

## Ecocriticism in *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony*

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**Abstract.** This study analyzes *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* (2024) through Greg Garrard's ecocritical lens, analyzing how the film represents environmental issues using the metaphor of black noise symbolizing ecological degradation. Using qualitative descriptive analysis, the research explores four ecocritical concepts: pollution, apocalypse, dwelling, and earth. Pollution is depicted as black noise disrupting natural harmony. Apocalypse is shown through environmental crisis narratives. Dwelling is portrayed through contrasts between destructive versus harmonious ways of living with nature. In terms of earth is presented as a grand orchestra producing a "symphony of life". A thorough assessment of conversations, visual imagery, and narrative aspects, the research demonstrates how this animated film effectively communicates complex ecological messages through music and visual storytelling. The findings suggest that *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* not only presents environmental criticism but also offers an optimistic solution by promoting harmony among living beings to restore ecosystem balance. This research contributes to understanding how popular animated media can enhance ecological awareness among viewers while also serving as an accessible and engaging platform for environmental advocacy that reaches diverse segments of society, particularly children who represent the future stewards of our planet.

**Keywords:** Ecocritism, Film Animation, *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony*, Greg Garrard.

### 1 Introduction

Film has evolved into one of the most appealing forms of literary work in modern society. As an audio-visual media, film offers a richer and more accessible narrative experience compared to conventional literary media. The popularity of film is demonstrated through high cinema attendance, the growth of streaming platforms, and massive film discussions on social media. In this digital era, films have become increasingly accessible and an integral part of society's daily cultural consumption.

As it develops, film no longer functions merely as entertainment but also as an effective means to voice social issues and public concerns. According to Iyzah & Ridlwan [1], films not only present fictional stories but also narratives that develop based on social phenomena occurring within society. Through captivating narratives and visuals, films can address sensitive themes such as social injustice, discrimination, poverty, and environmental degradation in ways that are more easily understood and accepted. As explained by Laksonia & Wijaksono [2], apart from providing entertainment value, film

can also serve as a medium used to convey messages. The power of film in influencing perspectives and social awareness makes it a powerful medium for conveying social criticism.

Increasing global awareness of the environmental crisis has prompted the emergence of films addressing environmental issues. Themes such as climate change, deforestation, pollution, and species extinction have become the main focus in many contemporary films. Animation, as one of the popular genres, has also taken a role in raising environmental issues. Films like *Princess Mononoke* (1997), *WALL-E* (2008), and *The Lorax* (2012) demonstrate how animation can be an effective medium for conveying environmental messages to various age groups.

This phenomenon aligns with the development of literary ecocriticism, which analyzes how literature represents the relationship between humans and the natural environment. Harsono [3] states that ecocriticism derives from two English words: ecology and criticism. Ecology can be characterized as the study of living things in relation to their environment, while criticism can be articulated as an evaluative judgment balancing the merits and shortcomings of something. Ecocriticism studies the relationship between literature and environment. In this sense, literary ecocriticism is relevant in analyzing how mainstream culture, in this case, film, constructs narrative frameworks to promote environmental concerns and ecological understanding.

*Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* (2024) emerges as the latest animated film that addresses environmental themes through a unique approach. This film combines elements of music and fantasy to convey a message about the importance of harmony between humans and nature. The film presents multiple metaphors about environmental degradation that can be understood by various age groups, including through the representation of black noise.

In analyzing the ecocritical concept in this animated film, the research will use Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach as the main theoretical framework. Garrard, in his book "Ecocriticism," identifies six main concepts in ecocritical studies: pollution, apocalypse, dwelling, earth, wilderness, and animals. These six concepts offer different perspectives in understanding how literary works or cultural products represent the relationship between humans and the environment. In analyzing *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* through an ecocritical lens, four of Greg Garrard's ecocritical concepts will be utilized. The concept of pollution will be used to analyze how the film represents environmental damage caused by human actions. The concept of apocalypse, which encompasses narratives of catastrophic environmental collapse and planetary destruction will help examine how the film depicts the threat of environmental destruction and its implications for the survival of beings on earth. The concept of dwelling will be used to analyze how the film portrays the relationship between humans

and their habitats. Finally the concept of earth will help examine how the film represents earth as an entity with intrinsic value.

Based on this background, this research will examine how the film *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* represents environmental degradation and how the relationship between music and nature is represented as a form of environmental criticism in the film. This research is important to understand how popular animated films can play a role in shaping environmental awareness and conveying criticism of destructive human behavior toward nature.

