etc.) in anyway and see what kind of impact they are creating i.e. either favorable or destructive to ecosystem. Fill (1998) also pointed out that we can investigate the role which language can play in developing, harnessing and also providing suitable solutions for the ecological as well as environmental problems and thus to avoid the choice of vocabulary which can affect these.

There is scarce work done in this field of Eco linguistics as it is an emerging field. More recently, Eco linguistic analysis of vegan campaigns has been conducted where they analyzed posters or banners which advocate for animals by giving them equal status as humans by considering them sentient beings with feelings and emotions and thus demanding their protection. It was investigated whether multimodal usage (language and usage of images in posters) in these campaigns display beneficial stories or ideologies to protect nonhuman species and prevent their exploitation which as a result was claimed to be beneficial (Zhdhanava, Kaur & Rajandran, 2021).

Moreover, there are also a few examples of Eco linguistic analysis of texts related to environment such as Mliless and Larouz, (2018) research aimed at analyzing Moroccan English language teaching textbooks and how they create an awareness of the concepts related to environmental and ecological problems. The researchers mainly focused at the usage of linguistic devices like euphemism, agency and passive voices to convey environmental issues to students effectively and how the text under study inculcates ecological principles in it.

A quite similar kind of research was conducted by Yuniawan, Rokhman, Rustono and Mardikantoro, (2017) in which he critically as well as Eco linguistically analyzed the green discourse. Unlike the previous study by Mliless and Larouz, (2018) which studied English textbooks, this one aimed at the texts taken from different newspapers and then analyzed the ideological, sociological and biological meanings they incorporate.

To explore another dimension of Eco linguistics, Wang, Zhai, and Zhao, (2019) did an Eco linguistic analysis of UN secretary general's speech not just about environment but specifically related to the uprising issue of climate change. For the analysis, he utilized two research approaches i.e., one of Haugen's and the other one of Halliday which is systemic functional analysis of the three main metafunctions in his speech and transitivity analysis to reveal or understand the ideology behind his speech. An incredibly unique aspect of the analysis was the utilization of Chinese sciosophy as a framework. The results highlighted how his speeches were ecologically beneficial to convey this message that how sudden action is required for the issue of climate change or practical implementation of ecological harmony should be kept in consideration on all levels of responsibility.

Discourse can be defined as knowledge communicated with the help of linguistic or nonlinguistic means which can have different functions but one of its purpose can spread information or for conveying a range of meanings while addressing a certain issue or discussing any topic. Hence, when coming towards the discourses related to climate change, we first need to understand why this issue or problem needs linguistic attention or what is the need to stress the role of language when addressing climate change.

This communication related to climate change comes under the umbrella term of environmental communication. In the past, this issue was not given its due share in the realm of discussions of policy meetings and conferences to make a difference because of a lack of scientific knowledge or understanding about it. The new research and scientific understanding of these phenomena led social scientists' interest in it along with the eyes of political and economic sectors. Thus, it got recognition as a global concern or a sort of threat which not only needs to get highlighted, however, worked upon as well. Climate change communication thus takes concern into how this issue is being addressed at different platforms through different linguistic means and how it influences or brings change in the mindsets, perceptions or opinions of those catering that information can affect their behavior or actions. Climate change discourses thus focus on how the language users should be sensitive to shape their discourse through selection of the vocabulary and linguistic expressions they opt to convey messages or information about environmental crises including climate change to bring constructive social change. In this context, climate activism is very much on call nowadays and many movements, campaigns and rallies are being led by climate activists as well under people and organizations from different social strata. One of the highlights was Greta Thunberg as an uprising climate activist, who became viral on social media. She utilizes rhetorical strategies and linguistic devices like ecologically beneficial metaphors and irony to criticize and challenge the people in power and world leaders. She uses smooth transitions between pessimistic and optimistic point of views. Her clear and direct expressions quoting statistical figures and scientific findings, predictions and certain consequences (risks involved, potential damages) pertaining to those along with the use of oppositional identity markers for resisting the authorities or policy makers, demanding climate action or climate justice, strengthens her arguments and motivates (many a times persuades) public to act desirably and resist or legitimize certain practices to make world a better living place for future generations.

