



Ecocriticism in the Novel *Jejak Balak* by Ayu Welirang and its Relevance in Literature Learning

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ABSTRACT

Ecocriticism is a literary study approach that focuses on the relationship between humans, the environment, and literary works. This study aims to describe: 1) the environmental ethical values contained in the novel *Jejak Balak* by Ayu Welirang; 2) the relevance of the environmental ethical values contained in the novel *Jejak Balak* by Ayu Welirang to literature learning in grade XII of SMA Taman Mulia based on the 2013 Curriculum, especially on Basic Competency (KD) 4.8. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with an ecocritic approach. The research data in the form of words, sentences, and dialogues in the novel *Jejak Balak* by Ayu Welirang were analyzed using content analysis techniques. The results of the study show: 1) the existence of various forms of environmental ethics, namely respect for nature, moral responsibility for nature, solidarity with nature, compassion and concern for nature, and the attitude of not disturbing natural life. These findings show that this novel depicts the relationship between humans and the environment that is oriented towards creating ecological balance; 2) the relevance of environmental ethical values contained in the novel *Jejak Balak* by Ayu Welirang to literature learning in class XII SMA Taman Mulia on KD 4.8, especially in activities to interpret the author's views, analyze life values from the perspective of critical reading of the novel *Jejak Balak* by Ayu Welirang, and foster students' ecological awareness, among others, through critical reading activities.

Keywords: ecocriticism, novel, relevance of literature learning

Ekokritik dalam Novel *Jejak Balak* Karya Ayu Welirang dan Relevansi dalam Pembelajaran Sastra

ABSTRAK

Ekokritik merupakan pendekatan kajian sastra yang berfokus pada hubungan antara manusia, lingkungan, dan karya sastra. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan: 1) nilai-nilai etika lingkungan yang terdapat dalam novel *Jejak Balak* karya Ayu Welirang; 2) relevansi nilai-nilai etika lingkungan yang terdapat dalam novel *Jejak Balak* karya Ayu Welirang terhadap pembelajaran sastra di kelas XII SMA Taman Mulia berdasarkan Kurikulum 2013, khususnya pada Kompetensi Dasar (KD) 4.8. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan ekokritik. Data penelitian berupa kata, kalimat, dan dialog dalam novel *Jejak Balak* karya Ayu Welirang yang dianalisis melalui teknik analisis isi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan: 1) adanya berbagai bentuk etika lingkungan, yaitu sikap hormat terhadap alam, tanggung jawab moral terhadap alam, solidaritas terhadap alam, kasih sayang dan kepedulian terhadap alam, serta sikap tidak mengganggu kehidupan alam. Temuan tersebut memperlihatkan bahwa novel ini menggambarkan hubungan manusia dengan lingkungan yang berorientasi pada terciptanya keseimbangan ekologis; 2) relevansi nilai-nilai etika lingkungan yang terdapat dalam novel *Jejak Balak* karya Ayu Welirang terhadap pembelajaran sastra di kelas XII SMA Taman Mulia pada KD 4.8, terutama dalam kegiatan menginterpretasikan pandangan pengarang, menganalisis nilai-nilai kehidupan dari perspektif membaca kritis novel *Jejak Balak* karya Ayu Welirang, dan menumbuhkan kesadaran ekologis peserta didik antara lain melalui kegiatan membaca kritis.

Kata kunci : ekokritik, novel, relevansi pembelajaran sastra

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INTRODUCTION

Literature is a form of human expression that reflects social and cultural realities and serves as a means for authors to convey ideas and experiences through written language (Lizawati et al., 2021; Elmustian & Razak, 2021). In its creation, literary works are not only imaginative but also reflect the realities of life, including the relationship between humans and the environment (Tjahyadi, 2020). From an ecocritical perspective, literary works are seen as a means to reflect the ecological realities that occur in society. From an ecocritical perspective, literary works are seen as a medium that represents the relationship between humans and the environment. Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* presents various ecological issues, such as deforestation and the exploitation of natural resources, which have resulted in environmental damage. This depiction demonstrates that literary works can be a means to understand the relationship between humans and nature and the various environmental crises that occur. This aligns with the research findings of Hartati, Wulansari, and Melia (2025), which demonstrate that ecocritical studies can uncover the relationship and conflicts between humans and nature, as well as the environmental crises represented in literary works. The selection of this research title is based on the scientific consideration that the novel *Jejak Balak* predominantly raises various issues of environmental damage that are relevant for analysis using an ecocritical approach. This literary work depicts various ecological issues, such as illegal logging, forest exploitation, and their impacts on human life and nature. Furthermore, the ecocritical approach to contemporary Indonesian novels still requires enrichment of research objects to broaden the perspective of literary studies related to environmental issues.