## 2 Methods

In this research, the author uses a qualitative descriptive method. This method involves obtaining information from secondary sources like relevant journals and watching the interactions and parts of the film *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony*. The analysis is done by richly describing the cinematography, dialogues, and other relevant aspects depicting the environmental message in the film. By utilizing the data obtained, the author explains and analyzes the issues to draw comprehensive conclusions about the environmental representation in the film.

The theory used to examine the representation of environmental degradation in the film *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* is the literary ecocriticism theory developed by Greg Garrard. According to Garrard [4], literary ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Ecocriticism explores ways in which we imagine and portray the relationship between humans and the environment in all aspects of cultural production. This research specifically employs four ecocritical concepts from Garrard: pollution, apocalypse, dwelling, and earth. These four concepts were chosen because they have strong relevance to the film's narrative, which depicts efforts to save the environment and ecological disasters. Through these ecocritical analytical concepts, this research reveals how the film uses narrative, metaphors, and visual representations to criticize environmental problems and depict the complex relationship between humans and nature.

## 3 Result and Discussion

Analysis of the film *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* through Greg Garrard's literary ecocriticism approach reveals how this film uses representations of music and landscape to convey strong environmental critique, integrating visual, narrative, and musical elements to portray environmental degradation through the unique concept of black noise, with four of Garrard's ecocritical concepts: pollution, apocalypse, dwelling, and earth. Pollution is depicted as black noise disrupting natural harmony. Apocalypse

is shown through environmental crisis narratives. Dwelling is presented through contrast between destructive versus harmonious ways of living with nature. Earth is portrayed as a grand orchestra producing a "symphony of life". The film successfully uses music as a metaphorical medium to convey ecological messages that are complex yet comprehensible to audiences of various age groups.

### 3.1 Pollution

In the film *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony*, the concept of pollution is depicted through an object called black noise as a form of sound pollution that disrupts the balance of nature. The film shows how black noise spreads rapidly and progressively throughout the ecosystem, causing the existence of music to disappear and disturbing the ecosystem on a planet that depends on musical energy as their source of life. This also significantly affects Earth, which falls into chaos when music disappears. This parallels how widespread pollution damages Earth's ecosystems in reality. In this film, black noise serves as a powerful metaphor for environmental pollution in the real world. When first introduced in the film, black noise is depicted as an entity that disrupts and destroys the harmony existing in nature. The visual representation of black noise as dense black waves that engulf all surrounding sounds and music is reminiscent of air, water, and soil pollution that transforms ecosystems into environments that cannot support life.



Fig 1. The illustrations of black noise that destroyed Planet Music.

All : ノイズ？  
Suneo : その音がじゃまな音のこと？  
Bentho Sensei : 音ではない  
All : へえ？  
Bentho Sensei : 奴は宇宙に存在、ノイズとは故障食べる、巨大な宇宙全体だ。

All : *Noise?*  
Suneo : Are you talking about that disturbing sound, sensei?  
Bentho Sensei : That is not a sound  
All : Eh?  
Bentho Sensei : It exists through the entire universe. Noise is damage that “consumes” the whole universe.

The spread of black noise in the film also reflects the nature of pollution that can spread uncontrollably when not immediately addressed. Scenes where black noise begins to spread from one area to another, destroying musical harmony in every place it passes through, illustrate how pollution can travel through air, water, or soil, contaminating previously clean and unpolluted areas. The film also depicts how black noise doesn't just affect one aspect of the environment but creates a domino effect throughout the entire ecosystem.

### 3.2 Apocalypse

The environmental disaster in this film is depicted through the threat of black noise that erases the existence of music in the universe. It causes chaos on Earth due to the disappearance of music and shows how the music planet experiences a terrible disaster heading toward destruction after losing musical energy. This demonstrates the urgency of rescue actions to eliminate black noise, save the music planet, and restore harmony on Earth. Because if the music planet is destroyed, Earth will not be able to survive either.



**Fig 2.** Bentho Sensei explains the first appearance of noise and the destruction of the Planet Music.

The apocalyptic concept in *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* is reflected through the depiction of destruction caused by black noise. The music planet is shown experiencing drastic changes after exposure to black noise: bright skies turn dark, musical plants that were previously alive wither, and the inhabitants of the music planet lose their vitality. This visual transformation is a powerful apocalyptic metaphor for how the environment can change drastically and move toward destruction when its ecological balance is disturbed.

