A picture containing text, grass, outdoor, tree

Description automatically generated

This document contains unmoderated discussion comments from participants in the *Stories We Live By* online course.

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# Part 1:Introduction

Thanks for the opportunity: eisigeyes Dec 1, 2017: Hi there, fellow ecolinguists! I just wanted to say that I'm excited to be working through this course, as I love to see the intersections of linguistics with other disciplines. I'm coming from a creative writing and TESOL background, so my work with discourse analysis has been rather limited. However, already I'm seeing a lot of clarification of discourse analysis principles I encountered in my previous training. And while at one of my previous universities, I took a course in complexity theory and ecological approaches to second language acquisition. At the time, it was a lot to take in, and I feel like this course will help ground some more of that training. So thank you for making such a valuable resource available to work through. I look forward to completing the modules!

Stories: nshih Aug 23, 2017 Hi, this is Naomi, I work for Greenpeace and this website is introduced by my colleague in the story team. I found the resources here provide me a chance to really understand what stories are and how to frame them. This is crucial cause my main duty is to transit the concept of our campaign into a story that general public would understand. In addition, there are lots of times that we need to tell good story to change the mindset of people and effect the way they think, talk and act!! After I went through this first chapter, I also found that without this story-telling skill, we also sometimes told the wrong stories, or confusing stories that people may not understand directly. In the exercise part, I also found it's difficult to distinguish the beneficial stories from destructive stories. I now see the great value of this course and I believe that the story I tell in the future can be more understandable and beneficial.

uniliterate Oct 25, 2017 Wonderful to read your comment, Naomi. I found this as well... I often didn't realise that articles which I thought were good and all about the environment were still damaging in subtle ways.

Ecosophy: xuedong Aug 4, 2017 Hi, I'm Xue and a PhD candidate of SUNY-ESF. The reason why I registered this course because storytelling is one important part of Environmental Interpretation which is my research focus. I want to learn more about story making and delivering in front of the public, especially when you have to make a general presentation through an impressive beginning story. That is always my weakness. It’s inevitable that I have to attend some academic conferences in my field and deliver my researches to individuals who know very little about my discipline. At this moment, I need to compare my professional study to normal things in daily life. It’s the most difficult and tricky part. In the case of the deep logic behind stories around us, to be honest, I never paid much attention to it. But this course explained the thorough theories about the truth of stories we live by. I’m glad I could learn start with the basic knowledge.

Exercise 2 – Story Analysis: calluna Jul 6, 2017 I wonder if anyone would like to share their reaction to any of the quotes in the exercise? Or challenge mine? (my blood got a bit fizzy on this one :-) ) Quote 11 "With many key natural resources and ecosystems services scarce or under pressure, achieving sustained economic growth will require absolute decoupling of the production of goods and services from their environmental impacts (DEFRA, UK Government). PD5" I pick this one as it strikes me as frighteningly insidious – seemingly I am quite sensitised to political semantics :-) My reaction: Destructive! Deliberate, pernicious use of ‘sustained’ instead of sustainable; 'economic growth' assumed as the desirable endpoint (although there could be context), mercenary use of ‘decoupling’ to promote denial, opening with 'resources' and 'ecosystems services' – those watchwords of the dominionist, speciesist, anthropocentric consumerist...

Gregknill Jul 6, 2017: One does have to be particularly careful about the structure of sentences and phrases, especially around business people and politicians. When we were drafting the new Constitution for South Africa, the business lobby wanted a basic right to Economic Growth (which was not accepted), and was determined to fiddle the wording on the Environmental Clause, where they wanted as a first prize, Sustained Growth as a right trumping the rest of the paragraph. When that failed they pushed for the old generalisation of Sustainable Development, but we eventually managed to hold them off with "ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development." It's not elegant, but politics is about negotiation. They were ok with this, because in their minds economic development=growth and is automatically justifiable. They failed to see the hole, which is that a proposal for resource use can be forced to justify itself; something which was expanded in later legislation. Sadly over time expedience has worn away some of the strength of the paragraph.

calluna Jul 7, 2017 Great real example – thanks for that. It's clear how careful you have to be with wording, especially to be reasonably future-proof. I wonder what proportion of politicians, civil servants, business lobbyists are aware of the frames they use... /:-) adegboyeadeyanju Jul 13, 2017 The quote gave me the chills too. It is deliberately destructive.

uniliterate Oct 25, 2017 Hi calluna, the quotes were really amazing for me too... I found the whole idea of stories very interesting. The quote from Plumwood on human exceptionalism was quite interesting, as an applied linguist, I often go on and on about how language distinguishes us from other animals. I think I need to be more careful here, and make sure I also point out that we are still animals, that we share the planet, and that we should retain our empathy and caring for other creatures and life on the planet, even if they don't communicate in the same way as us. calluna Oct 26, 2017

Uniliterate – thanks for commenting. I appreciate your openness about language no longer being considered a human distinction. Humanity's assumed superiority seems predicated upon the tautology that any other creature is 'less human than us'... /:-)

Rosalindpounder Jul 1, 2017 Hi, I found this course via Twitter. I'm an artist working with environmental concerns but also interested in literature, the genre of "nature writing" and human relationships to the non-human world - spiritual, practical and physical. I'm very excited to be starting this course today.

feeljmurillo Jul 2, 2017 I just completed my course in language and cognition in my PhD class and this online course is perfect in allowing me to review the concepts I learned in my class which I now found being further reified since this course is anchoring those concepts in a field that I also consider interesting.

Pumzi film: eisigeyes Dec 8, 2017: I wasn't sure where this would best fit, because I believe it has application to all of the modules, so I'm going to leave this here. It's a short film called Pumzi, which is Swahili for "breath". It deals with Afrofuturism, ecocriticism, and communication. You can read about it more here on Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pumzi). But, here is the link to the short film on Youtube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IlR7l\_B86Fc&t=800s). I hope it helps inspire some conversations here. Thanks for the opportunity!

calluna Jul 5, 2017 Thanks so much for offering this course free. I heard through the ecopsychology UK ning network – I'm in Kinross-shire, Scotland. I appreciate how much effort goes into producing online courses. I'm particularly grateful while I'm not earning due to healthlessness – and enjoying the irony of learning, researching and writing around ecopsychology with little ability to connect with nature /:-) The exercises are great to stimulate thought. I liked going through the text analysis before meeting explicit ecosophies, which might otherwise have influenced me.

Gregknill Jul 6, 2017 Hi, I'm Greg, from South Africa. It's nice to get back to a slightly academic environment, even if it's only a virtual one. My PhD (1992) was called The Green Paradigm, and it looked at much of what is being examined here, as well as some Green critique of Marxism and a few others, while bringing in some of the outlying alternative perceptions like Hildegard von Bingen. Post PhD I spent 20 years running Environmental Affairs in one of the provinces of South Africa, where one was forced to attempt to integrate lofty concepts with real life - like dealing with damage causing lions and elephants. It's interesting how little progress has actually been made in dealing with any of these challenges - in reality we seem to have gone backwards from the 70's (I was watching some of Alan Watts' videos the other day).

Ommehoney Jul 7, 2017 Hi, I am Ommehoney Fazel Razavi, Iranian PhD student in professional communication in Kuala Lumpur. I love animals and nature and I worry about the present and future of this messed up world, by taking this course I would like to learn how I can positively contribute, even if a bit…

ProfPAK Jul 18, 2017 The following text may be a useful complement to the many fine resources suggested in the course. It traces the history of environmental thinking in western philosophy, revealing, for example, the point at which western society turned toward the anti-empathetic side of industrialization and introduced the metaphors of dominance and control over nature: Human Life and the Natural World: Readings in the History of Western Philosophy. Owen Goldin and Patricia Kilroe, eds. Broadview Press, 1997.

plwaters Jul 19, 2017 Hi, I'm Phil, Creative Director of a social enterprise in Cornwall, UK, called I Love Nature. We provide story-based adventures that position children (and adults) within ecological learning contexts. Formerly the Play Project Coordinator for the Eden project, Cornwall, UK (although we still work on a number of projects with them), much of our work is about bringing play, story and nature together within a collaborative space using mostly fictional narratives as frameworks for environmental and sustainability learning. I am just wrapping up my PhD where I have been researching and developing a pedagogic method I call Narrative Journey, and look forward to this course expanding my understanding of stories and the way we narrate our own lives and the lives of others. I have a bit of catch up to do, but looking forward to participating and contributing, although this might have to be after my thesis has been submitted!

keithkelle Aug 3, 2017 I am an Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies at Mississippi State University. This is truly an excellent course with wonderful videos and other meaningful activities. I would like to apologize for starting late. It has been a busy summer including a conference in Martinique. I have conducted a lot of research in Ecocriticism, Ecolinguistics, Biosemiotics, and Environmental Philosophy, so I am very interested in exchanging ideas and approaches. I am currently working on a string of essays related to the ecological philosophy of Edgar Morin. I would highly recommend the "complex thought" that he cogently outlines in Homeland Earth and in his multi-volume Method. As far as the French tradition is concerned, many of Michel Serres's essays beginning with The Natural Contract are must-reads. I hope that I can catch up with all of these intriguing, ongoing discussions!

tlehe Aug 9, 2017 I am the founder of an enterprise called Wired Roots, which focuses on supporting individuals, teams, organizations and communities to learn and adapt in complexity through living systems thinking and regenerative design thinking. I also work and study at Gaia University, which functions as a project incubator for regenerative enterprises and develops ecosocial/permaculture designers. I've been very interested in the role of storytelling and narrative on worldview and behavior for a long time - I studied literature and philosophy as an undergraduate and am now focused on integrating narrative with learning, design, and systems thinking. Thanks so much for offering this course as you have, looks extremely fascinating and happy to be here with you all!

ivanapolji Jan 25, 2018 Hello, I'm Ivana from Croatia. This course has been very helpful and interesting since I'm Croatian language and literature teacher and always felt close to nature. By combining literature, linguistics, animal rights and ecology this course is very interesting to me and provides all the materials needed for my improvement. Also, I find it interesting how media (commercials and Internet) influence people's thinking and behavior. Your introduction to New Nature Writing is what made me use some of the poems in my poetry lessons and it was successful. Thank you for those inspiring videos and materials and I'm looking forward to our communication and sharing opinions!

Part 1: places to look for new stories

Places to look for new stories to live by arranstibbe May 28, 2017: This introductory part just gave a few suggestions for places to look for new stories to live by. There are many, many other possibilities. If you'd like to contribute suggestions then please enter them in the 'comment' box at the end of this discussion. Any suggestions you might have would be very useful. Thank you!

lucy539 May 29, 2017 I loved the suggestions of places to look for new stories to live by, and look forward to many more suggestions. Ecotourism can also be an ideal source of new stories to live by. Our interaction with nature in many instances is enabled by travel, and ecotourism advocates for responsible, non-consumptive travel.

JoyAckerman Jun 12, 2017 What brought me into the humanities (from geology) was the environmental critique of Christianity. I was shocked to learn that anyone could think the stories I knew so well could be interpreted as a call to domination and exploitation. (I guess I gravitated toward the nature hymns - or perhaps it was the influence of 'church camp' in the summer). Long story short, I took some seminary courses, dug into the question of 'who says' what theology is, and then focused my dissertation research on sacred space and place. I'm interested in what/how landscapes and places 'say' about our values (I did my research on Walden Pond as a place of pilgrimage). In addition to music, park interpretive materials can be excellent sources.

allisonbender9 Jun 13, 2017 I worked as a naturalist in a state park for a summer, and I think that young children can be sources of new stories to live by. As we walked through the woods on hikes, children noticed things with big eyes and open hearts that many adults wouldn't care to notice or observe. Children were easily delighted and fascinated by the smallest of things: a smooth rock, an edible berry and were ready to learn more about, and love these small discoveries. They were ready to use all of their senses and were less scared of nature in the way some adults have learned to be. I found there was a lot for me to learn about the woods from these young children.

MaureenK-T Jun 19, 2017 Greetings from Los Angeles. Although I have a history of Deep Ecology work, (Arne Naess at Schumacher College, Devon/Acting ED of Institute of Deep Ecology,) and naturally gravitated toward Systems Thinking,(cf. Fritjof Capra's online course A Systems View of Life) my work for the last several decades has been in Creativity and Aging. What I dream of is the integration of ecological sensibilities into every field. Looking for Beneficial discourses growing out of all areas of life feels like an exciting collaborative venture. It is fairly easy in the Arts as there a many groups of artists bringing attention to the beauty around us and bring attention to diminishing species so that they won't become extinct in human minds as a precursor to extinction. Thanks to my friend Jan van Boekel and the Wilderness Painting School in Europe and Womens' Environmental Artists Directory in Northern California as just two. I am plotting to add to the greening of aging (called Building Momentum by the Frameworks Institute) . To my mind bringing eco sensibility into every day in the later years can add great meaning. Looking forward to comments. Thanks all.

Ommehoney Jul 9, 2017 Looking into classical poetry of different languages and cultures, the passionate poets have good examples of observing and speaking of nature, humanity and their words are beautiful, effective and pleasant to live-by. A Persian speaking poet of some centuries back, who composed in Persian metaphysical style has a verse that I find good as an example, which share its translation: I honor the expansive green ambition of a tree , which does not deny its shade even from the woodcutter... poet: Saeb Tabrizi

calluna Jul 21, 2017 JoyAckerman mentions music, which led me to secular tone poems inspired by nature...but these can't be linguistically analysed, so, similar to Ommehoney's suggestion, how about traditional European epic poetry such as the Finnish Kalevala? (http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/kveng/) What strikes me linguistically is the fast pace of the Kalevala's narrative: there's much action and speech, but almost no reflection on motivations or emotions. I'm also amused by some of the recurring paraphrasings, such as "he put this into words, he spoke with this speech, he uttered". The ecolinguistic 'story' seems to be midway between animism of the more-than-human world (populated by super-human heroes and speaking creatures/elements) and viewing it as resources for human use.

calluna Jul 21, 2017 If you have access to BBC iPlayer, I recommend the comedy film Simon Amstell: Carnage: www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p04sh6zg (no expiry date at present) Ordinarily I wouldn't choose the pop mockumentary style but the way it ridicules our unthinking cultural behaviours and labels from the perspective of an imagined future vegan utopia is frighteningly effective. I would be fascinated to know how effective its influence has been. Before watching it I was teetering, but the way it re-describes eggs pushed me over the edge into veganism. Very clever counter narrative.

jpx10 Sep 19, 2017 I love the idea of young children being sources of new stories to live by. I'm a poet and a creative writing workshop facilitator. My most recent series of sessions is co-hosted with an ecopsychologist and we're looking at creative writing and nature. I've seen so clearly in my work how people very quickly form strong attachments to things that they write about - ie, they very quickly start to care about them. In one session, one of the participants had chosen a lemon from a selection of natural objects. He became so attached to it that he asked to take it home. He emailed me a couple of days later to say it gave him great pleasure to look at it in its bowl, 'shining' at him. So I think that when we express ourselves, in writing but also in any creative way, we very quickly tap into our unbreakable connection with nature - or rather the part of ourselves that knows it's part of nature. For myself, writing poetry around nature, is immensely powerful. As Joanna Macy says (I think it's JM), we all carry pain for the world. Poetry is how I can express my pain for the world without having to turn away because it's just too overwhelming. I'd like to share here my poem 'Mapping Hi-Zex Island', written in response to the 'man-made' island discovered by Charles Moore in the Pacific garbage patch: http://www.poetrycan.co.uk/2-general/1112-brispoprize15.html#third ..

bjhough Jan 19, 2018 Howdy all. I'm a little late to the party but am really excited to dive into this material. I've dabbled in this line of research, but am endeavouring to make it more of a focus going forward. I guess my question is this: discourses (stories) must be seen/heard to have impact, so for that reason I like looking at pop culture. Are we starting to see more eco-friendly stories making their way into mass mediated texts, or am I right to be a little sceptical since it's hard to divorce mass media from its inherent profit / consumption motive? I recall Patrick Murphy wrote a good article in 2010 or so about this....have we made progress?