The urgency of this research lies not only in the theoretical realm through the development of ecocritical studies, but also in the practical realm

related to the world of education. Increasingly complex environmental problems demand learning media capable of fostering ecological awareness in students. In the 2013 Curriculum (K-13), Indonesian language instruction in grade 12 at Taman Mulia Senior High School directs students to examine the content and linguistic elements of the novel and interpret the author's views, as stated in KD 4.8. However, literature learning in schools often focuses on intrinsic elements such as plot, characters, and setting without deeply connecting them to ecological values and current environmental issues (Jafar et al., 2025). Nurgiyantoro (2010) states that appropriate literature learning can shape students' attitudes and personalities, while Oktafia and Puspitoningrum (2022) emphasize that literature learning is often solely oriented toward meeting curriculum requirements. Therefore, an ecocritical approach can be an alternative to enrich literature learning while supporting the achievement of Core Competency 4.8 through interpreting the author's perspective on environmental issues in Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak*.

Literature can also strengthen understanding of cultural values and societal perspectives. Sulastris & Thamimi (2024) demonstrate that the novel *Keling Kumang* by R. Masri Sareb Putra can be effectively utilized in Indonesian language learning to increase students' reading interest, literacy skills, and understanding of local culture. Meanwhile, the decolonization perspective examined by Thamimi & Sulastris (2024) on Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel *This Earth of Mankind* shows that the expression of cultural identity plays a crucial role as a form of resistance to colonial domination. Therefore, literary works serve not only as a means of reflection on various environmental issues but also as a platform for expressing cultural awareness and fostering critical thinking within society.

An ecocritical approach is used to understand the relationship between humans and the



environment as represented in literary works. Through this approach, nature is positioned not only as a setting for the story but also as a symbol and a means of critique of the relationship between humans and the environment (Khasanah, 2024). Research results indicate that literary works represent the relationship between humans and nature as an important part of building readers' ecological awareness, both harmonious and exploitative (Ramadiani, 2025). This is evident in the novel *Jejak Balak*, which depicts deforestation as an impact of human behavior on the environment. As a work of fiction, the novel still reflects social reality and serves as a medium for criticism of environmental issues (Rahman & Cindi, 2024; Oktafia & Puspitoningrum, 2022).

Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* depicts a conflict over deforestation involving indigenous communities and economic stakeholders. Different perspectives on forests have given rise to a conflict between environmental conservation efforts and the exploitation of natural resources (Efrizah & Purwarno, 2026; Al-Qolbi, 2025). This conflict reflects the disharmonious relationship between humans and the environment, characterized by the dominance of economic interests over conservation efforts. This situation demonstrates that novels do not simply present a series of events within a story but also serve as a means of criticizing various forms of environmental damage and a medium for reflection on the consequences of human actions on nature (Hasanah et al., 2025; Karlina, 2025).

According to Ramadhani et al. (2020), literary studies that focus on the relationship between humans and the environment are known as ecocriticism. Literary works can be an important medium for building readers' ecological awareness (Khasanah, 2024). Through their storylines, character portrayals, and the various conflicts presented, authors are able to represent various environmental issues that occur in society. These literary works not only provide readers with an aesthetic experience but also encourage them to

understand the various consequences of human actions on the natural environment. Literary works can serve as a means of fostering concern for environmental sustainability.

According to Larasati & Manut (2022), ecology is a scientific approach that focuses on the reciprocal relationships between humans, animals, plants, and the environment. In literary studies, this concept is integrated into the ecocritical approach (Cahyo et al., 2024; Santoso et al., 2026; Nuryanti et al., 2025). In this study, the ecocritical approach focused on Keraf's (2010) theory of environmental ethics. Pre-observation interviews with Indonesian language teacher Sri Novia, indicated that Indonesian language subjects in grade 12 still use the 2013 Curriculum as a learning reference and have not optimally linked literary works to environmental issues. Yet, through Core Competency 4.8, literature learning requires the ability to interpret the author's perspectives that can be linked to ecological values. This indicates a gap between the potential for literary learning and its implementation in the classroom.

