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## **Ecolinguistics, Ecology, and the Stories We Live By: A Critical Examination of the Narratives Shaping Our World**

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### **Abstract**

This paper explores the burgeoning field of ecolinguistics, focusing on the book "Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By" by Arran Stibbe, a prominent ecolinguist. We look into the concept of "stories we live by" and how language shapes our understanding of the environment. Stibbe's framework of nine key narrative types is presented, providing definitions, examples, and highlighting the crucial differences between them. The paper explores how four of these stories influence our relationship with the environment and investigates how language can be used to promote a more sustainable future. Then, the paper also examines the rich tradition of the Qur'an and prophetic sayings (hadith), the foundational texts of Islam, as prime examples of a long-standing ecological discourse to see if Stibbe's call finds resonance in Islamic texts dating back over 1400 years ago. Analyzing examples from Qur'an and Hadith through an ecolinguistic lens reveals that Islamic texts utilize various linguistic tools to promote environmental responsibility. This alignment with Stibbe's framework highlights the potential of religious narratives as powerful instruments in shaping a more sustainable future. This exploration opens doors for further research into the intersection of ecolinguistics and diverse cultural narratives, seeking to identify additional narratives that can be harnessed to promote sustainable practices and a more harmonious relationship with the environment.

**Keywords:** ecolinguistics, stories we live by, discourse analysis, ecosophy, destructive discourse, beneficial discourse.

## 1. Introduction

The delicate balance between humanity and the environment is a defining challenge of our time. Ecolinguistics, an emerging field, bridges the gap between language and ecology, examining how language shapes our understanding of the natural world. This paper delves into the work of Arran Stibbe, particularly his book *"Ecolinguistics: Language and the Stories We Live By,"* which argues that the "stories we live by" – the narratives that underpin our societies – have a profound impact on our ecological behaviour. Stibbe argues that such narratives are no longer serving us well.

This paper explores Stibbe's framework for analysing these narratives and investigates the potential for alternative narratives to promote environmental responsibility. By examining the power of language in shaping our relationship with the environment, we can identify opportunities to craft new stories that foster a more sustainable future. Then, the paper will explore texts from Qur'an and Hadith, as potential sources of such beneficial narratives. These texts, dating back over 1400 years, may offer valuable insights that can contribute to a more ecologically conscious future.

## 2. Research Objectives

1. Investigating the influence of Stibbe's nine key narrative types on human-environment relationships, as presented in his book *"Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By."*
2. Exploring the characteristics of beneficial discourse that promotes environmental responsibility and destructive discourse that promotes selfish environmental behaviour.
3. Examining texts from the Holy Qur'an and prophetic tradition to identify potential narratives that resonate with Stibbe's call for crafting new narratives that can be used to promote sustainable practices and a more beneficial relationship with the environment.

## 3. Research Hypotheses

1. Narratives emphasizing human dominance over nature (anthropocentric narratives) will be associated with less sustainable practices, while narratives promoting an ecocentric perspective will be associated with more sustainable practices.
2. The Qur'an and Hadith, as foundational Islamic texts, contain narratives that promote a beneficial relationship with the environment, aligning with Stibbe's perspective on language use.

#### 4. Research questions

1. How does the language used in environmental communication (e.g., news articles, advertisements, documentaries) influence public perception of environmental issues?
2. How do Stibbe's nine key narrative types (ideologies, framings, metaphors, etc.) influence people's attitudes and behaviours towards the environment?
3. What alternative narratives can be identified that promote environmental responsibility and ecological balance?
4. Do the Holy Qur'an and Hadith contain narratives that promote a beneficial relationship with the environment, as defined by Stibbe's ecosophy?

#### 5. Review of Literature

Ecolinguistics is a rapidly-growing field that explores the intricate web connecting language, environment, and humanity. Its intellectual roots trace back to 19th-century thinkers like Wilhelm von Humboldt and anthropological linguists who investigated the relationship between language and the environment (Fill & Mühlhäusler, 2001). The term "ecology" itself was introduced by Ernst Haeckel in 1866.

The field gained momentum in the 1960s, fuelled in part by Rachel Carson's influential book "Silent Spring" which ignited environmental concerns. Einar Haugen's ground-breaking work, "The Ecology of Language" (1972), is considered a foundational text where Haugen defined language ecology as the study of interactions between language and its environment.

This diversification has led to the development of several key frameworks within ecolinguistics. The Haugenian tradition, stemming from the work of Einar Haugen, emphasizes the intricate interplay between language, mind, society, and the natural environment (Haugen, 1972). In contrast, the biolinguistic tradition views languages themselves as ecological systems with biodiversity. This perspective highlights the importance of preserving minority languages, fostering a richer and more resilient linguistic landscape (Mühlhäusler, 2003).

The Hallidayan tradition, informed by the work of Michael Halliday, examines the connection between language use and environmental degradation. This approach often employs critical discourse analysis techniques to reveal how language choices can shape environmental attitudes and behaviours

(Halliday, 2001). Finally, the eco-critical approach delves into how language can contribute to environmental issues or, conversely, promote ecological awareness (Stibbe, 2015). These diverse frameworks demonstrate the breadth and depth of ecolinguistics, offering a multifaceted lens for understanding the complex relationship between language and the environment.

Ecolinguistics builds upon, but also expands beyond, the concept of language ecology introduced by Haugen. While Haugen's work focused on language-environment interactions, ecolinguistics incorporates the biological aspects of ecology (Fill, 1998). It delves deeper than analysing individual texts, exploring the broader language patterns that influence how people perceive and interact with the world (Skutnabb-Kangas & Harmon, 2018).

For a comprehensive understanding of language, Stibbe (2015) argues for integrating three approaches: structural linguistics, sociolinguistics, and language ecology. Structural linguistics analyses language systems in isolation, focusing on building blocks and their interactions. While valuable for understanding language structure, it neglects social and ecological factors. Sociolinguistics views language as inseparable from society, recognizing its shaping power on both language and society (e.g., Critical Discourse Analysis). However, it doesn't encompass the full picture by neglecting the natural world. Language ecology, as outlined by Haugen, studies language in relation to its environment, including the social context (language-using community) and the human mind (potentially influenced by other languages).

Stibbe's book, *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By* (2015), proposes a framework that emphasizes the interconnectedness of language, environment (including social and biological aspects), and humans. He identifies nine key types of stories, including ideology, framing, metaphor, evaluation, identity, conviction, erasure, salience and narratives. He argues that these "stories" that "we live by" have a profound impact on our ecological behaviour.