Part 1 comments about personal ecosophy

Your ecosophy: arranstibbe Jul 6, 2017 It would be great to get an idea of the ecosophy of some of the participants of the course. Of course our ecosophies change all the time, so perhaps here you could give a snapshot of where you are now. My personal ecosophy is a mixture of social ecology and deep ecology because it's based on a more fair and equal society that values more than just the human, but I have sympathy with other more radical approaches like the Dark Mountain Project.

calluna Jul 6, 2017 Primarily deep ecology – currently I have a very strong ideology about 'emancipating' all other species/natural elements from their consideration by humans as 'resources'. I recognise cognitively that this would entail a fundamental overhaul of our society, to put it mildly. But I don't want to put 'rational' barriers up, instead continuously challenging, educating and changing my lifestyle. Won't make any difference? Probably not, but the 'right' thing to do...? I'd welcome challenge/discussion around this. Secondarily Dark Mountain style 'prepare for dystopia' and ecofeminism – at species scale: human 'crowd behaviour'—or maybe just the European 'way of death'—has been predominantly 'masculine' in attitude (control, combat, conquer) for a couple millennia and its short-term 'success' criteria are proving to have destroyed valuable and vital communities, cultures, knowledge that we now regret – either for what they provide to us or for their own inherent right to exist. As a species we need culling, but as individuals I keep finding empathy getting in the way... Basically I'm swithering between trying to save us through education or despairing of the cancerous mass of us.

plwaters Jul 19, 2017 I wasn't surprised to find myself (my ecosophy) aligned to deep ecology. As a practitioner and educator, I am wondering how this might apply to pedagogic processes, especially in educational contexts with children? Is it the role of environmental educators to help children evolve their own ecosophies? Or to provide ready-made models as is so often the approach in western educational systems? Taking for a moment, that one's ecosophy is never a fixed point, the more pertinent question I find myself asking is how, as an educator, do I work with children whose ecosphies are always in a state of unfolding; a state of becoming? This resonates very much with my own research and practice using Narrative Journey. As a pedagogic method, it works on a principle of stories in action; of stories always in a process or emergence. As we engage with each other, in fictional or real life contexts, stories unfold collaboratively, socially and ecologically, informed by place and context, and by shared meanings and interpretation. I, as the practitioner, might frame, or build the architecture for a storied experience, but the experiential learning happens in a third space. In our shared reality, or nexus. In my mind using a pedagogic process that works to the principle of knowledge continually under construction, fits rather well with ecosophy under construction. In one sense, we are never fully ecocentric, we are always moving towards being ecocentric. It is not an end point. It is a way of being. Thank you. The concept of ecosophy has given me lots of food for thought in how it might be considered in pedagogic practices.

arranstibbe Jul 20, 2017 Thanks Phil for the thoughtful comment. I would agree completely that our role is to encourage students to develop their own ecosophy rather than hand them ours as a package. What I find is that when students are asked to look into their heart and consider what's really important in life it's never having a lot of money, owning the latest gadget or beating other people. Just reflecting on the deepest values that defines us as a person brings out intrinsic (non-selfish) values in people. And the educator is there to gently encourage students to consider how animals, plants, forests rivers and the ecosystems that support life fit into their value system. Because the definition of ecosophy is that includes consideration (in whatever form) of more than just the human. And again they don't come up with 'we must exploit natural resources to grow the economy' as their deepest value for the relationship between the human and more-than-human worlds. Then once they've got their initial ideas of their ecosophy it transforms how they see the world around them because they can see how the stories that society is based on are in conflict with their values.

Exercise 3: Ecosophy reflection: laurasteven 1 Jul 24, 2017 Hello Everyone, my name is Laura, I work as en Eco-therapist (mental health) and I'm based in southeast England. I'm sharing materials from this course with my teenage daughter, Tallulah, who is home-educated. So far we are both finding it thought-provoking and stimulating. Thank you so much for making it available online free of charge. If I may, I would like to offer some of Tallulah's thoughts to the forum as I imagine she is a generation younger than most of us. I'm not suggesting T is representative, but may at least indicative, of her generation and demographic. I was interested to see which ecosophies she was drawn to in Part 1, Exercise 3. They were primarily: Sustainable development, Social ecology, Deep ecology and Transition movement. T expressed that she was drawn to messages that she considered hopeful, optimistic and realistic; on that basis she strongly rejected Deep green resistance and Voluntary human extinction. I had similar leanings as T, but (perhaps indicative of my age/generation) I have strong sympathies towards Ecofeminism. I am also interested in spirituality, and traditional and developing religious ecosophies. I had the privilege of briefly meeting Prof Bron Taylor this weekend and would like to add his work as a resource to you all http://www.brontaylor.com/

Ecosophy: adegboyeadeyanju Jul 13, 2017 I live and teach in Nigeria University where I hold a position in English Language and Linguistics and I must state very clearly that I have been enlightened on the concept of ecosophy and have even ''probed'' mine. I am working on a research agenda now where I am interrogating animal symbolism in a literary text. Thanks for the enlightening lecture

Part 1: Comments about other ecosophies, beyond those covered in the course

More Ecosophies arranstibbe Jun 20, 2017 The exercises for this part introduce a small range of ecosophies, from the very conservative (e.g., environmental problems will be solved through further industrialisation) to the very radical (e.g., we must let the human species gradually die out to protect the millions of other species on the planet). The idea is to get people thinking about ecosophies that they agree with or disagree with (and with no implication that more radical is better!). It's only a limited range, however, so I'd like to encourage you to add posts here which describe other ecosophies. You don't have to agree with them, it's just important to note that there are different ideas out there about the ideal relationships of humans with other species and the environment. We need to look at the range of ideas and use them in our own reflections, coming to our own position.

adamsargant Jun 24, 2017 I would add bio-regional animism as a branch of contemporary animism that recognises person-hood in other than human persons ( i.e. gives up human dominion over who and what a person is) and relates to the land/bio-region as a source of spirituality, where one's local bio-region is recognised and related to as a person (not as \*if\* a person... not a metaphor), along with other other-than-human persons.

arranstibbe Jun 25, 2017 Thanks Adam, that's a great suggestion. I've also been attracted to animism and bioregionalism, and like the idea of combining the two. It's interesting to see how texts assign and deny personhood.

lucy539 Jun 27, 2017 After reading through the introduction part of the course, I chose to identify with the ecosophy of sustainable development. I am also glad to learn about bio-regional animism from the discussion comments. I would add Environmentalism as an ecosophy. According to Wikipedia, Environmentalism is a broad philosophy that “advocates the lawful preservation, restoration and/or improvement of the natural environment”. Policies to support ecotourism, and trophy hunting are to a great extent based on this ecosophy, as their intent is biodiversity conservation. However, an Independent Review article by Nelson, (2003) cautions that efforts in environmentalism must be judged by their real consequences, not by their intended outcomes. The author critiques western environmentalism efforts in saving Africa, as a form of environmental colonialism. Certainly, the biodiversity conservation strategy in ecotourism has been faulted as weak, and the controversial trophy hunting, whose perceived ecological value comes from the revenue collected being used to cover the costs of protecting and growing the depleted and extinction threatened wildlife populations worldwide, is condemned for an alarmingly shrinkage of wildlife populations in areas where trophy hunting is permitted.

MarkGoldthorpe Jun 27, 2017 Hi. I'm starting a little later than others and am enjoying playing catchup! The ecosophies are interesting and very illuminating. But one I would add is what I call Lifeboat-ism. Or maybe it's AbandonShip-ism... The notion that we have some innate pioneering duty to get out into the Solar System and beyond, to discover and transform other worlds to live on, before we "wipe ourselves out on Earth." Popular in science fiction, but also seriously advocated by some scientists ... It ignores entirely our own ecological nature, as individuals and a species entangled productively with others; our (inter)dependence on what makes Earth habitable to us; and the likelihood that a "Run to the Stars!" mentality will hasten our pollution and extinctions here, and replicate it somewhere else. Huge wishful thinking, without the thinking!

calluna Jul 5, 2017 Thanks to adamsargant for "bio-regional animism" – I'm familiar with this idea from the Non-human Rights Project, the Declaration of Rights for Cetaceans and the establishment of legal personhood for the Whanganui river in New Zealand, as a ?branch of deep ecology, so I'm pleased to learn the label. Thanks also to MarkGoldthorpe for "Lifeboatism". I've encountered something similar as 'Spiritual Superiorism' – this whole living planet is merely a school for souls, in order to elevate some souls then be destroyed, albeit over a vast timescale. To me, this is detached Buddhism mangled with consumerism and its main flaw is that trashing our school is apparently no bar to spiritual development.

MarkGoldthorpe Aug 20, 2017 Hello. It looks like I'm not making quick progress with the course, as I first commented on Ecosophies back in June! However, although I've been working on I wanted to come back to also suggest that there is range of ecosophies which have a religious viewpoint on our relationship with the environment. Whether that amounts to one 'religious' ecosophy or many different ones under a general religious banner is up for discussion, but all the religions I know about have things to say about humanity's 'place' in nature, generally from positions of 'stewardship' for the earth but also shading into ideas that it is here for 'our' benefit and, to some extent, exploitation. Each religion changes over time too, and from culture to culture, so the relationship with 'modern' science can be complicated and a moveable feast. Maybe the 'Lifeboatism' ecosophy I mentioned above is itself a form of secular religious viewpoint: that we are somehow special enough to escape from the consequences of our own destructive behaviour and 'start again', but magically free of the rest of 'creation' and able to do without it! And thanks to Calluna for 'Spiritual Superiorism'! I'd not heard of the 'school for souls' idea, and agree that trashing the school seems a distinctly odd outcome... I'd not heard that term before, but it reminded (for some reason) of the current fad for thinking that we are all living in a vast computer simulation, as in the Matrix films. Slightly pointless, in my view, but maybe that suggests a new ecosophy too (or an old one with shiny new silicon boots on: that reality is but an illusion), as believing that must somehow shape the believer's attitude to the 'unreal' environment?

Mar 7 2018 07:32PM by EllieGold

I am grateful to the creators of this course. The subjects that are explored here awake our awareness about the natural world and our responsibility towards it.Though more and more people become aware that animals possess person-hood and are sentient and intelligent (http://www.projetogap.org.br/en/ , https://wearesonar.org/dolphin-and-whale-nonhuman-personhood/), the predominant attitude towards animals is one of neglect and abuse. Those that suffer the most are farm animals. They usually live short and miserable lives (http://www.four-paws.us/campaigns/farm-animals-/farm-animal-life-expectancy/) to be slaughtered and consumed. I am hopeful that Leonardo Da Vinci was right when he divined :"“The time will come when men such as I will look upon the murder of animals as they now look upon the murder of men.”

Mar 7 2018 07:35PM by EllieGold

Looking for the compassionate and ecologically sound attitudes towards our environment it is helpful to turn back and look at our ancestral wisdom. Pre-Christian native Irish law was very sensitive and protective towards the natural environment. There were specific laws in place which protected trees and shrubs.There were penalties (payed in cattle) for any unlawful damage done to a tree - be it brunch cutting or barking. More information is available at http://www.forestryfocus.ie/social-environmental-aspects/cultural-heritage/trees-and-folklore/brehon-laws/

Jul 3 2018 08:49AM by Vale Bailo

Thank you everybody who created this enchanting course! Yes, the stories we live by are inevitably manifesting themselves as they no longer provide the warmth sensation of serenity they might have had in another historical period (though some of them were born some very long time ago!) (I strongly recommend Riane Eisler “The Chalice and The Blade” to get an historical reconstruction of how we ideologically got here). One of the places where we can look for new stories I guess is our own life experience, as we do know and see when we feel at our best and when we don’t; so I guess every time we have to make any small everyday decision, we are at the very least looking for a compromise with the culture we were taught during our lifetime. That said, the Ecosophy quiz was both great fun and deeply insightful to me (eco-warrior!) and I am grateful you mentioned some further readings related to each ecosophy. For instance, I find the transition movement and deep green resistance quite similar and think they should merge as they really are part of the same strategy to me, while social ecology+ecofeminism and deep ecology I find are the premises on which the transition movement and deep green resistance (or any other kind of action) are rooted.

Also, I would like to share this opinion of mine with you: I find that ‘stories’ are not simply delivered in texts in terms of evaluative accounts of a fact – so I already present something as good or bad before the reader/listener can judge; often, a sort of ‘atmosphere’ is evoked, as a way to evoke particular feelings in the audience. This way, the audience might think they are judging the event reported on their own, while they are actually subtly proposed with a pre-confectioned evaluation. For instance, in ‘Next shares slump after gloomy 2017 forecast and unfestive figures’, a particular atmosphere is inspired in the readership by using a terminology which is generally associated to moods and states of being related to someone who is experiencing an emotional or physical harsh period (tough, disappointing, difficult, depressed, distressed); also, the atmosphere is reinforced by attributes relating to darkness or lack of enthusiasm, which are generally associated to negative situations (gloomy, unfestive). Finally, negative prosody is activated by terms which refer to situations of alert (warning) and demerit (lose), which are likely to have respectively an alarming and a disheartening effect on the reader.

Aug 7 2018 12:03PM by Cristina OG

Hi community! Thanks for providing such an interesting and necessary material. I must recognize that I have worked through the content with considerable delate. Nonetheless, I still believe is worth trying at any time. My first approach to the course comes from the educational field, specifically from language teaching perspective, to promote a more active use of language that leads to respect nature and any kind of live. In my opinion, language acquisition training mostly lacks real background examples to illustrate the way in which story telling shapes reality. Furthermore, in terms of providing linguistics knowledge as a tool, educators must keep in mind a pragmatic perspective that enables students to raise awareness on the importance of language to promote equality in a wide sense. Otherwise, we simply provide a new tool to maintain old narratives without critical thinking. In other words, it´d be like teaching technology to change paper for a keyboard but just giving it the same use.

