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## **Ecological discourse analysis of Al-Sisi’s climate change speech at the COP-27 Conference**

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on employing ecological discourse analysis (EDA) in studying presidential political discourse. The paper aims to investigate the discourse and significant ecological elements in the political address given by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, at the COP27 opening session on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022. With a focus on the language utilized, the study placed these subjects discussed in the speech in their respective social and cultural settings. The speech is analyzed using EDA as a theoretical framework. The data obtained were analyzed using a variety of resources. The analysis depends on an explanatory framework that offers an outline for analyzing discourse and demonstrates the discursive and aesthetic techniques used to convey the intended meanings. This study attempts to contextualize the current state of the world by focusing on the global topic of “climate change” as it is being addressed by world leaders within a speech community and enclosing linguistic and discursive issues within. Presidential discourse is globally critical, therefore approaching it from an EDA viewpoint is significant. The results of the study revealed that the language of the speech was used tactfully to arrive at the intended goals of the speaker. Regulative discourse is widely employed in the speech of the Egyptian president to achieve different ecological ideologies. The study’s findings demonstrated that this speech had its distinctive characteristics, and that language was skillfully exploited to achieve the speaker’s desired

objectives.

**Keywords:** ecological discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, regulative discourse, ecological linguistics, COP27

## 1. Introduction

Before delving into Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's speech at COP27, which was delivered on November 7th, 2022, in Sharm El-Sheikh, it is necessary to contextualize his statements and provide an overview of this event. Egypt assumed the COP27 chair with a clear estimation of the gravity of the global climate problem and a belief in the significance of multilateral and collective action as the only approach to face this actual global challenge. The goal of Egypt's COP27 presidency was to go from talks to implementation, it was a call for action. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi inaugurated the conference, which was attended by several key world leaders. Pushing for climate justice, the concluding remarks of the conference included immediate action toward the climate for the survival of this planet. In the past, Egypt had submitted a political declaration urging nations to prioritize funding for climate change adaptation, especially because 107 out of 190 nations had endorsed the declaration. Additionally, 73 international organizations had endorsed the political declaration, pledging additional efforts to combat climate change. In this vein, this paper performs an ecological discourse analysis of the speech given by the speaker to reach his objectives.

Since climate change is a problem that is constantly debated and argued in various political contexts, the language used in its context has been intensively looked into under many guises. The sophistication of the issue of climate change itself, which evolved from being primarily regarded as environmental to being political, sociological, intellectual, moral, and communicative, emphasizes the significance of language even more. Unlike the weather and its effects, climate change cannot be noticed, felt, or experienced, the only way we can learn about and comprehend this complicated crisis is through discourse (Fill, 2001).

The increasing amount of speech research on climate policies analysis in line with the expansion of climate policies over the last thirty years

provides proof of the significance of communication within climate policies. Aside from research papers that examined how ecology became a political rhetoric and how environmental issues have occupied the global conversation, the amount of research on climate change discourse is remarkably little. There is research on the application of ideologies for regional environmental policies, however, it does not clarify discourse patterns at the global level (Penz, 2018).

Dahl (2011) claims that language has a variety of effects when it comes to solving ecological issues. Even if speakers may appear to be using language neutrally, they may be concealing ecological abuse or, for instance, describing behavior in a more unfavorable light than it is. A lot of studies stress the importance of discourse in solving various environmental issues. For instance, Alexander (2009) claims that language is important in raising knowledge of ecological issues and the mechanisms of environmental issues.

Alexander (2009) notes that demand for ecological linguistics research is rising in the United States and many other nations, particularly in response to the urging call for governmental and civil action to address this climate phenomenon after it was virtually exclusively confined to North America and Europe. Institutions use discourse to push and refuse agendas and marginalize those who call for transformation (serious actions to address environmental issues to repress and disparage the wise voice on climate change in America, as postulated by Stibbe (2015), which is one significant pretext why ecological linguistics approaches are indispensable in analyzing environmental legislation.

Therefore, to provoke responses and bring about change in society, it is important to underline the significance of unity in the sociological challenge of environmental changes (Wei, 2021). In this regard, Wei (2021) claims that it is the duty of individuals as well as governments and politicians to proceed with the transformation from a polluted society to a greener society to mitigate the climate crisis. Thus, Wei's (2021) stances about such a transformation are crucial because they can generate actions that can impact legislators by encouraging them to commence particular steps to combat environmental issues. These

stances can be adopted and embraced via the political discourse of world leaders. Language can address these issues. The main goal of leaders (such as presidents and politicians) is to persuade individuals to cherish beliefs that could result in movements, specifically by persuading people to adopt convictions that are beneficial to a specific person, country, or purpose (Charteris-Black, 2018).

In this respect, it is crucial to note that leaders sometimes employ discourse that is simplified for political purposes. They encourage citizens to be actively involved in the civil transformation to address environmental issues (such as asking for the use of stronger rigorous measures to combat global warming); consequently, politicians may gain mass support and enhance their case (Dryzek, 2013).

The examination of Al-Sisi's speech looks at its organization, content, and linguistic style. Its macrostructures (themes), regional meanings, and lexical style are also scrutinized to determine how much the speaker's political views may be seen in their linguistic choices. The speech is subjected to Stibbe's model (2015) which inspired linguists to think about the ecological context and implications of language. He made an effort to connect linguistics to the challenges and worries of the twenty-first century, especially the widespread degradation of ecosystems.