### 3.3 Dwelling

The concept of dwelling in Garrard's ecocriticism discusses how humans occupy and interact with their living environment. In the film *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony*, this concept is represented through the contrast between two different ways of interacting with the environment: the destructive way that creates black noise and the harmonious way that produces the music of life.



**Fig 3.** Scene when Nobita confessed to Doraemon that he used Doraemon's "magic tool" to make the music class disappear.

Doraemon : そう、わかったぞ。のび太くんのせいで音楽の授業  
じゃなく、音楽そのものがなく名ちゃったんだ。  
Doraemon : Yes, I understand now. It's not just the music lesson that  
was lost because of Nobita-kun, but music itself has also  
disappeared.

Nobita, who steals Doraemon's device to eliminate music class at his school, unknowingly also eliminates everything related to music on Earth and triggers the emergence of black noise. This portrays Nobita and the modern urban environment on Earth as a place where noise and disharmony produce black noise that humans are unaware of. Modern life with industrial activities and technology is depicted as a source of disharmony that ultimately contributes to environmental damage. This reflects a critique of how modern human "dwell" on Earth, often not paying attention to the impact of their activities on the balance of ecosystems. In contrast, the music planet in the film offers an alternative picture of how living beings can live in harmony with their environment. The inhabitants of the music planet live with the rhythm and harmony of nature, producing music that becomes the source of life energy for their planet. Their homes and infrastructure are designed to harmonize with nature, not to dominate or damage it. Through this contrast, the film conveys a message about the importance of creating a more sustainable and harmonious model of life with nature.

Nobita and his friend's exploration of the music planet's diverse regions demonstrates the interdependence and mutual influence of distinct ecosystems. They visit music forests, music lakes, and music mountains, each with unique characteristics but still interconnected in a larger ecological system. Nobita learns humans must coexist with nature, not fight it.



**Fig 4.** Illustration of the inhabitants of the music planet who live harmoniously with flarre (music).

### 3.4 Earth

The concept of Earth in Garrard's ecocriticism discusses how humans view this planet, whether as a resource to be exploited or as an entity with intrinsic value that needs to be respected. The film *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* presents a strong view of Earth as a living entity with its own intrinsic harmony, manifested through the metaphor of music.



**Fig 5.** Scene that portrayed how chaotic the Earth would be if music disappeared.

- Doraemon : これでわかったろ、音楽がなくなるということになるんだ。
- Doraemon : Now you understand, *right*? What a world without music.

In this film, Earth is depicted as having its own natural "symphony" formed from the harmony of various natural sounds, from the sound of wind, rain, ocean waves, to bird songs and other animal sounds. This symphony is not just beautiful sound, but a manifestation of the ecological balance that maintains the sustainability of life on this planet. When black noise spreads and disrupts this symphony, various problems begin to emerge on Earth, showing that the balance of this planet depends on harmony that is often not realized by humans.

The film also presents a contrast between anthropocentric and ecocentric views of Earth. At the beginning of the film, Nobita and his friends have a view that tends to be anthropocentric, seeing the environment only as a background for human activities. However, after visiting the music planet and observing how the globe functions as a harmonic and interconnected entity, their perspective transforms to become more ecocentric. They begin to understand that Earth is not merely a human dwelling place, but a complex organism with its own intrinsic value.

#### **4 Conclusion**

Based on the ecocritical analysis of the film *Doraemon: Nobita's Earth Symphony* using Greg Garrard's ecocritical concepts, it can be concluded that this film portrays pollution through black noise as a metaphor for environmental contamination that spreads and threatens ecological balance. The concept of apocalypse is present in the narrative of the destruction of the music planet due to black noise, showing the urgency of rescue actions and fatal consequences if environmental damage is not addressed in time. Through the concept of dwelling, the film contrasts two different ways humans interact with the environment: the destructive way that produces disharmony on Earth and the harmonious way of the music planet inhabitants who live in tune with nature. Meanwhile, the concept of earth is manifested through the depiction of Earth as a living entity that has its own natural "symphony," transforming the anthropocentric perspective to ecocentric. This film successfully uses music as a metaphorical medium to convey ecological messages that are complex yet comprehensible to various age groups, making it an effective example of how popular works can play a role in shaping environmental awareness and criticizing destructive human behavior toward nature.

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