After doing the exercises, I would like to share some conclusions I have reached out. First, a deep analysis of the usage words shown in the texts reveals a coordinate effort to provide a negative mindset towards sales decrease. It feels like the mail goal of the report is to allow us to identify with the retail companies described, linking their benefit to our own happiness. Such a subtle mechanism may define our identity and affect our self-esteem, leading to a wrong perspective of reality that damages our well-being. Secondly, the wide range of real communication examples related to underlying stories helps to better identify this mechanism that encode specific visions of the world. Negative perspectives focus on reductionism, to promote short-term goals, and objectify other forms of being to detach our own feelings and ability to empathize with them. In short, it promotes competence and individualism over common solutions to a common problem. On the contrary, beneficial discourses highlight the debt of our society toward future generations and, moreover, promote new kinds of relationships.

So that, I find the syllabus for Stories we live by extremely useful to better understand fair, healthy and equal relations among all beings and with the environment. Looking forward to completing the modules and to promote these values among my future pupils.

Oct 28 2018 01:51PM by Romina

Hello!! I recently finished my MA in Education with focus on Learning for Sustainability. I did my dissertation on eco-narratives from sustainable bloggers, with the aims of understanding why they decided to adopt sustainable behaviours. As I read throughout papers for the lit review chapter I realised that the interconnectedness of the variables that lead people to act positively towards the environment and society are very much linked with the way we consolidate our experiences in a story form. Which is why I think this is an amazing course, still going through the exercises of this first introductory chapter, but very happy to see an active community here!!

Hope I can find some answers to understand better the world we are currently living in and to add value and maybe create new stories to live by that can be of positive impact for everyone and everything on this Earth!

Apr 11 2019 01:13PM by Ade

I am happy to re-commence the online course. And I am grateful that now I am learning again. The Introduction makes more sense now.

Apr 23 2019 08:21PM by Shahbaz Haider

Dear Madam/ Sir!

I regularly study this online course, but I want to know the implications of Ecolinguistics in English Language Teaching (ELT). Please inform me as soon as possible.

May 18 2019 11:53AM by ChristopherWLC

Hey all!

I am returning to this course very, very late after having started it quite a while ago, but I have had the objective of completing it in mind ever since. Now that things, have slowed down a bit for me, I am so excited to begin again.

Currently, I am a Spanish instructor at Mississippi State University, but I am teaching remotely from my new home in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. My first real exposure to Environmental Sciences of any form was not until Graduate school. I did a secondary concentration in History in addition to my Spanish degree, and one of the courses I took was History of Environmental Science, and it changed my life. It completely altered how I conceptualize the environment and the natural world, and gave me, for the first time, a eco-awareness that I did not have before. The introductory video for this lesson mentions looking to literary ecological writing as a possible source for new stories, and specifically mentions the work of Rachel Carson. It was reading her work in this class that really helped spark my interest and environmental issues, and to this day, I consider her to have had one of the biggest impacts on my thinking of anyone I've ever read.

My academic interests and research have always focused on language as political, especially within context of the interaction between majority/national languages and minority languages, but the part that excites me the most about this course is to see how I can make connections between the politicization of languages themselves with the politicization of environmental and ecological discourses.

I'm very excited to see everyone's contributions in these forums and the different perspectives they're working from.

Jun 25 2019 05:22AM by Marcy Beck

Thanks to arranstibbe and all the creators of this free online course, along with everyone who has shared their thoughts online. I've worked at a U.S. National research laboratory in a division focused on energy efficiency, environmental, and climate change research, and am currently a member of the Environmental Data and Governance Initiative, established just after Nov 8, 2016, initially as a data rescue effort based on concerns that the new administration would be deleting environmental data from its portals and websites. I work with EDGI's Website Monitoring Group where we look at changes in language, content and access to environmental information taking place on those federal webpages. I'm also on the governing board of Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods where I am honored to help preserve and protect three astonishingly beautiful Northern California State Parks. My third related thread is poetry, with a major focus on our relationship to natural landscapes and nature's beings.

There are opportunities popping up regularly now for considering the issues raised by this course! Social media, of course, abounds with places to look for new stories, especially related to climate change, but I'd very much like to recommend Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris's The Lost Words, Robert Macfarlane's Underworld, and Richard Powers' The Overstory.

# Part 2: Ideologies

Marian184 Apr 20, 2017 This is a great follow-up to the main presentation since it reveals many of the destructive assumptions shaping our worldviews. Looking for more positive discourses which contribute to more equitable relationships is the next step. I really enjoyed reading the extra course materials as they clearly illustrate how CDA can also reveal oppressing relationships towards the more-than-human world.

SandieStratford May 19, 2017 Very accessible, thank you. I was afraid when I embarked that it might not make sense to me, or it might be 'over my head' but it is very intuitive and cohesive. It makes such good sense and expresses what I have been trying to say for some time!

lucy539 May 23, 2017 I found this section informative, and enjoyed reading extra course materials on human animal relations. The readings made me reflect on some African cultures, where superstitious ideologies held by communities encourage kindness towards animals, even those animals viewed to be vicious. For example, the Luo community in Western Kenya, live adjacent to Lake Victoria, which provides niche conducive for reptile life, including venomous snake species. Their story of “Omweri”, a python touted as sign for good tidings and rains for the community, reinforces a discourse of the kindness that should be accorded to animals, and is equally illustrative of community’s acknowledgement of individual animals. Here is a link for a news article on Omweri. http://www.panapress.com/Deluge-threatens-Kenya-s--rain-snake---13-481993-17-lang1-index.html

MaureenK-T Jun 1, 2017 It is interesting to see what has happened in the 20 years since a paper came out of Yale U contrasting the post-war progress of US with Germany. The paper looked at the metaphors for citizens of each country: Germany views its citizens as producers, therefore to be cared for with health plans, protections, education and vacations; on the other hand, US citizens are viewed as consumers who must buy all that they need (healthcare, education etc) as well as being bombarded by commercials that are at root damaging. Of course each country's core metaphor is exemplified by its current "leaders". what more can I say?? Wish I can remember the author of the paper.

RuthB01 Jun 21, 2017 Is the problem as easy to recognise as Rebecca Solnit states? Is human greed at the heart of all mainstream ideologies? Perhaps the biggest challenge humanity faces is not just recognising the problem but in changing our ideologies when they are so entrenched within our societies. Thomas Berry presented a persuasive case for the need for a new story of the universe and the emergence of earth within it. This understanding calls humanity to reconnect with nature through ancient wisdom and contemporary cosmology. Perhaps we could then begin to challenge these embedded ideologies but to do so will require profound and radical changes both individually and collectively. The question is, can humanity make these changes before it is too late?

Kendra\_na Jun 27, 2017 I enjoyed this section’s extra readings that explored the language we use to define our relationships to other animals. It made me think of the Iroquois creation story of Sky Woman. Robin Wall Kimmerer beautifully recounts this and interprets it as a story of reciprocity between humans and animals and as a story of equal share in the work of creating this world. The story not only gives agency to animals, but makes human life dependent upon their actions. Throughout this section, I also thought of design based on biomimicry. Biomimicry appreciates and emulates structures and functions that already exist in nature and perhaps consciously work within the reality of complex ecosystems rather than disrupt.

brigitandrowan Jul 6, 2017 I recommend the novel Ishmael by Daniel Quinn. It re-interprets the Biblical creation myth in a very readable way, addressing many of the destructive assumptions under discussion in this course.

Ommehoney Jul 9, 2017 It was very hard to read what happens in Pork Industry. There is a collective neglect by all human beings when it comes to dealing with animals on or off the farms. Even myself as a vegetarian, I know that cooking non-veg for the rest of my family might be a penny in all these inhumane industries. So collectively we should change, and yes, words matter, the sense of guilt comes from knowledge and perhaps the step taken next is in the more humane path of compensating for the injuries we human race have inflicted upon life and its non-living surroundings. The pork industry handbook HIP ignores the fact that the pigs are living animals, speaks of them as machinery and their vital performances are reproduction and growth. Vital performance refers to internal organs functions, they are thus ignored as individual living beings and considered and treated as machinery, assets, their health is only a matter of consideration when it has an impact on the benefit, when they die, no matter how much they suffer injuries or how much it is hard for them to bear the levels of ammonia, as long as they survive until being slaughtered. So being pig is being pork, the difference between meat and the living animal is blurred. An ugly story to live by, an ugly story to narrate, to even know of, a shame. Haiku on the animals, soft and short, reflecting the beauty of nature and identifying animals with our own emotions of fear, of envy, of taking pleasure in nature, these poems come from an ideology that could be as " Animals and us, we are both living parts of this nature, they are beautiful, they have much in common with us and they can enjoy nature like we do. The activists of New Economics on the other hand do not base their assumption on the ideology of human being a selfish greedy collector of goods and the more is the better, they try to speak of other features of human beings which is generosity, sense of sharing, utilising a material to its maximum potentials through creativity and aesthetics, caring for environment and leaving this world as a better place as we change forms for the other generations, being giving and grateful for what we have instead of craving for more and more, promoting an economy which is based on human values and respect of environment, less damage, giving instead of injuring and keeping a healthy happy respectful society with opportunities for all. Amen :)

plwaters Jul 21, 2017 This was a very interesting section and resonated with a lot of my own thoughts and current practices. As a vegan, I am very aware of the varied discourses used to support veganism; the three current and dominating ones being animal welfare, environmental and human health; the latter two both from a human-centric point of view. I generally subscribe to all three in different ways, but this section has me questioning some of the underlying discourses. I shall pay a little more critical attention to them in future. The other aspect that resonates with me, is that my partner and I recently adopted a pig. In an ideal world, we would just set her free, but as pigs no longer freely roam the countryside in my part of the world, I guess she would soon be reported or killed. She is four years old, and has a wonderful quirky way of lifting a leg and tilting her head to be fed, which I know is because she’s performing a ritual that had recently, though well-meaning, been part of her captivity in a school. Again, this section has me thinking about what her true nature would be if she were to live her life completely free? She is a pet, I guess. And while her adoption no doubt saved her from going to a slaughterhouse, are we right to feel compassionate to have saved her life? As I write this, I am becoming more concerned, perhaps critical, about the language I use and the underlying discourses. They no doubt reveal a lot about the way I think, the position I might take on certain subjects, and certainly my beliefs and values.

OrkneyBec Jul 28, 2017 I'm interested in the way we include others (human and non-human) in our own stories. As the authors and central character it is inevitable that other characters are portrayed (and understood) in terms of their relationship to us. It is interesting to trace how this happens not only on a personal level but within our discourse communities. While I understand the impulse to ascribe emotions and personalities to non-human beings I am concerned that in doing so we merely impose our own limited anthropocentric view of the world on to them. My PhD research looks at the role of narrative in meaning making and I am increasingly aware of the way language works to reify active processes, reducing living interacting beings to linguistic labels, onto which we impose our own partial and situated understanding.

Mar 4 2018 11:38AM by arranstibbe

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JoyAckerman Jul 31, 2017 I started this section by reading Chapter 2 in the book, with its discussion of neoclassical economics texts. Several notions resonated with my experience, including the lack of 'choice' we have in our (US) culture about participating in this discourse. As an individual working with a financial planner on retirement investments, it's been uphill work to suggest that we want to make choices other than profit and/or security maximization - that we want to divest from certain types of companies in order to do good with our investments, not just do well individually. The selection on the pork industry was interesting because of the covert way that the agency, individuality and telos of pigs as animals is overwritten by the ideology of the superorganism of pork production. I wonder - could we counter this narrative through opposing efficiency to fairness, rather than inefficiency? What other term might we use in opposition? Or should we step away from the use of efficiency altogether, as a term that primes extrinsic values? The Japanese haiku were a welcome contrast - both acknowledging the sensory and purposeful lives of individual organisms, and casting the reader as witness.

LauraElder Aug 16, 2017 I Found this section very interesting if a little upsetting to read about the pork industry. It struck a chord with myself personally, It makes me feel sad that due to personal greed we no longer care about the welfare and quality of life for the pig. I do wonder how it would be possible to fully incorporate intrinsic values into the pork industry and think that would make a interesting debate.

dlancaster5 Aug 19, 2017 Pork industry words were clearly anthropocentric. Japanese haiku anthropomorphised the animals, giving them our feelings and characteristics. The words are chosen for the context. How do we change? I still eat pork, with more and more guilt. I love basking in the nature seen by Haiku poets. We have so many wicked problems. I am curious to see how these stories can help us change for the better.

Asya7 Sep 1, 2017 This section was pretty heavy. I keep wondering why people are not changing eating habits or the attitude to animals. Is it because we prefer to not notice what is going on (that is being conservative and just keeping it the most convenient way), are we just being selfish and seeing the human race as the only creatures that deserve to be happy by whatever means we choose or are people just ignorant? Different reasons demand different actions. And I am curious how much just spreading the word could change. Learning about such issues has influenced my thinking and behaviour a lot. The first time I heard about ecological sustainability was when I was 22 and just started my Master's. It was in the UK. Why was it never part of my studies in Russia?!

allisonbender9 Nov 4, 2017 This section made me wonder if "stranger danger" is a ideology in my community-and not just with fellow humans, but also with the natural world around us. As more and more people live in cities, we seem to become increasingly estranged from the plants and animals in our environments. When we don't know their names, or how they live, I think we hold more fear. Then, in comparison to my ecosophy, stranger danger, and fear of the natural world is a destructive discourse. What is encouraging about this problem, however, is that the solution is clear- get to know our follow beings!

mathiaschukwu Nov 11, 2017 I find this part of the course very fascinating, particularly the discourse of the pork industry. It seems also that the all-for-profit ideology of the handbook is one among many. But at the end I am not able to understand if respect for animals imply not being used for meet at all, by man. can anyone help out?

adegboyeadeyanju Dec 19, 2017 From the part of the world where I come from, it’s pretty difficult, in fact almost out-rightly impossible to separate as different strands (a) respect for animals and (b) the animals serving as religious symbols and/or (c) animals as dietary supplements. The complexity is further heightened by the intense religiosity of especially the 'traditionally inclined' people whether educated or not. Am I only thinking of local practice or global concerns?Any one willing to shed light on this?

ChristopherWLC Feb 14, 2018 I found this section both very interesting and very difficult emotionally. I have always had many problems with how we conceptualize our relationship with animals and their value to us as humans, but now I feel as if I am beginning to have some essential tools in deconstructing the discourses and language I have seen my whole life, but have never really known how to point out with precision how and why they are problematic. Whenever there is a discussion about animals or nature, I am always reminded about my personally environmental awakening brought about by one Rachel Carson, and how she radically changed how I understood the environment the intrinsic interconnectivity of it all. As some having pointed out in previous comments, I am to this day trying to reconcile my concern for animals and the environment and their welfare, and my own meat-eating, consumptive existence.