In order to get an idea of how much and what kind of work is done in the field of Eco linguistics related to Greta Thunberg's environmental speeches and to uncover how the current work differs from those already done, it is necessary to discuss Michael's (2021) study on the analysis of Greta Thunberg's book which is a collection of her eleven speeches related to the problem of climate change and global warming. Michael in her paper examined how

ecocriticism exhibited in Greta's speeches, which is basically an umbrella term incorporating the relationship between language, culture and nature having ecologically or environmentally critical perspective, integrates or makes use of rhetorical devices (such as ethos, pathos and logos or interpersonal and intrapersonal communication) in order to ecologically persuade her listeners to take immediate, practical action for uprising environmental crisis. She concludes her research with affirmation of Greta's success in influencing people through her apt and befitting linguistic choices, her straightforward stance, use of graphic analogies and interconnections of ecosystem and humanity in her speeches, which can thus be rightly claimed as Eco activism or famously called as "The Greta effect".

Leung (2020) conducted research on the analysis of three of Greta's speeches about climate change focusing on how she manipulates or influences particularly youth through her speeches as we have witnessed her leading campaigns and protests entitled as "School strike for Climate". The focus of this movement was primarily to create an impact or influence on the ideologies of junior school going children that how they too hold a powerful position to bring change through this climate justice movement. Leung in her paper makes use of critical discourse analysis framework by employing Fairclough's three-dimensional conception of discourse model for Greta's speeches analysis. She also used Foucault's theory of power and resistance for further analysis and investigated how Greta successfully played with discourse of power, dominance and counter narrative (oppositional position or counter power stance of youth submerged in these movements) to deliberately contrive the ideologies and identities of teenagers as stakeholders of the futuristic world.

Lauwren (2021) conducted a study using critical discourse analysis as a framework to study the speeches of Greta Thunberg's speech where she explored how Greta in her climate justice speech makes use of Halliday's three metafunctional features of ideational, interpersonal and textual by the analysis of three kinds i.e., transitivity, mood system and theme. She analyzed how the usage of these unveils her ideology through Fairclough's three dimensional critical discourse analysis model. She concludes that language does have power to not only influence ideologies, however, also to transform human being's behavior into sought action, it can rightly resist, put pressure and question authorities in order to achieve a specific goal out of it. Thus, Greta's speech can be marked as an ecologically beneficial discourse which can bring climate justice to the world.

Now, bringing the current research into the context of these related works and identifying similarities and differences is a very crucial step to understand the focus of current research. Regarding previous studies, it can be seen that few works have been done on Greta's speeches concerning Eco linguistics. The focus of Leung (2020) and Lauwren (2021) research was specifically on critical discourse analysis, to identify the powerful role which language can play in changing or influencing ideologies, than on Eco linguistics. We also know that using the theories of critical discourse analysis to analyze and interpret environmental texts can be termed as an Eco linguistic study (as this field is having a very limited framework or individual, independent theories yet and thus utilizes the theories of CDA as well, as part of its framework) however, the absence of this term "Eco linguistics" completely from the above-mentioned studies shifts the focus only to critical discourse analysis and not to the Eco linguistics. Both of the above studies focused on discourse and power relationship. Only Michael's (2021) research focused on ecocriticism, however, it is a very broad term and incorporates Eco linguistics alongside many other subfields such as ecofeminism, Eco spirituality, empirical ecocriticism, pastoral ecocriticism and climate change criticism, etc. In contrast, the focus of my research will be specifically on ecolinguistics that how language is used as a source of achieving or maintaining ecological harmony or for preserving ecosystem's equilibrium in Greta Thunberg speeches (Dash, 2019). The current work takes somewhat of a similar approach just like one of the related study (Leung, 2020) in utilizing the theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis of Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional conception of discourse model, however, the focus of previous was to analyze the discourse of youth while mine doesn't focus on any specific group of society rather looks at the general outcome or impact created by her speeches. Not only this, the selection of Greta's speech for current work is different in sense of taking the most recent one and thus not analyzed before. For further assessment or detailed and in-depth analysis of Greta's speeches to be called ecologically beneficial, my study will also incorporate the analysis of how linguistic devices or figures of speech (such as metaphors, euphemism and irony) which are very useful for revealing the ideologies behind discourses (Stibbe, 2019) are used in her speeches to sensitize or create awareness in public about ecologically destructive climate issue. This specific aspect has never been explored before while analyzing Greta's speeches.