This paper mainly depends on three axes in analysis. The first is theoretical in nature. It explains ecological linguistics because it is a relatively new discipline, besides Stibbe's model (2015) which is a key element of ecological discourse. The second deals with methodology. It outlines a key method for conducting the presidential speech analysis. The third is the study's analysis and discussion. The final section summarizes the findings and offers some suggestions.

## **2. Ecological linguistics**

Ecological Linguistics is the interdisciplinary approach of ecology and linguistics, as it has consequently become the subject of study, according to He and Liu (2020), who claim that ecology has become "the core issue of the 21st century". According to Wills (2017, p. 221), who supports this viewpoint, "the world is facing an alarming crisis that threatens the

existence of the human species on Earth.” Ecological Linguistics is extremely important in the twenty-first century. He continues, “connecting nature and people is the only answer to these global challenges” (Wills, 2017, p. 221). He also tries to establish ecological linguistics as the science of the twenty-first century.

The first to stress the importance of linguistic and ecological studies of language was Wills (2017). His ecological viewpoints helped to establish the field of ecological linguistics in the nineties. In 1973, he was the one who originally coined the term “linguistic ecology” i.e., the investigation of how a language interacts with its surroundings. He provides a window into the relationship between any language and its surroundings in “The Ecology of Language.” Insisting that language is part of a larger environment, Wills claims that language is a component of a wider ecology that includes people, society, social forces, and the natural world; all these factors interact and shape one another on various dimensions (Wills, 2017). Wills asserts that language only exists in the minds of those who use it and that it simply serves to connect its users to nature including the social and natural environment.

It is interesting to notice that the term “ecological linguistics” has several diverse definitions. Alexander (2018) claims that ecological linguistics is a new area of study. Since its inception in the early 1990s, it has signified various things to various researchers (Alexander, 2018). Ecological linguistics, according to some academics, is the study of how human discourse and the natural environment interact. Some academics approach it as the study of language ecology, while others approach it as a loss of linguistic diversity. Alexander underlines the importance of having a consistent methodology, a strategy, and a working definition of the word “ecological linguistics” to investigate interactions between language and the environment. Several usages of the term, as well as various ecological linguistics methodologies, are discussed.

Ecological linguistics is an auto-suggestive phrase. It mixes linguistics with ecology. Ecology is studied by the linguistics subfield. Linguistics refers to the scientific study of language, a linguistic study of ecology, or both. The word “eco” stands for ecology. According to He and Liu (2020),

the two fields initially seem to be unrelated. Numerous concepts have been created by combining the words “ecological” with “language,” including “ecocide,” “linguicide,” “sustainability,” and “linguistic diversity” (Wills, 2017, p. 221). Ecology, ecology of language, language ecology, and ecosophy are further terminology associated with ecological linguistics.

Ecology is defined as “the study of the link between living organisms, including humans, and their physical environment; it aims to comprehend the vital connection between plants and animals, and the world around them” (Wills, 2017, p. 221). Ecological linguistics studies the harmony (or lack thereof) between humans, nature, language, and culture. It investigates linguistic ecology and examines literature dealing with environmental or ecological issues.

One of the most important founders and influencers of ecological linguistics is Arran Stibbe. He has a massive contribution to the field which is related to language and ecology. Ecological linguistics, according to him, is the study of language interaction and diversity, signposting studies, and text analysis that happens to be about climate change. Thus, ensuring ecological sustainability and adopting an environmental protective perspective are part and parcel of ecological linguistics (Wills, 2017).

In this regard, ecological linguistics has two objectives. First, it seeks to create theoretical linguistics that views people as components of both society and broader ecosystems upon which existence depends. Second, linguistics can be a crucial tool for addressing ecological challenges such as environmental justice, sustainability, and climate change (Wills, 2017). It promotes the development of both language and ecology and examines the relationship between the two.

According to Stibbe (2015), language has a critical role in how humans connect, with other living things, and with the environment. Language may affect how people perceive the world, or more specifically, it can motivate people to preserve or ruin the ecology on which their survival depends.

Ecological linguistics, as claimed by Stibbe (2015), challenges the myths that contribute to ecological harm and diminish linguistic diversity; it presents good substitute scenarios that we live by. It is distinct from other

branches of linguistics that focus on the ecological narrative, language ecology, and sustainable protection of the earth for a green world and a balanced cohabitation of all beings. It examines linguistic narratives and political discourses through the lens of ecological viewpoints, such as political speeches, sustainability, climate change, ecological debates, and environmental challenges. It is a type of multidisciplinary critical thinking. It is a type of linguistics that offers a structure, tools, and approaches that no other branch of linguistics has ever provided. This indicates that ecological linguistics aims to give resources and methods for researching ecological linguistic issues (Stibbe, 2015).

A relatively small group of linguists “detect how language affects the ecological and environmental issues,” according to Castro-Sotomayor (2016, p. 153). This implies that ecological linguistics examines environmental narratives critically. Hence, it investigates the terminology used, how ideas are expressed, and how the environment could be affected as a result. Furthermore, language can cause erosion, over-consumption as well as the extinction or rescue of animals, birds, or species. Ecological linguistics, according to Wills (2017, p. 221), “highlights the role of language in the creation of potential remedies of ecological dilemmas”.