### **The Stories We Live By**

Stibbe argues that language is not merely a tool for communication, but a system for creating and spreading stories. Stibbe's stories are presented as mental models that cannot be directly analysed, but can be inferred through language use. Disguised as narratives, often implicit and unquestioned, they shape our worldview, including our relationship with the environment.

He identifies nine key types of stories that influence our ecological consciousness:

## Nine Key Stories We Live By

1. **Ideologies** are central and implicit belief systems that influence how we view the world and our place within it. Examples include capitalism, socialism, and ecocentrism. Each ideology frames environmental issues differently.
2. **Framings:** Framing is that act of using a familiar idea (source frame) to explain a new or unfamiliar concept (target domain). This comparison helps us understand the target domain by making it more relatable. For instance, framing climate change as an economic threat focuses on financial costs, while framing it as a moral imperative emphasizes social responsibility.
3. **Metaphors:** Metaphors compare seemingly unrelated things, shaping our understanding of a concept. For example, the metaphor "climate change is a problem" acknowledges a difficulty; it doesn't convey the severity or potential consequences, while "climate change is violence," emphasizes the immediate harm and potential loss of life associated with climate change.
4. **Evaluations:** These are judgments of worth attached to entities or actions. Describing wilderness as "wasteland" implies it has no value, whereas calling it "pristine" suggests protection is necessary.
5. **Identities:** Our sense of self is shaped by stories about who we are and our relationship with the natural world. The identity of "consumers" reinforces a focus on material acquisition, while "stewards" emphasizes environmental responsibility.
6. **Convictions:** These are deeply held beliefs that guide our actions. A conviction that humans have dominion over nature justifies resource exploitation, while a belief in interconnectedness encourages sustainable practices.
7. **Erasure:** Certain aspects of reality may be silenced or excluded from narratives. For instance, the ecological impact of certain industries might be downplayed or ignored.
8. **Saliency:** The prominence given to certain stories or aspects of a story shapes what we consider important. Focusing on economic growth might overshadow environmental concerns.
9. **Narratives:** These are longer, more complex stories that provide a framework for understanding the world. For instance, myths of man's superiority over nature encourage exploitation of resources. Conversely,

myths portraying humans as part of the web of life can foster a sense of responsibility and encourage sustainable practices.

### **Differentiation and Intersections**

While these nine stories are distinct, they often interweave and influence each other. For instance, economic ideology (capitalism) might influence the framing of environmental issues (framing climate change as an economic burden). Understanding these connections is crucial for analysing the complex narratives shaping our ecological behaviour.

### **Ecology and Ecolinguistics**

Humans are creatures of narrative with a fundamental tendency to understand and experience the world through stories. Stories shape our understanding of the world, guide our actions, and define our roles within society. This influence extends to the environment, with the narratives we live by impacting how we interact with the natural world. Ecolinguistics emerges from this intersection, examining the interplay between language and ecology.

While the connection between ecology (environment) and linguistics (language) might seem unusual, it is profound. The language we use shapes how we think about the environment. For instance, the obvious contrast between the language of nature documentaries that inspire respect and the language of advertisements that promotes environmentally damaging products exemplifies the profound impact of language on our environmental perception. Our thoughts, in turn, influence our actions. Ecolinguistics digs deeper than simply analysing individual texts. It explores the broader narratives that influence our environmental behaviour – the stories we live by.

Ecolinguistics empowers man to harness the power of language for positive change. By critically examining the narratives that shape our world, we can identify and resist those that contribute to ecological destruction. Furthermore, we can actively seek and promote new narratives that inspire a more sustainable future.

Furthermore, Stibbe argues that ecolinguistic studies often carry a normative dimension, establishing standards, principles, or ideals that guide behaviour. For him, Ecolinguistics doesn't just analyse how we talk about the environment; it also suggests ways of using language that will help us protect the natural world.

## The philosophy of Ecolinguistics

Ecolinguistics goes deeper than simply analysing individual texts. It seeks to expose the underlying stories that shape our environmental behaviour – the narratives we live by. These stories function as a kind of moral compass, influencing how we think, talk, and act in relation to the environment. The goal of ecolinguistic analysis is to critically examine these narratives and assess their effectiveness in the face of our current ecological challenges.

This critical evaluation depends on a core concept – ecosophy. Coined by Arne Naess (1995), ecosophy refers to a philosophy that prioritizes ecological harmony. It is a framework for evaluating the stories we live by, considering whether they promote co-operation, sharing, and sustainability – or competition, greed, and environmental destruction.

Ecolinguists, however, do not subscribe to a single, universal ecosophy. Each has their own set of values and priorities that influence their analysis (Naess 1995). For instance, **Anthropocentrism vs. Ecocentrism:** Does the ecosophy prioritize humans above all other living beings, or does it recognize intrinsic value in all life forms?

**Optimism vs. Pessimism:** Does the ecosophy view the future with hope and believe humans can overcome environmental challenges, or does it anticipate societal collapse due to environmental pressures?

**Balance vs. Survival:** Does the ecosophy advocate for a balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity, or does it prioritize survival and crafting new narratives in the face of potential societal collapse?

Ecolinguists do not simply pick a pre-existing ecosophy. They draw upon various schools of thought, evaluate them based on evidence and personal experience, and ultimately create their own unique framework for analysing the stories we live by. This personal ecosophy then guides their examination of language and its role in shaping our relationship with the environment.

In addition, Ecosophies are dynamic and ever-evolving, reflecting the ongoing exploration of new ideas, evidence, and experiences by the analyst. Therefore, the ecosophy Arran Stibbe suggests in his book is described as a framework for his work not the once and for all ecosophy of the world. He acknowledges the existence of many valid ecosophies – this particular one serves as a lens for analysing language in his book and in this paper.

## Living! Stibbe's Ecosophy in a Nutshell

Stibbe states that the core principle of his book's ecosophy can be encapsulated in a single word: Living; it's about thriving and experiencing high wellbeing. That is why he is not only concerned with recycling and using less plastic but he also speaks about economic growth, extreme nationalism and many other broad topics as part of ecolinguistics.

"Living!" goes beyond simple survival. It acknowledges the importance of wellbeing – a flourishing state of existence. This wellbeing extends not just to the present but also to the future, encompassing the ability of future generations to live well.

Linguistic analysis discloses the stories embedded within texts. These stories are then assessed based on the ecosophy. On the one hand, stories that celebrate life, promote reduced consumption, or advocate for resource redistribution are seen positively. On the other hand, stories that view people or other species as mere resources, promote unequal resource distribution, or encourage material accumulation are challenged.

