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Investigating the Effect of Semantic Broadening and Narrowing on Ecological Terminologies

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Abstract

This study investigates 20 ecological terminologies to assess the impact of semantic broadening and narrowing, and analyzing how such changes shape systematic communication, public perception, and policy formulation. It adopts MAK Halliday's systemic functional theory to analyze the secondary data using a qualitative analytical approach to examine the semantic change of broadening and narrowing in a few ecological terminologies. Through corpus analysis and discourse evaluation, we identify patterns of semantic shift in key ecological terms such as "environment", "climate justice", "biodegradables", "green", "biodiversity," etc., and assess their implications for clarity and conceptual coherence in ecological research. The findings reveal that most familiar ecological terminologies undergo broadening compared to narrowing. While certain word formation processes, such as broadening, can undergo semantic narrowing, it risks ambiguity,

whereas narrowing fosters precision but may restrict contextual relevance. The study underscores the need for balanced lexical evolution to maintain terminological rigor in ecological science while accommodating dynamic environmental discourse.
Keywords: Semantic Change, ecological terminologies, broadening, narrowing, environmental discourses

Introduction

In recent years, the urgency of environmental awareness and climate change education has grown due to the severe effects of ecosystem degradation. One key dimension of this concern lies in the evolution of ecological terminologies, which undergoes semantic broadening and narrowing that directly influences how people perceive environmental realities. UNESCO (2010) emphasizes the rise of novel experiences, including sustainable consumption, disaster preparedness, recycling, and renewable energy utilization, necessitating the development of new linguistic expressions to address these evolving challenges. Stibbe (2015) notes that the language used to talk about the environment must also change to keep up with the shifting realities of time.

This evolution illustrates the fluid interplay between language and environmental discourse, wherein meanings of words evolve over time due to cultural, social, political, and scientific factors. Aitchison (2001) asserts that language, akin to all facets of existence, undergoes gradual transformation, and ecological terminology is no exception. Semantic change, which occurs through broadening, narrowing, amelioration, pejoration, metaphor and metonymy helps to shape how people conceptualize environmental issues. Badmus and Olofinsao (2021) assert that these changes may be conscious or unconscious, as words acquire new usages or lose old ones. The linguistic shifts demonstrate both diachronic and synchronic transformations that distort the societal usages of these words in the environment.

In environmental discourse, terms like "wetland," "sustainability," "climate change," and "biodiversity" have undergone significant shifts in meaning. For instance, *wetland,* once meant a useless swamp and wasteland. Santra (2017) notes that it was considered "one of the most threatened of all environmental resources" (159). Today, Wetland is referred to as an area important for the stabilization of banks and shores, biodiversity, water purification, and flood protection (Santra, 2017, p.163). In the same way, *sustainability* has become a global catchphrase in politics, business, and society. *Biodiversity*, on the other hand, is often reduced to species counts, for which Cernansky (2017) argues "doesn't have to be just about the number of a species in an ecosystem" (p. 22) but in the complicated relationship between species that results in a healthy and resilient ecosystem. These changes reflect how semantic shifts can both limit and empower people, by raising awareness or risking oversimplifying ideas.

In addition, changes in the meanings of ecological words are significant for shaping ecological awareness, policy and public involvement. These changes make it easier for people to learn about ecology and get involved, and also make environmental problems seem less complicated. Stibbe (2015) asserts that linguistic evolution arises organically from human interactions with novel ecological contexts, evolving values and priorities. This study examines the double effect of semantic change, which contends that while language transformation is unavoidable, it requires direction to ensure that ecological terminology continues to inform, inspire and elicit meaningful responses to environmental crises. Most ecolinguistic studies concentrate on the influence of language in environmental advocacy, metaphorical framing or discourse analysis. Yet, they fail to thoroughly examine how semantic broadening and narrowing distinctly alter ecological awareness and perception. This paper is concerned with this deficiency by offering a comprehensive diachronic and synchronic analysis of specific ecological terms, which delineates their

semantic evolutions and assesses their ramifications for environmental communication. By employing Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a framework, this study goes beyond mere description of language change to examine the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of these shifts within ecological discourse. In doing this, the study not only adds to the field of ecolinguistics, but also presents a useful description of how broadening and narrowing strategically shape language to improve public understanding, policy framing and shared ecological responsibility.

This research emanates from the observation of the shifts in word meanings in terms of broadening and narrowing, and recognizing how these shifts shape public perception of environmental issues. By highlighting the central role language plays in how people interpret ecological concepts.

