

THESIS
THE IMPACT OF ANTHROPOCENTRISM ON THE ENVIRONMENT IN
COLIN THIELE'S *FEBRUARY DRAGON*

Written and submitted by

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES
POST-GRADUATE SCHOOL
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY
MAKASSAR
2021

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**As partial fulfillment to achieve master degree in
English Language Studies Program**

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APPROVAL SHEET (THESIS)

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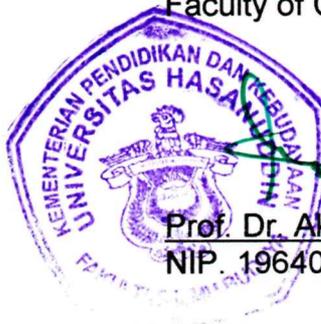
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Makassar, February 4th, 2021



Nurul Hikmah

ABSTRACT

NURUL HIKMAH (F022181025). *The Impact of Anthropocentrism in Thiele's February Dragon* (Supervised by Burhanuddin Arafah and Herawaty)

This study aims to describe the relationship between human and nature and its impact on the environment as revealed in Colin Thiele's *February Dragon*.

The analysis was conducted based on the elaboration of the characters' behavior and performance. The research used the qualitative-descriptive analysis method. Data were collected from the text and analyzed employing ecocriticism and mimesis approaches. The reflection of human-nature relationship in the novel was viewed from the ecocriticism perspective.

The study result indicates that Thiele elucidates two types of human positions in the ecosphere. The superior or anthropocentric is divided into dominating and caretaking. Furthermore, the author also illustrates his stance in the equality between human and nature. The interaction between human and nature indicates that human activities have two impacts: positive and negative impacts affecting the environment.

Keywords: *anthropocentrism, human-nature relationships, ecocriticism, Australian literature*



ABSTRAK

NURUL HIKMAH (F022181025). *Dampak Antroposentrisme Terhadap Lingkungan dalam Novel February Dragon karya Colin Thiele* (Dibimbing oleh Burhanuddin Arafah and Herawaty)

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjabarkan hubungan antara manusia dan alam dan dampaknya terhadap lingkungan dalam novel *February Dragon* karya Colin Thiele.

Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode descriptive-kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan dari teks dan dianalisis menggunakan pendekatan ecoritisme dan mimesis. Analisis dilakukan berdasarkan elaborasi tingkah laku dan performa dari karakter-karakter dalam novel. Penggambaran hubungan antara manusia dengan alam ditinjau dari perspektif ekokritisisme.

Hasil dari penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Thiele menjelaskan dua tipe posisi manusia di dalam ekosfer. Superior atau antroposentris dibagi menjadi *dominating* dan *caretaking*. Penulis juga menjabarkan posisinya terhadap kesetaraan antara manusia dan alam. Berdasarkan interaksi antara manusia dan alam dapat disimpulkan bahwa aktivitas manusia memiliki dua dampak, positif dan negatif, yang memengaruhi lingkungan

Keywords: *antroposentrisme, hubungan manusia dan alam, ekokritisisme, sastra Australia*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis could not have been completed without many inspiring and encouraging people. The writer would like to thank Prof. Burhanuddin Arafah, M.Hum., Ph.D and Dra. Herawaty, M.A., M.Hum., Ph.D. for their supervision, and valuable support throughout the whole course of this research. In addition, the writer also would like to thank Dr. Mustafa Makkah, M.S., Dr., M. Amir P, M.Hum., and Dr. Harlinah Sahib, M.Hum for their advice in the early and final stages of the thesis.

Her biggest gratitude for her family and friends. It is dedicated to her parents, Sitti Marhumi, S.Pd, Drs. Muh. Juhri, and her husband, Muh. Riza A. Natsir, S.T., M.Si. for their love and unconditional encouragement. Their immense support has made it possible to conduct and complete this work in the way it wanted to be done. Special thanks for the writer's best friend, to Darmayunita, S.KM, Dewi Andriani, S.S., M.Hum, Fatnia Paramitha Makatita, S.S., Syarifah Fakhrana Fildzah, S.S., M.Hum, Salmawati, S.S., and Nurfitrasari Patau, S.S for their positive energy.

The writer would like to acknowledge the support of the dean of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Prof. Dr. Akin Duli, M.A, lecturers of ELS Department and administrative and library staffs of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences.

Makassar, February 2nd 2021

NURUL HIKMAH

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the general idea and critical issues that the writer wants to investigate as well as the importance and the significance of this research.

A. Background of Study

The earth and other elements of the ecosystem are essential to maintain human's life. It includes food resources in the form of biological diversity, land for agriculture, energy resources for transport and industrialization, and carbon dioxide absorption and oxygen exhaust by green vegetation (Muhamad, Syihab and Ibrahim, 2020: 1054).

The relationship between human and non-human has been vigorously debated. Religions and philosophers have different notions about human creation and human-nature relationship. When Adam was sent down from heaven to earth, God developed resources to support his well-being, including numerous plants and animals. In Islamic view, the purpose of earth as a place for human to sustain themselves mention in the Holy Quran Al-Baqarah verse 29:

It is He who created for you all that is in the earth, and He designed the heavens also and fashioned (ordered) them as seven heavens; and He knows all things (QS. Al-Baqarah: 29)

The existence of humankind as the creation of God plays an important role because God exclusively assigned humans as His vicegerent on earth.

The Qur'an mentions human as the vicegerent, or representative of God in Al-Baqarah verse 30:

And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: "Verily, I am going to place on the earth a vicegerent (Caliph)", they said: "Will you place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood and we glorify you with praises and sanctify You? He said: "Surely I know what you do not know" (QS. Al-Baqarah: 30)

In Judeo-Christian beliefs, God established animals and plants to sustain humans. After creating the heavens and the earth and other components of the universe, including a multitude of living beings, in Chapter One of the *Genesis*, God said:

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." (Gen 1: 26-27).