Jul 3 2018 08:50AM by Vale Bailo

More than respect, I think it is just mutual coexistence and experiencing all the different nuances that it implies (it is okay to fear what or who we don’t know – this does not mean the object of fear should be eliminated; rather, we could just accept and embrace fear as one of the manifold feelings living together implies). Maybe that also is the point about animals being symbolically embedded into cultures and religions and being part of a community’s diet (as someone mentioned above): it might be that the relationship these communities hold for animals is perceived as being grounded on some form of respect, from their point of view; they might have practices for killing animals that are considered to be ‘good’. So really, I think what we lack as human beings is not (not always at least) respect for each other (yes, sometimes it is as “As charming as a pig” shows), but rather the ability to conceive that we live with Many – we are so entrenched into anthropocentric ideas and worldviews that realizing the Multitude that lives WITH us might be difficult. Haiku poetry I guess is based on this – observing. And if only we look, we see the swarming richness out there.

As allisonbender9 sates, we might be a bit estranged from the natural world; personally, I am lucky enough to live near the Alps and can recognize the sounds of birds and whether they are female or male from the nuances of their plumage and can’t coinceive a world where this would disappear. Also, I guess living with others makes us more empathetic and kind and enlarges our sensitivity to the manifold particulars of life.

Finally, as far as changing stories is concerned, I find it brilliant the way Eisenstein turns metaphors such as more is better upside down: instead of denying them, he just swaps the object they refer to. So it is not more consumer goods that we should live with, but more art, beauty, music. And still, more is good and it is still good to have desires.

Nov 3 2018 09:57AM by Cristina OG

Firstly, I would like to recognize I find it really interesting the debate that has been created here. This chapter stresses that the subtler metaphors are the more powerful the visions of the world they encode.

This idea is paramount to understand collective thinking and behavior in order to improve the quality of relationships among humans and towards the environment. Our future is worthwhile to do this effort.

I related this mechanism with sexism and its use of language, which we assume to be “natural”. Women have always been re-conceptualized to idealize their role as life “producers”. Even though half of the population is systematically mistreated, this fact is not even regarded for its financial impact, as it occurs with animals. Furthermore, women are daily objectified on advertisement and media messages, reinforcing the assumptions underlying chauvinist ideology that women are inferior to man. This reflects the idea that subtle mechanisms are even harder to get noticed, and so, they have more power to shape reality.

In my opinion, an ideology that doesn´t believe in human potentiality for good and leads us to hope in a better world won´t prove useful to create an equal and sustainable society. This statement is not intended to reinforce anthropocentrism, rather poses the solution into the root of its cause, given that any improvement must be individually created and collectively embraced.

Apr 11 2020 04:33PM by Murugavel T

I am from India - a country where Shiva (who is quoted in part 2, Exercise 3 … As said by her water doesn’t promote economy – but when it’s used by a multi national corporate it contributes to economy, when it is bottled and sold it gives money. This is the status of all ‘so called developing countries’. Corporates tell the nation what it should do. All natural resources are looked as commodities. Unless common men and women are made aware of how their life and the world they live in are exploited in the name of growth and development ‘conservation’ and ‘sustainability’ will only be words …

Apr 24 2020 11:55PM by Bruce Anderson

It's wonderful to be doing this course, and reading these discussions, thank you lecturers, tutors and participants. A question has come up for me in Part 2, prompted by the Dark Mountain Project Manifesto referenced in Part 1. Has anyone attempted to write a "Human Industry Handbook"? This could be a very powerful (if dark) piece of propaganda from "our" side. The closest thing I am aware of is Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal". For those who don't know it, it provides an analysis of the economic benefits of the poor raising their children as food for the wealthy (yes, seriously, and nearly 300 years ago). If I don't get any leads, I think I might try to update the Modest Proposal myself, along the lines of the Pork Industry Handbook.

Apr 25 2020 05:29AM by Arran

I haven't come across a 'Human Industry Handbook' - a fascinating idea!

Jul 6 2020 03:40PM by Monalisa Bhattacherjee

I have enjoyed this course and have developed a critical mindset related to worldviews. The articles in this section are arranged sequentially letting the readers understand the concept in an easy way. The second last article related to Haiku is an amazing piece of work. It has presented in front of us the more-than-human world which assures a sustainable livelihood.

However, related to Haiku discourse I have a doubt. The Haiku discourse presents nature as SENSER. I have understood the underpinning behind it. But in the paper "Counter-discourses and the relationship between humans and other animals", Stibbe (2015) has shown how the counter-discourses are dubious. In the same vein, if we try to observe nature as a SENSER, we are endowing nature with human attributes (love, envy, grateful). Thus, endorsing an anthropocentric view.

# Part 3: Framings

eisigeyes Dec 1, 2017 I thought it was really interesting that the biodiversity-as-web argument only focused on the web’s fragility in relation to humans. If we were to examine all the properties of spider silk and webs in proportion to their environments, we could reframe the web as powerful and resilient. This fact hasn’t escaped humans, as we have actively sought out mass-production of spider silk for anything from protective and medical devices to consumer goods. The field of biomimicry comes to mind as well, as so many industries are now looking to nature for its effective organization of construction and processing. Could the key to reducing our negative impact on the environment be found in these once-overlooked behaviors of other lifeforms in addition to our current interventions?

Biodiversity Frame Exercises. JoyAckerman Aug 8, 2017. I find these exercises useful, but challenging to devote energy to in the absence of a classroom environment. I will be integrating them in my own teaching, so that should motivate me to deepen my understanding. In reviewing the various frames for biodiversity, I was interested in the ways that various frames suggested not only certain action - but who might be responsible for taking action. Thinking of rare species like rare treasures suggests that certain qualified and trained experts will be necessary to recognize and preserve these; as an ordinary citizen, my responsibility might be limited to funding and appreciation of these efforts. On the other hand, the framing of biodiversity as a web prompted me to wonder which species or processes might provide the key supports for the whole, with whom our own species might be most closely linked, how we might strengthen the whole web to compensate for existing gaps. In short, I think the framing of a topic can suggest not only actions, but can broaden or narrow the community of actors.

bjhough Jan 19, 2018. My initial thought was that humans would certainly be a powerful part of the web, but then I wonder if that is just my human arrogance kicking in. This brings to mind an article I read some years ago that dealt with media representations of Arctic oil drilling. We focus on the mega-fauna like polar bears (as in, things we can buy cuddly stuffed versions of), but scientists argue (among themselves because media never discuss this) that the loss of micro-biological organisms is just as damaging. I agree--I might not be the one to draw the web, but I can certainly appreciate it & pass it along.

Cognitive frame. nadine\_andrews May 6, 2017 A 'cognitive frame' in cognitive linguistics is a bundle of strongly linked concepts and associated emotions and values, learnt through experience and stored in memory. Lakoff (2010) explains that cognitive frames have a physical neural basis. The more the frame is activated by exposure to trigger words, the stronger the neural network becomes and the easier it can consequently be activated. Lakoff, G. (2010). Why it Matters How We Frame the Environment. Environmental Communication, 4(1), 70–81.

amiluna Jul 9, 2017 Thank you for the quote, Nadine! Framing emotions and values in neural networks gives more weight to the process of influence. Also, makes me wonder about how much we learn from society instead of the physical world.

nadine\_andrews Jul 10, 2017 There are studies on priming that you may be interested in - how people can be influenced to think and act in particular ways through exposure to certain stimulus (e.g. language), without them being aware of how they have been manipulated. Dominant discourses in society (e.g. as expressed through media and advertising) can be thought of as a form of social priming, and this is what in my view makes language a psychosocial phenomenon. Some literature on priming:

Alexander, J. & Crompton, C., 2011. Think of me as evil? Opening the ethical debates in advertising. UK: Public Interest Research Centre/WWF-UK.

Chilton, P. et al., 2012. Communicating bigger-than-self problems to extrinsically-oriented audiences. UK: COIN.

Flouri, E., 1999. An integrated model of consumer materialism: can economic socialisation and maternal values predict materialistic attitudes in adolescents? Journal of Socio- Economics, 28, pp.707-724.

Kasser, .T, Ryan, R.M., Couchman, C.E. & Sheldon, K.M., 2004. Materialistic values: their causes and consequences. In: T. Kasser & A.D. Kanner, eds. Psychology and Consumer Culture: The struggle for a good life in a materialistic world. Washington DC: American Psychological Association. pp.11-28.

Maio, G.R., Pakizeh, A., Cheung, W.Y. & Rees, K.J., 2009. Changing, priming, and acting on values: effects via motivational relations in a circular model. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 97 (4), pp.699–715.

Thibodeau, P.H. & Boroditsky L., 2011. Metaphors we think with, PLoS ONE, 6(2), e16782.

OrkneyBec Jul 28, 2017 Thank you for the extra references on priming Nadine. I agree that language is psychosocial - it is the way we come to know ourselves, others and the world - dialogism is an approach to language and communication that emphasises the way that all meaning making is interactional and contextual. Per Linell's excellent book 'Rethinking Language, Mind and World Dialogically' (2009) is a must read for understanding language as socially emergent and meaning making as an (inter)active process.

MarkGoldthorpe Aug 26, 2017 I think an example of cognitive framing that has become quite embedded, culturally, is the use of military-speak in how we think of our coasts and the prospect or experience of coastal change - erosion, flooding etc. Stephen Trudgill, a geographer, researched the opposing sides in debates over how to respond to increasing coastal change at Slapton Ley in Devon - whether we should 'protect' ourselves from nature or 'work with' natural processes. Those who fell in the protectionist camp (a lot of the people living locally, quite understandably) appealed to our history of defence (successful or not) from the sea, which was seen as a threat, even an enemy - and those who advocated 'managed realignment' as the sea rises and causes more erosion were seen as wanting to 'surrender' to the sea. In contrast, the other side often spoke of the sea as a natural force which is far stronger than us and which we need to accommodate. There were many examples of military language being used, which I would have dig out, but of course the whole topic is talked of under the umbrella term of 'coastal defences' which automatically invokes our island history of invasions and resistance. That has particular and poignant relevance at Slapton Ley, where all the villages were evacuated during World War 2 so that the allies could use the beaches to prepare in secret for the D-Day landings - and where a military disaster saw hundreds of allied troops killed in 'friendly fire' that was hushed up for many decades. An American tank stands on the beach as a memorial, and the memory of military activity is as present as the prosepcts of the coastal road and houses being lost to the sea in the near future, as a result of climate change.

nadine\_andrews 2 days ago Hi Mark - yes I am also interested in the military frame. I am particularly annoyed by use of the metaphor 'fighting' climate change. I wrote a paper on it, need to finish it and get it out there! I argue it reinforces ideas of human-nature separation and also human superiority to nature - as if we can win the fight

SabrinaCupeiro Jan 28, 2018 Frame ENVIRONMENT is a COMMODITY Sadly, the environment has been seen a a commodity, a source of products and services, even for politicians and decision makers. It is necessary to talk about environment not only from an economical perspective, but from a more cultural and social point of view.

Asya7 Feb 7, 2018 I have looked for framings on the website of "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung" (because I am currently analyzing its articles for my thesis) and I guess I have found the framing CLIMATE CHANGE is a VEHICLE. The article is called "Wie der Motor des Klimawandels [the engine of the climate change] an der Nahrungsschraube dreht" (http://www.faz.net/aktuell/wissen/erde-klima/suessgewaesser-wie-der-motor-des-klimawandels-an-der-nahrungsschraube-dreht-15400750.html) Do you agree with me? Is it an example of framing?

nadine\_andrews Asya7 - yes you could use CLIMATE CHANGE IS VEHICLE as the conceptual metaphor, I would tend to think of it as part of NATURE IS MACHINE which like the NATURE IS ECONOMIC RESOURCE/COMMODITY metaphor is very common. Consider the entailment of thinking that complex natural systems are like a machine - humans make machines and we can understand how they work, so it obscures the mystery and complexity of nature. It also implies that we have control over it.

MaureenK-T Jun 1, 2017 It was very useful to be introduced to the terms Problem - with its inherent promise of solution - and Predicament -which calls for very different ways of thinking and being. I am reminded of Paul Hawken's latest book which gathers the 100 strategies which must be undertaken (ironically solutions to the big problem) for our survival. When viewing the top 20 as reactions to a predicament instead, it makes a great deal of sense that number 1 would be educate women and girls. What other class of people have been dealing with predicament for centuries - and still do? Thanks for the clarity.

fluersfloras Jun 8, 2017 There are numerous fascinating articles on how terrorism and climate change are communicated and are related/different. Glad that terrorism was mentioned, here.

Sathishkumareng Jun 14, 2017 I am really amazed on reading about the way terrorism and climate change linked. We need to educate the women.

RuthB01 Jun 22, 2017 The additional reading regarding frames and conceptual metaphors was helpful. It was interesting to see the importance of frames in strengthening particular cultural values. I was particularly struck by the notion of deep frames and how they are connected to values. I wonder how these notions should shape our discussion on key issues like the environment, education and terrorism. One question is, how can we more effectively activate humanities common-interest frame to activate empathetic tendencies? Wouldn't the world be a better place if this was the focus of the media and our political institutions?

Kendra\_na Jul 8, 2017 What I found particularly interesting in this section were the additional readings, which emphasize the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic values and the idea that to make change or achieve conservation goals we are not obligated to appeal to extrinsic values. This means that in communications, the message can be tailored to different audiences so the frame is relevant while still appealing to intrinsic values. We do not – and should not – assume we must fall back into appealing to the self-interest of people. People are all inherently selfish and altruistic. We must only bring that altruistic tendency to the forefront by appealing to emotions or telling stories. Niki Harre’s Psychology for a Better World (download here: https://www.psych.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/our-staff/academic-staff/niki-harre/psychologyforabetterworld.html) is relevant to this section. She shows that positive emotions give rise to cooperation and openness to change and that people want to live in a way that aligns with their deepest values. I also recommend watching the short video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zExibEV\_PY) about the book. I also want to note that there are a lot of economic tools useful for positive engagement with nature, but currently economics as it is framed today may be a generally destructive language to use. It is destructive because it immediately invokes economic activity as if it is in a zero-sum game with nature and conservation.

adegboyeadeyanju Jul 13, 2017 I think,''cognitive -or linguistic-frames'' could be positive or negative. Anyone wants to please shed more light on this thinking of mine?

arranstibbe Jul 14, 2017 Just to replyto adegoboyeadeyanju, I'd agree completely that framings (i.e., the application of frames to an area of life) can be positive or negative. In fact I'd say that any of the kinds of story in this course can be destructive stories, ambivalent stories or beneficial stories, as judged against the analyst's ecosophy.

allisonbender9 Nov 4, 2017 In working through this chapter, I realized that during a short activity I lead with school groups, I am essentially working to reframe the kids' understanding of water. When I start, I ask, "where does water come from?" and many students say things like the faucet. They demonstrate through their answers that water is always available to them, seemingly eternal. I then show them a liter of water to represent all the water on the world. We continue to measure and set aside of the proportions of water in the oceans, frozen in glaciers, underground, and polluted, and at the end we are left with just one drop. "This one drop of our fresh, accessible, and clean water is precious," I would tell them as I used a eyedropper to put place it in a palm. I've realized that this exercise tries to reframe water from something as endless, available, all around, to something that is special, limited, and precious. While in that example, the frames are clear, I think one of the challenges that arises in studying frames is that in our own cultures, we are just so used to the frames we live in, that it can be really hard to notice them, to pull them out into a space where we can assess if they are helpful or not. When reading about the differences between framing climate change as a problem versus climate change as a predicament, I wondered if framing as a predicament would spur more variety of responses, and open up space for more people to participate in whatever ways they might imagine. I like how that makes room for people and their unique vocations to enter the space and make a difference, but I also can’t help but thinking that reducing greenhouse gases, is a solution to our climate change problem! More thinking to do on this!