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

Semantic Change

Semantics is mainly interested in the linguistic meaning within a language. As Hidayati (2020) notes, it involves "the study of meaning communication through language" (34). In this field, semantic change investigates the change in the meaning of certain words over time, and how its effect is visible in aspects of language such as its phonology, morphology or terminology. The primary reason language change is man's desire to use concepts to suit his needs at a given time. Khalid (2009) describes this as "the evolutional change in the meaning of words," highlighting that meanings are never static but gradually changing (p. 46). In the same vein, Aitchinson (2001) explains that such change can "likely be triggered by social factors, such as fashion, foreign influence and social need" (p. 197). These changes are evident across different levels of language use.

Ecolinguistics

The interrelationship between semantics and ecolinguistics in this study lies in understanding how change affects human ecological awareness. Human language has the power to sustain or diminish environmental values, since it can strengthen or weaken how people perceive and relate to the environment. Ogedengbe and Adams (2025, p. 96) observe that "central to ecolinguistics and the understanding that linguistic expressions do more than describe the world; they actively construct perceptions of ecological systems", suggesting that terminology choices can create a system for ecological awareness.

Furthermore, Stibbe (2021) emphasizes that, "these systems are the hope, that is, taking on an ecological identity will encourage people to notice the larger ecological systems that life depends on, increase their respect and care for life in all its forms, and, importantly, act" 107. Ecolinguistics, as a field, generally studies how language inspires members of a society to protect or harm the environment and everything in it.

Ecology of Language in relation to semantic change

The impact of the global ecological crisis has given rise to what Haugen (1972) terms "the ecology of language", which investigates the relationship between linguistics and ecology. Einar Haugen first coined the term *ecology of language* with the view to explaining how language functions within an environment. To Haugen (1972), ecology of language is "the study of the interactions between any given language and its environment" (57). The environment in this sense is simply the social and cultural setting for which language is interpreted not merely the physical one. To collaborate this, Penz and Fill (2022) explain that, "the environment of a language is the society that uses language and includes the social and psychological environment of language, yet not the physical environment" (233).

Within Ecolinguistics, the ecology of language helps one to comprehend how language evolves due to changing realities and how such change affects societal awareness. Like every living thing, language has the capacity to live or die, and when ecological terminologies shift in terms of narrowing and broadening, the ecology of language provides a wider scope to explain the change and its meaning. As different society faces different ecological issues, and the drive to either broaden or narrow such issues due to environmental priorities or shared experiences, ecological meaning in language helps to support positive narratives and discourage harmful narratives (Stibbe, 2021, p 9).

Ecological Terminologies

In response to the growing concerns about environmental issues, new ecological terminologies have been coined or created to meet the rising issues. This creation is inundated by the context-dependent interpretation, which produces different interpretations, "because words mean different things to different people" Badmus and Olofinsao (2021, p. 165). However, scholars such as Hodges (2008) promote a critical review as some ecological words carry multiple meanings, while others tend to have several words for the same concept. This makes it difficult to understand and can lead to misunderstandings. This ambiguity can make it difficult to communicate and understand each other.

Hodges (2008) affirms that ecological language is influenced by diverse lexical and philosophical assumptions, especially with regards to the construction of meaning and scientific knowledge. The ultimate objective of ecological terminologies is to redirect focus towards the detrimental effects of human actions on the environment and to foster heightened environmental consciousness and accountability.

Semantic Broadening

Semantic broadening refers to the situation whereby a word that used to have a limited meaning starts including more referents or

ideas. Allan and Robinson (2012) characterise it as a process through which "a word with restricted meaning becomes less restricted." Pyles and Alego (1982) characterise it as a sense that broadens to encompass additional referents than it previously possessed. This change can be seen in a number of English words. The term "bush fire" used to mean a fire that only burned bushes, but now it means any uncontrolled fire that spreads beyond its original source. The Old English word *docgma*, originally meant a certain type of dog, but has, over time, changed to mean "dog", which includes all members of *Canis familiaris*. Another good example is the word "salary," which comes from the Latin word *salarium*, meaning "an allotment of salt." The word is used to mean "soldiers' wages," but it has, over time, added a referent to mean "the general wages paid to all types of workers." These examples depict semantic broadening as a concept that often occurs because of social, cultural and practical needs, which change the meanings of words beyond their literal or original meanings. This change also affects specialised areas of language, like ecological terminology, where words take on more metaphorical meanings that affect how people think about environmental issues.

