



Original Article

A Study of Ecocriticism in English Literature

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Abstract

This article studies the concept of Ecocriticism and its impact on English literature. In this paper the writer considers the human relationship with nature, its beauty, its usefulness, and the problems caused by human intervention in his writing. In English literature, many writers have shown nature as a symbol of peace, beauty, and inspiration in life, while others have depicted the damage caused by human selfishness and industrialization. Therefore, nature is sometimes seen as a friend and companion, and sometimes as a victim of human actions. This article explains how literature sheds light on environmental problems based on examples from poems, novels, and plays. Literature draws attention to serious issues such as pollution, deforestation, water depletion, species extinction, and climate change. Studying such literature from the perspective of environmental criticism increases the reader's awareness of nature and makes them feel responsible for saving the environment. English literature is not limited to just ideas, stories or beauty, but also plays an important role in awakening the society for environmental conservation. Therefore, this research concludes that English literature can be an effective medium to strengthen environmental thinking and convey the message of sustainable development.

Keywords: Ecocriticism, English Literature, Nature, Environment, Human-Nature Relationship, Climate Change, Environmental Issues, Literary Criticism etc.

Introduction

In today's times, with increasing environmental problems such as pollution, global warming, and deforestation, it has become very important to consider the relationship between man and nature. Literature has always been an important tool that affects people's thoughts and feelings. A modern method of reading literature is Ecocriticism. In this method, how writers depict nature and the environment is studied. This helps us understand the relationship between man and nature from the perspective of writers. Nature has been given a special place in English literature, from Romantic poets to today's writers. Poets like William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge praised the beauty and wonder of nature, while many today's writers express concern about the environmental damage caused by human activities. If we study literature from the perspective of environmental criticism, we get clearer ideas about nature conservation, natural beauty, and ecological balance. This article studies how environmental criticism appears in English literature and how it helps us understand the message of environmental conservation. Based on various literary works, this research paper shows that literature can make people more aware of nature and inspire them to care for the environment.

Objectives of the study:

1. To understand the meaning and importance of the concept of 'environmental criticism' in literary studies.
2. To study how the relationship between man and nature is shown in English literature.
3. To learn how environmental problems such as pollution, deforestation and global warming are drawn to attention through literature.

Research hypotheses:

H1: If English literature is studied from the perspective of environmental criticism, the importance of environmental balance becomes clear.

H2: Literature can be an effective tool in creating a sense of responsibility towards the environment among the readers.

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Meaning and scope of environmental criticism in literary studies:

Today, nature is facing many serious problems. Pollution, deforestation, climate change and loss of biodiversity are having a major impact not only on the environment but also on human life. At such a time, it becomes necessary to see how nature can be understood and respected through literature. One of the important methods of studying literature is environmental criticism. This method involves an in-depth consideration of how nature, the environment, and environmental issues are presented in literary works.

Scope of Ecocriticism:

Environmental criticism is a new way of reading literature. It focuses on nature, the environment, and the relationship between humans and nature. It studies how writers show the effects of mountains, forests, rivers, animals, and human activities on the environment in their writing. Environmental criticism sees nature as an important character in literature, not just a backdrop.

1. **Origin and development:** The term "Ecocriticism" became popular in the 1990s, especially among American and British scholars. Due to increasing problems such as pollution and deforestation, scholars began to explore how literature speaks to these issues. Later, this concept began to be used globally and was also applied to Indian and post-colonial literature.
2. **Scope of literary studies:** Environmental criticism can be applied to all types of literary works, old and new, poetry and prose, fiction and non-fiction. For example, the Romantic poet Wordsworth glorified the beauty of nature, while today's writer Amitav Ghosh writes about climate change and environmental crises. Therefore, this method is useful for understanding literature from different periods and on different subjects.
3. **Role in understanding literature:** Environmental criticism tells us that literature does not only tell human life stories but also shows where man stands in nature. This method shows that writers have praised or warned about nature throughout history. Readers also get an opportunity to think about their relationship with their environment through such literature.
4. **Importance today:** In today's times, problems like global warming, extinction of species, and deforestation have become serious. At such times, environmental criticism becomes very important. Literature is no longer limited to entertainment or information, but also makes people aware of saving the environment. Due to this, readers become more environmentally conscious and understand the importance of nature in life.

