

ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN “NEVER LONELY AGAIN” PICTURE BOOK

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ABSTRACT

This study entitled “*Ecological Awareness in Never Lonely Again Picture Book*”. It represents how ecological awareness the main character portrays the way nature as a friend can occur. The data of this study were collected from a picture book entitled *Never Lonely Again* by Hans Wilhelm (1988). The qualitative approach was used to present and analyze the data. In analyzing the data (Issue of Nature as a Friend) theory from Cheryll Glotfelty (1996) was applied. The result of the study revealed that nature can be an influence in changing a good personality towards the main character. The personality change caused natural objects in the picture book such as flowers, sunshine, waterfall, mountain, etc. To complete the research, analysed the data based on the pictures and saw the changes in the characters at the beginning and end of the story.

Keywords: *Literature, ecological awareness, picture book*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini berjudul “*Ecological Awareness in Never Lonely Again Picture Book*”. Ini merepresentasikan bagaimana kesadaran ekologis tokoh utama menggambarkan cara alam sebagai sahabat dapat terjadi. Data penelitian ini dikumpulkan dari buku bergambar berjudul *Never Lonely Again* karya Hans Wilhelm (1988). Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan untuk menyajikan dan menganalisis data. Dalam menganalisa data (masalah alam sebagai teman) teori yang dilaksanakan oleh Cheryll Glotfelty (1996). Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa alam dapat menjadi pengaruh dalam mengubah kepribadian yang baik terhadap karakter utama. Perubahan kepribadian tersebut disebabkan oleh objek-objek alam yang terdapat dalam buku bergambar seperti bunga, sinar matahari, air terjun, gunung, dll. Untuk melengkapi penelitian, dilakukan analisis data berdasarkan gambar dan melihat perubahan karakter pada awal dan akhir cerita.

Kata Kunci: *Sastra, kesadaran ekologi, buku bergambar*

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Being environmentally aware means understanding how our behaviour impacts the environment and committing to making changes to our activities to protect the planet. The environmentalist movement in recent decades has prompted many people to make both minor and substantial lifestyle changes to live in a more environmentally friendly way. However, humans have an important role in maintaining the balance of nature. Over time the mindset of humans gradually fades to preserve nature and is more selfish than

the surrounding natural life. Humans should stay on their path that coexists with the natural environment because humans do not need to think that life is not about themselves. According to Miller (2020, p. 1) most of us dismiss touching a tree as a way to reconnect with and heal ourselves, this despite our deep history as nature lover and mounting evidence that nature is an effective tool to combat cancer, anxiety, depression, high blood, pressure, and stress.

Not difficult for humans to get back in touch with nature. Humans only need to spend time in nature such as going to parks, mountains, or forests. Most modern people today become difficult because of the daily

rush, but at least we should try to spend a little time to see the nature around us, such as rivers, leaves, mountains, trees and sky. So that we will realize that there is another life on this earth besides humans. Nevertheless, respecting nature is a form of spirituality in which both are inseparable. Respecting nature means remembering the role God has set us as humans, and respecting nature mean preserving the universe that God has given. (Balevre, 2016, p. 1) defined nature can be a friend. Nature can be found peace walking through the woods, fishing on the ocean, climbing the heights of the mountain, or simply looking at the stars.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the issue of ecological awareness as described in *Never Lonely Again* picture book, this study tries to reveal the following questions :

1. How does ecological awareness portrayed in *Never Lonely Again*?
2. How does ecological influence the main character's personality in his life?

1.3 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is the area of children's literature. This study focuses on elements of picture book, which is intrinsic and extrinsic specially in the *Never Lonely Again* picture book. The limitation in this study is to examine *Nature as a Friend in Never Lonely Again Picture Book* related to the Children's Literature approach.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study can be highlighted as the following points::

1. To portray ecological awareness in *Never Lonely Again* as picture book
2. To reveal the influence of ecological in changing the personality of the main character in *Never Lonely Again*.

1.5 Functions of the Study

Hopefully this study would be beneficial and have the following functions :

1. To improve the writer's knowledge and academic skill in analyzing literary issue in children books especially those in picture books.