Within Western Intellectual Tradition, the relationship between humans and nature known as either dichotomous, human beings are separate and distinct from nature, or hierarchical, human beings are part of nature. However, human positions are higher than other creatures (Sandler, 2012: 285).

It is believed that humankind is the strongest creature on earth. Compared to other living beings, there are several elements that make human beings superior. Humans have the capacity to comprehend what other people feel and think (Blackmore, 2004: 172,178). According to Sandler (2012: 107), humans are complete moral beings, and crucially for environmental ethics, whereas individuals of other organisms are not. So

far as many people believed, only human beings have the cognitive and psychological ability to raise moral dilemmas, understand moral concepts, use those concepts to formulate principles, deliberate on those principles and apply them in particular situations.

Human being's control on earth is a significant factor that leads to a multitude of environmental degradation. It is believed that after *The Fall*, the time when Adam and Eve were sent down to earth, the original condition of nature, which was perfect, began to degenerate. This argument is valid because, since that day, humans have begun to take advantage of the planet to support their lives.

Human activities, from pollution to overpopulation, have profoundly changed the environment since the industrial revolution. Over the past seventy years, the global population has grown exponentially, resulting in rising demand for land and food. Human beings have cleared many acres of land for houses and farms to meet those needs. Human beings have also been burning oil and coal to fuel their houses, factories, aircraft, and vehicles, producing carbon dioxide, while animal product consumption releases another methane pollutant.

NASA has been recording the level of carbon dioxide in the air since 2005. Reported in climate.nasa.gov in March 2020, the result shows that there are about 413 carbon dioxide components per million that are at their highest level in 650,000 years. Global temperature and sea level are influenced directly by this phenomenon. According to NASA, since the last

nineteen centuries, our global temperature has increased by about 1.6 degrees Fahrenheit. The global average sea level has risen by almost 178 mm over the past hundred years.

Consequently, the stability of the planet is being disrupted. The heat and the rise in sea level have produced multiple issues. These days, fires and floods are becoming a natural occurrence. According to Stewart's report in towardsdatascience.com on 28 November 2019, the Amazon Basin was struck by the worst fires, which destroyed the rainforest, home to 30 percent of the world-famous species, and 90 billion in 2019. In Australia, nearly half a billion animals are dead from Australia raging bushfires. More than 12 million acres of land are burned. Many were killed directly by the smoke and flames. Others may have lost access to food and shelter destroyed by the fires (Newsaround, 2020). Reported by Kurniawan on 3 Oktober 2019 in reuters.com, Indonesia also experienced the same disaster. According to Indonesian Government data, more than 2.12 million acres of land had been burned by the end of September 2019.

Climate activists, literary scholars, authors, or even ordinary citizens have taken different actions to fight against this catastrophe. According to Mayerson (2020: 1), artists and cultural producers, including novelists, have mirrored the general growing awareness and concern. Campaigns, scientific papers, and legal action have been done to prevent the impact of this global climate change. Numerous filmmakers have also created documentaries about our planet's present condition that can easily be found

on various platforms. In the U.S., an organization called The United States Environmental Protection Agency's Youth-oriented Climate Changes has encouraged young generations to be a part of global climate change solutions by creating a website "A Student's Guide to Global Climate Change" (Echterling, 2016: 285).

As ordinary citizens there are various things that could be done to help the environment. Practicing recycle, reduce, and reuse is one of realistic efforts to protect the environment. Recycling involves in managing the waste that people produced, so instead of buying new stuff people can create valuable thing from their old stuff. Reducing means using less thing. It could be reducing the use of single-use plastic bags and bottle and saving energy including water and electricity. For reusing, people can start by maximize the function of the thing that they already have. This method will help to decrease the amount of waste produced to the environment.

The writer, as literary scholar and ordinary citizen personally also have done several practical things including using reusable shopping bag and bottle, managing the waste at home, and using water and electricity wisely. Although these kind of actions seem simple, the writer believes that it would create a great impact in maintaining and sustaining the environment also in promoting the effort to save the environment from destruction.

In the field of literary studies, in the 1980s, literary scholars began to shift their concerns to conclude nature in literary studies as the response to

this global environmental crisis. There were many academic papers, teaching materials, and ecological conferences related to environmental literature. Some universities also began to include literature courses in their environmental studies curricula. The establishment of ASLE (Association for The Study of Literature and Environment) in 1992 and its journal called ISLE (Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment) in 1993 were when ecological literary studies, known as ecocriticism, had become a famous critical school (Gaard, 2009: 322).

However, if it was to trace back to centuries ago, many writers or authors had been documented nature and the relationship between humans and nature in their writing. It can be seen from the work of British romantic writers like William Wordsworth, Robert Frost, and Mary Shelley or American Transcendentalists, like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Henry David Thoreau. Their works have been analyzed by many literary scholars. In Australia, writing about nature can be found in the work of Henry Lawson (Rigby, 2015: 123). Since the early nineteenth, Australian literature has been presenting green literature, which they call "The Age of Colonial Literature, known for its 'bush poetry.' Henry Lawson, Banjo Peterson, and Dorothea Mackellar were the pioneered of this genre, which is inspired by the Romantic Movement (Murti, 2019: 3)

It is obvious that started in 1990, climate change in literature and literary studies is no longer a marginal topic. Fiction regarding climate change, or cli-fi, has attracted substantial media and critical interest. Climate change in

literary studies is also now being regarded as a specific subfield of literary studies, particularly in literary or critical theory (Johns-Putra, 2016: 82). These days, literature and environment have become a popular topic among literary students. Although this kind of research is only done through textual analysis, it cannot be denied that what is written in literary work is the reflection of real life, as Abrams (1971: 6) designates as “mimesis”, art is the imitation of the universe.