The results of this study are relevant to Indonesian language learning in grade XII of SMA Taman Mulia, particularly in Basic Competency (KD) 4.8, particularly in the activity of interpreting the author's views containing life values ??and various environmental issues represented in the novel *Jejak Balak*. This novel can be used as a teaching material to develop analytical skills while building students' ecological awareness. Thus, literary learning does not only emphasize the structural aspects of the text, but also plays a role in shaping the character of students who have concern for the environment.

Based on the above description, there is a research gap between the ecocritical approach in literary research and its relevance to school learning. Furthermore, research specifically examining the novel *Jejak Balak* with an environmental ethics approach and linking it to literature learning is still limited. Therefore, this

study is novel in integrating an ecocritical approach with the relevance of literature learning. The novelty in this study lies in the use of Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* as the object of study, which specifically addresses ecological conflict based on local wisdom and indigenous people's beliefs about nature. Unlike previous research on Negeri Lintasan Petir, which emphasized general ecological criticism, *Jejak Balak* presents a spiritual-ecological dimension through belief in ancestral forest guardians. This demonstrates a fusion of cultural values, local myths, and environmental ethics that strengthens the contextual ecocritical perspective.

This research focuses on uncovering the forms of environmental ethics found in Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak*, using the environmental ethics theory proposed by Keraf (2010) as a basis for analysis. The principles of environmental ethics that serve as the basis for this research include: (1) respect for nature; (2) moral responsibility toward nature; (3) solidarity with nature; (4) compassion and concern for nature; and (5) non-disruption of natural life. This focus of the study makes it crucial to conduct this research to describe the various forms of environmental ethics represented in Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* and to examine their relevance to literature learning in grade 12 students at Taman Mulia High School. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of ecocritical studies and serve as a reference in literature learning that supports the growth of ecological awareness in students.

METHOD

The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method. This method aims to examine the meaning and representation of environmental ethics contained in Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak*. This study uses the ecocritical approach proposed by Keraf (2010). The research data consists of words, sentences, and dialogue in the novel text that depict the relationship between humans and the environment.

A data source is the object from which research data is obtained. According to Ariyanti et al. (2022), data sources in qualitative research can come from documents, texts, events, or informants related to the research focus. The data source in this study is the novel *Jejak Balak* by Ayu Welirang. The depiction of the story's setting, the actions of the characters, and the plot constructed in the novel provide a representation of the impact of forest exploitation and the various environmental ethical values that emerge in community life. Based on this, the text in this novel serves as the primary data source analyzed in the form of quotations relevant to the research focus, then classified and interpreted based on an ecocritical approach and the concept of environmental ethics.

The object of study in this research is the novel *Jejak Balak* by Ayu Welirang, published by Gramedia Pustaka Utama in 2023 with a total of 384 pages. The novel was chosen because it depicts the relationship between humans and the natural environment and the conflicts related to forest exploitation.

Data collection was carried out through several stages, namely: (1) reading and understanding the novel text carefully and repeatedly to obtain the necessary data. (2) identifying parts of the text relevant to the research focus, and (3) recording and classifying data in the form of quotations. These steps align with data collection techniques in literary research, which emphasize systematic reading, recording, and classifying text data (Ayuningtyas, 2026).

The instrument in this research was the researcher herself (human instrument). In literary research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument, reading, collecting data, interpreting, and analyzing literary works. To assist the data collection process, the researcher used a data card table and interview guide. The data card table was used to record quotations related to environmental ethics in the novel *Jejak Balak*, while the interview guide was used to obtain information regarding



the relevance of the research results to literature learning at Taman Mulia High School.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification (Miles & Huberman in Sugiyono, 2023). Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and grouping data obtained from research results. In this study, data reduction was carried out by selecting text excerpts from Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* related to environmental ethical values. The selected data were then grouped based on the environmental ethical categories used in the study. Data display: Data presentation is carried out by arranging the reduced data into tables or descriptive descriptions to make it easier for researchers to understand the data patterns found. In this study, the classified data is presented in the form of data card tables and descriptive explanations so that the relationships between the data can be clearly seen. Conclusion drawing and verification: At this stage, the researcher draws conclusions based on the analyzed data. The conclusions obtained were then continuously verified throughout the research process to ensure the accuracy and validity of the data. Thus, the data analysis provides a clear picture of the environmental ethical values contained in Ayu Weliran's novel *Jejak Balak*.