2. To give better understanding to readers about Children's Literature approach related to the picture book
3. To be one of the references for next writers or whoever interested in conducting a study with similar topic.

1.6 Systematical Presentation

To ease readers in mapping the whole contents of this study, it is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction that discusses general view of the subject and topic of the study, also reasons for writing this study. Secondly, there is statements of problem consist of research questions to be solved related to the issues discussed. The second chapter is related studies, review of literature, and theoretical framework. Some previous studies, expert quotations, and theories that are closely related to the issues are explained in this chapter. The third chapter is research methodology contains approach used in analyzing the data, where the data are taken from, how the writer collects the data, and how it is analyzed. The fourth chapter consists of finding and analysis that discusses the analysis conducted in this study. The fifth chapter consists of the conclusion and suggestion. It is the summary the result in this study, including the suggestion for the next study.

RELATED STUDIES, REVIEW OF LITERATURE, AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Related Studies

The issue of nature has become discussion in some studies conducted by graduates from some university. Therefore, it is necessary to view some related studies as a reference and comparison. In this study, there are three related studies viewed.

The frist study is entitled "Nature Exploitation In Dr. Seuss' Movie Script "The Lorax" Using Ecocriticism Theory by Cheryll Glotfelty". This study was conducted by Cabello (2019) from Pamulang University. He tried to build an

understanding of the relationship between human and nature in “The Lorax”. To complete the study, the data were analyzed using Cheryll Glotfelty’s theory as the basic concept and frameworks. Based on the analysis, the content is about Once-ler as the character has some negative relationships with nature. The result of this study shows that in ecocriticism, there is some relationship between human and nature in negative and positive things, therefore, in this analysis Once-ler as a character is directly exploiting the nature.

The second study was a thesis from Fajar University entitled “Children’s Litterature: As a Way of Raising Environmental Consciousness – A Study”. This study was conducted by Tamrin (2018). The study analyzed about how green literature could help to encourage the children to get closer to their environment. Several of children literature books are used as the object of the study to prove that the children literature could indeed be a very helpful tool for raising the ecoconsciousness. The children books are used in this study are in the form of picture books. The result showed that documentary analysis of ecocriticism was used to the children picture books to reveal the way to increase children awareness about their environment. In the end, this study will hopefully increase children’s love to protect, preserve and nurture the environment in the near future.

2.2 Review of Literature

As mentioned above that there are many kind of literature; prose, poem, drama, novel, picture book etc. On this paper, the writers try to analyze picture book as one of the literary book works. This chapter highlights some theories those are related to this study.

2.2.1 Picture Book

Never Lonely Again picture book is fiction storybook that presents interesting pictures that make the story come alive. Every page of the book is filled with pictures as a whole. When opening a page, attention is drawn to the image first, not the

text itself. The picture that is displayed is like speaking a thousand words, allowing the child who reads the book to flow with the storyline, more than that, the story that is displayed is interesting. According to Smith (2013, p. 1) “A picture book for children as distinguished from other books with illustrations, is one that essentially provides the child with a visual experience. A picture book has a collective unity of story-line, theme, or concept, developed through the series of pictures of which the book is comprised”. Story elements in picture books are like prose works in general, the picture books have story elements, such as characters, plots, conflicts, and themes. According to Paul (2019, p. 1), picture books may be simpler than adult fiction in some ways, but one aspect that requires an equal amount of time and care is character development. Just as in fantasy or misery or romance fiction, children’s fiction writers must know their picture book characters inside and out. The following are the elements in the picture book *Never Lonely Again*.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

In this study, theory from Cheryll Glotfelty (1996) is used to analyze ecocriticism and nature in literature for the issue nature as a friend which is portrayed in *Never Lonely Again* (Wilhelm, 1988) picture book. It mainly aims to enhance people’s awareness toward the importance of preserving nature and to make people realize how great the influence of nature toward humans is. (Cheryll Glotfelty, 1996, p. 7) asserts Literary theory, in general, examines the relations between writers, texts, and the world. In most literary theory, ‘the world’ is synonymous with society – the social sphere. Ecocriticism expands the notion of “the world” to include the entire ecosphere.