Mar 7 2018 07:34PM by EllieGold

Simon Christmas in his Report "Engaging people in biodiversity issues" suggests an interesting argument that"the relative unfamiliarity of the term ‘biodiversity’represents an opportunity to develop a brand around the term," He continues by emphasizing the importance of "consistency in building and maintaining a brand" as "Commercial organisations...invest considerable resources in developing and policing this consistency".Personally, it does not appeal to me at all.But it would be interesting to hear what other members think.

Jul 3 2018 03:31PM by Vale Bailo

Part 3 on framings is quite insightful. I am a PhD student in Italy, and recently I have discussed this issue with my supervisor: what she said was that I should be careful in judging frames; framing something negatively might in fact have extremely positive effects in terms of the way we act about that something.

And sometimes I suppose you better have negative framings you can detect and challenge if need be, instead of ambivalent framings, like the ones on biodiversity that refer to it in terms of what they might be useful for to we human beings (i.e. resources, services, etc.). It holds true that preserving the planet would definitely have benefits for us too, and that these ‘compromised’ kinds of framings might appeal to the reader more than others which, as in a sense, call for a refined sensitivity to be appreciated (i.e. web), one which is already bent to caring for the environment.

As far as framing environmental issues in terms of a problem or a predicament is concerned, I think it also has implications in terms of width of interpretation allowed to the readership: the problem frame might be more direct, as it offers a straightforward solution to it, but it really might be dangerous as it depends on which solution we are proposed to the problem. Take ‘development’: the very fact that we call the Global South “un/underdeveloped”, no matter if we do that out of good intentions, already implies a specific idea of what being developed means; this in turn may hinder us in carrying out our potential good intentions.

May 28 2019 05:37PM by ChristopherWLC

In a rare bit of fortuitous coincidence, I stumbled across an excellent example of a commercial framing while working through this unit, but from a different source. I was taking a break from the readings and decided to watch a video on YouTube to disconnect for a bit, and, by chance, the pre-video ad touched on exactly this. It was an ad talking about the environment, specifically pollution and its solutions, within a commercial framing. The video showed two surfers who had visited Bali, encountered first hand the impact of plastic pollution in the oceans and on the beaches, and decided to create a company devoted to beach clean-up. If you purchased one of their bracelets made from the recovered plastic for £10, that money would go to fund beach clean-up efforts organized by this group.

The idea of beach clean-up in and of itself it not problematic, but this particular framing as a commercial effort/opportunity is. The basic economic assumption of the human desire to consume and buy still underpins what one otherwise might see as worthwhile project. It positions environmental clean-up effort within the framework of consumerism. It does not question the continued consumption and disposal of plastics, but only seeks to find a response to the symptom, not a solution for the cause. In this way, it could also be seen as being framed as a predicament, rather than a problem. It assumes that the issue will only continue into the future, which would coincidentally help to the perpetuate their business model. It offers the customer/consumer the opportunity to keep consuming by purchasing the new bracelet and by not questioning their own plastic use, while at the same time affording them a sense of satisfaction that they have been able to contribute something to the betterment of the environment, all of which are extrinsic in nature. This last one I think can be particularly tempting, since environmental issues are seen as so daunting and evoke a sense of powerlessness in the individual to be able to make a difference, so to be able to have even the smallest sense of making a contribution could be, and in reality is, a powerful commercial tool

# Part 4: Metaphor

eisigeyes Dec 2, 2017 Thank you for those exercises connected to The Corporation documentary. It's so easy to just passively absorb these corporation-as-monster, -family unit, -football team metaphors and not really break apart the components that are adding to their vitality. I particularly appreciated the multimodal framing you presented in the tables for analysis. One question I came across in the corporation-as-monster was whether we can judge the vitality of a metaphor based upon the potency of its content. Although the scene with Dr. Frankenstein's creation is brief, the depiction of the rather gruesome murder seems like it should hold more weight than, say, the whale breaching the surface of the ocean. Is this a viable way to interpret vitality, or must we go with the volume of materials presented (e.g., bad apple metaphor early on)?

arranstibbe Dec 3, 2017 Yes, I certainly say that striking images will lead to more vitality, it's just harder to measure.

MiraLB May 25, 2017 I found the analysis of the Pork Industry Handbook (PIH) a useful one to reveal the link between agribusiness-animals-consumers. Viewing animals as machines and ultimately products means we no longer perceive them as sentient beings.

Eftekharsadat Jun 1, 2017 The materials are excellent. Since I was studying, I tried to remember some metaphors about some animals and nature in Persian language and these come to my mind such as; The view of "all the nature and animals are for human and are at his service. By this point of view, consuming and destroying the nature and in general term, environment, is inevitable. "Donkeys" are the symbols of foolishness and porters. Having the role of porting for the animal avoids thinking of it as a live creature with feelings. Although, there are some metaphors about some animals which cause human feeling closer to that animals and be more care about them such as: Horse as noble animal or dog as faithful one or dove as peace and chance sign.

lucy539 Jun 27, 2017

I found this section to be informative, especially given the imminent regard for metaphor analysis research approaches in other academic fields, like tourism, see {Adu – Ampong, (2016), A metaphor analysis research agenda for tourism studies. Annals of tourism research, Vol, 57, pp 248 – 250}, link http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160738315300311

adegboyeadeyanju Jul 13, 2017 Thoroughly enjoyed reading "WORLDVIEWS AND METAPHORS IN THE HUMAN-NATURE RELATIONSHIP and quite persuaded that our widespread belief and attitude to not only the world but other forms of life therein ''consists of a more or less (of) consistent set of explicit and implicit concepts, assumptions, biases and ideologies that place the human being at the center of the Earth and even the Universe. This worldview is often associated with a utilitarian attitude towards Nature. That is, it considers Nature to be an instrument for human ends without taking into reasonable account the needs and rights of other life forms and Earth systems themselves. An essential component of the anthropocentric worldview, therefore, is the dominator model'', little wonder we are destroying the Earth both by our actions and inaction. Very aptly expressed

Kendra\_na Jul 14, 2017 Verhagen brought up many interesting metaphors we could use to describe the earth, among them earth as organism (I’m thinking of Lovelock’s Gaia hypothesis) and earth as spaceship (used by Udall, Hardin, and others). One other metaphor I find particularly informative for the Christian perspective is earth as God’s body. This is proposed by Sallie McFague in her book Models of God. If Christians used a metaphor for God that was non-hierarchical (king, lord, etc.), perhaps this would alter our relationship to the earth because all things would be evidence of divine presence. The earth could no longer be relegated to Otherness. MacLeod’s essay relates to this relegation of non-human beings to a position as Other. The use of the dog metaphor, allows us to diminish people and the earth by challenging the emotional and intellectual capacities (judged by human standards) and asserting a status quo of dominance over another human or being. I also found it interesting that the contract dogs and humans enter into is one of dog following the rules if the owner (master) living up to their end of the deal. If the human-dog relationship is a metaphor we could apply to the earth-human relationship, why are humans not holding up their end of the deal and caring for what they claim to be in a relationship with, even if it is one of assumed domination?

JoyAckerman Aug 9, 2017 Thank you for clarifying the relationship of frame and metaphor in this chapter. I now see that a metaphor is a specific type of frame. I was interested in the metaphor of Earth as Mother - and even more interested that the excerpt describes the kind of mother. The Olympian creation myth presents a metaphor of Earth as mother, but the way the story is told suggests that it is only through the activity of the mother's male son Uranus that the female Earth is fruitful. In this story, Mother Earth is passive: 'emerging' from chaos, giving birth in her sleep rather than through gestation and labor, and - rather than being fertile - is subject to 'fertile rain.' If metaphors are a type of frame, then it appears to me that some 'frame chaining' is going on in this short tale, perhaps the subversion of a matriarchal framing of the world toward a patriarchal framing of the world? The Earth is still the Mother, but a passive and unfruitful one that only gives life because of the activity of the male character.

bjhough Jan 19, 2018 I don't know if anyone has seen Conservation International’s "Nature is Speaking" series (evidently with nation-specific celebrities giving voice to various elements) but here's the one for Mother Nature: https://www.conservation.org/nature-is-speaking/Pages/Julia-Roberts-Is-Mother-Nature.aspx It is an interesting attempt at humbling humanity. In thinking about Mother Earth / Nature, the word I came up with is "indifference," which I suppose is still passive, but yet powerful?

nshih Jan 24, 2018 I found this part of course very useful to my current job, to tell the public about an specific environmental issue. I have started the course from 2017 and until now from chapter 1 till here, the fruitful learning has formed the way I write the copy and content in our social media channel and adopted in our strategy as well.

SabrinaCupeiro Jan 28, 2018 I think that the Doomsday Clock is a clear metaphor of the dangers we face regarding climate change, massive destruction weapons, and biological weapons. On January 25th 2018 the clock time was modified and we are two minutes from the final judgment

Asya7 Feb 15, 2018 I've been thinking how much we are used to seeing pigs as non-worthy. It is even reflected in the language (at least in the Russian language) as we are saying "Stop behaving like a pig!" (meaning stop being so messy or showing non-decent behaviour) and things like that. And now we have billboards with social ads like the one here: https://cs.pikabu.ru/post\_img/2013/09/18/5/1379486450\_1300377908.jpg [Don't turn into a... Don't litter where you live!]

Mar 17 2018 01:56PM by Elizabeth Gold

It seems that "the only good pig as a dead pig".Pork, for example is an "unsung ...dinnertime hero" (http://www.thejournal.ie/perfect-pork-2027086-Apr2015/). This kind of metaphoric framing could be hard to digest. Marta Zaraska wrote a book called Meathooked. We can roughly apply this term to the entire western way of living including the use of language.

In French the common insult 'être un (sale/gros) porc (to be a dirty/fat pig) becomes 'tout est bon dans le cochon' (everything is good/healthy in pork), In Russian pig is lovingly called piggy in the the proverb "Была бы свинка — будет мясо, будет и щетинка" (The piggy will provide meat and bristles)

when a "stupid" "fat" cow .becomes beef then people “ love its perfumed smoke, they love its roiling drops of blood and grease, they love its density, so much more gravid in the belly than any vegetable, like ballast for living. . . . To be meaty means to possess merit and conviction. ” (BEEF The Untold Story of How Milk, Meat, and Muscle Shaped the World By A. Rimas and Evan D. G. Fraser)

Jul 4 2018 11:42AM by Vale Bailo

This course is brilliant and the food and mouth disease extract had me thinking of how erasure of animals and victimizations of farming families might not only be a voluntary expedient to shift attention away from the violence perpetrated towards animals, but it might also be the result of acquired framings where value is almost automatically assigned to those realities that do play a role in the economic system, especially in our era which is centered around the importance of economics. So, animals per se are not such a reality, but small enterprises or farms are. It is like if a part of a watch breaks – we would possibly say that the watch is broken, not the single cog-wheel. Also, it was interesting to see how the economic system we have created is often represented in terms of a creature we cannot control any longer, be it the multi-headed beast, the psychopath, the machine which is running out of control– sort of a Dr. Frankenstein/Creature story. As for the corporation as a juridical person, it was a bit flustering to see how we are enlivening things and reifying living beings.

The metaphor of earth as a mother brings me back again to Eisler and her reconstruction of how the Great Mother has been gradually subdued to a male god after the kurgan invasions, but gradually; so in a first moment we still see her side by side with a male counterpart which is both her lover and her son, and this is what apparently happens in the story of Olympia and Uranus..

Part 5: Evaluations

In praise of winter Textgazelle Jan 9, 2018 I recommend the book 'Winter - an anthology for the changing seasons', edited by Melissa Harrison. The book is a collection of short stories, poems etc. from very different writers and times. Dickens, Joyce, Shakespeare and Woolf are in company with today's writers. The book is a warm tribute to slush, snow, coldness and all the diversity in experience of animals and changing seasons. I appreciate how this course makes me pay attention to new layers in literature. After this part 5, I have started a new "game": to spot appreciations of winter, rain and cold weather which - as we saw in this section's weather forecast - often is described as unwanted. In the short story 'A priest in the family' by Colm Tóibín I ran into this brief paragraph: 'As long as it's the winter I can manage,' Molly said. 'I sleep late in the mornings and I'm kept busy. It's the summer I dread. I'm not like those people who suffer from that disorder when there's no light. I dread the long summer days when I wake with the dawn and think the blackest thoughts' (of course you can discuss if it's escapism, that she seeks to avoid reality etc., but it is interesting to see winter being appreciated).

eisigeyes Dec 2, 2017 I was really fascinated how the context of the text we were working with could change the breakdown of our appraisal patterns. It was really effective thinking of the patterns in terms of a Venn diagram, because in so many instances, there is a kind of neutral language that overlaps with both positive and negative appraisals.

adegboyeadeyanju Dec 19, 2017 Certainly, I too was fascinated by how the context of the text being worked on correlates with our appraisal patterns. I am currently studying a comic play written by an internationally acclaimed writer from Nigeria's Niger Delta and my re-reading has clearly shown that it is an ecocritical play. It is essentially not a comedy but centred pre-eminently on environmental despoliation. Thank you for the lecture and for sharing your thoughts.

RuthB01 Jan 10, 2018 I was fascinated by the idea that some much of the evaluation is embedded within culture and that different cultures have different associations. Looking at the language challenges to re-evaluate the negative associations which we may be unaware of. Earlier in the year, I decided to never make a negative comment about rain because of our need of it and its value to the earth.

MiraLB May 25, 2017

The smell of the rain after a hot day (like today!) is so refreshing. It is interesting to find just how embedded these notions of high sales as positive are in the Western world. Practically and pragmatically, how can we change this story?

fatemeh.shah May 31, 2017 I remember one poem by modern Iranian poet "Sohrab Sepehri". The poem is famous as "One should wash his eyes"./چشم ها را باید شست/ .He believes that under the rain one can explore the truth of every thing.