Environmental fiction has several positive externalities that make them a fitting object for analysis. Mayerson (2020: 1) argues that climate fiction can play a role in helping people to recognize, understand, and feel the catastrophic trajectory on which we find ourselves and chart a different path forward. Mayerson (2020: 1) furtherly argues that most of us believe that, regardless of our print position, researching texts that are environmentally involved is a worthwhile and even more critical endeavor, not just because this work is interesting and gratifying, but also because these texts matter, socially, culturally, politically. Researching environmental fiction will increase environmental awareness and help to find solutions to the ecological problems that are happening now, especially in our country.

The damaged natural environment, the conception of the human-natural relationship, and the urge to raise knowledge of the environment through literary work inspired, have motivated the writer to undertake a literature and environmental analysis. Therefore, the writer decides to do an eco-critical reading of a novel entitled *February Dragon* by Colin Thiele,

because the story of *February Dragon* is closely related to the current environmental issues, especially Australian bushfires.

Thiele is an educator and author of more than one hundred books, which have won him worldwide achievement. According to Piddington (1987: 4), Thiele started writing children's novels, often describing life in rural South Australia in the 1960s. His first publication was *The Sun on the Stubble*. Other well-known novels were *Blue Fin*, *The Fire in the Stone*, *Storm Boy*, *February Dragon* and his most famous, *The Valley Between*, which earned him the Australian Book of the Year Award in 1982. In 1951 he was the South Australian winner in the World Short Story Quest. In 1967 and 1968, Thiele won the Hans Christian Anderson Award. In 1979 and again in 1986, he won the Austrian State Prize for Children's Books. Other awards included 2 Commonwealth of Australia Jubilee Federal Arts prizes, the Grace Levin Poetry Prize, and the Dromkeen Medal in 1997.

February Dragon, which was commended by The Children's Australian Book Council in 1966, was written at the request of the South Australian Bushfire Research Centre, hoping for a "harrowing tale. Could do for the prevention of bushfires what Storm Boy had done to protect Wildlife in the Coorong Wetlands at the mouth of the Murray River (Clark, 2010: 12). Grey (1994: 90) states that Thiele's novel focuses on environment and preservation of wildlife during that period. Thiele's stories were pro-environmental and sympathetic to an animal long before either cause was

fashionable. His work such as *Storm Boy*, *Fire in the Stone*, and *February Dragon* represents environmental issues, especially in Australia.

February Dragon is a tale about three children from Australia living on a remote farm in Australia surrounded by bushland. The novel took place in a fictional town called Gumbowie, which was located in a rural area of South Australia. The story told from a third-person point of view tells of the daily lives of the children of The Pine, Resin, Turps, and Columbine, who were full of enjoyable adventures before the raging bushfires destroyed the whole country, including their homes and farms.

The novel represents the social life of the rural area in Australia, where people lived alongside the bushland. The community in the novel mostly worked as farmers, truck drivers, clerks, or shopkeepers while some of them were running small shops. People entertained themselves by doing fishing, having a picnic in the bush, or going to the village festival. Beside social life, the novel also portrayed the beauty of Australian wilderness where different kind of tree and various wild animals like yabby, goana, and possum lives.

February Dragon depicts vividly the atmosphere of Australian summer, which was extremely hot and dusty, similar to the real atmosphere of the Southern Australian corner, which is mostly surrounded by dry forests. Thiele also gives overt attention to the relation between humans and the environment by showing the interaction between humans and native

Australian animals, also by the way the characters in the novel lived in a village with adjoining farm and bushland.

The story of *February Dragon* is more of an episodic story than a sequential one, which may make the plot look unpromising. Thiele, however, delivered the story with magnificent yet straightforward narratives. Using powerful figurative language forces the reader to feel the emotion of the story. For instance, Thiele used the word "dragon" as a metaphor for the fire to describe how powerful and dangerous the fire was. It can be seen from the following quotation:

They spread with incredible speed. Within ten second the flames were as high as the tree tops; within a minute the tree had joined together in a common front; within five minutes a full-scale bushfires was roaring through The Big Scrub. The dragon was free (Thiele, 1966: 138).

Thiele also used anthropomorphic and zoomorphic imagery to portray human-nature relationships. In his narrative, Thiele illustrated different ways of how human beings interact with nature. Humans and non-human can live harmoniously, but the domination of humans over nature can damage the balance of life. His Anthropocene narratives focus on "the most dangerous thing in Australia", the Bushfires.

The story raises issues like deforestation, pollution, and animal oppression. The story told that there had been many land and animal exploitations for the sake of human needs. As a result, humans have to accept the consequence of their careless behavior.

The environmental topics discussed above have captured the writer's interest in considering the human-nature relationship by examining the position of human beings in an environment and the impact of human's domination on the sustainability of the environment. Therefore, the writer chose the title *The Impact of Anthropocentrism on Environment in Colin Thiele's February Dragon*.

According to Li and Liu (2017: 138), material ecocriticism is an excellent way of interpreting Anthropocene narratives. From this perspective, respectively, humans and non-human are seen as fully-fledged actors. Since *February Dragon* is likely inspired by real bushfire event in Australia, the writer approaches the text by employing Abrams's mimetic theory. The reflection of the anthropocentric behavior of human beings is viewed from the perspective of ecology and environmental ethics. Thus, the ecocriticism approach by Glotfelty was applied to the analysis.

B. Identification of problem

After reading *February Dragon* by Colin Thiele, the writer identifies several problems that could be investigated and developed as a research topic. The first is the use of figurative language. The figure of speech could be an interesting topic to investigate since the author of this novel used various types of figure of speech such as simile and metaphors for example, in the sentence "*The Big tree were blowing up like gunpowder*" (1966:145)

and some metaphor like "*dragon*" and "*monster*" to describe how dangerously the fire was.