## 6. Methodology and Data Analysis

### Research Approach:

This study employs a qualitative approach grounded in ecolinguistics. Ecolinguistics offers a framework for analysing the relationship between language and the environment, with a focus on how discourse shapes human understanding and interaction with nature (Stibbe, 2015). Critical discourse analysis (CDA) principles are used to investigate how the Qur'an and Hadith construct narratives about humanity's place within the environment. CDA aims to identify underlying ideologies and potential influences on environmental perceptions and behaviours within these texts (Fairclough, 2003).

### Data Selection

The analysis focuses on specific Qur'anic verses and Hadith narrations, along with their translations. These selections were chosen based on two key criteria:

1. **Thematic Relevance:** Texts were chosen for their thematic relevance to environmental concepts like interconnectedness with nature, human responsibility, and sustainable living.
2. **Narrative Construction:** The chosen texts were also selected for the way they construct these themes through Arran Stibbe's theoretical framework of stories categorized as "destructive" or "beneficial" discourse.



The number of texts chosen for each story will vary depending on the specific themes explored and the richness of the narrative styles employed within the relevant verses and hadiths.

## Analysis

The analysis of the selected Qur'anic verses and Hadith narrations focus on specific linguistic features that can reveal underlying meanings and environmental messages. These features include:

- **Vocabulary choices:** This includes examining the connotations of words, pronoun usage, and the modality of verbs (e.g., "might" vs. "must"). For instance, analysing the use of words with positive or negative connotations when referring to the environment can reveal underlying values. Similarly, pronoun usage (e.g., "we" vs. "they") can shed light on who is perceived as responsible for environmental stewardship.
- **Relationships between words:** Analysing synonymies, antonyms, and broader categories (hyponymy) within the text. How words are related can reveal underlying concepts and hierarchies. For example, if the text uses synonyms for "nature" that emphasize its bounty and beauty, it suggests a different value orientation than using synonyms that emphasize its power or potential for danger.
- **Grammatical structures:** This involves looking at the use of active vs. passive voice and nominalization. The use of active voice can highlight agency and responsibility, while passive voice can obscure who or what is causing environmental harm. Nominalization (turning verbs into nouns) can also distance the reader from the action being described.
- **Underlying assumptions or presuppositions:** Identifying any implicit meanings within the text. The text may contain underlying assumptions about the environment, human behaviour, or resource use that are not explicitly stated but influence the overall message.
- **Depiction of participants:** Examining how humans and nature are portrayed (as individuals or collective groups). Are humans presented as dominant over nature, or as part of a larger interconnected system? Are environmental issues framed as individual actions or collective challenges?
- **Figurative language:** This includes analysing the use of metaphors, irony, and metonymy. Metaphors employed to describe the environment can reveal underlying beliefs about humanity's relationship with nature. For example, metaphors portraying nature as a mother or a resource to be exploited can have different implications for environmental behaviour.

By examining these linguistic features, the analysis aims to gain a deeper understanding of the environmental narratives constructed within the Qur'an and Hadith.

## Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis follows a three-step process:

1. **Identifying Environmental Narratives:** The selected verses and hadiths are examined to identify the environmental narratives they convey. This involves analyzing the language used, the metaphors employed, and the overall message being transmitted.
2. **Critical Discourse Analysis:** CDA is then applied to these narratives. This involves examining the texts for underlying ideologies, power structures, and values. For example, the analysis might explore:
  - How the narratives portray humanity's relationship with nature.
  - Implicit assumptions about resource use and consumption.
  - Whose perspectives are prioritized within these narratives?
3. **Evaluation of Environmental Impact:** Finally, the analysis considers how these narratives might influence environmental perceptions and behaviours. Do they promote responsible environmental stewardship? Do they challenge unsustainable ideologies of limitless growth and consumption?

## Focusing on Four Stories

While Stibbe offers a wider range of narrative types, this analysis focuses on **ideology, framing, metaphors, and evaluations**. These elements provide a powerful lens for understanding how Islamic texts promote environmental responsibility.

- **Ideology:** It reveals core values like humanity's role as Earth's stewards. This foundation is crucial for interpreting environmental messages.
- **Framing:** It explores how environmental challenges are presented, influencing our response. Islamic narratives often reframe them as shared responsibilities, encouraging collective action.
- **Metaphors:** They shape our relationship with nature. Examining how the Earth is portrayed helps us understand how the texts encourage respect for nature.
- **Evaluations:** They are ingrained cultural associations or shortcuts that heavily influence our environmental behavior. Understanding how these shortcuts work, both positively and negatively is crucial for promoting sustainable practices.

By focusing on these four, the paper captures a comprehensive understanding of the environmental messages within the chosen texts.

### **Ensuring Data Reliability**

To ensure a reliable and accurate representation of the original texts, the study utilizes the Sahih International translation for the Qur'an, known for its faithfulness to the Arabic text. Hadith narrations are sourced from Sunnah.com, a well-respected online resource for Hadith collections.

## **7. Story I: Ideologies**

### **Ideologies and Their Environmental Impact**

Our perception of the environment is complexly woven with narratives that shape our understanding and guide our actions. Arran Stibbe, in his insightful book, uncovers the captivating story of ideologies – the first threads in this complex tapestry. These ideologies are defined as shared belief systems that manifest in the way we communicate. They act as powerful lenses, colouring how we see the world and influencing our environmental behaviour.

Stibbe dives deeper, introducing the concept of discourse as the standardized language groups use to represent the world. These discourses weave unique "stories" that can be rooted in factual evidence or act as imaginative constructions. Ultimately, they shape how we interact with and understand the environment.

A beneficial ideology, according to Stibbe, proposes an ecosophy, an environmental philosophy that champions a simpler life – reduced consumption and a more equitable distribution of wealth. This ecosophy stands in clear contrast to destructive ideologies that promote relentless economic competition and limitless growth. These ideologies, with their focus on short-term economic gains, often come at the expense of long-term environmental sustainability.

Critical discourse analysis, a valuable tool within the ecolinguistic framework, helps us dissect how ideologies become naturalised through language. By recognizing them as constructed narratives, we can resist and challenge their hold and potentially rewrite them for a more sustainable future.

### **Destructive Discourse**

In the following, some prominent examples of destructive discourses are presented.

## **Ideology of Limitless Growth**

The ideology behind mainstream economics often prioritises limitless economic growth (Halliday 2001), viewing it as the key to prosperity. Mainstream economics often employs language that celebrates limitless growth, portraying it as an inevitable and desirable outcome. Terms like "economic expansion" and "increased productivity" prioritise short-term economic gains over the long-term health of the planet. This narrative neglects the finite resources of our planet and fails to acknowledge the environmental consequences of uncontrolled consumption. It directly contradicts Stibbe's vision of a sustainable future built on responsible resource management and reduced consumption.