Semantic Narrowing

But semantic narrowing limits the meaning of a word, making it more specific or limited than it was before. Khalid (2019) refers to narrowing as a process that limits the meaning of a word or concept to a subset of its original interpretation. For example, the Old English word *deor* used to mean a lot of animals, but now it only means the animal we now call "deer". In the same way, the word "meat," which used to mean any type of food, now only means the flesh of animals. More so, the word "mistress," which comes from the Old French word "maistresse," was used to mean a woman who took care of a household or child, but now changed to mean a woman who is having an affair with a married man. This kind of narrowing shows how changes in culture and society can

affect how language changes over time. In recent research, narrowing is also seen in ecological terminology. For example, words like *ecology*, *environment,* and *ecosystem* are sometimes used in very specific or metaphorical ways to mean aspects of the ecosystem that "transform secondary nature back toward a more ecologically resilient condition" Re, (2024, p.26). This underscores the significance of analysing the impact of narrowing and broadening on ecological discourse, especially in influencing public comprehension, policy formulation, and environmental consciousness. In light of this context, the current study examines the impact of semantic broadening and narrowing on such ecological terminologies.

Empirical Review

Ge and Danarajan (2024) conducted a thematic review of ecolinguistics covering more than fifty-three years, and analyzing the field's scope, methodological trends, and thematic convergences and divergences. Their research shows that ecolinguistics is a young but growing subfield that is becoming more popular, with more publications, a wider range of topics, and more collaboration between different fields. While identifying the huge potential of ecolinguistics in promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, their findings also emphasize limitations that necessitate academic inquiry to strengthen the field's theoretical and practical foundations. This extensive review underscores the significance of ecolinguistics in linking human society, cognition, and the environment, while also allowing for more concentrated investigations into particular aspects, such as semantics and shifts in meaning within ecological terminology.

Similarly, Stibbe (2014) further advanced ecolinguistics by incorporating it into critical discourse studies (CDS). He expanded the analytical framework of CDS by incorporating ecological considerations into its normative scope. His work emphasizes how ecolinguistics critiques discourses that perpetuate ecological harm

while advocating for those that promote environmental respect and sustainability. By applying discourse analysis to non-human entities and future generations, Stibbe redefined the relational boundaries of power, ideology, and responsibility within discourse. This empirical contribution emphasizes the necessity for discourse analysis that addresses both human and ecological impacts, although it does not directly examine the micro-level semantic shifts of ecological terminology that influence these discourses.

Ponton (2022) further contributes to the trend by linking ecolinguistics with Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA). His study, in contrast to conventional critical studies that reveal detrimental ecological discourse, investigates discourse that advocates for environmental sustainability. In utilizing CDA instruments such as framing, metaphor and presupposition, this study examined how ecologically "positive" discourses expose foundational ideologies that uphold environmental ethics. Ponton presents a supplementary methodology to ecolinguistic analysis by emphasizing language that maintains environmental consciousness. Nonetheless, even though this methodology enhanced the ideological and pragmatic aspects of ecolinguistics, it inadequately addressed the evolution of lexical semantics within ecological discourse – a deficiency that persists.

Ogunyemi and Bada's (2019) research was on ecolinguistics within the multilingual environment of Adekunle Ajasin University in Nigeria. Using survey data from 180 students, they discovered that Nigeria's indigenous languages are becoming more endangered and are being overshadowed by English, which is the primary language of thought and academic communication. The results of the study show that language is important for cultural and biological diversity, but they also reveal that local languages are in danger. This work enriches ecolinguistic discourse by contextualizing it within language endangerment and

multilingualism, but does not examine semantic change in ecological terms.

These reviewed studies clarify the expansion and complexity of ecolinguistics, ranging from thematic reviews (Ge & Danarajan, 2024) to theoretical advancements in critical discourse studies (Stibbe, 2014), positive discourse frameworks (Ponton, 2022; Stibbe, 2015), and empirical multilingual settings (Ogunyemi & Bada, 2019). However, none of these directly examine the effects of semantic broadening and narrowing processes on ecological terminologies, public perception, and policy communication. This gap has shaped the current study, which examines semantic shifts in specific ecological terminologies through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. This study fills an important gap by connecting ecolinguistics with semantic change. It looks at how broadening creates ambiguity and how narrowing guarantees precision. This helps make environmental discourse clearer and more precise.