Ecological linguistics forms people’s perspectives on language and existence, where culture and environment are shaped by the contexts they experience, and language plays a key role in rephrasing these contexts. It promotes sustainability and opposes actions that contribute to climate change, nations’ language and culture disappearance, extinction of species, the planet’s high temperature, loss of life balance represented in killing animals and insects, environmental deterioration, and growth. It investigates the impact of language on long-term interactions between people and other living things, including the environment (Zou & Gao, 2013). It blends ecology and language in this manner as the developments in human ecology, which bond all kinds of structures (such as financial, social, religious, language, cultural, and environmental dimensions) are scrutinized.

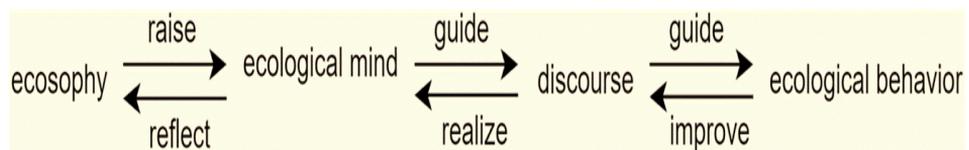
He and Liu (2020, p. 147) define Ecological linguistics from another perspective as “the investigation of the impact of language on the life

support interaction among humans, other species, and the external world.” Ecological linguistics is the science of how language shapes, preserves, affects or damages the interaction between people, other living things, and the ecosystem (He & Liu, 2020).

Ecological linguistics offers the required resources for researching how language improves the quality of life through ecology. In this regard, it is comparable to critical discourse analysis because it constantly develops new frameworks for analyzing or understanding human verbal or written interaction. The necessity for the existence of a school that can investigate the crucial part of linguistics to influence or conserve the environment and promote ecological justice has been met by this new branch of linguistics (Wills, 2017).

### 3. Literature review

Stibbe (2015) is regarded as the founding father of ecological linguistics. He describes ecological linguistics as the study of language interaction and diversity, the analysis of texts that happen to be about the environment. As a result, ecological linguistics encompasses ecological viewpoints as well as environmental sustainability. Accordingly, it has two goals. The first is to establish linguistic theories that consider humans as part of broader ecosystems on which life is based. Second, linguistics can be utilized to solve environmental challenges, ranging from climate change to environmental protection. Thus, any environmental plan ought to take environmental divisions and ecological hypotheses into account. Ecosophy serves as the standard for evaluating a discourse's environmental perspective and properties. It directs people's opinions, language, and environmental action; in turn, these factors can also have an impact on the environment; this cycle is seen in Figure 1 (He & Ma, 2022)



**Figure 1:** The relationship between ecosophy and ecological behavior (He & Ma, 2020)

According to Stibbe (2015), there are three types of ecological speech: constructive discourse, equivocal discourse, and damaging discourse. Ecological linguistics is used in this analysis. As a result, it encompasses far more than linguistic ecology or the evaluation of utterances that address environmental or ecological concerns. Thus, Wei (2021) recommends that there must be an ecological study of all discourses and an ecological investigation of all narratives.

Bang and Trampe (2014) first used the term “ecology” to describe the connection between language and creatures in the seventies. Since then, a lot of academics have included this perspective in their work. For instance, according to Halliday (2001, p. 199), “classism, growthism, the extinction of species, pollution, and the like -- are not only issues for the scientists and biologists. They are issues that affect the field of applied linguistics as well”. Ecological linguistics remains a relatively new field of study, though. If we consider Haugen’s contribution from 1972 to be the commencement, it will be 50 years old in 2023. Ecological linguistics, according to Carvalho, (2018, p. 158), is “a type of philosophy that fosters consciousness of the interconnection of all kinds of thinking”.

Additionally, the concept of “environment as an asset” for growth is prevalent in the regulative discourse around ecological improvement and sustainability all over the world (Castro-Sotomayor, 2016). Sustainability has been consistently acknowledged in significant international conferences, including the UN Earth Summit in 1993, the International Summit on Sustainability in 2001, and the UN Conference on Sustainability in 2012. This pattern peaked in 2015 with the adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals summarized later into 8 goals (SDGS), which made sustainability the UN’s declared agenda through 2030 (He, W. & Liu, J. (2020).

However, the connection between people, ecology, and economic statuses is not fully acknowledged in this regulative discourse. Rapidly emerging viruses and infections pose a rising hazard to humans’ well-being, necessitating the development of radical bio preserving strategies through a greater comprehension of the rhythms and intricacy of ecology. For instance, the “One Health paradigm”, which

seeks to bring together humans, animals, and ecological safety through scientific epistemology to be collected in “scientific discourse” might be a key factor in ensuring everyone’s wellness and preserving biological diversity and sustainability (Stibbe, 2015). While this is going on, there is factual proof that aesthetic viewpoints on nature, together with culture and religious beliefs, can help to maintain ecosystems and the animals that live there. We can reclaim the depth of our interactions with the environment by revisiting the inherent worth of biological diversity and sustainability. To integrate alternative narratives that embrace the inherent virtues of sustainability, it is necessary to extend the perspective (Wei, 2021).

#### **4. Critical discourse analysis and ecological linguistics: Similarities and differences**

According to Stibbe (2015), ecological linguistics is a branch of critical discourse analysis (CDA) but differs from CDA in that it concentrates on the broader ecosophy system, which includes how people interact with their environment. It highlights the beneficial and detrimental effects that people have on the environment. He goes on to say that ecological linguistics makes a distinction between narratives that preserve nature and those that harm it. In this vein, ecological linguistics plays a crucial role in revealing the prevailing discourses that “publicize environmentally damaging behavior”; in contrast, this encourages the discourses that “sustain relationships of compassion and consideration for the environment” (Stibbe, 2015, p. 260).