The second topic that could be analyzed is the portrayal of human and nature relationship. The author shows different kinds of human and non-human interaction and how different characters treated these non-human objects differently. By the portrayal of how humans treated their non-human counterparts, the reader can justify the position of human beings in the universe.

The author also describes human domination and environmental degradation caused by human behavior. As described in the novel, the increasing population after the War forced human beings to raze the forest to build their home. Humans also treated wild animals as their property. The behavior of these ignorant human beings, in the end, led to environmental disaster.

The last topic is the portrayal of social life in Australia, especially in a rural area after World War II. The migration to the rural area increased during 1939-1945, where people, including immigrants from Italy, Southern, and Eastern Europe, moved to a particular area in some parts of Australia such as New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria. In the novel, the author describes people who came to that area and cleared the land for agriculture until they finally could build a small town. The story also describes the social and economic condition of the community, such

as their occupation and social gap between people with a decent job like manager and people who worked as a farmer.

C. Research questions

This proposed thesis will investigate the relationship between human behavior and natural environment, focusing mainly on the impact of anthropocentrism on nature and environment in Australian novel, *February Dragon*, written by Colin Thiele, therefore the writer formulates research question as follows:

1. What human-nature relationship do the characters' performance in Thiele's *February Dragon*?
2. To what extent does the human-nature relationship influence the environment as revealed in the novel?

D. Research Objectives

Based on the problem above, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To elaborate human-nature relationship as performed by the characters in Thiele's *February Dragon*?
2. To elucidate the influence of human-nature relationship on the environment as revealed in the novel.

E. Significance of study

This study is expected to theoretically beneficial to students and researchers who want to do research related to literature and environment,

especially the application of ecocriticism in analyzing literary works. It is also expected to help students and researchers who are interested in doing research or publication about ecocriticism. Hopefully, the result and the findings of their research will contribute to the development of literature and environmental studies.

The writer also hopes the finding of this study will practically be a significant endeavor in promoting environmental awareness since this research suggests to find out solutions for environmental degradation. By understanding the findings of this research, people will wisely treat nature, including other environmental surroundings.

F. Sequence of chapters

This research consists of three chapters. Chapter one depicts five fundamental parts of this study: the background of the study, identification of research problem, research questions and objectives, and significance of this study.

Chapter two is a literature review that elaborates on the theoretical aspects of this research. They are previous related studies that consist of several research done by other researchers and theoretical background, which will further describe ecocriticism and anthropocentrism.

The third chapter explains the methodology. The writer presents data collection techniques, data analysis methods, data sources and explains step by step the research procedures.

Chapter four presents the finding and discussion. The collected data were elaborated and analyzed by applying the mimetic approach by Abrams and were viewed from the perspective of ecocriticism.

Chapter five summarizes the essential findings and the result or the outcome of this study. This section also includes the recommendation by stating the limitations of this study and suggests how they might be improved in future work.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter provides a literature review, consisting of previous related study, theoretical background, and the term's definition in this research.

A. Previous related study

In completing this research, it is important to review several previous research related to the problems to gather valuable information and ideas that help the writer to develop basic concept for this research. The writer review several unpublished thesis and articles published in some reliable journals focusing mainly in research with similar issues.

The first is a research entitled *The Impact of Anthropocentrism on The Natural Environment from Margaret Atwood's perspective*, carried out by Azizmohammadi and Kohzadi (2014). This study discussed the realistic significance of Margaret Atwood's study of the environmental impact of anthropocentrism in her novel *Oryx and Crake* by applying Glotfelty's ecocriticism. This research shows Atwood's great concern about the environmental issue. She shows her opposite side of anthropocentric behavior through a character's life. The author also discovered the deleterious effects of anthropocentrism on the natural environment.

The second research paper is the research paper entitled *D.H. Lawrence's St. Mawr; Eco-critical Study* (2014) conducted by Hooti and

Ashrafian. This research is a critic of Lawrence's *St. Mawr*, using Garrard's Ecocriticism. The paper examines the depressive effect and cause of the environmental crisis, including the impact of industrialism, gender, religion, and philosophy on environmental suppression. The result shows Lawrence's belief in re-establishing an intimate relationship between humans and the rest of life.

The journal entitled *How to See The World and Other Lesson from Children's Environmental Literature* (2016) was published by Clare Echterling, which examines several contemporary children's environmental books. Various books which inform readers about environmental justice and the link between environmental degradation and systemic social issues such as class-setting and politics were analyzed by employing Gaard's notion of eco-pedagogy. The findings in this research paper compared two different kinds of environmental books and their influence on children. *Magic School Books* and *Climate Change, The Lorax*, and *Celebrate Earth Day* are oversimplified environmental issues that do little to prepare children for sustained and critical thinking. In the meantime, there are books like *Seed of Change* and *Oil Spill! Disaster in the Gulf of Mexico* informs readers about individual actions to combat environmental disasters. It encourages children to address social issues such as corruption and discrimination in the face of environmental disasters and think critically about overcoming various environmental problems.

The research entitled *An Eco-critical Reading of the River Thames in Selected Fin de Siècle Literature* by Selina Jayna Philipine (2018) explores ten literary texts that represent the condition of the Thames at *Fin de Siècle* or literary works produced at the end of a century, especially the 19th century. The result elaborates how nature plays a part in our daily recreation, how it can help to build our identities, and, finally, how our treatment can have an adverse or beneficial effect on our existence. These exchanges with nature are revealed by an eco-critical examination of the central themes of recreation, national identity, and sanitation.