Theoretical Framework

Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (1994) provides a robust framework for this study. It posits that language change is affected by users' societal needs at the moment. Unlike structural linguistic theories that prioritize form over function or sentence-level analysis (Burns & Coffin, 2001), Systemic Functional Linguistics, as a functional theory of language, focuses on "the semiotic constructs… made out of meaning", especially how language constructs meaning within cultural and environmental contexts (Matthiessen et al., 2010, p.1). A core tenet of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is its semantic orientation, which asserts that grammatical categories are based on meaning. This framework enables language to both reflect and shape social realities through three meta-functions: ideational (representing experiences), interpersonal (expressing social relations and attitudes), and textual (organizing coherent discourse).

The ideational meta-function is concerned with how people construct the world in them and around them using grammatical resources, participants, or processes. Matthiessen et al. (2010) relate this to how we "provide the resource for construing our experience of the world around us and inside us as meaning" (p. 92). People employ words in their ideational function as a means of representing patterns of experience by creating a mental picture of reality. The interpersonal meta-function reflects the creation of social relations, attitudes, and evaluations through language to show urgency and meaning. Halliday's meta-function places language in the form of coherence, highlighting the message in the light of themes in discourse**.** Meanwhile, the textual meta-function ensures coherence and structures messages to emphasize environmental themes.

This paper aims to investigate the semantic changes in selected ecological terminologies, using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The choice of SFL is appropriate because it clarifies the evolution of ecological terminology in response to societal demands, with semantic broadening and narrowing functioning as linguistic strategies for depicting emerging environmental realities. This study employs SFL's meta-functions to analyze semantic shifts and illustrate how language reflects ecological challenges, shapes public discourse and catalyzes action for environmental sustainability.

Methodology

The study adopts a purposive sampling technique to examine twenty frequently used ecological terminologies, to view their semantic changes over time in relation to semantic broadening and narrowing. The data is gathered from a variety of sources, including scholarly journals, and media articles within multimedia texts. These terminologies were selected because of their frequency of use within different online platforms. To comprehend their nuanced meaning and changing patterns, Adams and

Ogedengbe (2025) explain that "the incorporation of multimedia devices, which include the use of online platforms …and other multimedia resources, facilitates learning processes" of ecological terminologies (88). These varieties of resources will help to provide a rich blend of both historical and contemporary lexical words that have undergone either broadening or narrowing. The study will interpret the dictionary meaning of the selected terminologies and relate them to their modern ecological applications, to assess how a shift in word meaning affects societal awareness.

Results

Semantic Narrowing

Semantic narrowing of words will examine specific ecological terms to illustrate how their meanings have become more restricted or limited over time.

Table 1: Examples of **semantic narrowing** in ecological words

S/N	Ecological Word	Original meaning (Dictionary)	Ecological context meaning
1	Climate Change	A slight but natural variation in the weather patterns of the climate at a particular time.	A long-term natural change in temperatures and weather patterns either due to greenhouse gases or human-induced activities. Eco-activists often frame it as a 'climate emergency'
2	Biome	A major ecological community with a distinct climate and flora.	It is now broadly used to describe large **geographical areas** with similar climate, vegetation, and wildlife.
3	Environment	Originally used to refer to the physical, spiritual, and social aspects of one's surroundings.	It has been narrowed or restricted to mean the natural world, including the ecosystem within a geographical sphere, such as temperature, soil conditions that necessitate an organism's survival.
4	Wild	A plant or animal dwelling in their natural environment, not controlled by humans.	Any untamed organism that helps to maintain the ecological balance of nature.

5	Weed	This is a wild plant that grows where it is not wanted, especially among cultivated plants.	This term has been narrowed informally or widely used to refer to hard drugs such as cannabis or most tobacco products.
6.	Niche	A job or activity that is perfect for someone, or a hollow place in a wall.	This term has been narrowed to stress the spatial and functional relationship of specific species within an ecosystem, including their interaction with other organisms.
7.	Resilience	The ability to return quickly to your usual health or state of mind after suffering an illness, difficulties, etc.	This term is narrowed ecologically to view the capacity of the ecosystem to recover from severe environmental changes, such as an earthquake, a tornado, etc., while maintaining its essential function.
8.	Migration	The movement from one place to another of a large group of people, birds, animals, etc.	Semantically narrowed to mean the seasonal movement of a species of animals from one habitat to another for either survival, food, or breeding.
9.	Cycle	A number of events that are happening in a repeated order.	Ecologically narrowed to mean the repeated movement or change from one phase or form to another, which enables reproduction or ecosystem sustainability example, the carbon cycle, the nitrogen cycle, etc.
10.	Pollution	The process of making air, water, soil, etc., dangerously dirty and not suitable for people to use.	In an ecological sense, it has been narrowed to mean any environmental contamination, which excludes any non-physical sense, such as water pollution, air pollution, but not spiritual pollution.