According to Alexander, (2009, p. 206), when it comes to the connection between ecological linguistics and CDA, “ecological linguistics addresses the language’s role pertaining the nature”, and “the implications of linguistics and discourse in characterizing, but also exacerbating and possibly mitigating ecological issues”. According to Stibbe (2015), environmental intellectuals and reviewers have made significant efforts to defend the environment, but have not examined how beliefs, metaphors, frames, and other narratives we live by are (re)generated as well as how they alter the way we perceive the wider realities throughout a thorough linguistic perception.

According to him, the best methods for such investigation are CDA and

ecological linguistic analysis. In light of this, “if we integrate linguistic strategies with the understandings of ecology philosophers, then the outcome can be regarded as a sort of ecological linguistics” (Stibbe, 2015, p. 261). Therefore, the goal of ecological linguistics is to evaluate or expose text that has a negative impact on the environment. According to Dryzek, (2013), this idea is utilized to describe a specific type of connection with other creatures and their surroundings that rhetoric reveals, which might further the directed social emphasis of CDA studies. Ecological linguistics, according to Stibbe, (2015) aims to “urge nations to become more analytical and discard or endorse narratives founded not only on emotional or societal grounds but also environmental ones” (p. 261).

While ecological linguistics is defined by scholars as having several techniques, the older ecological linguistics strategies concentrated on the linguistic structure whereas more recent ones have concentrated on verbal communication. Stibbe (2015: 262) concluded that instead of taking a language systematic methodology, the regulative discourse framework to ecological linguistic analysis “examines how specific communities select distinctive linguistic features and syntactic structures from those accessible from the linguistic knowledge and incorporate them in a specific manner to share experiences”. Ecological linguistics, therefore, addresses the more extensive ecosystems on which all lives are based. In this regard, Stibbe (2015) claims that ecological linguistics takes into account the broader natural processes that all surviving patterns depend on, whereas CDA is specifically geared toward sympathy with subjugated individuals.

One significant cause why CDA and ecological linguistics approaches are important in analyzing climate change narratives is that organizations use language to establish ideologies that deny and marginalize those who advocate for change. As a result, changing climate is not just a scientific issue, but also a social challenge in which the relevance of unity should be stressed to evoke negative responses and initiate change in society (Grundman & Krishnamurthy, 2010).

Numerous methods and areas of study have been referred to as Ecological Linguistic Analysis. Analyses of linguistic variation and communication, research on endangered spoken languages or dialects, research of multi-

modal discourse, and analyses of manuscripts about the climate or subjects associated with the environment, such as living creatures, environmental assets, publicity, power, nature tourism, or global warming are all examples of research that belong to this category. The model developed by Stibbe (2015) explains this variety of methods by connecting them to various interpretations of the word and notion of “ecosystem.” As he puts it, “the application of language analysis methods to disclose the circumstances go through, exposing them to scrutiny and debate from an environmental viewpoint” is what the “study of ecological linguistics is (Stibbe, 2015, p. 265).

Also, Thompson, (2014) is cited as one of the significant contributors to creating the linguistic paradigm related to ecology, his paradigm is utilized in the analysis methods which bond language analysis and linguistic ecology together and the negative actions towards nature that endanger the environment (Fill & Muhlhauser, 2001).

To solve the pressing issues of the twenty-first century, we need to utilize ecological linguistics, a field that can investigate the part language plays in revealing destructive practices towards nature and encouraging sustainable discourses. The finest area of linguistics to accomplish this is ecological linguistics (Fill & Penz, 2018). “Study of language likewise requires a manifestation of the energies that endow life to language and vice versa,” (Haig, 2001, p. 210).

According to Fill and Alwin (2001), ecological linguistics is divided into three separate but connected schools: the Halliday paradigm, the bio-linguistic paradigm, and the Haugenian paradigm (theories that followed the Hallidayan approach which is concerned with the ecology of multilingualism or linguistic communication in diverse parts of the world). The first paradigm examines language as a component of a wider ecological system and is founded on the relationships between society, the rest of nature, and human thought. The second paradigm (bio-linguistic) is the most common and agreed upon. It requires a more pragmatic understanding of the concepts of “language” and “environment.” According to this approach, the current global language system should be viewed as a global ecosystem, and the demise of minority languages

represents the decline of sustainability worldwide. This paradigm has been embraced by academics that study anthropological linguistics and historical linguistics. (Alexander, 2018).

According to Fill and Alwin (2001), it is appropriate to take the phrases “ecological linguistics” and “ecology of language” as broad forms that represent a quite multidisciplinary area. Additionally, it is claimed that problems in ecological linguistics are also covered in other branches of linguistics, including sociolinguistics, CDA, communicative discourse, and applied linguistics in general. Ecological linguistics is receiving more attention from the linguistics research community, this is evident in the expanding number of publications in academic journals, the variety and divergence of its research themes, and the use of a variety of research techniques. They come to the conclusion that these signs point to promising research for ecological linguistics (Fill & Alwin, 2001).