Part of the poem is as the following:

One must wash eyes, look differently to things words must be washed

The word must be wind itself, the word must be the rain itself

One must shut umbrellas

One must walk in the rain

One must carry the thought, the recollection in the rain

One must go walk in the rain with all the townsfolk

One must see friends in the rain

One must search love in the rain

One must sleep with a woman in the rain

One must play in the rain

One must write, talk and plant lotus flowers in the rain

Life is repeated wetting

Life is swimming in the pond of present....

It is interesting that The name of the poem has been enterded in the language used by people in their conversations. It has the potential to be a story that we can live by.

fluersfloras Jun 9, 2017 The "sunny weather is good" is fascinating; this "appraisal pattern" also made me consider brands that use the sun (related words or sun symbolism) to evoke "good" associations with their product. For example, Jimmy Dean sausages/breakfast sandwiches, are currently using sunshine/suns in their marketing materials. This, juxtaposed next to the reading of the haiku provided a stark contrast.

Sathishkumareng Jun 16, 2017 The reading of Haiku enlightened me. I have never expected such hidden meanings can be found from the Haiku.

Kendra\_na Jul 15, 2017 Other evaluations with environmental implications include: individuality/independence is superior to cooperation (one implication is car culture favored over public transportation), NOW is worth more than future (discounting the future), and emotions are bad and rationality is good. In “Living in the weather-world,” it mentions that there are few advertisements for being outside (much less in weather that isn’t sunny). While this is generally true, Great Outdoors Colorado just began a campaign called Generation Wild (https://generationwild.com/), which promotes the variety of experiences young people can have in nature and encourages them to get outside. Two of these experiences include splashing in puddles in the rain and dancing to the beat of raindrops.

JoyAckerman Aug 11, 2017 It might be a saying from an outdoor gear company, that 'there is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing.' In this case the company is using it to promote retail sales of high-end clothing for outdoor sports, so the 'no bad weather' message is undermined by the 'buy our stuff' message. I love Matt Harvey's poem about less and more. He's taking the positive valuation of more and applying it to things that are not counted by the GNP, like stars and participation. He keeps the tone friendly and funny by making rhyming a game that starts out simply, then gets really contorted, pairing 'pulmonary failure' (less) with two flowers 'clematis and dahlia' (more). I was really impressed by this chapter's emphasis on what is 'not counted' by GNP (thank you for the Robert Kennedy excerpt), as well as the idea of making evident the 'cost and price' of growth. As someone working in the environmental field, it's important that we present a positive vision for the future, rather than just a negative message of 'STOP' and 'CUT BACK.' This chapter provided some helpful ways to do so using positive valuation for desired activities and goals and outcomes.

RuthB01 Jan 10, 2018 I think this chapter shows how important cross-cultural pollination of ideas is - we can challenge our perceptions and cognitive evaluations through interaction with others. It also demonstrates the power of art to open our minds and challenge our preconceptions. I remember having an interesting conversation with a Japanese student who presented me with a calligraphy of the word cloud. I asked him why he'd chosen this word and having read the Japanese haiku you can image that his response challenged and surprised me; he said it made him think of blue skies and warm lazy summer days, whereas my immediate impression had been a negative association with rain.

bjhough Jan 19, 2018 This might piggyback on the context discussion from a different thread, but I worked for a gigantic US-based radio conglomerate some years ago (Clear Channel, now known as iHeartMedia), and they (like the outdoor clothing company) adopted "Less is More" as a way of convincing advertisers to buy 30-second ads vs. 60-second ads, thereby doubling the number of clients they could sell in the same amount of time :-/ I like Harvey's take much, much more.

SabrinaCupeiro Jan 28, 2018 Although my country's economy depends on farming, the rain is usually seen as bad news. It is not until we face a dramatic drought, that we realize how important it is. Only people who depends on farming is waiting for rain

Mar 18 2018 08:35PM by Elizabeth Gold

I would like to express my gratitude to the people who run this module. I read differently thanks to the awareness I gain taking this course.

Being ovo vegetarian I wanted to look into various folklore, mainly sayings and proverbs to see how the subject of meat is evaluated across the cultures. I wasn't surprised to find that overwhelming majority of proverbs described meat as highly desirable, the best food ever and valuable. For instance in Russian: Рыба -- вода, ягода -- трава, только мясо -- еда (Fish is water, berry is grass and only meat is a food), in Hebrew אין שמחה אלא בבשר There is no happiness but in meat, Moreover, it is framed as a potential peacemaker: in Ukrainian: Як ковбаса та чарка, то минеться и сварка.(A sausage and a drink stop a fight) and even as a reason to get married ﻿: in Russian Для щей люди женятся, для мяса замуж идут.(Men marry for the cabbage soup, women for the meat).

According to my personal ecosophy, industrial farming is polluting and destroying the environment as well as strips farm animals of any respect, denying them their essential sentience. Nevertheless, I think, that perhaps earlier in history people were more dependent on meat as a nourishment. I addition, back then industrial farming did not exist,

As for the evaluation of rains, clouds and other precipitations, it seems that Dr. Stibbe is right that "sun is good rain/snow is bad" is a cultural evaluation and, I would add, it is a contemporary, industrial story we live by. Historically, people depended on precipitation to harvest good crops. It is reflected in the proverbs like: Sun is for cucumbers, rain for rice.(Vietnamese), Sunshine without rain makes a desert (Arabian),

It seems that In India, China, in Arab countries the rain is perceived, evaluated and framed quite differently than say in England or the US. Rain and clouds are framed as kindness, benevolence, generosity: A promise is a cloud; fulfillment is the rain. (Arabian), Good people, like clouds, receive only to give away. (Indian), Adversity is as the rain of spring(Japanese).

It would be interesting as a research comparison to look at Chinese/Indian/Japanese weather forecast to see if they tell us a different story about weather.

Mar 19 2018 07:55AM by Arran Stibbe

Just to say thank you to Elisabeth for all the insightful posts - that was a great one above. And of course to everyone else who has posted on the discussion groups, which are a mine of amazing ideas. I do read everything carefully but I've already had my say in all the materials so I'm leaving it to you!

Jul 4 2018 11:42AM by Vale Bailo

The paper on weather forecasts made me pay more attention on our regional forecasts and I noticed that when it rains we are said “Bad weather” instead of just “Rain” or whatever (which surely has an impact on the audience as we are said to be the rainiest region in Europe). I suppose there are historical reasons that underpin cultural evaluations, apart from recent economic ones: I come from Italy and till the 60ies Italy was a country based on local livelihoods and subsistence, which means each family used to have their own fields to cultivate and animals to raise. Rainy weather meant people had a hard time working the fields or the harvest could be damaged, which meant a great loss as people couldn’t rely on any other resources for food.

Haiku seems beautiful; my only reserve is: I wonder whether it would only appeal a public which is already sensitized to the beauty of nature; I am not sure it would engage people who are bent towards accumulating goods- they would just read it by. Also, I think the way discourses are used is of paramount importance: I see that a process of appropriation of the ‘green discourse’ is increasingly taking place to do greenwashing about clothes, as unfortunately clothes are possibly one of the (now disposable) goods more attractive to people.

Last but not least, thank you very much for the book and article provided on appraisal theory – they are very useful to me.

Jan 19 2021 04:04PM by Geoffrey Mokua Maroko

"Evaluations" has made good reading. I particularly find the appraisal theory interesting. We are able to see how what we consider good may have negative ecological consequences and vice versa. In my home County of Nyamira and neighbouring County, Kisii (both in Kenya) legislation has been enacted outlawing eucalyptus trees under the pretext that they take in a lot of water and are likely to cause river sources to dry. Fearing the possibility of being slapped with heavy fines, farmers have engaged in massive logging of this species. Ironically Kisii and Nyamira Counties receive higher average rainfall per year than any other County perhaps due to the dense forest cover- thanks to eucalyptus. In a sense then ECALYPTUS ARE BAD yet they can also receive a positive evaluation since they attract rainfall. By eliminating them, farmers will not be protecting rivers but indeed causing desertification,

# Part 6: Identities

Identity and agenda. eisigeyes Dec 3, 2017 I know, I'm using some of the "agenda" language we heard in The Corporation, but I like that we're getting a balance of viewpoints in these modules without, necessarily an agenda of conversion. For instance, in the data provided from the Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) organization, we can see a range of narratives—concern for future generations, interconnectedness, proximity to nature, authority over nature, losing sight of what’s important, environmental consciousness—that don’t blanket surfers as an ideal model to emulate. They’re just as capable of the short-sightedness and self-interest we see in corporations and other entities. In the field of writing, we are constantly sensitizing ourselves to the narratives on the page and off; however, we almost never give a nod to discourse analysis. I was, in fact, shocked when I went through two degree programs, and discourse only really came up in poetry workshops, and even then, it was in a limited capacity. So much of what we did in the field of creative writing was instinctive that it’s really refreshing and frustrating to see how discourse analysis tackles the same subject matter. I’m looking forward to the point that my knowledge of discourse analysis can become more instinctive, but I suspect that’s a long way off.

adegboyeadeyanju May 2, 2017 Great thoughts. I am happy to be on this course which I only started yesterday. I teach English and Linguistics at the University of Abuja-Nigeria and was introduced to Ecolinguistics by members of my network at the Systemic Functional Linguistics Association.

paulwhite4 May 15, 2017 I have found what I think is a very interesting article in Men's Health magazine, 'WHY STEADY STATE CARDIO WINS THE RACE TO FAT LOSS' (www.menshealth.co.uk/fitness/steady-state-cardio-can-jump-start-your-health). While it is true that it argues for body perfection, as all the other articles do, it does so through promoting longer-span, lower intensity jogging as opposed to ultra-high intensity fitness programmes. It could be argued that such endurance sport could be better psychologically for the individual, in the sense that it could promote more self-control, determination (to avoid the temptation of stopping), possibly a more balanced psychology in general, as well as allowing the runner to escape the confines of the gym's four walls. This is all opposed in the article itself to high-intensity fitness which is designed to raise your heart-beat to near its maximum level for short bursts. However, not only does the article make limited references to psychological balance (it only refers to stress reduction), it also justifies the practising of lower intensity exercise in terms of it's benefits it can bring for engaging in the higher intensity kind: "It will also aid your recovery from lifting sessions, so you’ll feel (relatively) fresh the next day while cardio-averse bros are hobbling back to the rack. Because it promotes capillarisation (the formation of new blood vessels), you’ll increase the blood flow to your muscles when you lift, which equals a bigger post-workout pump." The article uses the second person pronoun (you), which I think is aimed at immersing the reader in their 'future-self' fantasy, and a mix of generally positive adjectives (steadier exercise, fresh, better foot strike, humble jog, smart move), with others which are implicitly positive in the context of the article/magazine (bigger boosts, higher training volume, elevated metabolism). However, in general the article does look beyond simple body/fitness obsession: "LISS (steady-state training) boosts your memory, improves insulin sensitivity to ward off diabetes, and even quells hunger hormones. Perhaps most importantly, at a time when anxiety levels are spiking (there were 8.2 million reported cases in the UK in 2013), the humble jog is being harnessed to rein in stressed minds." The general conclusion I would make however is that it generally objectifies the body, considering it as something whose worth can be evaluated numerically, something which should be improved in a similar way to a piece of technology. For this reason, I believe that the article is generally detrimental to our relationships with our bodies, in that it creates distance between mind and body, as if the second is something to be tweeked with in an unempathetic, even possibly punishing manner.

fluersfloras Jun 9, 2017 Advertising and consumerism are highlighted again in this section of the course. It would also be interesting to discuss female magazines and related language; like the male magazine analysis, it could probably be a course in itself. The idea that magazines are "environmentally destructive" is only partially true -- magazines have the potential to steer readership in more positive directions that foster more holistic, 'real' lives. in close, a comparison of multiple magazines (not just men's fitness magazines), would be ideal, here.

arranstibbe Jun 10, 2017 Thanks to fluersfloras for this comment (and the great comment in part 5). My students at Gloucestershire often do analyse other kinds of magazines for their assignments. The mainstream lifestyle magazines tend to be mostly negative, with occasional positive threads in them, but then there are wonderful alternative magazines like Permaculture Magazine which use language in ways that tell new stories. You can see a few examples of my students' essays here (http://ecolinguistics-association.org/articles) in the Advertising, financial discourse and magazines section (you need to scroll down). There's certainly a lot more to say about the world of magazines.

Sathishkumareng Jun 16, 2017 I feel that reading magazines can change the thought flow. I have some of the magazines that really enlighten the people of the ideas what the editors have. I know about an educational magazine that gives lots of ides to the students who step into the next level. This has brought many opportunities for the students too. On the other hand, many magazines have just attractive pictures and messages to just get the readers. May be these kinds of magazines create a negative impact . Many magazines come out with nice stories for the society. Recently a magazine told the entire area with the story of a cobbler and that reached the authority concerned and he was aptly helped for the better life.

Kendra\_na Jul 22, 2017 I was intrigued by the “Identity Reflection” article’s discussion of the need to develop comfort with a fluid and responsive identity. An identity that is too rooted is “necessarily fragile.” A fluid identity is not unstable, but one that invites empathy and critical thought. I think that having that capacity to critically examine our identities is important because, as Crompton and Kasser discuss, it is important to have identities where we can align values and behaviors. A question: Do you think it is possible that through other ways of promoting belonging, magazines like Men’s Health could still exist be less potent? Magazines are “windows to the future self” as well as (false) doorways to belonging.

arranstibbe Jul 23, 2017 In answer to Kendra, there's a book by Gauntlett (Media, Gender and Identity) which argues that lifestyle magazines, including Men's Health are positive because they open up alternative possibilities for people to base their project of self on. I'm not convinced though - if the primary purpose of a lifestyle magazine is to create a buying mood to get readers to buy the products advertised in the magazine then it's never going to create non-consumerist, earth-centred identities. So I doubt that big mainstream lifestyle magazines are going to create positive identities. There are non-mainstream magazine like Permaculture which are different though, and exist for different purposes, and they can be wonderful.

dajo456 Jul 23, 2017 To what extent is there difference between buying a lifestyle or the permaculture magazine in this example? If what you are doing is consuming a particular (ecosophy) 'story about the self' and being non-mainstream. Yes, there is more potential or resistance to mainstream consumerist identities (ingroup/ outgroup), and we're not talking Whole Earth Catalog, so what about other means of distribution if we are talking identity? Kendra - a fluid and responsive identity is interesting, especially when considering liminal identity theories

arranstibbe Jul 24, 2017 "To what extent is there difference between buying a lifestyle or the permaculture magazine in this example?" I'd say that the stories they tell are very different - one says that to be a real man you need to have huge muscles, wear branded clothing and drive a powerful car, and the other that we need to care for the earth, care for people and share things fairly (https://permacultureprinciples.com/ethics/). They do share the physical layout of a magazine - but everything else from production, distribution, funding, goals and consumption is different. We have to be careful about being too binary though - there may be some positive things in Men's Health (an occasional encouragement to eat vegetables or think about health etc) or something negative in Permaculture magazine. But I'd say one is overall a destructive discourse (according to my ecosophy) and the other is a beneficial one.