## **Ideology of Consumerism**

Advertising thrives on narratives of discontent, constantly reminding us of what we lack and how their products can fulfil a yearning for happiness. Words like "dissatisfaction" and "need" create a sense of inadequacy, while terms like "latest" and "upgrade" fuel a desire for constant acquisition. This relentless pursuit of "more" translates into excessive consumption, leading to environmental damage through resource extraction, production processes, and waste generation. This ideology stands against Stibbe's ecosophy, which emphasizes mindful consumption and living within our means.

## **Ideology of Extreme Nationalism**

For instance, ideology of extreme nationalism is often adopted by far-right political groups and movements who advocate for the prioritisation of a particular nation's interests over all others. Words like "us vs. them" treating "the other" as a "threat" paint a picture of a world where suspicion and hostility rule. This ideology can manifest in behaviours such as hostility towards immigrants, suspicion of foreign cultures, racism, etc. For example, the rise of extreme nationalism in some European countries has led to policies that make it more difficult for immigrants to integrate and contribute to society. Such story harm societies and goes against social justice and equalities where all human beings deserve good life.

## **Countering the Narrative**

Fortunately, alternative narratives exist, offering hope for a more sustainable future. Intriguingly, the Qur'an and Hadith, foundational texts of Islam, weave a narrative that aligns beautifully with Stibbe's ecosophy. These sacred texts, far from promoting division, advocate for embracing human diversity and treating all people with respect.

Surat Al Hujurat (49:13) offers a powerful narrative: "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted." This verse emphasizes our shared humanity, highlighting "knowing one another" as the purpose of diversity. The message transcends national borders, promoting a sense of global community.

The saying of the Prophet Muhammad: "O people, your Lord is one. There is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, or of a non-Arab over an Arab, nor of a red (skinned) person over a black (skinned) person, nor of a black (skinned) person over a red (skinned) person, except by piety. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most pious of you," is one of the most important and well-known teachings of Islam. It reflects the ideology of universal equality within Islam. It emphasizes the fundamental equality of all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality. Prophet Muhammad showed that the only thing that matters in the sight of God is piety, or righteousness.

Moreover, Qur'an and Hadith provide a counter-narrative to the ideology of limitless growth, emphasizing spiritual fulfilment, contentment, and ethical economic practices.

### **Prioritizing Inner Wealth over Material Abundance**

A Hadith narrated by Abu Huraira states: "*Wealth is not in having many possessions, but rather (true) wealth is feeling sufficiency in the soul.*" This challenges the notion that material possessions equate to true wealth. Instead, it highlights the importance of inner contentment and spiritual satisfaction as the source of genuine wealth. The Hadith subverts the prevailing narrative of limitless growth by:

The hadith emphasizes that true wealth lies in feeling spiritually fulfilled and content with what one has, rather than chasing material possessions. It uses negation (Wealth is not): to refute the equation of wealth with material possessions.

Then, by means of Contrastive Conjunction (but rather), the hadith introduces the true source of wealth – inner contentment. It encourages a shift in focus from external accumulation and the relentless pursuit of "more"- that characterizes limitless growth- to internal well-being, promoting a more mindful and sustainable approach to living.

Thus, this Hadith serves as a powerful counterpoint to the materialistic mindset that drives limitless growth.

## Ethical Economic Practices and Social Justice

Furthermore, the concept of "more" is challenged in Islam. While limitless growth narratives equate "more" with progress and success, the Qur'an presents a different perspective. "More" is not always good, especially when it comes at the expense of others or through exploitative practices like usury. The true path to "more" lies in ethical economic practices and contributing to the well-being of the whole society.

For example, The Qur'an (2:276) condemns usury (riba), a system that exploits borrowers. It emphasizes the importance of charity (zakat) as a means of purifying wealth and achieving social justice: "Allah destroys interest and gives increase for charities. And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever." This verse promotes ethical economic practices and discourages practices that perpetuate inequality.

On the one hand, the verse highlights the importance of ethical transactions by condemning usury. Usury might appear attractive because it promises "more money," but the Qur'an portrays it as a destructive and exploitative practice, ultimately leading to a decrease in well-being.

On the other hand, it encourages charity and redistribution of wealth to those in need, promoting social justice. Instead of focusing on individual accumulation, it emphasizes the importance of contributing to the collective well-being of society. Linguistic features like using strong verbs "destroys interests" and contrasting it with concept of "gives increase for charities" work together to challenge the idea of "more" associated with limitless growth.

The Qur'an utilizes specific linguistic features to reinforce the message of ethical economic practices and social justice:

The use of the strong verb "destroys" in reference to usury emphasizes the severity with which Allah views this exploitative practice. This stands in stark contrast to the celebratory language often used in limitless growth narratives when discussing financial gain.

The verse also employs juxtaposition by placing "destroys interest" next to "gives increase for charities." This literary device creates a clear contrast between the destructive nature of usury and the positive reinforcement associated with charitable giving.

These linguistic features work together to expose the deceptive nature of "more money" gained through usury and highlight the true path to prosperity – ethical economic practices and contributing to a just and sustainable society.

## Rewriting Our Environmental Ideology

By recognizing the constructed nature of ideologies, be they economic or nationalistic, and embracing alternative narratives like those found in the Qur'an and Hadith, we can begin to rewrite our environmental story. By consciously choosing narratives that promote environmental responsibility and social justice, we can weave a brighter future for ourselves and the planet we call home.

## 8. Story II: Framing

### Mental Structures: The Power of Frames

Our understanding of the world is shaped by mental structures called "frames" (Lakoff, 2014). These frames act like blueprints, influencing our goals, plans, and ultimately, the actions we take. According to Arran Stibbe, framing refers to the act of imposing a story or concept from one domain of life (source frame) onto another domain (target domain) to structure how the target domain is understood. This essentially means using familiar ideas or narratives to shape how people perceive and interact with a new concept.

In the context of climate change, the frame we adopt dramatically impacts how we approach the crisis. Two contrasting narratives, each offering a unique frame for climate change, illustrate this point.

### The Security Threat Narrative:

Caroline Lucas, a Green Party MP, supports reframing climate change as a national and global security threat. This narrative evokes a sense of urgency, similar to how we might respond to a military invasion. Headlines declaring climate change an "existential threat" or pronouncements of a "climate war" would position governments and the military as primary actors, potentially leading to stricter regulations and increased government intervention.