Furthermore, according to Doring (2018), the phrase “ecology of language” includes a broad range of aims where linguists can interact significantly across all types of social science domains to gain an understanding of the link between languages and their functions. He employs the phrase “ecological linguistics” as an entrance to a wide variety of interests. Terminologies such as “ecology of language” or “ecolinguistics,” he claims, refer to a vast collection of works and ideas that have a common topic, clearly defined as a theoretical model. These terminologies have all fallen into a few broad and interconnected categories, allowing them to construct a collection of conceptual approaches (Doring, 2018).

These approaches have been clarified in a paper by Halliday who was the first to relate ecological biology, economy, and environmental problems with linguistics. Halliday (2001) takes ecological linguistics into account in addition to the concept of “well-being”, the ecological, and cultural surroundings. He believes that language is part of life, it helps shape the world, and reflects what is true. He observes that the world’s natural assets are not limited and that humans might certainly deplete them. This is part of Halliday’s ecological interpretation of the language that is mostly linguistic, where he incorporates ideas from his systemic functional

language (SFL). He concludes that the prevailing system of capitalism in the societal structures has an unavoidable impact on lexical and grammatical choices from his analytical perspective of sociolinguistic studies (Halliday, 2001).

Ultimately, the relationship between ecological linguistics and CDA becomes evident when human discourse in different occasions and cultures could lead to environmental damage with different cognitive and discursive narratives and contexts. On the other hand, a positive discourse that corresponds with ecological emergencies could be very effective in changing the damaging human behavior as it is considered an eye-opener to the eminent dangers of damaging ecosophy. Ecological linguistic analysis is thus very similar to CDA except for the ecology and environment items. Both are interdisciplinary, incorporating considerations of ethics, economy, and society into text analysis. The privilege that ecological linguistics has over CDA is that it necessitates shifting the focus of analysis away from the oppression of some groups of humans by other groups of humans towards a broader understanding of the function of human discourse effect in determining how the ecosystems are treated and how they respond to affect people's lives (Haig, 2001).

## **5. Methodology**

This study adopts Amossy's (2018) explanatory framework, which divides environmental discourse into three categories: regulative discourse, which sees nature as an asset to be handled for welfare benefits (ethnocentric), scientific discourse, which sees nature as a subject of study (anthropocentric), and spiritual/poetic discourse, which sees nature as a divine creature with inherent ethical worth (ecocentric). This framework was selected because it offers a helpful method for encapsulating and categorizing the wide range of environmental discourse. Although some studies have proposed many kinds of ecological discourses, they are frequently either too broad to evaluate environmental disputes or, in other cases, too contextually narrow (Dryzek, 2022).

First, regulative discourse is typically found in organizations with decision-making authority over ecological regulations and policy. This discourse sees the environment as a resource to be managed for social

welfare, and it is one of the predominant perspectives of nature in modern civilization, along with utilitarian systems because the main goal of this discourse is the value of ecology, it has gained significance in the ecological policy-making cycle. This narrative of ecological discourses has greatly contributed to including ecosystem services and new preservation studies. These viewpoints strive to derive the motivation for ecological and sustainability conservation from the services and financial benefits they offer (Dahl & Flottum, 2014). According to Roper, Ganesh & Zorn, (2016), the discourses of environmental sustainability and ecological upgrading are consistent with this discourse. These discourses demonstrate a firm belief that technological advances can address ecological issues while supporting socioeconomic progress.

Second, nature is regarded as a focus for investigation in linguistics, therefore, the scientific discourse has emerged. It is founded on the belief that humans may learn about nature via scientific methods. This approach “subjects nature to the capacity of human investigation” (Amossy, 2018, p. 251). Science is viewed as the cornerstone of the link between society and the environment since it uses factual information and rational thought to describe the environment to develop “awareness” about it. This discourse exhibits the clearest inclination of the environment duality that has pervaded mankind because it demonstrates a strong conviction in human potential to unlock the environment’s secrets (Nisbet, 2009).

Finally, the poetic discourse also finds values for the mind and the heart in nature. According to this school of thought, nature is a spiritual being with inherent moral worth (Amossy, 2018). Nature is a part of human society, and its unaltered state is how it should be. When humanity understands that civilization is a component of the environment, it will be able to peacefully coexist with it. The impacts of this discourse, according to Amossy (2018) are derived from emotional pleas to the audience.

The methodology relies on qualitative analysis of Al-Sisi’s speech, with less experimental quantitative analysis, and focuses on the description of linguistic qualities, with little mention of social and cultural variables.

## **6. Analysis**

For analysis, the inauguration speech by Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi from COP 27 was chosen; it was already translated on the official presidential website. Two steps were followed in the discourse analysis. Multiple discourse modalities can be detected in a single speech, hence this was necessary (Van Leeuwen, 2017). First, themes that could frequently be discovered in this speech were used to classify the message intended to be conveyed. These themes were found while the inductive theming process was being done (Van Leeuwen, 2017). Open qualitative theming to study the speech content was followed without the use of a predetermined list of themes. Following that, the axial theming was used to arrange the themes into comparable ones, which produced the following five topics:

(1) Environmental balance, (2) Institutional trust, (3) Ecological justification, (4) Financial assistance, and (5) Nature depiction. The last point is frequently included in addresses to highlight countries' traditions of valuing ecology. The first four categories are frequently discussed during COP meetings. These five give a general picture of the narratives that arose in international ecological debates, even though there are slight variations in the degree to which governments presented these themes. The themes derived from the initial theming were then examined using Amossy's (2018) conceptual framework for sustainability.