Analysis

From Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective, ecological terms like "*climate change*," "*biome*," "*environment*," and "*wild*" are analyzed through ideational, interpersonal, and textual meta-functions. From the ideational perspective, ecological terms are understood by viewing participants' roles in the word use process, presenting humans as actors responsible for the change. Ideationally, climate change is reframed as a human-impacted system that emphasizes cause-and-effect dynamics over an unbounded natural phenomenon, while "*biome*" descriptively and scientifically categorizes ecological

systems, "*environmen*t" integrates social existence as a key participant in the discussions of ecosystem protection or degradation, creating a broader relationship which positions man and the natural elements as co-interactors within the same system. "*Wild*" is ideationally narrowed to undomesticated organisms or areas untouched by humans. Lastly, "*weed*" is narrowed to a competitor or an illegal plant, which justifies the material processes such as removal, control or eradication. These ecological terminologies work to ideationally present ecological experience into a system of actors or entities that influence interpretation and public awareness.

Interpersonally, these terms foster ecological consciousness by shaping relationships between how people describe ecological issues and take a stance. The term "*climate change*" drives advocacy that warns against unsustainable growth, but in ecological discourse, words such as "*biome*" adopt a more evaluative nature in conservation contexts (e.g., "threatened biomes should be protected"). This positions humans to be stewards with a positive viewpoint. While the term "*environment*" supports advocacy by evaluating human impacts on how the environment is handled, whether beneficially or harmfully. Similarly, "*wild*" as an ecological term functions interpersonally by countering exploitative views, but when used for intrinsic values, it promotes respect for nature's needs. Interpersonal meanings shape people's ecological attitude and strengthen collective accountability.

From a textual perspective, these terminologies play a role in how environmental discourses are interpreted. The term "*climate change*" serves as a thematic anchor for cohesive policy and socio-political discourse, while "*biome*" enhances narrative flow through reference chains to terms like "climate". When the term "*environment*" is viewed textually, it provides coherence by linking to specific ecosystems, which act as a hypernym for terms

such as marine, forest, wetlands, etc. It provides a perspective to understand specific ecological results. Finally, "*wild*" when viewed thematically implicitly supports cohesive ecological narratives, collectively reshaping human-nature relations with urgency and specificity.

These terminologies, when thematically applied, help to guide the audience toward more ecologically appropriate interpretations.

Semantic Broadening

Table 2: Examples of semantic broadening in eco-friendly words

	Ecological Word	**Original meaning**	**Ecological context meaning**
11	Green	Originally used to refer to a particular colour.	The term has been broadened to mean any environmentally friendly practices, action, or place. Thus, new words such as '*green library'*, '*green energy', 'green commerce',* etc. have emerged. This term gives a sense of safety.
12	Greenhouse gas	'A gas that aids the greenhouse effect by absorbing infrared radiation'.	Any gas in the Earth's atmosphere that traps heat
13	Organic	The word is used to mean natural or 'close to nature'.	Any natural product that has a low impact on the environment.
14	Flood	This refers to a large amount of water that covers a usually dry area.	Due to the constant or sudden destruction of life and property, this term has been broadened to also refer to ideas, the flow of the tide towards land or a particular large number of persons in a place.
15	Refuse/ Reduce/ Reuse/ Repurpose/ Recycle	Each individual dictionary meaning varies.	These terminologies as used in ecological context has been broadened to create a process and a notion of ecosystem safety.
16	Climate	Climate is a situation that exists at a particular time, especially one which involves people's opinions and attitudes.	This term has been broadened to cover a wide range of meanings, with new words added to expand its meaning. Examples include: '*climate footprint'*, '*climate justice'*, '*climate activist*', '*climate change'*, '*climate*

			crisis', etc.
17.	Disturbance	Something that stops one from being able to continue doing something, or the act of stopping someone from being able to continue doing something.	This term has been co-opted into ecology to mean any discrete natural or man-made events that alter the ecosystem structure.
18	Eco-	The suffix 'eco' is derived from the term ecology to mean 'environment'.	The presence of the suffix has been broadened to mean any ecologically acceptable place, person, or action that is beneficial to the environment. E.g., *Eco-regions, eco-friendly, ecozones, eco-tourism*, etc.
19	Bio-	The prefix 'bio' is used to refer to living things.	This prefix has been broadened to accommodate new words such as *'biogas', biomass, 'biosphere'*, etc.
20	Conservation	The protection of natural things such as animals, plants, forests, etc., to prevent them from being spoiled or destroyed.	This term has been broadened ecologically to mean the protection and management of biodiversity, ecosystems, and natural, cultural, or economic resources, for sustainability.