This research shows that literature is not just for reading or enjoying, but it is also useful for increasing awareness about the environment. From ancient poems to modern novels, many writers have used their language to save the earth. Therefore, environmental criticism not only teaches us a deeper meaning of literature but also connects it to real-life natural problems. This vision creates a more responsible and environmentally friendly mindset and lifestyle among people.

Human and nature relationship:

Relationship between man and nature: The relationship between man and nature is an important topic in English literature. The researcher has shown this relationship in various ways, sometimes man lives peacefully with nature, and sometimes he destroys the environment. That is, this relationship is sometimes positive (respect, love) and sometimes negative (destruction, exploitation). The changing relationship of man with nature is seen in literature over time. For this purpose, examples from poems, novels and plays are studied. In English literature, we see various ways in which man is connected to nature. Some writers have shown that man forms an intimate relationship with nature by seeing its power and beauty. For example, the Romantic poet William Wordsworth has depicted how man learns from the peace and power of nature and lives in harmony with nature. But some other writers have shown how human selfishness, greed and recklessness harm nature in various ways such as pollution, cutting down trees, destruction of animals and damage to plants. Both of these aspects make it clear that the relationship between humans and nature is not straightforward or permanent, but rather changes over time.

Literature raises awareness regarding environmental problems:

Many writers have shown the devastation caused by pollution, deforestation and global warming through their writings. Their narratives make it clear that if man ignores nature, he himself will face great dangers. With effective language and vivid imagery, literature presents the suffering of a polluted river or the pain of endangered animals in front of the reader. This creates an emotional bond in the minds of the readers and makes them realize why it is necessary to save the environment. Literature not only warns of the present but also of what may happen in the future. Therefore, the reader tries to change his lifestyle and create a cleaner, greener world. In this way, literature becomes an effective medium for environmental education and awareness, rather than just a means of entertainment.

If we read using Ecocriticism in English literature, we can see that most writers have expressed sensitivity about the relationship with nature. Literature is not limited to human emotions or society, but also shows how man and nature coexist. Romantic poets William Wordsworth and P. B. Shelley sang the praises of nature and believed that nature gives peace and healing to the human soul. Her writings show a spiritual connection to nature. In modern times, writers like Amitav Ghosh and Margaret Atwood have given priority to issues like climate change, deforestation and pollution in their literary works. Their novels, poems and characters have given an idea of how the environment is being destroyed by human actions and what the world of the future will be like. Therefore, environmental criticism shows that literature is not only artistic or emotional but also environmentally and socially conscious. It encourages readers to respect and protect nature.

Summary: This research paper is based on the modern literary study method of Ecocriticism. Ecocriticism is the study of how nature and the environment are depicted in literature. This method helps to understand the relationship between man and nature as presented by writers at different times. This concept began in the 1990s and later it was used in various literary genres such as poetry, novels, and plays. From this perspective, nature is considered an important element of literature rather than just a background.

The relationship between man and nature is seen in literature in various ways. Sometimes this relationship is harmonious and respectful, and sometimes it is destructive of nature. Writers effectively show the human perspective on nature through their writing. Literature also creates awareness about environmental problems such as pollution, deforestation, and climate change. Effective language and emotional descriptions make readers feel close to nature and understand the importance of protecting the environment. Literature inspires readers to act responsibly by warning them of the consequences if the destruction of nature continues in the future. This shows that environmental criticism gives us a new perspective on understanding literature. Literature is not just a means of entertainment but also an effective medium for environmental awareness. It makes readers aware of nature and inspires them to live a sustainable life.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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