Certainly, ecocriticism has extended the concept of “the world” within literary analysis, so that now it does not just focus on cultural, social, and linguistic background. Rather, it talks about something that the readers often forget,

which is the nature or the ecosphere depicted in the literary works. This study will use theory by Cheryll Glotfelty (1996) because the relationship between humans and nature is in accordance with the issue in the story.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Approach of the Study

This study was included to qualitative approach because the author describes the data and the result of the study into reading picture book. In analyzing *Never Lonely Again* picture book, the author uses qualitative approach because searches information about children's literature through library research in few of libraries of university, the author also searches information about children's literature from books, journal and internet.

According to (Creswell, 1994, p. 13) a qualitative approach is a way of collecting data by observing directly, making notes and report the data. After the writer get all the data, the writer analyzed and describes into paragraphs.

3.2 Data Source

Never Lonely Again (Wilhelm, 1988) is a credible source based on the availability of the book both in print format. The data source in this study was *Never Lonely Again* picture book, this picture book was published in 2013.

3.3 Data Collecting

The data were collected from *Never Lonely Again* picture book which are related to the problem of this study, the data were analyzed. The steps which were done in collecting data, they are :

1. Reading *Never Lonely Again* picture book by Hans Wihelm repeatedly.
2. Identifying the content which relates to the issue of ecological awareness.
3. Marking the essential scenes that related to ecological awareness.
4. Taking the essential scenes and interpretating them based on the theory.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data are collected from a picture book entitled *Never Lonely Again* were classified into how nature as a friend happened and how the influence of nature in changing the personality of the main character within the story. The finding data is revealed in the form of essay and followed by analysis. In this study, the theory used to analyze of the concept nature as a friend using the ecocriticism theory by Cheryll Glotfelty (1996).

FINDING AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Ecological Awareness as Portrait in *Never Lonely Again*

The writer could analyze nature as a friend in *Never Lonely Again* picture book. In this study, natural objects can be interpreted in pictures from the picture book *Never Lonely Again*. This story is a fiction book that recounts of Chestnut is lonely friends with nature, assisted by Morris how to make friends and make peace with yourself and interpret that nature can be a good friend. This research will be conducted by analyzing the images in the picture book.

4.1.1 Nature as a Friend



Picture 5, 6. Chestnut and Morris playing in the flower garden

This picture shows the view that Morris is hugging flowers. Morris takes Chestnut to a beautiful flower field, the beautiful flowers blooming there. The expression shown by Chestnut looks annoyed because he does not understand what Morris is doing when he hugs the flowers and smiles happily. Flowers become natural objects shown in the picture. This flower has a fragrant and calming fragrance. The beauty of flowers can be felt when hugging a flower the feeling becomes calm, flowers

have an attractive colour when you look at them, the shape is beautiful too. *"Look here! These are some of my friend!"* said Morris (Wilhelm, 1988, p.9). Morris shows Chestnut a new friend, the flower. It was not what Chestnut had previously thought, the figure of a friend who could play and converse together. Morris gave the reason because it was beautiful in colour, smelled good and the flowers smiled at them. *"...someone who smiles at me is my friend! Insisted Morris"* (Wilhelm, 1988, p.9). Besides humans and animals, plants also have an important role for the life of every living thing. In this object, the existence of nature must be maintained so that the presence of this plant or flower can be a beauty to calm the mood of every living being.



Picture 7, 8. Chestnut and Morris are catching butterflies

They were seen catching a butterfly together. They really enjoy it, Chestnut also look happy. We can see the change in expression of the enthusiastic face of the Chestnut who is smiling happily. Chestnut are no longer awkward playing with Morris, because it turns out that Chestnut like to catch butterflies. Butterflies are animals that can fly. Butterflies also have their beauty, such as their colourful wings. Butterflies can adapt to a clean environment. In this study, butterflies are one of the natural objects that will make Chestnut excited and active as in the picture, Chestnut and Morris are catching butterflies together while running and jumping happily. Morris said *"We can't keep a friend locked up"* (Wilhelm, 1988, p.11). This mean he will just play with butterflies and he did not catch it. Morris is always cheerful can comfort Chestnut with something he shows. Chestnut found

something simple but made him happy and the genuine smile he showed added to his enthusiasm. Different from the previous Chestnut in this picture looks more expressive and glad. This picture also shows a butterfly flying around a flower because it wants to show the existence of such a beautiful nature.

