


Chapter 10

Ecological Poetry and Environmental Literacy through Language Socialization

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the role of ecological poetry in fostering environmental literacy within the framework of language socialization and Ecological Systems Theory. Ecological poetry functions not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a pedagogical tool to cultivate cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of ecological awareness. Using Bronfenbrenner's model, the chapter highlights how students' ecological literacy develops through interactions across microsystems (classrooms), mesosystems (student organizations), exosystems (institutional policies), and macrosystems (cultural values). Writing ecological poetry enables students to articulate sustainability concerns, reflect critically on human–nature relationships, and become active agents of ecological discourse. The integration of creative literary practices in language education is presented as a transformative approach to nurturing critical ecological consciousness and promoting sustainability in higher education.

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INTRODUCTION

The global environmental crisis increasingly underscores the urgency of strengthening ecological awareness across disciplines. Recent data indicates that wildlife populations have declined by an average of 73% between 1970 and 2020 (World Wide Fund, 2024), while approximately one million species are at risk of extinction due to human activities that have transformed 75% of terrestrial areas and 66% of marine regions worldwide (Solomon, 2023). Furthermore, coral bleaching events between 2023 and 2025 have affected nearly 84% of the world's coral reefs, threatening marine biodiversity and food security for billions of people (Van Woesik & Kratochwill, 2022). On the other hand, global plastic production exceeding 460 million tons per year, along with greenhouse gas emissions from plastics reaching 1.8 billion tons of CO₂-equivalent, has exacerbated climate change impacts such as extreme weather, droughts, and unpredictable flooding.

These environmental challenges are not only ecological but also intersect with economic, political, technological, health, and socio-cultural dimensions. This systemic and transnational crisis cannot be resolved through fragmented, sectoral approaches. Therefore, reinforcing interdisciplinary ecological awareness is crucial in formulating solutions that are not only grounded in scientific innovation but also supported by progressive public policies, transformative environmental education, and active community participation. Such multi-sectoral collaboration is key to addressing the complexity of environmental degradation while paving the way toward socially and ecologically just sustainability (Steffen et al., 2015).

Language and literature education hold strategic potential in fostering environmental literacy that goes beyond linguistic mastery to include the cultivation of ecological consciousness. In this context, university students as members of the academic community act as agents of social and ecological literacy, capable of articulating environmental issues through linguistic expression. They are not merely recipients of information but also creators of discourses that reflect values of sustainability and ecological justice. One prominent form of expression is ecological poetry, literary works that not only exhibit the beauty of language but also convey social critique, ecological concern, and calls to action. Ecological poetry does not merely stand as aesthetic texts but serves as advocacy media that narrate environmental crises and urge the creation of harmony between humans and nature (Crook, 2007).

The integration of ecological poetry in language learning creates opportunities to develop environmental literacy, encompassing understanding, critical awareness, and the ability to take concrete actions toward ecological sustainability. In practice, assignments involving the writing of environmentally themed poems can be an effective medium for internalizing ecological values while simultaneously enhancing students' linguistic skills and critical thinking abilities. Studies on poetry by Tialila

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