### The Supply Chain Challenge Narrative

The discourse surrounding environmental protection often focuses on top-down solutions, with governments and international organizations taking center stage. While these entities play a crucial role, this framing can lead to a sense of passivity among the general public. Individuals may feel powerless to contribute to solutions, believing the responsibility lies solely with governing bodies.

Alan Knight, director of Virgin Earth Challenge, proposes a different story. He suggests reframing sustainability as a supply chain challenge (2012) to foster collective responsibility for environmental well-being.

The "supply chain challenge" narrative, prevalent in business, offers a valuable framework for reframing environmental responsibility. Within a supply chain, every member plays an active role in delivering the final product. Similarly, in the environmental context, everyone becomes an active participant in the interconnected web of life. This reframing fosters collective responsibility, ensuring all parties are accountable for their environmental impact and work together to find solutions for ecological challenges, not simply passive recipients of environmental regulations.

Every individual, regardless of their position or profession, can be seen as part of a larger "environmental supply chain." Consumers can make informed choices regarding sustainable products, businesses can implement eco-friendly practices, and communities can advocate for environmentally responsible policies. This reframing fosters a sense of agency and encourages active participation in finding solutions.

By critically analysing these framings, we can see how language shapes not only our understanding of the problem but also who we see as responsible for tackling it.

### **Qur'anic and Hadith Examples of Environmental Protection Framing**

The Qur'an and Hadith contain numerous examples where framing promotes protection and responsible use of the environment, employing various linguistic features to convey this message. Here are a few examples:

- "He it is Who has appointed you as khalifah (inheritors, vicegerents) on the earth." (Qur'an 2:29).
- Likewise, Abu Sa'id Khudri reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "The world is sweet and green (alluring) and verily Allah is going to install you as vicegerent in it in order to see how you act."

### **Reframing Our Place on Earth**

Qur'an and Hadith offer a powerful story that is woven into the very fabric of our existence, a narrative that shapes how we see ourselves in relation to the world— a frame for understanding humanity's role on Earth.



## The Stewardship Frame

Qur'an, in Surat Al-Baqarah verse 29, declares humanity "khalifah" (inheritors, vicegerents) on earth. This verse acts as a source frame, a familiar concept (inheritance) applied to a new domain (our role on Earth). The target domain, in this case, is reframed through the lens of stewardship. We are not simply inhabitants, but entrusted caretakers, with the responsibility and accountability implied by the word "khalifah."

This stewardship frame is further reinforced by a Hadith narrated by Abu Sa'id Khudri. Here, Prophet Muhammad describes the world as "sweet and green," a place entrusted to us by Allah. We are appointed as "vicegerents," echoing the Qur'anic term "khalifah." This repetition emphasizes the core message: we are not just guests on this planet, but responsible beings.

The beauty of this framing lies in its simplicity and emotional significance. By invoking the concept of inheritance, Qur'an establishes a sense of ownership and obligation. We are not just taking care of something borrowed, but a precious legacy passed down through generations. The Hadith, with its vivid imagery of a "sweet and green" world, further strengthens the emotional connection to our responsibility.

This framing of humanity as stewards has profound implications for our actions. It compels us to move beyond a purely exploitative relationship with the Earth and embrace a role of care and sustainability. By understanding ourselves as inheritors with a duty, we are more likely to make choices that ensure a healthy planet for future generations.

## The Supply Chain Frame

Furthermore, the supply chain frame reinforcing collective responsibility and active participation in the face of our environmental challenges finds its echo in two prophetic traditions. It's important to note that these Hadiths may not have directly addressed environmental issues. However, the principles they convey align perfectly with the concepts of shared responsibility and action within the supply chain frame.

Firstly, Ibn 'Umar (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: I heard Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying, "All of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards. The ruler is a guardian and responsible for his subjects; the man is a guardian and responsible for his family; the woman is a guardian and is responsible for her husband's house and his offspring; and so all of you are guardians and are responsible for your wards."

According to this hadith, we are all responsible individuals. No matter where you are, a ruler, a man, a woman, we are all guardian with responsibility and accountability. Each one has an active part to play in the cycle of life. Just as every member plays a part in delivering a final product, everyone has a role in ensuring environmental well-being.

The hadith shows that the responsibility for guardianship manifests differently in various societal roles. Rulers can enact environmental policies. Individuals can reduce waste and can use resources responsibly. A very busy housewife looking after her family members can also make difference can manage her household's environmental impact by conserving water or using energy-efficient appliances. Everyone is responsible in this frame.

To do so, the hadith used inclusive term "All of you". This emphasizes that everyone, regardless of their social status, gender, or profession, has a role to play. Besides, the word "guardians" and the phrase "responsible for your wards" are repeated throughout the Hadith. This repetition reinforces the concept of guardianship and responsibility as a core message. The Hadith also uses the active voice throughout, stating "you are guardians" and "you are responsible." This emphasizes the importance of taking action and not being passive bystanders.

Secondly, the Hadith narrated by Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) also beautifully aligns with the concept of a tiered approach within a supply chain:

"Whoever amongst you sees an evil, he must change it with his hand; if he is unable to do so, then with his tongue; and if he is unable to do so, then with his heart; and that is the weakest form of Faith."

This Hadith can be seen as outlining a progressive response to environmental problems, mirroring the different stages within a supply chain:

While the previous hadith asserts that active participation is needed from everyone, this hadith asserts that any form of action or effort is appreciated. It Hadith outlines a three-tiered approach, mirroring the varying capacities within a supply chain:

- "Change it with his hand" represents direct, high-impact action, similar to a manufacturer implementing sustainable practices.
- "Change it with his tongue" signifies raising awareness and influencing others, akin to a distributor promoting eco-friendly products.
- "Change it with his heart" reflects disapproval and a refusal to participate in the "evil," similar to a consumer choosing sustainable alternatives.

The Hadith uses a comparative structure to highlight the importance of action. "That is the weakest form of Faith" positions disapproval within the heart as the least desirable response. This comparison implicitly encourages striving for a stronger form of faith that translates to some form of action within the "supply chain of good."

In essence, these Islamic teachings remind us that we are not simply inhabitants of this planet, but rather stewards entrusted with its care. By embracing this responsibility and actively participating in the environmental "supply chain," we can ensure a flourishing Earth for all.

## 10. Story III: Metaphors

The third type of stories explained by Stibbe in his book is metaphors. They are defined as "stories that conceptualize something as if it were something else" (Martin, 2014). They are not merely figures of speech; they are fundamental cognitive tools (Mey, 2018).