Another research paper, *The Environmental Uncanny: Imagining Anthropocene in Mary's Shelley's The Last Man* by Rebecca Richardson (2019), explores the relationship between man and nature in Mary Shelley's *The Last Man*. The researcher used Timothy Clark's notion of the "emergent effect" of the text, which means that the situation in the text is being re-engineered as a context that encompasses both the present and the uncertain future. This journal focuses on how the uncanny of the environment is created in the text. Shelley's realistic portrayal of the environmental crisis creates an uncanny feeling for the reader because the story in *The Last Man* describes an environmental crisis such as high temperatures, glacier melt, and carbon dioxide levels caused by human domination, which is similar to what is happening now. The paper also concludes that the human population has a strong relationship with the environmental crisis.

After reviewing the related studies above. The writer draws similarities and difference between the previous study and the current studies regarding the topic investigated and the approaches. Generally, the previous research above focuses mainly on environmental topic. However. The specific topics and the approach used among the research are quite different. The previous researchers employed different approaches in analyzing their chosen object. Various approaches, such as Garrard's theory, eco-pedagogy, Greta Gaard's ecofeminism, Glotfelty's ecocriticism, and Buell's ecocriticism were applied by the previous researchers in conducting their study.

The research entitled *The Impact of Anthropocentrism on The Natural Environment from Margaret Atwood's perspective (2014)* and *D.H. Lawrence's St. Mawr; Eco-critical Study (2014)* both reveals the negative effects of human activities on nature. The research *An Eco-critical Reading of the River Thames in Selected Fin de Siècle Literature (2018)* and *The Environmental Uncanny: Imagining Anthropocene in Mary's Shelley's The Last Man (2019)* are also reveal the negative impact of human behavior but these research elaborate more on the similarities of the real event and the event in the story. Furthermore, in the research entitled *How to See The World and Other Lesson from Children's Environmental Literature (2016)*, the researcher not only illustrates the negative externalities but also elucidates the solution for environmental degradation as the book suggested.

What previous researchers have already done is merely different from what the writer intends to do. Although this research has a similar theme to the research above, the writer used different objects and methods of analysis. In this study, the researcher analyzed an Australian children's book, *February Dragon*, written by Colin Thiele. In analyzing the work, the writer used two approaches, Glotfelty's ecocriticism and Abrams' mimetic approach to support the analysis.

The writer elaborated the human-nature relationship and human position in the universe as revealed by the characters in the novel, then analyzed human beings' position, whether it is described as equal or anthropocentric. Based on the elaboration of human-nature relationship, the writer analyzed both negative and positive impact of human behavior on the environment, which is different from what the previous researchers had done as they only focus on the negative impact. The writer also included many solutions for eradicating environmental degradation.

B. Theoretical Background

The analysis of this research was conducted by applying ecocriticism by Cheryll Glotfelty. Ecocriticism attempts to interpret literary work from the perspective of ecology. It views the ecological aspects such as the environment's condition and the relationship between humans and nature in literary work. From the perspective of literary theory, it can be concluded

that ecocriticism is closely related to other literary theory, which is the mimetic theory. Therefore, in this part, the writer gives an overview of ecocriticism, elaborates Glotfelty's ecocriticism, and mimetic theory by Abrams. The reflection of human-nature relationship was viewed from ecological perspective.

1. Overview of ecocriticism

Ecocriticism was born as the cause of the environmental crisis and the desire to improve the way humanity treats the natural environment. This idea or movement was not accomplished through science but through writing and literary work. The trembling situation encouraged many scholars from literary studies to include nature and the environment as a new field in studying literature.

Ecocriticism, according to Howarth (1996: 69) derives from Greek "Oikos" means the connection between humans, nature, and the spirit, and "kritis" means judge. The meaning of ecocriticism is simplified as environmental writings and has been widely using to analyze literary work. Many eco-critics indicate *Silent Spring* (1962) by Rachel Carson as the first modern natural writing, while Peter Barry (2017) and Glotfelty (1996) said that the term ecocriticism was possibly first mentioned in 1978 in William Rueckert's essay "*Literature and Ecology*." Rueckert defined ecocriticism as "the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature." Barry also suggests the article of Karl Kroeberg entitled *Home at Grasmere* as the first to use the term ecological in literary criticism. To sum

up, the 1960s and 1970s to be when ecocriticism has paved the way in literary research.

Howarth added (1996: 70), in the U.S., ecocriticism started gaining attention in the 1980s when many scholars had done several project collaborations in environmental literary studies. For example, Frederick O. Waage's who edited collected environmental essays entitled *Teaching Environmental Literature: Materials, Methods, Resources* (1985), Alicia Nitecki founded *The American Nature Writing Newsletter*, which published essays, book reviews, and classroom notes related to nature and the environment.

According to Barry (2017: 239,248), ecocriticism expanded as a widely used literary and cultural theory by the early 1990s with the formation of the *Association for the Study of Literature and Environment* (ASLE) at the Western Literary Association (WLA), followed by the launch of the journal; *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, co-edited by Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. In 1993, the ecological literary study had emerged as a recognizable school in literary studies.

In the U.K., ecocriticism or green studies was founded through the work of Jonathan Bate, *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and The Environmental Tradition* (1991). British eco-critics point out that many of their concerns are evident in Raymond William's book *The Country and the City* (1973). The development of Ecocriticism in the U.K. can be noticed by the emergence of degree programs in environmental literature, especially in new colleges

and higher education. Richard Kerridge, Greg Garrad Terry Gifford, and Lourence Coupe are the proponents of British Ecocriticism and are now based in U.K.'s different institutions (Barry, 2017: 241).