Eco-linguistics is in its infancy thus it does not hold its independent theories rather it utilizes the theories of discourse analysis to critically analyze or interpret any (related to environment or ecosystem) piece of work. Different linguistic theories, theories related to cognitive science (as to analyze how a specific thought is shaped in our minds), geographical, philosophical, environmental as well as biological theories can analyze different aspects related to

diverse topics and these come under eco-linguistics (Stibbe, 2019). However, no matter which theoretical framework is used for the analysis, one thing remains constant is judging them based on ecosophy of our own at the end. This term “ecosophy” suggests philosophical principles as normative or ethical framework of individual researcher for questioning, challenging or evaluating the discourses under study against it. There is no fixed ecosophy, however, I will move forward with what Naess (1995) said that in ecological philosophy (consisting norms, values, rules and priorities etc. of ecologist) there can be a consideration for ecology, of ecological harmony, sustenance and equilibrium of the system that supports life on earth. My research will follow this similar ecosophy just like Stibbe’s book “Language, Ecology and the stories we live by”, where ecologically beneficial ideologies and discourses are praised and promoted while destructive use of language is opposed and criticized in Greta’s speeches.

In this framework of ecosophy, this work will specifically have an ecolinguistic analysis of metaphors employed or used by Greta Thunberg in her latest 2021 famous speech to Youth Climate summit in Italy where she mocks world leaders with idiomatic expression or metaphorical figure of speech like “Blah Blah Blah” as equivalent to their meaningless talks and speeches of years. The current study will look for all other instances where these linguistics devices are utilized and what overall impact they create.

For this specific study, Norman Fairclough’s tri-phased framework was applied as overall theoretical framework to critically analyze Greta Thunberg’s speech. As it was necessary to understand how the subject was being talked about and then how people interpret or perceived that and after all this how they actually reacted to that or shaped their responses in action. So, the purpose of using this particular model was to have an answer for research questions or for better understanding of those concepts. Fairclough’s model is different from other models (and thus useful for my research) that the dimensions or patterned processes of analysis this model provides can be very useful to comprehend the organization of ideas in Greta’s speech (Janks, 1997; Latin, 2005).

### 3. Methodology

Qualitative research approach is used for an in-depth understanding or exploration of Greta Thunberg’s selected speech. The data (Greta Thunberg’s speech) text was developed by listening the speech which is available on YouTube. This is a public platform which is accessible to everyone so there wasn’t any need to seek permission because of ethical reasons. This work employs theories of critical discourse analysis to conduct an ecolinguistic analysis of Greta Thunberg’s speech. Greta is an environment activist specifically a climate change activist from Sweden who’s been a part of many campaigns and conferences and thus has delivered many speeches across the globe. She has also written a book which published in 2019, entitled “No one is too small to make a difference” which is basically a collection of her eleven speeches specifically addressing global warming and climate change. However, for the current work her recent speech from 2021 with the criteria of the highest views on YouTube was selected. This speech was delivered in Milan, Italy on September 28, 2021 just after the UN’s report of August, warning the worsening situation of climate change and the expected destruction it can cause for futuristic generations, if not taken seriously, hyped with snappy words like “Blah blah blah”, given to Youth Climate. The purpose of taking this specific speech was to examine what sort of linguistic expressions or language assistance Greta utilizes in her speech to address this threatening climatic situation knowing how impactful her words can be at such a difficult time.

### 4. Data Analysis/Discussion

During the first step of Norman Fairclough’s model, textual analysis is conducted. During textual analysis, morphological, phonological, syntactic, semantic as well as coherence or unity in Greta’s selected speech is analyzed. The textual version of her speech comprises nine hundred and fourteen words (914) in totality. Greta initiates her speech with greetings and courtesy markers/words which are “hello” and “thank you”, after which she directly shifts towards the topic under discussion that is “climate change”. Interestingly, here she does not build any background for her discussion or the reason of why she was actually there as part of that summit and what led her towards addressing that issue as a general overview or general way of opening any speech but the usage of the term “climate change” in the subject position places importance on this issue. Afterward, she adopts a skeptical tone and utilizes figurative language. She uses this statement that:

*“Climate change is not only a threat; it is above all an opportunity....”*

In this statement she makes use of both irony and metaphor. She equates climate change first with threat for comparison or symbolism and then calls it an opportunity which becomes a metaphoric expression. However, this statement actually is not only portraying her ideology, but she also takes this statement from what politicians have been saying for years and criticizes them for their procrastination. She first used word “threat” which according to Stibbe can be considered as an ecologically beneficial metaphor as it showcases the relationship between two

different things i.e. climate change and human world at large and conveys how we are at risk of destruction or crisis which needs our attention as early as possible. Choice of metaphors is very crucial in making people understand or communicate to them for conceptualization and for retrieving certain actions out of them. Greta utilizes inductive style of argumentation which according to Martin (2014) is a kind of building reasoning by making use of certain analogies which is the use of lexical item “threat” in this case. Using expressions like danger, violence, war, and warning conveys typical threatening (pessimistic) situations where people are likely to pay attention immediately as they emphasize the urgency as compared to the optimistic or euphemistic expressions like “beneficial” in this case.

She again makes use of a statement by quoting politicians and coherently relates it with her previous statement of comparing climate change phenomena with an opportunity to move towards the success of the ecosystem and developing ecosystem. Statements like this can motivate people in a way where they fantasize about the world and then would like to happily work for the cause of getting rewarded at the end but there are very less percentage of such people who are psychologically convinced this way. Contrastively, the pessimistic expressions can make people hopeless to act and optimistic situations can advance positive outcomes for people. So, we see a glimpse of both pessimistic first and then optimistic tones or vocabulary items. In the second statement, she also uses first person plural pronoun “WE” two times which is an inclusive expression that reflects or evokes a sense of unity and includes masses/public into it. This expression of solidarity has a rhetorical function, and it is used in her speech thirty-three (33) times which can influence people to attaining a desired/targeted outcome. Simultaneously, she is quoting how politicians make use of this expression for their personal benefits. In continuation to that, in her third statement she again uses an ecologically beneficial metaphor which is “fighting” climate change and satires or criticizes politicians as well. Just like “we” she uses the expression of “us” as well with the same purpose.

Greta quotes the statements of other politicians as well such as Boris Johnson and Indian prime minister Narendra Modi and makes satire or fun out of their remarks regarding climate change with the usage of their words like “bunny hugging” or “calls for innovation...” and equated all of those phrases with the idiomatic expression “Blah blah blah”. She uses these lexical choices to portray her stance of how policy makers and political leaders make a fool out of public with their fake promises and inaction on their part suggests utter nonsense or meaninglessness which must be opposed as well as questioned. These lexical choices give a kind of straightforward or direct message to leaders to keep a hold on their tongues and sets an identical, distinct or disconnected position of Greta and Public to them. Using “blah blah blah” many a time in her speech defines phonological patterns or rhythmical tone (rise and fall) of her speech as well. She makes use of a lot of stress patterns in her speech as well to emphasize her point.

She makes use of dichotomous terms as well such as “they” and “them” versus “us” and “we” repetitively in her speech limiting Us-Vs-Them language which builds a separate identity and thus establishes a boundary between people and powerful leaders. Using adverb “of course, we can still...” emphasizes hope and optimism and the use of adverb of time “now” suggests the urgency of taking instant action considering present moment only. Besides it, she has also used conjunctions like “and” and “but” throughout her speech which gives it a kind of coherent and unified tone and suggest clarity and cohesion of Greta’s ideology or point of view. For further strengthening her arguments, she gives references to scientific predictions and theories and makes use of statistical data as well which again is use of rhetoric.

*Only about 2% of government...*

*And according to a new report by the UN, global emissions are expected to rise by 16% by 2030 compared to 2010 levels.*

The next step in analysis of Greta’s speech is basically about interpreting the understanding built out of textual analysis and then judging the text based on inter-textual as well as intra-textual discourses. As this process of analysis is linked to the previous one, there will be some repetition in evaluation of explored concepts. Using conjunctions like “And” and “But”, subordinating conjunction like “As long as” in Greta’s speech not only gives organization and coherence to her thoughts but also suggests that even if climate change is a threatening situation, we have a chance or conditions which can make things better.

