

The Ecolinguistics Association

Name of Organisation

The Ecolinguistics Association

Mission, Vision and Objectives

To bring together researchers to explore the role of language in the life-sustaining interactions of humans, other species and the physical environment.

To promote the development of linguistic theories which see humans not only as part of society, but also as part of the larger ecosystems that life depends on.

To promote the application of linguistic tools to address ecological issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental justice.

To contribute to the transformation of the social structures that underpin ecologically destructive societies.

To establish an identity for ecolinguistics as an ecological humanities discipline, and build links with other ecological humanities disciplines such as ecocriticism.

To support conferences, dissemination of research findings and practical action.

Scope of Association

The focus of the Association is linguistic research which uses 'ecology' in the literal sense common to ecological science and other ecological humanities such as ecocriticism, ecopsychology and political ecology. That is, the *life-sustaining interactions of humans, other species and the physical environment* (or similar formulation).

Research which explores metaphorical ecologies is beyond the scope of the Association (e.g., an ecology of semantic units, an ecology of dialects, or an ecology of influences on language learners), unless the research makes explicit links to ecology in its literal sense.

Ethics

Since ecolinguistics examines the impact of language on *life-sustaining* ecosystems, it necessarily has an orientation towards preserving those ecosystems, in the same way that medical science has an orientation to preserving life.

The Association does not promote a specific ecological philosophy (ecosophy), and is open to members who base their work on any ecosophy (e.g., sustainable development, deep ecology, social ecology or ecofeminism).

Membership

Membership of the Association is free and open to any researchers or practitioners who wish to explore the role of language in the life-sustaining interactions of humans, other species and the physical environment. This includes ecologists, environmentalists and conservationists who are interested in language, as well as linguists and communication researchers who are interested in ecology.

Structure

Convenor: the convenor is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Association, and can appoint co-convenors to assist with specific areas such as membership, journal editing, or bibliography editing. The convenor is appointed by the Steering Group.

Steering Group: the Steering Group is made up of the convenor, co-convenors, regional representatives and subject representatives. It is responsible for the broad direction of the Association, for holding conferences, and for updating the constitution. The Steering Group works on a consensus decision making process, where members propose actions and are authorised to complete them if there are no strong objections and fewer than four mild objections.

Constitution: Changes to the constitution can be made by the Steering Group in consultation with the membership.

Selection of Steering Group: There will be a periodic call for representatives to cover those who leave or to ask for representatives of new regions or areas of study. If there is more than one representative for an area then it will be decided by vote.

Length of Terms: Convenors and Steering Group members can continue in post as long as they feel they are actively contributing to the Association in a constructive way. If convenors or Steering Group members are out of touch for a significant length of time or are not acting constructively in their role then they can be asked to leave by a consensus of other Steering Group members.

Finances

The Association holds no central funds. Any funding required for an Association conference or project will need to be provided by the Steering Group member in charge of the project, from their personal or research funds. Indirect funding of Association projects is limited to suitable sources such as public funding bodies. The Association will not be involved in any projects that are funded from inappropriate sources.

Conferences

The Association will periodically hold conferences, which will be proposed by a Steering Group member and accepted by consensus of the group. The Association will provide support by encouraging members to volunteer to help with the organisation, and by publicising the conference to members. The Association will support conferences which:

- a) Focus on research which is within the scope of the Association and promotes the objectives of the Association (see above).
- b) Use innovative facilitation techniques to encourage active interaction among delegates.
- c) Include outdoor activities where delegates can interact with each other in the context of other species and the physical environment
- d) Treat conference food as an expression of relationships between humans, other species and the environment and use sustainable sources.
- e) Minimise air travel and maximise international participation by providing online ways to engage with the conference, or parallel satellite seminars in other countries.

Voting

Where voting is required, for example to elect a Steering Group member or to change the constitution, then it will be carried out electronically, with all members notified of the vote, given the information they need to make a decision, and given a chance to vote anonymously online.

Journal

The Association will publish articles, digital stories, poetry and other forms of dissemination which lie within the scope of the Association. As far as is practically possible, these contributions will be in any language, and will be peer reviewed before publication.

Ecolinguistics List

The Association will operate a moderated mailing list for members to share news about what is going on in the world of ecolinguistics. The list will be moderated by the convenor, in line with moderation policies decided by the Steering Group.