While distinct, metaphors and frames share significant overlap, with metaphors functioning as a specific type of framing that utilizes a source frame from a different domain to structure the target domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson explains that frames are mental structures that organize our knowledge about a particular domain. Think of them as lenses through which we interpret information.

However, Metaphors act as a specific type of framing. They work by transferring understanding from one domain (source domain) to another domain (target domain).

For example, Rebecca Solnit's call to frame climate change as "violence" emphasizes the harm inflicted on vulnerable populations (Solnit, 2019). Here, "violence" is a broad enough concept to directly frame climate change, unlike metaphors like comparing climate change to "a rollercoaster" (Kyriakides, 2008) or "an angry beast" (Russill, 2010). These latter metaphors rely on source domains like "rollercoaster rides" and "beasts" to shape our understanding of climate change in a way that is more specific, recalling a previous experience.

Metaphors can be powerful and vivid, influencing scientific discourse, public communication, and individual perception (Semino, 2008).

## Metaphors that we die by

Stibbe's ecosophy warn us about particular metaphors that can distort our understanding of the problem nature is facing like "nature is a machine." Why is this metaphor considered destructive?

### The Machine Metaphor

Machines are built from separate parts, fixable through repair or replacement. This simplicity deceives us into a dangerous optimism. We believe techno-fixes like carbon capture or hydrogen cars can solve environmental problems without addressing the root causes. Newspapers use phrases like "turning down the global thermostat" or "fixing the climate," framing the issue as a mechanical malfunction solvable by scientists and engineers (Nerlich & Jaspal, 2012). This excuses the public from considering the necessary social and cultural shifts for a sustainable future.

Another issue is that the machine metaphor diminishes the vibrant tapestry of life within nature. Verhagen (2008) argues that it justifies our exploitative approach to the environment, reducing living beings to mere components.

### A Step in the Right Direction: Nature as an Organism

"Nature is an organism" offers a more promising metaphor. Concepts like "ecosystem health" or "ecosystem medicine" acknowledge nature's systemic wholeness and self-healing capacity, unlike machines that require external intervention (Rapport et al. in Keulartz, 2007). "Isn't nature more like us – a living organism – than a machine?" (Larson, 2011)

However, metaphors like "ecosystem health" still place the responsibility for care on experts, similar to a doctor-patient relationship. Nerlich and Jaspal (2012) found the metaphor "the planet is a patient" used to justify geoengineering as a medical fix. This metaphor offers no clear role for the public in addressing environmental challenges.

### Metaphors to Live by

Do Qur'an and prophetic tradition offer a powerful counterpoint to destructive metaphors that portray nature as something to be dominated or exploited rather than leading us towards a more harmonious relationship with the environment?

## Metaphors of Belonging

Verse 22 in surat Al Baqara paints a vivid scene: "[He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling and sent down from the sky, rain and brought forth thereby fruits as provision for you. So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him]. "(Qur'an 2:22)

The key lies in how the Earth and sky are described. The verse portrays the Earth as a comfortable dwelling place, furnished for our benefit and the sky as a protective ceiling sheltering us

Stibbe's ecosophy emphasizes interconnectedness, respect, and responsibility towards nature. While these metaphors might seem straightforward, they nudge us to see the Earth through an ecosophy lens.

The "bed" metaphor fosters a sense of belonging. We are not strangers in a cold, uncaring universe. The Earth is our comfortable home, a creation of God entrusted to us for a temporary stay. We can enjoy its fruits and beauty, but ecosophy reminds us that with this comfort comes responsibility. Responsible tenants would not trash their apartment. We are temporary dwellers, not permanent owners. The Earth belongs to God, and we have a duty to use resources sustainably and care for this magnificent dwelling, ensuring it remains a comfortable abode for generations to come.

The beauty of these metaphors in Qur'an 2:22 lies in their simplicity and relatability. They connect with our basic human need for comfort and belonging.

Likewise, the verses from Surat An-Naba' (78:6-13) utilize metaphors to paint a picture of a meticulously crafted world where humans coexist harmoniously with nature. This analysis explores how these metaphors contribute to the overall message.

"Have We not made the earth a resting place? And the mountains as stakes? And We created you in pairs. And made your sleep [a means for] rest. And made the night as clothing. And made the day for livelihood. And constructed above you seven strong [heavens]. And made [therein] a burning lamp." (Qur'an 78:6-13)

The earth is described as a "resting place" (78:6). This metaphor emphasizes the Earth's role in providing sustenance and comfort for humanity. It positions humans not as dominators, but as inhabitants who rely on the Earth's bounty.

The description of mountains as "stakes" (78:7) can be interpreted metaphorically. While it could refer to their physical stability, it might also suggest a metaphorical function of anchoring and securing the Earth. This metaphor reinforces the interconnectedness of elements within the natural world, where each plays a vital role.

The night is metaphorically compared to "clothing" (78:9). This personalizes a natural phenomenon, creating a sense of comfort and security. Clothing provides a sense of belonging and protection, similar to how the night offers a time for rest and renewal. This metaphor encourages us to view night not just as an absence of light, but as an active and comforting aspect of nature. It highlights the natural world's ability to provide for our basic needs for rest and security. By drawing a connection between the comfort of clothing and the experience of night, the metaphor suggests a harmonious relationship between humans and the natural world.

These metaphors collectively paint a picture of a world where everything has a purpose and contributes to a harmonious whole. Humans are not separate from nature, but entrusted with this "dwelling place" – the Earth. The metaphors nudge us towards a sense of responsibility, encouraging us to care for the Earth that provides for us.

Moreover, the Hadith narrated by Anas ibn Malik, "If any Muslim plants something or sows seed from which man, bird, or beast eats, it counts as sadaqa for him," employs metaphors to convey the profound environmental and spiritual significance of planting and nurturing life.

### **Metaphors of Nurturing**

The concept of planting is metaphorically linked to an act of generosity and giving. Just as charity (sadaqa) involves sharing material possessions, planting involves sharing the bounty of nature with other living beings.

The Hadith envisions a scenario where the fruits of one's labor extend beyond personal consumption, nourishing not only humans but also birds and beasts. This metaphor highlights the interconnectedness of life and the positive impact of individual actions on the broader ecosystem.

The Hadith suggests that the reward for planting extends beyond the immediate act. Even after the planter is gone, the plant continues to provide sustenance, generating a continuous stream of sadaqa. This metaphor emphasizes the long-lasting impact of positive actions.

