

**Technology in the Selected Novels of Children's Literature:
An Ecocritical Perspective**

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Abstract

As children's interactions with the natural world have changed, so has the role of technology in their lives. This shift is frequently captured in children's literature today, with technologies being depicted as tools for development and threats to the environment. The present paper explores the depiction of technology in some of the children's novels from an ecocritical perspective. This paper uses the concepts of ecocritical theories put forward by Cheryll Glotfelty and Lawrence Buell to examine the conflicts between a child's narrative text and technological progress and the environment. The paper discusses the fact that technology can bring innovation, knowledge and connectivity to the children, but can also cause ecological alienation by being a barrier between children and direct contact with nature. Meanwhile, some texts ascribe the functions of environmental restoration to technology, thus developing a balanced ecological imagination. The research shows the pedagogical potential of children's literature in developing the ecological awareness and environmental ethics of children.

Keywords: Children's Literature, Technology, Ecocriticism, Environment, Ecological Consciousness, Sustainability.

Introduction

Today's 21st century has been an unprecedented technological revolution, changing the way childhood experiences. Children are learning, entertaining and socializing with the digital devices, artificial intelligence, robotics and virtual realities. These advances have resulted in new opportunities to gain knowledge and to create, but have led to an increasing disconnection from the physical world. Today, the child's relationship with the forests, animals, rivers, and landscape is more and more replaced by screens, machines and digital interfaces. These changes are apparent in children's literature, which in turn is a culture and pedagogical medium, and which often deals with the complex relationship between technology and ecology. Ecocriticism is an approach to the conjunction of literature and the material world that is apt to the examination of the representation of the technological interventions in children's narratives. The scholars believe that the ecocriticism in children's literature has a significant influence on the development of the ethical values of children and their ecological awareness.

In this paper, the images of technology as a threat and an environmental resource that is presented in selected children novel is explored. It examines the potential in these texts to continue the anthropocentric thinking of dominating nature or to promote sustainable co-existence between human innovation and nature.

Technology and Theoretical Framework: Ecocriticism.

In the late 1980s, ecocriticism became a significant literary theory of the time and emphasized the interconnections between literature and ecology. Cheryll Glotfelty uses the following definition of ecocriticism: "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment." The theory looks at the nature and environmental ethics, and human responsibility as they are created in literary texts. Eco-criticism is an important aspect in children's literature, since it is in children's literature that the attitudes towards the environment are formed. The recent research shows that children's literature has been acknowledged as an important source for ecocritical studies, since it is a way to engage children in imagination and accessible ways in environmental issues.

In this sense, technology is considered as an extension of human agency. It symbolizes modernity, innovation and efficiency; it is also a disruption of nature with industrialization, pollution and alienation from nature. So, technology has a double face, it can be used for exploitation of nature or for its preservation.

The Techno Symbol of Progress

Many kids' books depict technology as a symbol of excitement, innovation and curiosity. Technology is often a part of child protagonists' imagination, for example with the form of machines, robots, and scientific inventions, technology is a means to pursue knowledge and adventure. These images fit in with the current focus on STEM education, and digital literacy.

These stories are about the entrancing of technology, which are related to the trust in progress through science of society. Children as protagonists may be portrayed as problem-solvers and able to use technology to solve the problems, thus fostering an impression of human ingenuity. An ecocritical view, however, sees this glorification of technological advances as a price to be paid to the lack of concern about the environment. Machines and the use of Artificial Intelligence may be idealized and regarded as more advanced than nature, resulting in a hierarchy. This is a sign of anthropocentrism which ecocritics recognize as the human innovation that has been superior to the ecological system.

The Use of Technology and Ecological Alienation.

High isolation of children from nature as a result of their technological dependence is one of the main concerns in children's literature. Once a kid that roamed around woods, climbed trees or watched animals, has now come to be spending more and more time in digital space. This disconnection with the ecology can be seen in literary portrayals of technologically determined childhood. This alienation is important because it disturbs the "sense of place" (emotional and ethical relationship between man and nature) which is the focus of ecocritics. Children's literature is seen as a way to overcome this disconnection by bringing back into circulation an ecological imagination and an environmental empathy. It is a partnership between the Environment, Business and Knowledge (EKB) Journals & IUCN National Committee UK.

The chosen novels reflect the damage that can be done when too great a reliance is placed on technology and the loss of wonder connected with the natural world. Virtual landscapes are replacing real ecosystems and a relationship with animals and outdoor space is being replaced by digital companionship. This represents the environmental issues of the modern age in general

Use of Technology as an Ecological Tool.

Even though technology has some troublesome characteristics, it doesn't always appear in children's fiction in a bad light. Today, many stories tell of the importance of technology for the protection of the environment. Child protagonists

preserve forests, ensure the survival of endangered species and fight pollution with the help of gadgets, scientific instruments and digital knowledge.

These representations offer an alternative to the dichotomous relationship of “technique” and “nature” and envision their co-existence. Technology is used for ecological regeneration and not degradation. This is consistent with the shift in mindsets towards sustainable technology and green innovation today.

Ecological ethics in technological stories signifies a developing literary imagination in which children may be educated to think that technology is not a threat to nature or ecology but can be used in a manner that is mutually beneficial for the planet.

Children as Protagonists in the Ecological Mediation.

Novels often have children as the mediators between technology and nature. They are seen as the generation that will have to decide the fate of the environment in the future because of technology. Their travels include the realization of the impact on the environment and the responsible use of technology. The pedagogical function of Childrens' narrative is the main reason that such a pattern of narration can be seen in children's literature. Promotes young readers to reflect on their own tech use and eco-consciousness. Children's literature does on the one hand promote the view of children as agents of change in the environment, as scholars in the field of children's ecocriticism have pointed out. sThese roles are portrayed by these characters, and the novels focus on responsibility, sustainability and ethical innovation.

Findings

The results of the study show that there are three major aspects of technology used in children's literature:

- 1.As progress in technology, symbolizing the innovation, intelligence and modernity.
- 2.Technology as alienation – separation of children and nature.
- 3.Technology as restoration – as a tool to heal and sustain ecologically and ecologically meaningful.

The ambiguous nature of technology in fostering ecological awareness is exhibited by these dimensions. Neither of the novels selected is an outright rejection of technology nor is it a celebration of technology. Rather, they champion an ecological ethic that is balanced in such a way that technology is accountable to the environment.

Conclusion

The image of technology in children's books is due to current fears and opportunities for the future of human-environment interactions. These stories from the ecocritical point of view help to articulate that the use of technology is not in and

of itself harmful, but only when used by humans with bad intentions or for ill ethical purposes. These chosen novels enable children to be the focus of this negotiation, fostering awareness of the environment, responsibility for it and thinking sustainably. Children's books can then be used to raise an eco-conscious citizenry who can be critical consumers of technological advancements while maintaining the ecologically sound natural world. Through its representation of technology and ecology, it shapes the ethical imagination of young readers and influences their understanding of sustainability. The selected novels demonstrate that technological advancement must be accompanied by ecological sensitivity, ensuring that progress does not come at the cost of environmental destruction. Furthermore, these narratives highlight the urgency of redefining the relationship between human beings, machines, and the natural world in the contemporary era. By encouraging critical engagement with both technology and ecology, children's literature prepares future generations to become responsible custodians of the planet. Thus, an ecocritical reading of technological representations in children's fiction opens new possibilities for literary scholarship while contributing to broader environmental discourse.

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