According to Murti (2019: 2), In Indonesia, the ecocriticism movement is initiated by Perhutani when they held a literary event, "The Art of Writing Green Literature with Perhutani," which is a series of Perhutani Green Pen Awards, a form of writing contest on forest and environment. This event is to encourage the awareness of the young generation regarding environmental issues.

In addition to the development of ecocriticism, British eco-critics, Lawrence Buell (2005: 138), divided ecocriticism into waves. The first wave is characterized by its emphasis on nature writing as an object of study and as an awareness of the condition of the environment. The second wave is linked to the relationship between human and non-human, quite similar to the first wave. Also, the third wave, which was occurred in 2009, indicated by the acceptance of the ethnic and national particularities that generates human experiences from an environmental viewpoint.

Nowadays, ecocriticism is becoming more influential and has been widely used as an approach to analyze literary studies. Hooti and Ashrafian (2014: 32) elaborated that there are two trends in ecocriticism, first is the one in which literature affected by the contemporary environmental crisis is

a matter of concern. The second trend is re-reading the established literary canon based on eco-critical principles.

Despite its popularity, ecocriticism is still developing. Without any strict boundaries, scholars are still struggling in defining its scope since ecocriticism is an area of studies of diverse disciplines (Hooti and Ashrafian, 2014: 32). However, ecocriticism has encouraged the development of new branches of study, such as ecofeminism, which appears to be the new literary approach, as the combination of ecocriticism and feminism. This approach is widely adopted to explore the relationship between nature, women, and men in literary works. Many ecofeminism critics have produced a large number of publications regarding feminism and environmental writing.

Generally speaking, the emergence of ecocriticism was the result of the compilation of excellent environmental writing and events or activities. Its development began as a response to the environmental crisis and aimed to spread awareness of environmental issues and how to prevent it. Ecocriticism lies its principle mostly on environmental ethics and modern ecology.

Different scholars defined the term "ecocriticism" in different ways. However, their primary concern is similar, which generally focus on the relationship between humans and nature. The fundamental point of ecocriticism is that it rejects the notion that everything is socially or

linguistically constructed. Nature exists and presents as an entity, which affects us, which we can affect, perhaps fatally, if we mistreat it (Barry, 2017: 243). It is similar to how Glotfelty described ecocriticism where *"human and culture is connected to the physical world, affecting and affected by it"* (1996: 12).

Howarth (1996: 70,73) furthermore elucidates some basic principles of ecocriticism, which consist of ecology and ethic, and language and criticism. Ecology was identified when authors began to express the harmful effects of humanity and the environment, while ethics is identically related to the growing concern of socio-politics or economy that would affect the environment and the encouragement to protect the natural environment. Language and criticism connect science and literature. Instead of using language as a medium to represent (mimesis), ecocriticism use language to point. It means that the usage of a particular form of language like metaphor aims to attract the attention of the reader. Otherwise, criticism will explore how the language is used to describe the situation in a text.

Meanwhile, British ecocriticism pioneer Garrard (2004) also points out several aspects regarding ecocriticism. He elucidates several definitions of terms that have a strong relationship with the concept of ecocriticism, such as pollution, position, dwelling, apocalypse, animals, and the earth.

Barry (2017: 246) also added some focused areas of ecocriticism. Barry argues as eco-centered reading focuses outside, we can call outside

or 'outdoor environment' as a series of adjoining and overlapping areas which move gradually from nature to culture. Area one is called the wilderness, which consists of deserts, oceans, uninhabited continents. Area two, the scenic sublime, e.g., forest, lake, mountains, cliff, waterfalls. Area three consists of the countryside, e.g. hills, field and wood, and area for domestic picturesque like parks, garden, and lanes.

To conclude, Barry (2017: 255) depicted what eco-critics do. They re-read major literary works from a nature perspective, with particular attention to the representation of the natural world, and extend the applicability of a range of eco-centric concepts, using them of things other than the natural world -concepts such as growth and energy, balance and imbalance, symbiosis and mutuality, and sustainable or unsustainable uses of energy and resources.

Eco-critics also give particular canonical emphasis to writers who foreground nature as a significant part of their subject matter, such as the American transcendentalists, the British Romantics, the poetry of John Clare, the work of Thomas Hardy, and the Georgian poets of the early twentieth century. They extend the range of literary-critical practice by emphasizing relevant 'factual' writing, especially reflective topographical material such as essays, travel writing, memoirs, and regional literature. Lastly, they turn away from the 'social constructivism' and 'linguistic determinism' of dominant literary theories (with their emphasis on the linguistic and social constructed-ness of the external world) and instead

emphasizes eco-centric values of meticulous observation, collective ethical responsibility, and the claims of the world beyond ourselves.

2. Glotfelty's view of ecocriticism

Cheryll Burgess Glotfelty is an Associate Professor of Literature and Environment at the University of Nevada at Reno, the United States of America, the first American professor of literature and environment. She is the author who wrote several essays on ecocriticism. Glotfelty co-edited *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* University of Georgia Press (1996) with Harold Fromm. Her publication had helped the development of green the field of literary studies. Her most intense interest is the connection between literature and the environment. Glotfelty has published several books and essay, including *The Bioregional Imagination: Literature, Ecology, and Place* (2012) and *Literary Nevada: Writings from the Silver State* (2008), the first comprehensive anthology of Nevada Literature. (Barry, 2017: 241)

In the introductory part of *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Glotfelty emphasis the importance of literary studies in the age of environmental crisis. According to Glotfelty (1996: xv) the study of literature in the twentieth century is still overlooks several aspects like gender and race but lack attention to the environmental aspect. Consequently, ecocriticism did not become a presence in the major institution power in literary study.

Glotfelty proclaimed the concept of "ecocriticism" as a response to the global environmental crisis. She defines ecocriticism as "*the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment*" (Glotfelty, 1996: xvii). Furthermore, ecocriticism can be distinguished from other critical approaches that investigate literature from many other aspects, as Glotfelty said as follows:

Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender-conscious perspective and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies (1996: vii).