Data validity in this study was ensured through diligent observation and theoretical triangulation techniques (Husnulloil et al., 2024). Diligent observation was applied by repeatedly, carefully, and in-depth readings of Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* to ensure that the data collected aligns with the research focus and reduces the possibility of misinterpretation. This process enabled researchers to identify elements of environmental ethics more systematically and precisely. Furthermore, theoretical triangulation was used by comparing research data based on various relevant theoretical perspectives, particularly the

environmental ethics theory proposed by Keraf (2010), allowing for more objective interpretation of the data and avoiding subjective bias. Husnulloil et al. (2024) state that theoretical triangulation is a technique for testing data validity by comparing research findings from different theoretical perspectives to achieve a deeper and more objective understanding. By applying these two techniques, the resulting data is expected to have a high level of validity and accuracy and be scientifically accountable.

RESULTS

The research results show that Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* contains various environmental ethical values, analyzed using an ecocritical approach. The analysis was conducted based on the environmental ethics theory proposed by Keraf (2010). The forms of environmental ethics identified include respect for nature, moral responsibility for nature, solidarity, compassion and concern for nature, and non-disruption of natural life. Overall, this study found a number of data points that fall into all of these environmental ethical categories.

1. Respect for Nature

Data 001

Here, there is still a belief in ancestral guardians. The king of the jungle is not considered a wild animal, but rather a sacred ancestor who is revered. (Welirang, 2023:37).

Data excerpt (001) not only demonstrates a respectful attitude toward nature but also illustrates a shift in human perspective, from one that was initially human-centered to one that places greater emphasis on nature. In this perspective, nature is considered to have significant value and is not inferior to humans. The reference to the king of the jungle as "ancestor" indicates that humans are not the primary focus, but rather an interconnected part of nature. This demonstrates the close relationship between humans and nature.

Data excerpt 002

There are elders in the indigenous community who say this is the victims' own fault. These forest ancestors do not agree with their land being seized and converted into oil palm plantations (Welirang, 2023:120)

Data excerpt (002) demonstrates a respectful attitude toward nature expressed through the views of indigenous community elders. The statement that the forest ancestors do not agree with the seizure of their land indicates that the forest is viewed as something that must be respected and should not be controlled indiscriminately. Furthermore, the rejection of the establishment of oil palm plantations demonstrates an awareness of preserving the forest. This situation demonstrates that forests are not merely viewed as an economic resource, but as an essential part of the environment that must be preserved. This quote reflects a respect for nature through a rejection of forest clearing that can damage the environment.

Data 003

I love the forest and all its contents, bro! But that's not the right thing to do to take people's lives! Please stop all this and surrender yourself to the police (Welirang, 2023:328).

Data excerpt (003) demonstrates a respect for nature, as reflected in the character's statement expressing love and appreciation for the forest and all its contents. This statement demonstrates that the character values the existence of the forest and the living creatures within it. Furthermore, the character emphasizes that love for the forest should not be used as an excuse to commit acts of violence against humans. This demonstrates that respect for nature must be accompanied by humanitarian values and not be carried out in a way that harms others. This quote reflects a respect for nature through expressions of love for the forest accompanied by a wise attitude in preserving life. Overall, the respect for nature in *Jejak Balak* is demonstrated through a recognition of the intrinsic value of living creatures and nature itself. This is

evident in how indigenous people position tigers as sacred ancestors, indicating a spiritual relationship between humans and nature. The findings of this study align with previous research showing that literary works often represent nature as an entity with noble values and worthy of respect (Widiano et al., 2026; Sholihah & Asih, 2025). These results indicate that this novel not only presents the ecological relationship between humans and nature but also reflects the cultural and spiritual relationships that exist between the two.

2. Moral Responsibility for Nature

Data 004

What's it called? Emerald of the Earth? No palm oil greening. Instead, it makes the earth barren. (Welirang, 2023:22)

The data excerpt (004) demonstrates a moral responsibility for nature. This is evident in the figure's criticism of the notion that palm oil plantations can green the earth. The figure instead asserts that the presence of palm oil makes the earth barren. This statement demonstrates an awareness of the environmental damage caused by clearing land for palm oil. This attitude reflects a moral responsibility to protect nature by rejecting activities that can disrupt the environmental balance.