4.2 The influence of ecological in changing the personality of the main character in *Never Lonely Again*

Based on analyzed the picture book, it turns out that the influence of nature has its role in human life. The existence of nature gives life to humans because humans and nature can not be separated, they need each other. This picture book tells of a character named Chestnut who has no friends and lives alone. Then, he met another character named Morris who was friendly and cheerful. This analysis begins when Morris introduces natural objects that can change the personality of the main character who has no friends and is alone. Chestnut and Morris ha ve different personalities, lonely Chestnut and cheerful Morris. It is those contrasting personalities that finally unite them with nature. Their meeting which eventually became a close friendship.FriendshipIn the first picture, there is the main character named Chestnut. Chestnut is a lonely man and lives alone. Almost every day all he did was sleep all day. Chesnut also hates noise and he should live alone. There are so many things out there that are passed in his life and without him realizing it, his life is lonely and empty.



Picture 1. Chestnut is sleeping on the first page of the book



Picture 2, 3. Chestnut meets Morris

The beginning, Morris's arrival at the tree house was shocking and annoying, because before that no one had come to the tree house. Chestnut and Morris have different personalities, lonely Chestnut and cheerful Morris. It is those contrasting personalities that finally unite them with nature. Chestnut's first meeting with Morris was the beginning of this research. This study is interpreted from the image showing chestnut and Morris meeting right in front of the chestnut tree house. Then, Morris took Chestnut somewhere and Chestnut did not know where Morris would take him. In this case, it can be seen from Chestnut's unfriendly face towards Morris. This attitude is shown as he does not want to be friends with anyone.



Picture 4, 5. Chestnut and Morris make a friend

Then, started by Morris who asked him to play, he wanted to show his friends to Chestnut. Morris wants to help Chestnut to make new friends and said that he knows what Chestnut feel right now. Morris explained that everyone feels the same way, they will feel bored with the routine every

day. However, different from otter who is always happy and can have friends every day. "Have you ever wondered why we otters are always so happy?" ... "It's because every new day we have to make one new friend" (Wilhelm, 1988, p.6). That's what Morris said, he wanted to prove to Chestnut that we can have friends and always be happy. Happiness does not just happen but comes from the experience of life itself, in every pleasant and unpleasant state, in happiness and suffering. It shows that even in pain, the meaning of life can still be found

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

This study reveals the depiction of nature as a friend toward Chestnut characters in *Never Lonely Again* picture book. After analyzing the picture of *Never Lonely Again* by using ecocriticism theory by Cheryll Glotfelty, it can be concluded that the picture book contains about how to make friends with nature and change of personality in the main character so that not be alone again. It is depicted by Chestnut with Morris characters that will make nature as a friend using theory by Cheryll Glotfelty. This nature as a friend begins when Chestnut meets Morris. Morris knows the problem Chestnut is having, Chestnut who is bored of his life. The change in the main character's personality is caused by the presence of natural objects in the book, such as flowers, butterflies, waterfalls, apple tree, sunshine and cloud. In this picture book, the change in the personality of Chestnut after getting to know nature. The nature here accompanies their journey and feels like having new friends or feelings that were previously empty filled with a beautiful experience.

5.2 Suggestion

This only analyzed one picture book. For the future researchers should consider analyzing different picture books sourced from different topics; they have to analyze how we can appreciate the existence of nature in other illustrated

books. To further research, particularly those who have the same problem and are interested in conducting research, it is suggested that this study can be a reference. Hopefully, there will be any further research on how to complete this technique. Therefore, the next study for English Department students who are interested in conducting a study with a similar topic, should analyze deeply with other approaches and theories and try to study other aspects of nature as a friend. Moreover, the picture book is not the only object in literature, so the next study should try to apply Cheryll Glotfelty's theories in other objects such as novels, dramas, short stories or poems.

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