Literary theory, in general, examines the relations between writers, text, and the world –is synonymous with society. Ecocriticism expands the notion of "the world" to include the entire ecosphere (Glotfelty, 1996: xviii). It assumes that everything is connected to everything else. Therefore, Glotfelty illustrated several questions that ecocritics and theorist could ask like the following:

How is nature represented in this sonnet? What role does the physical setting play in the plot of this novel? Are the Values expressed in this play consistent with ecological wisdom? How do our metaphors of the land influence the way we treat it? How can we characterize nature writing as a genre? In addition to race, class, and gender, should a place become a new critical category? Do men write about nature differently than women do? In what ways has literacy itself affected humankind's relationship to the natural world? How does the concept of wilderness change overtime? In what ways and to what effect is the environmental crisis seeping into contemporary literature and popular culture? What view of nature informs U.S. government report, comports, and advertising, and televised nature documentaries, and to what rhetorical effects? How is science itself open to literary analysis? What cross-fertilization is possible between literary studies and

environmental discourse-related disciplines such as history, philosophy, psychology, art history, and ethics? (Glotfelty, 1996: xix).

Based on her long explanation above, ecocriticism covers broad concepts and scope. It could work within the concepts of place, region, nature, and environment, also within other subjects or fields of study, like anthropology, philosophy, and religion. Although it has a broader scope, the fundamental premise of ecocriticism is that human and culture is connected to the physical world, affecting and affected by it. There is a correlation between human action to the sustainability of nature, which could either damage it or maintain it. (Glotfelty, 1996: xix)

Ecocriticism aims to examine the representation of nature in literary works like novels, drama, poems, and short stories. Glotfelty in Gaard (2009: 322) elucidates that the aims of ecocriticism are to provide a home, a community, and some academic legitimacy for the work of a new generation of literary scholars who were discovering, discussing, and interpreting literary texts about the environment. Ecocriticism also examines representations of nature and environmental values in literary texts, and explore the interconnections between nature and culture.

To sum up, Glotfelty's ecocriticism attempts to include the entire ecosphere or universe in analyzing literary work. Its purpose is to respond to environmental problems and "contribute to environmental restoration, not just in our spare time, but from within our capacity as professors of literature.

Ecocriticism focuses on the relationship between literary work and the physical environment, which means it lies its principle in environmental ethics and modern ecology and literary theory. It also examines how humans can either affect or affected by nature.

3. Mimetic Theory by Abrams

Meyer H. Abrams (1915-2015), an American literary critic, was known for his famous publication and critical theory, including *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (1962) and *The Mirror and The Lamp* (1953). His publications have been widely used as learning material for literary students.

Abrams (1971: 6-7) divides critical theory into four categories of approach. Those approaches consist of the mimetic approach, which focuses on the text and the universe. Objective approach, which focuses on the text itself. The pragmatic approach, which is concerned with the relationship between text and audience, and expressive theory, pay attention to the relationship between the text and the author.

According to Castle (2007: 16), the word "mimetic" comes from the Greek word "mimesis," which means the act of imitation. This theory is the oldest form of literary theory that was first coined by Plato. In Plato's Republic, mimetic works upon three categories: the ideal world, the physical world, and the world of art. The physical world is an imitation of the ideal world, and the world of art is an imitation of the ideal world, in

the tenth book of the Republic. He said that there are three beds. First is the idea of the bed. The second is a physical bed made by a carpenter who imitates the ideal bed, and the third is the bed painted by an artist. (Abrams, 1971: 8-9)

The mimetic approach explains arts as imitation aspects of the universe, which means that the physical world in art is an imitation of the real world. The author expresses his/her idea of reality through the work of arts, including literary work. Mimetic asks how literary works convey messages about the world. We can understand the truth or the reality behind a particular era in literary works. It can be concluded that mimetic theory views literary works as an imitation or reflection of the world.

4. Human-nature relationship and anthropocentrism

This thesis carries out the impact of human-centered believes on the natural environment, as reflected in Thiele's *February Dragon*. To understand the investigated topic, it is important to have fundamental knowledge about environmental ethics to discover the meaning of anthropocentrism.

Within Western traditions, the concept of human-nature relationship is mostly dichotomous means human being are separate and distinct or hierarchical, which means human beings, although part of nature, is superior—another modern philosopher like Spinoza and Hobbes, arguing that human beings and other species are equal. (Sandler, 2012: 105,106).

Anthropocentrism comes from the Greek; the word 'Anthropos' means 'human being', and the word 'kentron' means 'center'. Therefore, etymologically, anthropocentrism has the same meaning as human-centeredness; thus, it can be said that anthropocentrism refers to the belief that human beings are the center of the universe. According to Thornber (2014: 900), the term was coined in the 1980s by renowned ecologist Eugene Stoemer and popularized at the turn of the 21st century by Nobel Prize winner chemist Paul Crutzen, the Anthropocene has continued to force critical attention across a wide range of disciplines.

However, anthropocentrism sometimes associated with negative meaning, assumed as the arrogance and ignorance side of humans being that is believed could affect the environment negatively. Eco-criticist Greg Garrard defines anthropocentrism as follows:

Anthropocentrism names any stance, perception or conception that takes the human as centre or norm. An 'anthropocentric' view of the natural world thus sees it entirely concerning the human, for instance as a resource for economic use, or as the expression of particular social or cultural values – so even an aesthetics of landscape appreciation can be anthropocentric (2004: 183)

That statement emphasizes that anthropocentrism places humans in the first position as creatures who valued nature as a resource for various purposes, from economic use to nature appreciation. However, anthropocentrism alternatively, also believed as the opposite of eco-centric or nature-centeredness (Buell, 2005: 134)

Sandler (2012: 105-111) in his overview of environmental ethics, breaks down several aspects regarding the position of human beings in nature. Human beings have the uniqueness that distinguishes them from other species. The cognitive, psychological, and social capabilities are made human beings superior. Moreover, humans are moral agents and are able to understand and formulate principles and apply them to different situations and conditions. The specialties of human as a moral agent, unlike other species, is called anthropocentric. Sandler further explains that anthropocentrism emphasizes the condition of an individual to morally responsible for its actions.