The three discourse categories—nature as a resource, nature as an object, and nature as a spirit—were connected to the five subjects that emerged throughout the coding process. The first, “justification for conservation,” includes the causes of conservation that are specifically specified. It may theoretically fall under any of the three categories proposed by Amossy (2018) since people may support ecological preservation as a resource, a knowledge source, or a moral force. However, it was discovered that the speech justification largely focused on the viewpoint of seeing nature as a resource. Since improving human happiness through policies is the aim of all three of these concerns, trust in the government's actions, climate justice, and economic assistance, the regulative discourse was influenced by these three issues. All these aspects mentioned above can be connected to representations of the environment, but in this speech,

representations were delivered in the setting of both scientific discourse and aesthetic (poetic) discourse. The speech's contents are divided according to the five themes mentioned above:

### 6.1. Reasons for sustainability

Al-Sisi's speech at the inauguration of the COP27 focused mainly on the first subject, the necessity of logical diversity conservation. The speech's main goal for the protection of the environment was the value of sustainability as a renewable source. The regulation of global warming, changing climate, and other severe weather conditions were also mentioned, besides environmental sustainability which was among the frequently cited commitments of environmental challenges facing humanity. Additionally, Al-Sisi spent a significant portion of his statement stressing the importance of incorporating sustainability worth into other development areas to achieve long-term sustainability. He implied that Egypt's Vision 2030 is adopting the notion of sustainable development as a broad framework.

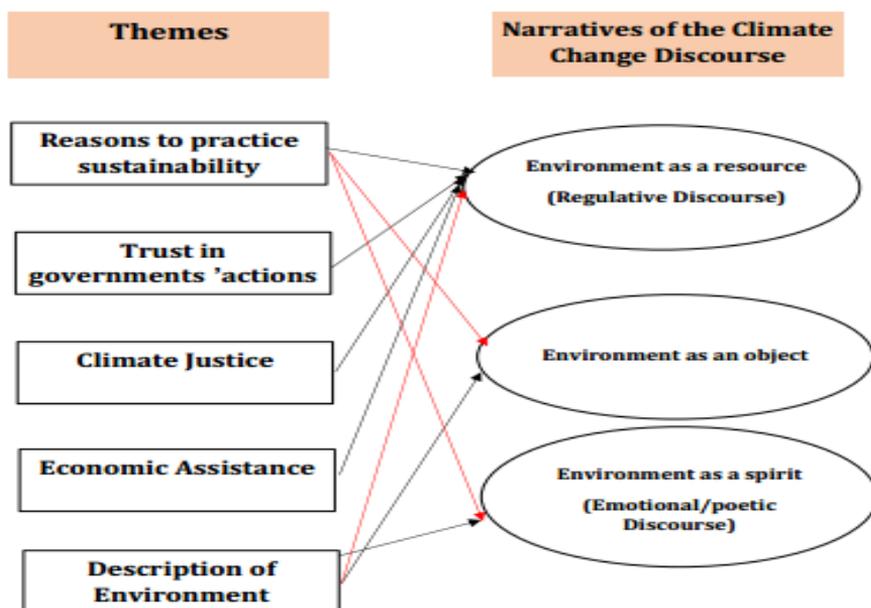


Figure 2: Connections between the study's subjects and Al-Sisi's discourse.

In Figure (2), the connections given in the examined speech are indicated by red-colored arrows, whereas theoretically conceivable linkages are suggested by black-colored lines.

The speech employed many statements to urge to “practice sustainability” as follows:

1. “(COP 27) is currently taking place in the city of Sharm El-Sheikh, the city of peace, and the first of Egyptian cities to know its path **towards green transformation.**”

In this speech, Al-Sisi focused mainly on green growth or “transformation” which means fostering economic growth and development, while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies (Stibbe, 2015). He drew attention to the Egyptian city of “Sharm El-Sheikh” as an example of sustainability to be followed in front of world leaders.

2. “We are working diligently to accelerate the pace of green transformation by expanding reliance on renewable energy and clean transport.”

Through a meticulous and full awareness of the significance of preserving and applying sustainability, with the involvement of all sectors and affiliated organizations, civil institutions, women, and youth, in the idea of incorporating sustainability in green growth, infrastructural facilities, related industries, and wellbeing, Al-Sisi shed light on the urgency of executing sustainability on all sectors. It is worth noting that a prevailing feature throughout the speech is the statements focusing on the advantages of cherishing sustainability including the regulative discourse sentences which consider the environment as an asset.

## **6.2. Trust in governments' actions**

The president's speech highlighted more than once how trust in governments' actions is crucial towards the environment and their sustainability practices.

3. “(COP 27) is currently taking place in the city of Sharm El-Sheikh, the city of peace, and the first of Egyptian cities to **know its path** towards

green transformation.”

A city will never know its path toward sustainability without the direction of a government and practices that foster this meaning. In an implicit statement, the president pointed to the role of governments without stating them clearly to pinpoint the importance of the action over the doer of the action and also to fortify the vital role of governments in guaranteeing the execution of sustainability actions with their full capacity.

4. “Are we closer today to achieving our goals than we were a year ago? Have we been able to assume **our responsibilities as world leaders in dealing with the most serious and influential issues of the century?** The most important question that **we should be asking ourselves is: does what we aspire to achieve** fall under the scope of the possible? Undoubtedly, it is not impossible if there is a genuine will and sincere intention to promote joint climate action and transform the outcomes of our meetings into a tangible reality.”