Analysis

The broadening of the identified ecological terminologies in Table 2 using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory demonstrates how language evolves to construe environmental reality. In their original meanings, these terms function primarily within everyday usage as material or relational processes in the ideational meta function. The term "*green*" for example has acquired additional connotations of 'safety and healthy life'. Thus, we hear words like "*I am going green*." (to mean, I am eating healthily) and other phrases such as "*green energy*," "*green library"* use to refer to any library that meets the requirements for a green and sustainable library*, "green language"* or "*green building*" all now convey a commitment to safe ecological practices and policies.

In the same light, the word "*flood*" broadly and metaphorically describes any overwhelming or excessive influx or situation (e.g., "*information flooding*", "*flooding of tears*" or "*flooding of ideas*", etc.). The broadened ecological meanings involve semantic extension, grammatical metaphor, such as nominalizing processes like "climate change" into a thing. These shifts enable the terms to represent complex environmental concepts, such as sustainability, safety, or ecosystem impact, through nominal groups and compounding like "*eco-friendly*," "*Refuse/ Reduce/ Reuse/ Repurpose/ Recycle*," and "*climate footprint*". Textually, they organize discourses through cohesive chains and thematic progression to focus on environmental issues, mostly in educational, media or policy discourses.

Interpersonally, these terminologies enact social relationships by assessing ecological actions with positive terms such as "organic" to imply purity, or negative terms (e.g., "greenhouse gas" to signal harm), evaluations, urgency, or safety, like terminologies such as "climate crisis" to evoke a sense of action. The 5Rs ("refuse/reduce/reuse/repurpose/recycle") exemplify a collective process, bonded into one instructional discourse to promote ecosystem safety. Prefixes like "eco-" and "bio-" expand lexically to signify environmental benefit or biological focus, creating new lexical items (e.g., "biogas," "eco-tourism"). Overall, SFL reveals how these terms shift from concrete to abstract meanings, enabling ecological discourse to construe experience, enact advocacy, and organize urgent environmental narratives across diverse contexts.

Discussion of Findings

From the analysis, ecological terminologies have been significantly narrowed or broadened to create an impact on societal awareness and cultural behavior towards environmentally friendly or unfriendly issues. The constant use of these ecological terminologies in advertisements, workshops, policy documents, academics, etc., helps to create a unique public perception, evoke a

sense of guilt when a narrative does not favour the environment (negative), and encourage the general public to uphold the environment as our haven (positive).

In addition, the repeated usage of certain ecological terminologies, whether positive or negative, within specific domains, shapes the mindset and promotes the behavior of other members of the society. It is deduced that when existing words cannot be narrowed in terms of their meanings, certain words or prefixes are added to create a contextual foundation, which in turn go through different word formation processes such as clipping and neologism, etc, depending on the environmental need. For instance, the prefix 'eco-' is added to new words to broaden and create new meanings, which in turn meet new experiences and context. The analysis demonstrates that broadened terms extend discourses to include new ecological realities, whereas narrowed terms increase specificity and urgency in environmental communication.

Conclusion

To sum up, semantic changes in ecological terminologies demonstrate the unique relationship between language, societal need and environmental realities. While broadening as a semantic process expand word meaning over, narrowing restrict or limit meaning with the process of time. By studying both broadening and narrowing from the perspective of ecological terminologies, this study reveals the changing nature of ecological terminologies to meet new realities, and it explains how important ecological terminology is when applied in a balanced way.

Ultimately, the evolution of ecological language highlights the dynamic relationship between words and the world, confirming that language continues to be a potent instrument for promoting sustainable behavior and cultivating collective ecological responsibility. However, while broadening democratizes access to

ecological concepts, it risks oversimplification, and narrowing sharpens precision, which can exclude wider interpretations. Finally, the changes in ecological words remain a powerful tool for inspiring sustainable behavior and fostering collective ecological responsibility.

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