Greta intentionally uses constitutive intertextuality in her speeches where she quotes other texts or discourses directly and explicitly in her speech such as reference or quotations from politicians, leaders or policy makers. She uses scientific statistics procedures and their up-to-date research and predictions about climate change. This speech of Greta was a sort of reaction to the August report of UN which warned about the destructive or dystopian situation climate change can bring to the futuristic world or generations. These direct quotations and references strengthen her point of view and give a loud voice to her ideology or opinion. The pattern of her speech of first quoting so-called leaders and then giving her reaction or response to those by criticizing and satirizing them persuades audience or

people listening into believing her as it is. She gives allusions or historic reference to colonialism as well suggesting the inequality or disproportionate distribution of power in society and relating that to the current condition of climate change issues outcome which is in the hands of political leaders or policy makers and that they are exploiting this powerful position.

The climate crisis is of course only a symptom of a much larger crisis - the sustainability crisis, the social crisis - a crisis of inequality that dates back to colonialism and beyond - Apart from that, if intra-textual elements are explored to build a relationship of Greta's speech with other works done previously as discussed in related works section, where they analyzed green discourse present in environmental texts (Yuniawan et al., 2017). Similarly, in Greta's speech the glimpses of green discourse can be found, for instance, in the opening section of speech she refers to politicians and criticizes how they make deceptive and manipulative use of Green discourse in their speeches or addresses to public which do not serve any beneficial purpose as they only care about making money and work on economic growth which Greta referred as "Green economy". This is like Moroccan textbooks which were analyzed by Yuniawan et al. (2017) where responsible word selection and pervasiveness of euphemistic expressions was missing and this proved to be ecologically destructive.

The third and final step of analysis (according to Fairclough's discourse model) of Greta's speech is conducting social analysis which is actually related to explanation of her discourse based on social and cultural context. In this step a larger or broader picture on the basis of which ideologies and norms of society are constructed are explored; thus, economic, political aspects are also highlighted. First, drawing a comparison between the sayings versus doings of political leaders at the start of Greta's speech suggested a corrupted or morally flawed position in society which inculcates a kind of deception or disloyalty in the minds of public for which they feel like taking a strict stance or resistance in the future. Again, the point related to us versus them position also suggests a social position or unidentified or disconnected relationship between leaders and public and thus creates distinctive identity and ideology. For example, she said:

*"If this is what they consider to be climate action, then we don't want it"*

She relates this climate change condition by building a comparison and contrast to the economic growth policies being made on part of policy makers or politicians. Furthermore, she discusses how there is this urgent or instant need of taking climate change issue seriously just like politicians are paying attention in developing or building economic growth or stability. She emphasizes how climate change issue, just like economic growth, is very crucial for society and on a larger scale for this entire ecosystem, for the life sustenance on it. She criticizes political leaders' hegemonic position and then shifts onto emphasizing how we as public and mass of people because of our own increased numeric and change the power dynamics through opposition, resistance or with our forceful stance or can hold that position to bring change. This suggests how she uses such lexical choices e.g., inclusive we which creates solidarity and unified position of people in society that can do anything they want to achieve. She places responsibility on the shoulders of every individual as part of this ecosystem and thus demands action from them. Her related quotations are:

*"Hope is taking action"*

*"Hope always comes from the people"*

She uses sensitive terminologies or topics of emotional value such as colonialism to evoke or trigger people to think about climate change and do something about it. It is quite obvious that ideologies are based on the sociological makeup of languages so selection of linguistic material or vocabulary is very important as the thoughts are shaped by conceptualizing, internalizing or visualizing those words. Greta's use of vocabulary "unlike the ever seen" for the climate predicted situation (in case of any inaction), "betrayal", "ever before", "inequality" suggests implicit cultural as well as a social stance in her speeches to manipulate people's ideologies and change the way they think for a futuristic sustainable world.