In this quotation, Al-Sisi clearly stated the role of world governments to take measures to direct nations to take action toward the environment. He also united himself with the audience by using the pronoun “we”, the audience was at that moment the world leaders attending the conference, the Egyptian people, and the international community through the media. This inclusion indicates a sense of unification with the audience to convey how the environmental issues are pressing to be congregationally confronted.

The president resumed on the same point:

5. “Today, our people expect from us rapid, effective, and equitable implementation. Our peoples expect us to take real and concrete steps towards reducing emissions, enhancing adaptation to the consequences of climate change, and providing the necessary financing for developing countries that suffer the most from the current climate crisis. Therefore, we have been keen to call this Conference: “Implementation Summit”, which is the goal that all our efforts and endeavors must center around.”

Here, the president concentrated on people’s expectations of their governments. People around the world await governments to take the

initiatives to create national and international mechanisms aimed at enhancing sustainability. The verb “implement” was mentioned nine times, and the noun “implementation” was mentioned eleven times during the speech, this clarifies that the President’s objective from this address is a message to “call for action” directed to world leaders and governments.

6. “In Egypt, we have set ambitious goals expressed in Egypt’s National Strategy to Address Climate Change. We are working diligently to accelerate the pace of green transformation by expanding reliance on renewable energy and clean transport. We have taken concrete steps towards the structural transformation of bills, legislation, and government working mechanisms to contribute to the promotion of green investments.”

The president resumed by explaining practically how the “implementations” should be executed and sponsored by governments (macro-level) by orienting the attention to “green transformation” and the transition to “renewable energy” by giving Sharm El-Sheikh city as a pioneering example of green transformation.

7. “Perhaps the national programs for investing in water, energy, and food projects (Nouwfi) that Egypt has recently launched is an embodiment of this ambition and trend. Egypt’s transition towards a low-emission green economy in all areas is a practical demonstration of the need for effective implementation on the ground and is a good example that hope still exists to overcome the challenges imposed by climate change if there is will and determination.”

The president continued to highlight the role of the Egyptian government’s initiatives (micro-level) to protect the environment and practice sustainability.

8. “Our ability as an international community to move ahead in a unified and coordinated manner to implement our commitments and pledges in accordance with the Paris Agreement is contingent on the level of trust we are able to build among us.”

The president went back to address the international governments (macro-level) and urged them to unify and coordinate to implement sustainability.

9. “I suggest announcing more nationally determined contributions, raising the ambition of your strategies to reduce emissions, launching ambitious and effective initiatives that gather proactive actors around clear goals with regard to adaptation and financing, following up on the implementation of previously launched initiatives and joining the new ones, which Egypt intends to launch during the conference.”

He also praised the role of governments in raising awareness and inspiring nations to cooperate with officials to embrace green transformation to protect the environment and adopt sustainability.

10. “Most importantly, I ask you to advise your negotiators, who will start two weeks of important negotiations, to be flexible and to work on building **trust and consensus in order to reach outcomes**, which I am certain that you, world leaders, want this conference to result in.”

He focused on governments and institutions’ role in gathering people for the sublime environmental cause.

In this particular point, the president pointed out how governments could take their initiatives to create national and international mechanisms aimed at enhancing sustainability protection. The regulative discourse has a consequence which is trust in institutional measures.

### **6.3. Climate justice**

The majority of the presidential speech emphasized the importance of climate justice. Regulative discourse can be viewed as a subset of climate justice. The idea of climate justice evolved to combat inequalities among many people and groups, despite its inconsistent definition (Penz, 2018). The goal of ecological justice is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly regarding ecological causes, such as the availability of environmental resources and the reduction of hazards from natural disasters (Roper, Ganesh, & Zorn, 2016). The president highlighted the duty of the youth today to preserve sustainability for succeeding generations, demonstrating the need for equality between emerging and industrial countries and between various socioeconomic countries. The president divided the concept of “climate justice” into two facets as follows:

11. “The millions of people watching us today, who viewed our conference

last year; women, men, youth, children, farmers, workers, and businessmen, people from all over our planet share a common destiny and goal.”

The president shows how the destinies of all categories of people “women, men, children, farmers, workers, and businessmen” are connected to the environment, if it flourishes, generations to come will flourish.

12. “I have confidence that you are here today to answer those questions and to respond to the concerns of the millions around the globe who are now, more than ever, suffering from climate disasters, whose pace is accelerating, and intensity is increasing, in an unprecedented manner, day by day, all over our planet.”

On the other hand, the president connected the destinies of the upcoming generations to the turbulences of climate change, if it is unstable, people's future will be unstable.

13. “Generations that must not bear the consequences of mistakes they have not made. People who have become more aware and knowledgeable of the scale of the challenges and the requirements to address them, and the high price of inaction.”

The president later illustrated how the instability of climate as a result of irresponsible human practices could affect people's quality of life. He also depicted the relationship between climate change and human practices as a reciprocal relationship with positive and negative results.

14. “This shall take place in a manner that ensures the formulation of practical tracks to achieve a **balanced transition** towards a green economy and takes into account the special circumstances and conditions of these countries.”

In reference to quality, the president pointed to the “balanced transition” toward a greener economy sponsored by both governments and people equally.