JoyAckerman Aug 13, 2017 Interesting thread about magazines and identity. Most magazines seem to be primarily underwritten by advertising, so at some level they provide space for these sales pitches. I see the same trend in online sites, as advertising creeps into spaces like email, FB and blog pages. Even public television and radio have 'underwriters' in addition to the public, so as a public television viewer I am led to believe that my life will not be complete until I've taken a Viking cruise! I wonder - although it's possible to separate the articles from the ads in analysis, will the reader experience always incorporate both? I really enjoyed this chapter, in part because I already focus on identity in 2 courses I teach and these materials will help me integrate narrative into the identity aspects I already include. I teach a Conservation Psychology course in the Environmental Studies MS program at Antioch University, and introduce identity in relation to values and behavior. This chapter encourages me to spend more time in the class helping students think about how to recognize, foster and resist identity narratives in their work. I recommend a book called Redirect: The Surprising New Science of Psychological Change, Timothy D. Wilson, Little, Brown and Co., 2011. I listened to this book on CD, then bought a used copy; the focus of the book is how promoting stories of self can help people change, or reinforce negative ideas and behavior. The author critiques some popular social programs for at-risk youth, diversity in the workplace; and the author has a helpful and accessible chapter on evaluating social research (which I assign to students). Although the focus of the book is more social science, the title word ReDirect is based on redirecting narratives. I suspect that I have not adequately addressed (in my courses) the question of identity change, taking it as fairly fixed (in terms of students' audiences); I'll want to balance this with more attention to intervening in the stories that contribute to self-narratives.

Mar 22 2018 09:37PM by Elizabeth Gold

Vandana Shiva in her book Earth Democracy explores the idea of "earth identity" and "ecological identity. .She speaks of a worldview where life is seen "as a continuum between human and non-human species, where the community of all living "beings is supported by earth".The fluidity of the common earth identity shared with non-human intelligence is based on sharing the same "soil, water and air".

She draws a parallel between fundamentalists and industrially farmed animals. Both of them are stripped of their genuine identity and as a result revert to cannibalistic behavior. Both of the groups are deprived of their space- be it ecological, cultural, economic or space to roam and graze freely.

She believes that our ecological identity as our core identity: "We are the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breath".

All this brings me to the thought that the identity we, as people, ascribe to animals, plants and earth itself is largely spells out ours.

Jul 5 2018 06:46PM by Vale Bailo

I completely agree with the fact that nowadays consumer goods are proposed as a way to shape identity and differentiate oneself – I have recently seen that some famous clothes-brands are now offering a section of clothes which should address ‘alternative’ people (?) labeled something like ‘Divide’ –as you see, the same result (sales) is obtained by different means. So stories might be appropriated and made use of to achieve distorted aims – i.e. people get engaged in ‘alternative’ brands, buy their products and wear pro-environment slogans on their t-shirts, in a quite controversial way. So I guess we should be careful not to let our ‘environmental’ side get engaged in ‘larking-glasses’. The means we are communicated and communicate the stories we believe in is fundamental. Nevertheless, I remember being at the high school, reading Peter Singer’s Animal Liberation, watching documentaries like Cowspiracy and getting engaged in healthy diet and environmental concerns and at the time it was ‘weird’. Nowadays I would say that environmental and health concerns have become more popular, also thanks to those means of communication like social networks and the like, which we might be used to look at as ‘negative’. And the fact that there are growing popular shows – just go to the grocery and see how food offer has changed in just a few years. These topics are in a sense becoming a fashion, which is a way to engage a lot of people, even though it has its downsides – i.e the impact related to demand of healthy food produced on the other side of the world, like quinoa, even though we can grow our kinds of healthy food here.

Jan 22 2021 07:47AM by Geoffrey Mokua Maroko

I am thinking about identities in this era of COVID-19 when a substantial part of human operations have been taken up by ICT. We hear of Zoom meetings, links, passcodes, Google Meet, e-banking, e-commerce, digital devices etc. What all these mean is that the human being can only operate if he/she possesses a device such as a smart phone, iPhone, tablet, laptop, or desktop. We have seen businesses and schools digitizing their operations. Students are being asked to procure devices in order to access on-line learning. We seem to be assuming a "digital identity." Human functions are literally getting taken up by the computer. But do we ask ourselves the environmental impact of these digital devices we are acquiring? Do we know what we will do with them once they get old and dysfunctional? How will we dispose them without causing environmental destruction? Right now we are on a buying frenzy of these gadgets because that is the "new normal" but do we have mitigating strategies to safeguard the environment from imminent pollution?

# Part 7: Convictions

Facticity variation...eisigeyes Dec 4, 2017 I really appreciate that facticity can vary based upon the intentions of the presenter. In some of the samples we have high facticity based upon the lyrical quality of individuals' experiences in nature, whereas other examples present high facticity in terms of scientific presentations. What caused me some trouble initially was the term "facticity" in reference to lyrical presentations, because they are, by nature, rooted in emotion, and so I was a bit confused by the idea that they could be presenting fact. However, it becomes clearer to reframe those individual presentations as factual in terms of some quality or aim sought out by the presenter (i.e., experience, facts). I often had issues in my discourse analysis class, because there's a certain objective system of discourse markers that have been analyzed, and I have a tendency to take my creative writing / literature training and psychologize those markers or the intentions in a piece without relying solely on the objective evidence of the features of a piece. This has been really great training to balance that impulse.

fluersfloras Jul 21, 2017 This section's articles were appreciated. The "Uncertainty about causes and effects of global warming..." news coverage article provided an interesting analysis of how specific (climate change related) language separates "us" versus "them" and how it that language influences our perception of responsibility (or blame) for the health of the planet. Interestingly, in the section about Putin, the author cites an example in which journalists asked Putin questions relating to his wife, but did not ask questions about global warming. This small facet of the text pertaining to questions (and not just their responses) could provide avenue for a sister-paper/research that delves more into the language of the questions funnelled from journalists re: climate change to important world leaders. On a global scale, it may be interesting to better understand how these questions about climate changed are framed and asked, including an understanding of Kuha's "included and suppressed agents," us versus them, and "what actions they are carrying out" as framed by these questions. Perhaps this research could provide further insight into the climate change debate overall and how it is influenced by the communication stream from media (reflecting journalists and world leaders) to the public (as receivers of this news).

Kendra\_na Jul 26, 2017 I think the identity topic fits before convictions well in this course. How we identify ourselves affects who we listen to, what we are willing to hear, and how we listen and speak. Although we may not be able to achieve true subjectivity in language, the process of science gets very close, through scientific method and peer revision, we reveal truths about our world. What is tricky about climate change is that those who deny anthropogenic changes to the environment are also rejecting a reputable, and usually trustworthy, way of knowing.

JoyAckerman Aug 15, 2017 This has been one of my favorite chapters so far, and one that will be useful to me in several courses. Students who take our Earth Systems and Climate Change course have asked that we help them be better prepared to engage in dialog with people who espouse counter-climate-change positions. From this material on facticity and conviction, I can see that what students need to learn is not only the climate science, but also ways to talk about - and to recognize patterns in talk about - climate change. It's already a challenge to engage students in learning about scientific uses of terms like uncertainty and error, which have specific and distinct meanings from their general usage. In science, uncertainty refers to a mathematical analysis which actually provides greater information about a measurement - it does not mean that you are 'not sure.' Likewise, in scientific measurement, error does not mean mistake but has to do with the precision with which a measurement has been conducted. As the semester draws nigh, I am wondering where and how I'll also fit in additional time and material on 'climate talk' - such as facticity and conviction. I am using an additional book this semester called Dire Predictions, by Michael Mann and Lee Kump, which includes a lot of visual information about climate change. And I just saved a link to a curriculum developed by an AESS colleague (Association of Environmental Studies and Sciences), which starts with individual narratives of climate change experience, rather than the scientific facts. I wasn't sure I'd use that material in this science course, but after reading the analysis of New Nature Writing and its power to incorporate both the facticity of experience and the facticity of science, I may well do so. Here's a link to Kate Darby's curriculum, for which she solicited climate narratives through AESS: http://serc.carleton.edu/bioregion/examples/184616.html. I'd love to hear from anyone else teaching climate science about whether and how they integrate climate speech into their course.

SabrinaCupeiro Jan 29, 2018 In this part of the world in South America, I usually hear people saying that a plot or the riverside is a "dirty space" when there are a lot of plants or trees, and the grass has grown. What is more, it seems that authorities have the same point of view, and they work with heavy machines to "clean" the place. "Full of plans" means that it need to be cleaned. It is not seen as a green space where to appreciate life in nature.

Mar 29 2018 11:02PM by Elizabeth Gold

While exploring how mass media coaxes us, readers, into accepting cruelty and injustice inflicted on both humans and animals I came across a linguistic technique that is worth mentioning. It is the use of euphemism. Apparently, it is a favorite of both manipulative politicians and scientists. In her article "Discarding euphemisms: the fate of animals deserves truthful words" Gosia Bryja shows how 'euphemisation' of language used to describe killing of animals is robbing " us of compassion towards non-human animals." The animals are presented as 'crops' that are harvested/utilized when there is a surplus. She quotes Aldo Leopold - the founder of wildlife management who defines it as “the art of making land produce sustained annual crops of wild game for recreational use.”

PETA devotes one of its blogs to animal - related euphemisms that are there to 'fool' us into believing that animals are treated well when in reality it is not the case. From 'cage-free eggs' and 'humane meat' to 'declawing' and 'leghold trap' these euphemisms are used to hide animal cruelty and abuse.

Mar 30 2018 09:56AM by Elizabeth Gold

Only adding a few words about the same technique of language 'euphemisation' as it is used in politics. Chi Luu in the online article "Linguistics of Mass Persuasion..." is quoting an American historian Henry Steele Commager notes on the 'corruption of language' in the American politics: "...Bombing is “protective reaction”, precision bombing is “surgical strikes”, concentration camps are “pacification centers” or “refugee camps” … Bombs […] dropped on one of your own villages are excused as “friendly fire”; a bombed house becomes automatically a “military structure.”

Chi Luu mentions also “persuasion by hinting” as one of many language techniques used in advertisements. For instance, the consumers are being 'trained' to complete the 'grammatically unresolved phrases' like “20% more/quieter/cleaner/bigger/faster!” as if there is something better out there just within their reach..

Studying the chapter on conviction made me definitely more aware about the language techniques used in 'mass persuasion'.

Jul 5 2018 06:46PM by Vale Bailo

This one possibly was the chapter that left me more puzzled. I came to have a slight understanding of how complicated stories might be to disentangle before we can comprehend, analyse and change them, if need be. I see how there are some broadly yes/no stories, which you either agree to or not – for instance that human action contributes to climate and environmental change. But, being Italian, I cannot help but thinking about the story of migration: our political debate nowadays sadly revolves around the topic of migrants and the opinions diffract into a million pieces. They are said to be either war/ environmental/ economic migrants, a mixture of the above, or either that they ‘are not’ migrants at all (right-wing positions) and shouldn’t be let in. It is so difficult to provide a clear framework to include these people-on-the-move that it becomes difficult to lay the foundation for a beneficial (we need it!) story of migration.

Jan 28 2021 02:02PM by Geoffrey Mokua Maroko

I wish to comment about part of the exercise given for this part.

The Question: Analyse the extract below from Men’s Health magazine. How does the facticity pattern decrease the facticity of the description RED MEAT IS UNHEALTHY? What impact could this have on the readers’ convictions about the healthiness of meat?

The Text: From Men’s Health magazine: A world leader in the fight against cancer, Dr Dashwood completed his PhD in the UK before hopping across the pond to join Oregon State University. His most recent research means you can indulge in a rare steak a little more often, without fear of retribution. Bloody heaven we say … scientists have discovered an easy way to protect yourself from the harmful effects of a sirloin – eat it with a side of spinach … Now you can have your steak and eat it (MH4:35)

My analysis: The facticity pattern decreases the facticity of the description RED MEAT IS UNHEALTHY by calling to expert authority “ A world leader in the fight against cancer…”, “…completed his PhD…” and “scientists have discovered…”. The author also uses repertoire of empiricism by saying, “His most recent research means…”. Another strategy is the use of the modal verb “can” to show that one has the option of not taking RED MEAT or the quantifying phrase “…a little more often…” and an assuring word choice “…without fear of retribution” and “…eat it with a side of spinach” The impact this facticity pattern would have is encouraging people to eat red meat as much as they want without any fear of health consequnces.

# Part 8: Erasure

chardover Mar 30, 2017 Hi, my name is Charlotte Dover and I'm a 2nd year English Literature and Language student at the University of Gloucestershire. I opted for the Ecocriticism module this year because I have always felt a love of the natural world and knew that investigating this kind of positive discourse analysis would be of great interest to me! I became so inspired by the content that I undertook an internship to aid the development of the online course and the whole team is very pleased with how its turning out. Erasure is a crucial story we live by and a prominent element of ecocriticism. If we can pinpoint the ways in which the natural world is erased, we can combat it. This is something I value because of my own personal ecosophy, which is that all beings have intrinsic value and need to be noticed and respected.

Sathishkumareng Jun 17, 2017 After reading this lesson, I am really worried that as we human beings take care of things like mobile phones , lap tops and all but we have failed to take care of animals and the plants by which the ecosystem is completely spoiled. though we speak a lot about plants and its importance none is ready to spend money and time for that. I know a doctor who gives a sapling to the mother who has delivered a baby. Once the mother and the baby are discharged from the hospital, the doctor gives the mother a sapling ans asks her to take care of the sampling like she takes care of the baby. she says it works out. In our place people are a bit sentimental too.Also, we fail to take care of things that are not important to us. Because of this a species can be completely destroyed. the mind of the men has to change. Life has to be made easy but not at the cost of other's expenses. To construct a house or a company, we do not worry to cut hundreds of trees and at the same time, we should know that those hundreds of trees will give life to hundreds of human beings.

fluersfloras Jul 21, 2017 This module brings to mind two things that I've studied as an environmental studies major. First, the misconstrued, disconnected (from nature) concept of modern, industrialized agriculture and the modern (western) grocery store and its marketing falsehoods ("natural" and "fresh"), are echoed in the essay, "Deep Ecology and Language: The Curtailed Journey of the Atlantic Salmon." Seafood, most specifically, is misrepresented in western supermarkets. As the essay discusses, fish were once singularly wild caught but since, fish farming has emerged and has changed our relationship with seafood. This article is fascinating and prompts the reader to see and ponder what the "intrinsic value of fish" truly means. "How can we prevent repeating the 'learning curve' of disease, suffering, and ecological problems that resulted from the curtailment of the journey of the Atlantic salmon?," the author questions. The author similarly implores us to consider land-dwelling agriculture, also. By becoming more aware of the erasure, so can we recognize it and expand our minds towards intrinsic worth.