The metaphors in this Hadith paint a picture of a harmonious world where humans coexist with nature in a mutually beneficial relationship. Planting is not

merely an agricultural activity; it is an act of nurturing life, sharing abundance, and earning spiritual rewards.

Furthermore, Anas ibn Malik narrates: "If the Final Hour comes while you have a shoot of a plant in your hands and it is possible to plant it before the Hour comes, you should plant it."

This commitment to the Earth's well-being aligns beautifully with the message conveyed in the previous verse. Just as responsible stewards would not neglect a dwelling they're inhabiting, we should not neglect the Earth, even at the perceived end of times.

While seemingly straightforward, the Hadith holds a deeper message. The "shoot of a plant" can be interpreted metaphorically as a symbol of hope, giving and selflessness.

The placement of this Hadith within the chapter "Attending to this World" in the book *Al Adab Al Mufrad* is significant. It challenges the exploitative mind-set that sees nature as a resource to be depleted and it emphasizes that our ecological responsibility is not conditional on future timelines. It is a continuous commitment that extends beyond human lifespans.

To conclude, Quran and Hadith, through their use of metaphors, offer valuable guidance for living sustainably. They challenge us to move beyond exploitative models and embrace a more responsible approach to our planet. By viewing the Earth as a dwelling place, nurturing life through planting, and understanding our interconnectedness with nature, we can create a future where humans and the environment can thrive together.

## 10. Story IV: Evaluations

The fourth type of story introduced by Stibbe is the evaluation. These are essentially ingrained cultural associations, positive or negative, with concepts, experiences, and behaviours that influence our interactions with the environment. Think of them as mental shortcuts – pre-programmed responses that guide everything from our clothing choices to the houses we build. However, are these shortcuts always helpful?

Evaluations can be both cognitive lifesavers and sources of bias. They help us navigate a complex world by offering quick judgments. For example, seeing a red traffic light triggers a cascade of evaluations in your brain – "stop," "be cautious," "danger" – all because "red means stop" (linguistic tool: exemplification). However, this reliance on pre-programmed responses can lead

to rigid thinking. In societies where "bigger is better" (linguistic tool: appraisal terminology), excessive consumption and environmental degradation often follow. A bigger house becomes a shortcut to perceived success, ignoring the environmental impact of increased energy needs. This ingrained glorification of size demands a critical reevaluation of these shortcuts and their true cost.

### **Reframing Dominant Evaluations**

This is where things get exciting! We can challenge these dominant evaluations. Take economic growth, often associated with positive evaluations like "strong" and "successful," but overlooking the negative aspects like "polluting" and "unsustainable." An analysis of the fundamental assumptions underlying these evaluations is necessary. Examining the "growth at all costs" ideology might reveal its neglect for environmental sustainability. Realizing that, we need to reframe these evaluations and introduce new ones. Our world needs "sustainable growth" not "unlimited growth," and "bigger" isn't always "better." Instead, we should promote "moderate" and "sustainable" practices.

### **Countering destructive evaluations**

Qur'an and Hadith promote moderation as an ecological evaluation. They counter the destructive evaluation of "more is better", leading to overconsumption and resource depletion by advocating for a balanced approach to consumption.

In Surat Al A'raf, verse seven reads: "O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess. "(Qur'an 7:31)

The verse directly addresses humanity ("O children of Adam") and encourages enjoying life's provisions ("eat and drink"). However, it places a crucial limitation: "be not excessive." This imperative discourages wastefulness, further it evaluates excessive consumption as something God dislikes ("Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess") and discourages actions that disrespect the value of resources provided by God.

Another example from Surat Al-An'am (verse 6:141) tells a story about responsible resource consumption using evaluation as a central narrative tool:

"And He it is who causes gardens to grow, [both] trellised and untrellised, and palm trees and crops of different [kinds of] food and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of [each of] its fruit when it yields and give its due [zakah] on the day of its harvest. And be not excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who commit excess." (Qur'an 6:141)



The verse opens with a vivid description of nature's bounty ("gardens," "palm trees," "crops"). This rich imagery establishes a positive evaluation of the natural world and its provisions. The following imperative, "Eat," reinforces this positive evaluation by encouraging humans to enjoy these earthly blessings.

The verse then introduces the concept of "zakah," a form of obligatory charity. This acts as an evaluation of one's possessions, recognizing that a portion of it belongs not just to oneself but also to the community. By giving zakah, one avoids the negative evaluation of being "greedy" or "hoarding" seeking unlimited, selfish growth.

The central message arrives with a clear warning: "And be not excessive." This imperative establishes moderation as the guiding principle in utilizing resources.

The verse further emphasizes this evaluation by stating, "Indeed, He [God] does not like those who commit excess." This implies that excessive consumption is not only wasteful but also displeasing to God, introducing a negative evaluation for overindulgence.

Overall, the verse constructs a story where humans are encouraged to enjoy God's provisions but with a sense of responsibility. It reframes consumption as a privilege to be exercised with moderation, guided by a mindful evaluation of its impact. The act of giving zakah becomes a positive evaluation, demonstrating gratitude and social responsibility. This aligns with Stibbe's concept of challenging dominant evaluations ("bigger is better") and introducing new ones ("sustainable growth"). Here, the verse promotes moderation ("be not excessive") as a counterpoint to the potential negative evaluation of excessive consumption.

Another verse from Surat Al-Furqan (verse 25:67) reinforces this concept:

“And [they are] those who, when they spend, do so not excessively or sparingly but are ever, between that, [justly] moderate.” (Qur’an 25:67)

This verse from Surat Al-Furqan constructs a story about responsible resource management through the concept of evaluation. Here's a breakdown of how the linguistic features support this narrative:

- **The Absence of Evaluation for Spending Itself:** The verse starts by describing those who spend ("And [they are] those who, when they spend"). Notably, the act of spending itself is not assigned a positive or negative evaluation. This suggests that spending is a neutral activity, and the evaluation hinges on how it is done.

- **Introducing the Negative Evaluations of Extremes:** The verse then highlights the undesirable extremes in spending behaviour: "not excessively" and "or sparingly". These phrases introduce negative evaluations for both excessive spending and stinginess.
- **Moderation as the Implicit Positive Evaluation:** The verse concludes with a key phrase: "and are ever, between that, [justly] moderate." While not explicitly stating "moderate" as a positive evaluation, the act of placing it between the two undesirable extremes implies its desirability.

The Quranic message is echoed in Hadiths that promote mindful consumption. In hadith, Amr bin Shu'aib narrated on the authority of his father, on the authority of his grandfather that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Eat, drink, wear clothes and give sadaqah (charity) but with neither extravagance nor pride."