The specialties of human beings mentioned above are their most vital characteristics. Humans can either use it wisely by doing positive actions or arrogantly use it to dominate nature. Thus, the writer concludes that anthropocentrism, which sometimes means negative, actually has two different sides, positive and negative as Sigler (1994: 148) in his essay *Wonderland to wasteland: Toward Historicizing Environmental Activism in Children's Literature* argues that there are two approaches of anthropocentrism in children's literature; domination or humans sentimentalize the environment, and caretaking model, place human as caretaker of the earth.

Bennet et.al (2018: 597-598) added, the term "environmental stewardship" has been used to refer to various actions such as the creation of protected areas, the replanting of trees, the limitation of harvests, the

reduction of harmful activities or pollution, the creation of community gardens, the restoration of degraded areas or the purchase of more sustainable products. It applies to the description of strict environmental conservation measures, active restoration activities and/or the sustainable use and management of resources.

Meanwhile, for speciesism According to Singer (2009: 2), the concept of speciesism was a definitive version of notions such as racism and sexism. It aims to reduce or ignore animals' suffering solely because it is disregard to discriminate animals only because they belong to another race.

5. Conceptual framework

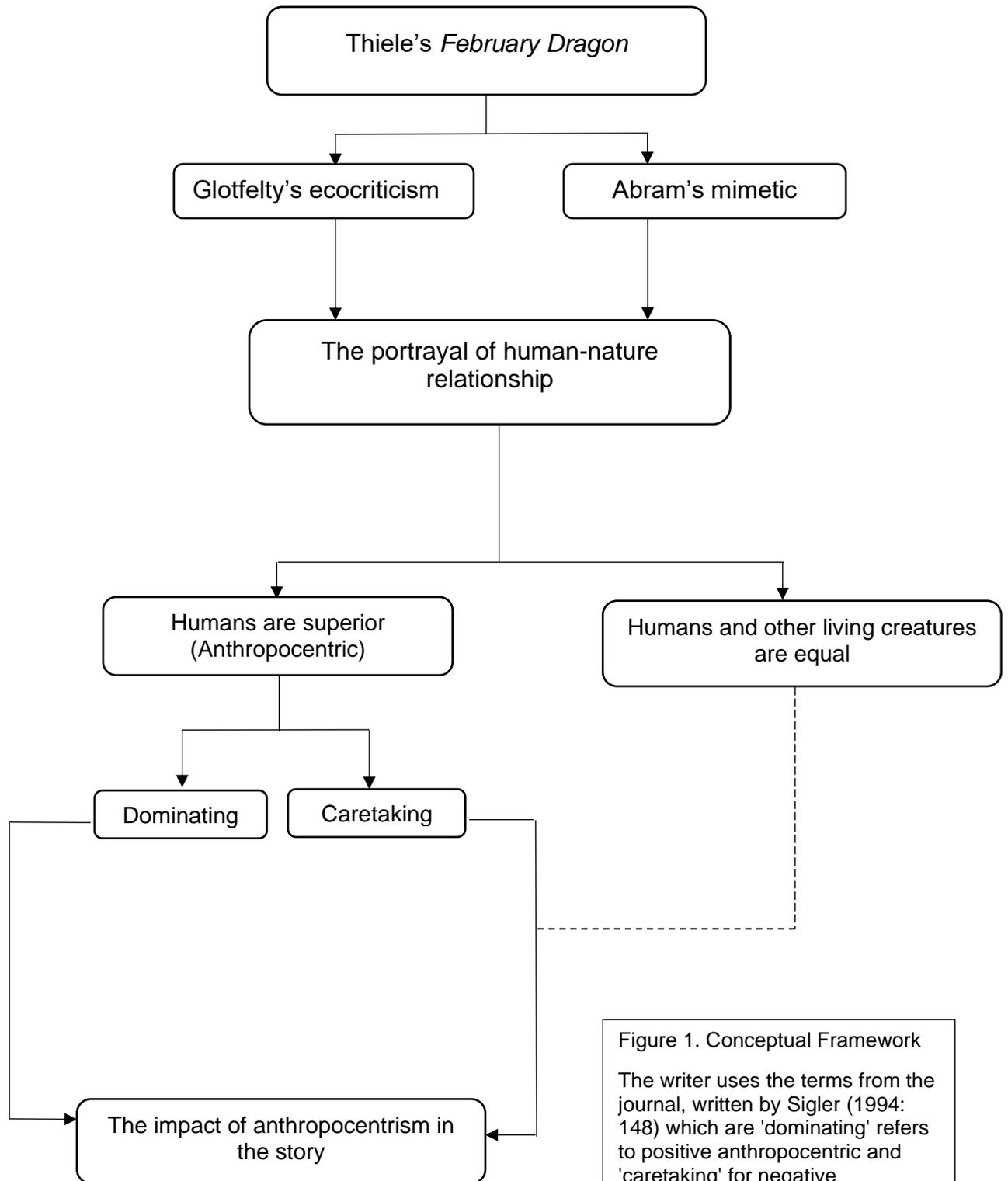


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The writer uses the terms from the journal, written by Sigler (1994: 148) which are 'dominating' refers to positive anthropocentric and 'caretaking' for negative anthropocentric.