## 5. Conclusion

This research work provides critical insight based on Eco linguistics and how Greta Thunberg, "an environmental/climate activist", makes use of linguistics or language for environmental sustainability or by keeping ecologically beneficial worldview as part of her ideology. Greta makes use of a lot of ecologically beneficial metaphors like "threat", "fighting" which showcase pessimistic tones and urgency of taking action for this issue. However, she also uses optimistic vocabulary/terms in her speech which cannot be called or termed as ecologically destructive according to the ecosophy utilized for this research project. These can be labelled as ambivalent metaphors according to Stibbe's categorization of ecological metaphors. Not only in the usage of metaphors but in

her overall speech, she showcases a smooth and powerful transition between pessimistic and optimistic expressions to emotionally balance her stance so that people do not get wholly depressed resulting in incapability or abandonment to take action at all rather she motivates and shows them ray of hope as well. With lack of euphemistic expressions from her speech and using direct and dominant discourse she upholds a firm stance against politicians. The analysis conducted in depth showcased the extent of linguistic assistance to succor her arguments. Using ecologically beneficial as well as sometimes ambivalent metaphors, extensive use of irony and figurative language, lack of euphemistic expressions, her simple and direct language use is presented in the analysis section which concludes or summarizes reason behind her growing fame and influence over people's shifting ideologies and which is now forcing people in power as well to take serious action and develop constructive policies to ensure a healthy and safe world (by acting and thinking ecologically).

## References

- Chen, S. (2016). Language and ecology: A content analysis of ecolinguistics as an emerging research field. *Ampersand*, 3(1), 108-116. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amper.2016.06.002>
- Dash, R. K. (2019). What is ecolinguistics. *Language in India*, 19(5), 379-384.
- Fill, A. (1998). Ecolinguistics—State of the art 1998. AAA: Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik, 3-16.
- Fill, A. F., & Penz, H. (2017). *Ecolinguistics in the 21st century: New orientations and future directions*. In *The Routledge handbook of ecolinguistics* (pp. 437-443). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315687391-30>
- Grimm, N. B., Faeth, S. H., Golubiewski, N. E., Redman, C. L., Wu, J., Bai, X., & Briggs, J. M. (2008). Global change and the ecology of cities. *Science*, 319(5864), 756-760. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1150195>
- Lauwren, S. (2021). Critical Discourse Analysis of Greta Thunberg's "You're Acting Like Spoiled, Irresponsible Children" (Doctoral Dissertation, Universitas Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta).
- Leung, L. E. (2020). The Greta Effect: How does Greta Thunberg use the discourse of youth in her movement for climate justice. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation]. University of Calgary. <https://bit.ly/38HcgPe>
- LeVasseur, T. (2015). Defining "Ecolinguistics?": Challenging emic issues in an evolving environmental discipline. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, 5(1), 21-28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13412-014-0198-4>
- Martin, J. H. (1994). Metabank: A knowledge-base of metaphoric language conventions. *Computational Intelligence*, 10(2), 134-149. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8640.1994.tb00161.x>
- Michael, M. (2021). When Ecocriticism and Rhetoric Meet: An Analysis of Greta Thunberg's no one is too Small to Make a Difference. *Research Journal of English Language and Literature*, 9(1), 33-35.
- Mliless, M., & Larouz, M. (2018). An ecolinguistic analysis of environment texts in Moroccan English language teaching textbooks. *International Journal of Research in Environment Studies*, 5, 103-116.
- Naess, A. (1995). *Self-realization. An ecological approach to being in the world*. G. Sessions (Ed.), *Deep Ecology for the Twenty-First Century*, Boston and London (Shambhala) 1995, pp. 225-239.
- Stibbe, A. (2015). *Ecolinguistics: Language, ecology and the stories we live by*. Routledge.
- Wang, H., Zhai, R., & Zhao, X. (2019). Analysis of the UN Secretary-general's Remarks on Climate Change: From the View of Ecolinguistics. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 10(4), 851-857. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1004.24>
- Yuniawan, T., Rokhman, F., Rustono, R., & Mardikantoro, H. B. (2017). The study of critical eco-linguistic in green discourse: Prospective eco-linguistic analysis. *Humaniora*, 29(3), 291. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jh.27441>
- Zhdanava, A., Kaur, S., & Rajandran, K. (2021). Representing nonhuman animals as equals: An ecolinguistic analysis of vegan campaigns. *Journal of World Languages*, 7(1), 26-57. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jwl-2021-0003>

## Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).