The Hadith employs a series of imperatives to guide behaviour. "Eat, drink, wear clothes, and give sadaqah" instruct listeners to fulfil basic needs and engage in charitable giving. These actions ensure a basic level of well-being and promote social responsibility. However, the Hadith also places limitations on these actions through the negations "neither extravagance nor pride." This discourages excessive consumption and the arrogance that can accompany material abundance. By combining positive instructions with limitations, the Hadith encourages a balanced approach to resource use.

Another Hadith emphasizes moderation through negative evaluation is narrated by Anas bin Malik that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"It is extravagance to eat everything you want."

The phrase "It is extravagance" immediately positions evaluation as central, with the term "israf" (extravagance) carrying a strong negative connotation. By condemning the act of eating "everything" the one might desire.

Hadith establishes a clear negative evaluation of overindulgence, implying the positive evaluation of moderation as the desirable alternative.

Similarly, it was narrated from 'Abdullah bin 'Amr that:

The Messenger of Allah passed by Sa'd when he was performing ablution, and he said: 'What is this extravagance?' He said: 'Can there be any extravagance in ablution?' He said: 'Yes, even if you are on the bank of a flowing river.'

The Prophet (ﷺ) encountering Sa'd performing ablution sets the stage, with the Prophet's question introducing "israf" (extravagance) as the key evaluation term. Sa'd's initial confusion highlights the potential for different interpretations of what constitutes waste. However, the Prophet's response expands the definition of "israf" by condemning excessive water use even with a flowing river nearby. This emphasizes that mindful and responsible resource management applies to all resources, regardless of abundance. By highlighting the negative evaluation of wastefulness ("israf"), the Hadith inherently promotes the positive evaluation of moderation, encouraging a balanced approach to resource use that avoids the pitfalls of limitless consumption.

Therefore, Quran and Hadith, through their use of evaluations, advocate for a balanced and responsible relationship with the environment. They promote moderation in consumption, encouraging us to enjoy God's provisions while being mindful of the impact on the natural world. By challenging dominant narratives like "bigger is better" and reframing consumption with evaluations like "sustainable growth," these sacred texts offer guidance for a more ecologically conscious way of life.

## 11. Research findings

This research, guided by Arran Stibbe's ecolinguistics framework, investigates the influence of language on environmental behaviour. The research questions centered on how ideologies, framings, metaphors, and evaluations shape our relationship with the environment, and how Islamic sacred texts like the Qur'an and Hadith contribute to environmental protection.

The findings demonstrate the profound impact of language on our perception and interaction with the natural world. Ideologies, such as limitless economic growth and consumerism, prioritize short-term gains over sustainability. This research contrasts these destructive ideologies with Stibbe's concept of ecosophy, which promotes responsible resource management and a simpler life in harmony with the planet.

Framing narratives were found to significantly influence how we approach environmental challenges. The study explored the contrasting framings of climate change, highlighting the difference between positioning governments as primary actors (security threat) and businesses as solution providers (supply chain challenge). The research then analysed how the Qur'anic concept of humanity as "khalifah" (inheritors or vicegerents) on Earth reframes us from mere inhabitants to stewards entrusted with the Earth's care.

Metaphors, acting as a specific type of framing, were also examined. The research criticised the "nature as a machine" metaphor for its one-dimensional and exploitative viewpoint. In contrast, metaphors like "nature as an organism" acknowledge the interconnectedness and self-healing capacity of nature. The Qur'an and Hadith offer alternative metaphors, such as portraying the Earth as a comfortable dwelling, fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility for its well-being.

The research explored how cultural associations, or evaluations, act as mental shortcuts impacting environmental behaviour. The study acknowledged the potential downsides of these shortcuts, like the "bigger is better" mentality promoting excessive consumption. Qur'anic verses and Hadiths were analysed for their emphasis on moderation as a counterpoint to such evaluations. By promoting responsible resource use and discouraging wastefulness, these sacred texts encourage a balanced and sustainable approach to living.

## 12. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research demonstrates the power of critical Language Awareness in challenging the limitations and potential harm of destructive narratives. By understanding the influence of language on environmental behaviour, we can pave the way for a future where human and ecological well-being are intertwined. Modern narratives may have fallen short in addressing environmental concerns, but this research suggests that revisiting the wisdom of the Qur'an and Hadith, with their emphasis on harmonious coexistence with nature, offers valuable inspiration for crafting a more sustainable narrative for generations to come.

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## علم اللغة البيئي والبيئة والقصص التي نحيا بها: دراسة نقدية للروايات التي تشكل عالمنا

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### المستخلص

يستعرض هذا البحث تطور مجال علم اللغة البيئي ويسلط الضوء على كتاب "علم اللغة البيئي: اللغة والبيئة والقصص التي نحيا بها" للكاتب أرن ستيني. يتم التركيز على فهمنا للبيئة من خلال مفهوم "القصص التي نحيا بها" وتقديم إطار ستيني الذي يشمل تسعة أنواع رئيسية من الروايات. يوضح البحث تعريفات وأمثلة لكل نوع، ويسلط الضوء على الاختلافات الأساسية بينها. ثم يتناول البحث تأثير أربعة من هذه القصص على علاقتنا بالبيئة ويبحث في كيفية استخدام اللغة لتعزيز مستقبل أكثر استدامة. بعد ذلك، يستعرض البحث أمثلة من القرآن والأحاديث النبوية كمراجع إسلامية رئيسية، لاستكشاف مدى توافق دعوة ستيني لاستخدام اللغة لتعزيز علاقتنا الإيجابية مع البيئة في النصوص الإسلامية التي تعود إلى أكثر من 1400 عام. يظهر تحليل الأمثلة من القرآن الكريم والحديث النبوي الشريف، من خلال منظور علم اللغة البيئي، أن النصوص الإسلامية تستخدم أدوات لغوية متنوعة لتعزيز مفهوم المسؤولية البيئية. ويؤكد هذا دور النصوص الدينية كأدوات فعالة في صياغة مستقبل أكثر استدامة، مما يفتح آفاقاً جديدة لمزيد من البحث في تقاطع علم اللغة البيئي والسرديات الثقافية المتنوعة التي يمكن استغلالها لتعزيز الممارسات المستدامة وتحقيق علاقة أكثر تناغمًا مع البيئة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** علم اللغة البيئي، القصص التي نحيا بها، تحليل الخطاب، الفلسفة البيئية، الخطاب الهدام، الخطاب المفيد