Kendra\_na Aug 23, 2017 How do we make all animals more fully human without treating them as pets or anthropomorphizing them? For example, children often want to stroke animals that do not find touch rewarding because they know that cats and dogs do like that. I think we must show ourselves and the next generation what the needs, preferences, lives of individual species are, but also understand that pets offer a gateway to an ethic that individualizes animals and helps build empathy toward other beings. There is erasure in the word “it,” which seems to be applied to all beings except humans (and maybe pets). Robin Wall Kimmerer has attempted to combat the use of this pronoun, which voids all other species of agency and worth, here: https://onbeing.org/programs/robin-wall-kimmerer-the-intelligence-in-all-kinds-of-life/. It may not be perfect, but it’s a way of opening our minds to recognizing erasure. I also wanted to bring up another example of the mask. The polar bear used in Coca-Cola advertisements. My mom was always disturbed by this commercial, because not only is the polar bear anthropomorphized and its qualities as a polar bear erased, but it’s image is being used to sell something without its consent.

chardover Aug 23, 2017 Very valid point about the difference between household pets and the natural world as a whole, Kendra. I think the issue of humans' need for ownership of nature is a key ecological issue. It appears that as a species, we make sense of the earth by either projecting our humanity on to it, for example through The Mask as you mentioned, or by regarding animals as subordinate.

JoyAckerman Aug 28, 2017 I enjoyed this chapter's excellent illustrations of the variety of kinds of erasure in texts. The definitions and descriptions will really help me in giving feedback on student writing. I'm aware (and critical) when written work conceals the agency of the actors (especially when the result is that there is no one to 'blame' for environmental destruction!). Rather than merely criticizing passive sentence construction, I now have more to go on. The book chapter's examples of the erasure of animals and plants in ecological and agricultural reporting is really interesting. Makes me ask how much of ecological economics is economics, and how much is ecological. 'Counting nature' may help us to include the cost of environmental destruction in our accounting, but now I can see why it doesn't really change the paradigm. Although I've been sensitive to (sensitized to) the erasure of women and minorities in nature writing, this section has helped me to see a variety of ways in which other animals are subject to disenfranchisement through our language.

eisigeyes Dec 5, 2017 The images in this chapter gave me a lot to think about in terms of erasure. I was particularly drawn to the final image of the birds flying over the ocean. At first, I was thinking, "Hey, this isn't so bad: open air, community, good weather." Then I realized that there was no land actually pictured in the photo, which means, sooner or later, those birds are going to need to land somewhere, and the ocean isn't exactly hospitable to bird life cycles, in terms of building nests, looking for food, and general rest and recuperation. By erasing this land, we have this weird positive image of what is essentially a death sentence. Then again, I think the audience can understand that there is still land out there that is habitable for birds, but it does bring to mind other species that may be losing their landmasses (i.e., polar bears).

bjhough Jan 19, 2018 Agreed...the images gave me a lot to think about as well. Perhaps picking up on an earlier point in the thread--it is interesting that in order to see animals, we must see them as individuals. That seems, to me at least, a very human way of looking at them :-) But, if it generates empathy & encourages action on their behalf so much the better.

SabrinaCupeiro Jan 28, 2018 Hello to everyone. First of all I would like to thank the organizers of the course, they have done a wonderful job. Here in Uruguay, we do not have any information about ecolinguistics, and it was revealing as an environmental communicator to find it. I work as responsible for the communication area in an environmental and conservationist NGO, with a strong scientific orientation, I always find difficult to communicate our mission in a way that touches the public's minds and hearts. Reading about erasure, really illuminates this issue. We talk about biodiversity and native flora and fauna, but never refer to them as individual animals, plants and habitats. We do no describe them as an experience to live. From now on, I will take this kind of erasure discourse into consideration before publishing.

Apr 2 2018 06:29PM by Elizabeth Gold

One of the ways the animals are devalued or erased in agribusiness is by representing them as machines/ production units. I have been aware about that but after reading the chapter on Erasure I wanted to find out more. So what did I discover?

'NCT' for rams.. Multiple articles calling farmers to 'NCT' their rams before the mating season. ( Now is the time to put your ram through its NCT; Will your ram pass his annual ‘NCT’? Rams need thorough 'NCT' ahead of breeding season...).This metaphor turns rams into faceless breeding machines that have to be up-kept for the sake of this singular activity. How about the rest of the year? Even when the issue of their well-being is raised objectively, the emphasis is again on their functionality: " There is growing concern about their short working lives, many falling by the wayside in their first working year."

Have you heard about 'empty cows'? One of the farming articles titled "An easy and effective way to identify empty cows" calls dairy farmers to "optimise profitability by... reducing the number of days that cows are empty".This metaphor again shows that cow's only value is purely economic with no needs or inherent worth. Cows that for some reason don't produce off springs are seen as an "anomaly" that "baffles the experts". Somehow the derogative metaphors which describe the cows - "spinster cow", "elderly bovine maidens" or "barren females" have a distinct feeling of sexism. That is strengthened by the conclusive sentence in which one of the "experts" guesses that the reason farmers keep this "virtual army of females aged four years or over who have never had a calf" is "to keep stock bulls quiet when they're off duty."

Also, apparently, what some farmers want is 'an invisible cow' as one of the online articles "Breeding the ‘invisible’ cow and striving for simplicity..." states. The farmer in the article 'erases' his cows both figuratively and literally :"I want an invisible cow. I want to see her two times in the year – the day she calves and the day I inseminate her. I don’t want to see her for the rest of the year ..."

# Part 9: Salience

chardover Mar 28, 2017 Hi again! As mentioned in the previous section, I'm Charlotte and I'm a 2nd year English Literature and Language student at the University of Gloucestershire. I opted for the Ecocriticism module this year because I have always felt a love of the natural world but also, for me, it provided an intriguing bridge between my two disciplines (literature and language). I became so inspired by the content that I undertook an internship to aid the development of the online course and the whole team is very pleased with how its turning out. Salience is almost the opposite of erasure - we must give nature salience through our use of language to make bring it to the forefront of our minds. It's a far more positive way of looking at texts. Enjoy! :)

Sathishkumareng Jun 17, 2017 Life is easy when we make it easy. When we feel that everything around is important we can feel the importance of the life. To make a meaningful life we should think that everyone and everything around is important. As the baby and mom, we should feel that we should be with the nature.

fluersfloras Jul 21, 2017 Thank you for aid in developing this course, @chardover! Agreed that salience is an uplifting approach to nature. One cannot help but think of Aldo Leopold's "Sand County Almanac" when drawing on examples of salience. The words and writing of Leopold are so descriptive that the reader can feel what Leopold is feeling and see what he is seeing. Additionally, creating an individual identify for members of nature, such as in "Salience and Trees," is a unique way to develop an emotional connection with different elements of nature, such as a tree for example; as the author states, "[H]ow we feel about trees, and ultimately, how we treat them, is influenced by the ways they are represented in the texts and images which surround us."

JoyAckerman Aug 28, 2017 Two favourite aspects to this lesson (I'm reading the book as well as the notes and exercises). One is the focus on visual communication. This is more and more important to our 'audiences' - and therefore more important for me to incorporate in the classroom through providing some guidance to students when asking them to make presentations or work products that use images. Climate Outreach (climateoutreach.org) has a new focus on climate visuals, including courses and resources to help folks who work in the climate change communication field. The other part of this chapter I liked is the focus on nature writing. I had to look up New Nature Writing (which was instructive); but I have just finished Robert McFarlane's Wild Places so have some familiarity with this genre. In a class I teach called Ecological Thought, I always ask students to draft a personal essay on a Nature Encounter. Next, they read and share about an essay from an edited collection called The Color of Nature, which includes nature writing intentionally selected from writers with experiences and perspectives that are socially and racially diverse from the 'white male privileged' norm (that is often critiqued as the locus of the nature writing voice.) After discussion - what do we mean by Nature? by Encounter? by Nature Writing? (as well as discussion of how to give and get essay writing feedback) - students revise, or at least plan a revision of their essay. If I include Ecolinguistics as a course text next year, students will have more fodder for considering the value of nature writing in society, as well as ideas about how to heighten the salience of nature in their own writing. Thank you!

Kendra\_na Sep 4, 2017 Great last part of the course. I really liked that not only do we need to give linguistic and visual saliency to plants and animals through representing them as agents of material processes, but we must recognize that our lives depend on the active roles of all beings. And those roles can be quite ordinary. I am glad fluersfloras brought up Leopold. I particularly think of his "Land Ethic."

SabrinaCupeiro Jan 29, 2018 In the last ten years in Uruguay, Government decided to include native fauna pictures in the currency, specially in coins, instead of the face of a famous man or woman. As people handle coins everyday, it is a really effective way to build up salience for our animals, to generate interest in them and their status in their habitats. I would like to share this link about animals illustrated in currency "Valoración de la naturaleza e iconografía numismática en nuestra América" (Spanish only) http://vidasilvestre.org.uy/actividades/valoracion-de-la-naturaleza-e-iconografia-numismatica-en-nuestra-america/

Jul 6 2018 09:11AM by Vale Bailo

I wonder whether anthropomorphism can be used as a primary means to introduce a preliminary form of sensitization of people to environmental concerns and to the value of nature; since the audience would likely be one which is used to ideologies of anthropocentrism and self-interest first, it could be a way out towards increasingly humane worldviews – reform instead of revolution, do we have time for it? I write this bearing in mind “Ecolinguistics and erasure: restoring the natural world to consciousness”, where examples of erasure are given with respect to gender, women’s writing, etc. and the importance of taking them into account. Beneficial stories about nature, the environment, human beings, animals, etc. work for a section of society that already holds dear those values and stories to their heart; much more difficult would be to appeal those who thrive into the present system, and those who think they thrive or could thrive if they follow a given path and focus on given ‘promoted values’. I wonder whether it would make sense and be useful to find a set of compromised stories to engage everyone, even those who are skeptic about environmentalism (how many people do believe in climate change as man-made in the USA? Who voted for Trump?) and then slowly readjust these stories and make them increasingly beneficial, till there would be no more need to refer to stories about ‘what people can gain about becoming environmentalists’ anymore (frame chaining). Also I have read the article about Trump’s administration and I think one of the ways stories could be changed is by having communicators expressing evaluations about what they report, instead of just reporting someone else’s point of view, which especially for journalists means reproducing alternatively the left or right-wind ideologies in a sort of manicheistic circular and unfruitful way, even though it may be difficult to do so. One thing that left me a bit confused was why terms such as badger – say the names we have given to animals – should be considered as a form of erasure; it might be difficult sometimes to include in texts descriptions of the animals or plants we are talking about for the sake of brevity, concision or clarity of the text; moreover, appreciation of what those names imply relies on what they evoke in the readership, so I guess it has to do with our knowledge about nature in the first place. If we know the natural world well enough, than those names would not be a form of erasure any longer, but rather they would evoke beauty and authenticity.

Jul 6 2018 11:56AM by Vale Bailo

I believe that nowadays there has been a turn towards more empathetic and nature-focused ways of seeing the world; I see that people is more sensitive to local food, organic agriculture, sustainable forms of tourism, rediscovery of local places, affective geography, rediscovery of old traditional ways of growing food and of life in small countries, outside the city. Also, they are more attentive to global environmental topics and their interrelation with our globalized systems of subsistence and lifestyles. Again, my only concern is with who uses these beneficial stories and how: greenwashing is going great and loads of products are sold under the false pretense of being eco-sustainable, when there are not, or predominantly not.

Changes in stories should really go hand in hand with changes in everyday real life: can a story about the beauty of spending time outside in the green really change our worldviews if we never get to experience what it is like to hike, swim, or occasionally meet wild animals?

# Part 10: Corpus

Getting to work with multiple corpora...eisigeyes Dec 7, 2017 I really loved the way the exercises here were sequenced. It was awesome to get to the final series of exercises, where I could draw conclusions and make deeper observations based upon the findings in the BYU COCA Corpus and the Google N-gram Viewer. It gave me some ideas for future corpus studies, and it also reminded me of a colleague of mine who created a tutorial / walk-through for the COCA corpus as her master's thesis. If you are interested, here is the link to that walk-through: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpoY8O5yXew. That is the first video in a series of five that can get you more confident with using COCA. Hopefully that will help others as well as they move into future corpus and discourse work.

Corpus Approaches repoole1 Mar 28, 2017 Hi all, I'm Robert Poole, an assistant professor at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. I hope these materials will benefit you and help you advance your ecolinguistics research. I understand that performing your first corpus searches can seem a bit overwhelming. If you need to troubleshoot your search syntax or have any questions on the corpora or the tools, please post here and I'll respond as soon as possible. To the corpus!

JoyAckerman Aug 28, 2017 Thank you so much for this introduction, including the references and links. Although I've worked with doctoral students doing text analysis of specific sets of documents (public hearings about wind turbine siting, for example), I lack an overview of the corpus approach. I'll look at these links in more detail, and also keep them in mind for students who want to experiment with this research method.

repoole1 Aug 31, 2017 Hi Joy, I'm glad the resources will be helpful to you and your students. If you or your students ever have questions, feel free to email me directly at robert.poole@tamucc.edu.

Eftekharsadat Jun 16, 2017 This part is really useful since I have some questions and materials in my mind but I don’t know how to start and research.

Sathishkumareng Jun 17, 2017 I have done some research studies about ELT. I feel that this will help us make wonderful researches. I will try that for sure.

Jul 9 2018 09:37AM by Vale Bailo

It was interesting to do the ‘wolves’ search and see how ‘wolf’ might be used to refer to a person who might be involved in criminal activities. I guess this negative rhetoric around wolves –or any other animal- has unconscious negative consequences as far as their treatment is concerned. I have recently read about wolves having re-appeared in certain areas in Italy, and it was an endangered species. As farmers lamented the fact that wolves were killing and eating the cattle, regulation is being approved to allow people to kill them. This makes quite non-sense as they will disappear again, but much discourse around wolves being dangerous has been circulating, that people find it hard to envisage any other alternative solution to protect both wolves and farmers, like keeping the wolves in a protected natural park. Of course, there are many associations asking for preservation.

What I think I got from this last chapter is that, as we are facing a cultural turn and we are called to choose whether to continue living the way we do, or following a new path, we seem to be torn in two and we act in a sort of schizophrenic way. On the one hand, one can see that our sensitivity towards life is changing (the fact that from the 70s or so ‘who’ becomes a widespread pronoun for animals, for instance), while on the other hand we tend to accept things without questioning them appropriately, so for instance we find ourselves talking about global warming instead of climate change, which is basically using a metonymy to refer to one of the greatest challenges of our society (as it is up on us to act –or not to act- and not on anybody else).