#### **6.4. Economic assistance**

Promises to foreign or national initiatives and programs for infrastructure growth were addressed during the speech to highlight financial

sustainability protection. This is based on the idea that economic indicators may help solve the issues associated with sustainability loss and that wealthy countries have a duty to assist poor nations. All these efforts focus on providing tools to assist poor economies to increase their capability.

15. “These countries bear their responsibilities, to the best of their abilities and the amount of appropriate support and finance, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, granting them some satisfaction with their position on global efforts to combat climate change.”

The president continued, explaining:

16. “Also, it will not materialize without developed countries taking additional serious steps to fulfill the pledges they have taken upon themselves to finance and support adaptation efforts and address the losses and damages resulting from climate change in developing and the least developed countries. This shall take place in a manner that ensures the formulation of practical tracks to achieve a balanced transition towards a green economy and takes into account the special circumstances and conditions of these countries.”

The second theme, “Trust in governments’ actions,” and the fourth theme, “Economic Assistance,” both included an unusual sequence: wealthy nations and suggested international organizations have an obligation toward developing countries. This results in the distinctions in economic resources for international communities between developing and developed nations.

## **6.5. Description of the environment**

Nature is a great tutor. It has taught us so many lessons, yet it still holds millions of mysteries for us to discover. The information that has been collected over decades; perhaps even hundreds of years can be discovered in nature. President Al-Sisi depicted nature and the environment as a human being who is having reactions and responses to human deeds and practices.

17. “A climate that is more responsive to the peoples’ needs and conditions

that are conducive to life, work, and growth, without damaging our world's resources, which must be further developed and invested, and made more sustainable.”

The president conveyed the idea that the environment reacts to our practices; the worse we treat it, the worse quality of life we will experience, and vice versa.

18. “One disaster ends in one place, and another starts in a different place, leaving behind thousands of victims, injured and displaced and causing billions in material losses. It is as if the world has become a stage, a constant display of human suffering in the strongest form.”

The aesthetic rhetoric to place humanity in a harmonic connection to nature is a manifestation of the divine and holy force that maintains the harmony of the natural world. It serves as humanity's safeguard against unforeseen extremes that would upset the equilibrium of the world.

## **7. Discussion**

Al-Sisi's remarks in the opening of COP27 revealed that the regulative discourse that viewed the environment as an asset predominated during the speech. The rising role of international organizations in global climate management is among the justifications for why the regulative discourse is so pervasive throughout international politics. The complexity of climate issues has increased, and many of them now have a worldwide scope (He & Liu, 2020). To effectively address climate change issues, governments and other key parties must be encouraged to cooperate and take consensus action. As a result, several parties have come together through global bodies like multilateral environmental agreements and climate change conferences.

Although the “environment as an asset” narrative has an unquestionable influence on contemporary culture, it has also shown several barriers to ecological conservation. Wider populations might be inspired by addresses that present a better-rounded viewpoint that sees the environment as more than just an asset (Wills, 2017). Relying on an examination of prior statements at COP summits, this research paper offers a helpful framework for ecological discourse analysis.

The increasing amount of discourse research on environmental analysis in line with the expansion of climate issues over the past 30 years shows proof of the importance of discourse within climate policy. Apart from a few research works that examined how sustainability had become a public debate and how environmental issues have overshadowed the worldwide conversation of diversity, the number of publications on ecology discourse is remarkably few. There are research works on the application of discourses in national environmental policy, but they do not describe global discourse patterns (Stibbe, 2018).

## **8. Findings and suggestions**

Al-Sisi used five types of ecological discourse narratives: reasons to practice sustainability, trust in governments' actions, climate justice, economic assistance, and description of the environment. For clarification, all these narratives pertain to these domains: environment as a resource (emotional discourse), environment as an object (spiritual discourse), and environment as a spirit (poetic discourse). Thus, by employing these narratives, the president responded to climate issues by highlighting the importance of climate change and the demand for the government to establish more efficient policies and procedures in place to address this issue and its effects. He mostly used the narrative of sustainability to depict climate change as a protracted issue and a strategic danger.

The results of the ecological linguistics analysis of Al-Sisi's speech show that he presented climate as a hazardous issue. This is demonstrated by the most often occurring phrases, including the term "climatic changes," which are related to instability. This demonstrates that the president approaches the issue in a manner that is most similar to that of the world leaders, who frequently employed phrases taken from the context of warfare.

In the light of this study's objectives and results, the field of this research may be enhanced by:

1. Implementing a comparative study to analyze the speeches of other world leaders who attended the COP-27 to determine how language is used, and what linguistic characteristics and structures can be identified.

2. Investigating whether sociolinguistic factors influence speakers' linguistic decisions while discussing ecological issues for instance if a president's figurative choices regarding climate changes are influenced by gender for instance.

## 9. Conclusion

This research investigates how language is employed to conceive climate change by politicians (through ecological discourse). According to the results of the current study, regulative discourse is primarily utilized to conceive and depict climate change by politicians, including both international and domestic channels. Politicians utilize ecological discourse as a vital instrument to construct contexts, and this might affect how the audience views the matter in question (climate change). Consequently, it is crucial in the research of this linguistic element in climate issues rhetoric (in political discourse analysis) to analyze regulative discourse which can help us better comprehend how governments define environmental issues, the reforms in society they hope to bring about, and how they could influence the addressees in dealing with the issue.

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