Data 005

This must be the ancestral curse that punished them... hopefully other thieves will come to their senses. Amen (Welirang, 2023:94).

The data quote (005) demonstrates a moral responsibility towards nature. This is evident in the statement that those who destroy the forest are being punished so that other thieves will be made aware. This statement illustrates a warning to those who damage the environment. This attitude reflects an awareness that actions that destroy nature require consequences so that they are not repeated. This statement demonstrates a moral responsibility towards nature through the hope that others will refrain from destroying the forest.



Data 006

Local communities, with the permission of the local government, may utilize certain forest areas for their livelihoods or to benefit from the plants that grow in the forest (Welirang, 2023:113).

Data 007

This is supposedly customary land, but how can it be turned into oil palm plantations? There are enough oil palm plantations in West Sumatra. Perhaps it was the ancestors who punished them to make them aware of the land they inherited (Welirang, 2023:137).

Data 008

Well, there's something even worse, he said, 'I support the killer, whoever he is, or whatever the creature is. Illegal logging must be stopped. (Welirang, 2023:154).

Data 009

Yes. Here, flash floods are called galodo. That's the result of human greed. Forests are continually being cleared and converted into oil palm plantations... Eventually, nature will rebel, for example, by sending flash floods (Welirang, 2023: 294).

Data excerpts (006), (007), (008), and (009) demonstrate a moral responsibility towards nature. This is evident in efforts to remind and reprimand actions that damage the environment, such as clearing land for palm oil plantations, illegal logging, and deforestation that causes flash floods. Furthermore, forest utilization must be subject to permits to prevent overexploitation. This statement illustrates an awareness of preserving nature from human-caused damage.

Data 010

You're not wrong, you're just disrupting my plans. I must restore the balance of nature. Kill the hunters of protected animals, loggers, and

those who seize ancestral land (Welirang, 2023:324).

Data excerpt (010) demonstrates a moral responsibility towards nature through a desire to restore environmental balance. The figure considers hunters of protected animals, loggers, and land grabbers to be the causes of environmental damage. This statement illustrates an effort to stop actions that damage the environment.

Data 011

I hope the government cares about customary land. If not the government, then who else will? The flood disaster wasn't just caused by the land itself, but also by the destruction of the system, because the land use of the Batang Aia area was changed (Welirang, 2023:364).

Data 012

The general public and indigenous peoples demonstrate every day. They demand the rights of indigenous peoples, namely customary land whose management is regulated by law. This land will be used by residents for farming and food self-sufficiency (Welirang, 2023:368)

Data 013

Forgive us, Inyiak. God willing, we will protect the country (Welirang, 2023:374).

Data excerpts (011), (012), and (013) reflect the hope that the government will care about customary land, the community's efforts to fight for land management rights, and the promise to protect the country. These statements reflect concern and commitment to preserving the environment.

Findings regarding moral responsibility towards nature indicate that the characters in the novel are not only aware of environmental damage but also strive to provide warnings, critique, and take action against behavior that damages the environment, which aligns with research by Juanda & Afandi (2024). This is evident in the criticism

of palm oil plantations, illegal logging, and awareness of the impact of ecological disasters such as flash floods. These findings align with research stating that literary works function as a medium for social criticism of environmental exploitation (Akbar et al., 2025; Khairunnisa et al., 2025). Thus, the novel *Jejak Balak* not only represents environmental damage but also emphasizes the importance of human responsibility in maintaining the balance of nature.

3. Solidarity Towards Nature

Data 014

However, it should be emphasized that, although it is far from possible, this area is a customary forest area managed jointly by the local government and the local indigenous community (Welirang, 2023:113)

Data excerpt (014) demonstrates a solidarity attitude towards nature through joint management of customary forests. This management is carried out by the local government and indigenous communities to maintain forest sustainability. This demonstrates an awareness of collective environmental protection. This attitude reflects efforts to maintain the balance of nature through cooperation in forest management.

Data 015

For us, endangered animals are the guardians of the chain of life in the forest. If they are hunted, the ecosystem could be slowly destroyed. Eventually, humans too could become victims of nature's ferocity (Welirang, 2023:264).

Data excerpt (015) demonstrates an attitude of solidarity with nature through concern for endangered animals. Endangered animals are seen as guardians of the chain of life in the forest, playing a role in maintaining ecosystem balance. This statement demonstrates efforts to prevent hunting to prevent environmental damage. This reflects solidarity with nature through the protection of living creatures that are part of the ecosystem.

This attitude of solidarity with nature in this novel is demonstrated through collective awareness between humans and nature as a unified ecosystem. This is evident in the joint management of customary forests and efforts to protect endangered animals as part of the chain of life. This finding aligns with the ecocritical approach, which states that literature can depict a harmonious relationship between humans and nature as a form of ecological awareness (Ma'rifah & Sofyaningrum, 2026; Andriani, 2025). Thus, this novel demonstrates that environmental sustainability can only be maintained through cooperation between humans and nature.

4. Attitude of Compassion and Concern for Nature

Data 016

If you love the earth, stop smoking! You're just making the air here dirty! (Welirang, 2023:126)

Data excerpt (016) demonstrates a compassionate attitude toward nature through the prohibition of smoking, which can pollute the air. This statement illustrates the character's concern for environmental cleanliness. The reminder not to smoke demonstrates an effort to maintain clean air quality. This attitude reflects concern for nature by preventing environmental pollution.

Data 017

Forgive us, Inyik. Hopefully, this tragedy will awaken the village youth to love the land inherited from their ancestors (Welirang, 2023:228).

Data excerpt (017) demonstrates a compassionate attitude toward nature through the hope that the community will cherish the land inherited from their ancestors. This statement demonstrates an awareness of protecting and caring for the environment. The expression also expresses regret for the damage that has occurred, hoping to prevent it from happening again. This reflects concern for nature through a desire to protect the land and ensure its preservation.



Through simple actions that reflect concern for the environment, such as maintaining clean air and caring for ancestral land. These findings indicate that concern for the environment is not always manifested in grand actions, but also through everyday behavior. This finding aligns with previous research, which states that ecological awareness in literary works is often represented through various actions that reflect concern and responsibility for the environment (Firmanda, 2025). Thus, this novel teaches that concern for nature can begin with simple actions in everyday life.

5. Attitude of Not Disturbing Natural Life

Data 018

But, maybe it's also because Agam hunts? Even though Agam says he doesn't hunt protected animals, Mahzar still considers it a threat to the ecosystem (Welirang, 2023:358).

Data excerpt (018) demonstrates a non-disruptive attitude toward wildlife through the view that hunting activities can threaten the ecosystem. This statement demonstrates concern about the impact of hunting on the balance of nature. Although it does not hunt protected animals, the activity is still considered potentially disruptive to living creatures. This reflects an effort to preserve nature by avoiding actions that could damage the ecosystem.

Data 019

The path was closed with bamboo stakes by the Satsabhara officers while covering the SAR activities on the last day. A no-passing sign was also posted in front of the stakes (Welirang, 2023: 372).

Data excerpt (019) demonstrates a non-disruptive attitude toward wildlife through the restriction of certain paths. The closure of paths and the posting of no-passing signs indicate an effort to limit human activity. These actions aim to prevent the surrounding environment from being disturbed by human traffic. This attitude reflects

an awareness of preserving wildlife by minimizing environmental disturbances.

This non-disruptive attitude in this novel is demonstrated through restrictions on human activities that have the potential to damage the ecosystem, such as a hunting ban and restrictions on access to certain areas. This finding suggests that humans need to be aware of the limits of their use of nature to avoid disrupting the environmental balance. The results of this study support ecocritical studies that suggest that literary works can illustrate the importance of limiting the exploitation of nature as a form of ecological awareness (Juanda, 2024; Aji et al., 2023). Thus, this novel emphasizes that environmental protection is not only achieved through active action, but also through self-control over natural exploitation.

Relevance of Environmental Ethical Values ??in the Novel Jejak Balak to Literature Learning in Grade XII of Taman Mulia High School

The results of this study demonstrate its relevance to literature learning in Grade XII of Taman Mulia High School, both those based on the 2013 Curriculum and the Independent Curriculum. In the 2013 Curriculum, this connection is found in Basic Competency 4.8, which requires students to interpret the author's perspective in the novel. Meanwhile, in the Independent Curriculum, literature learning emphasizes the ability to understand, interpret, and reflect on the values in literary texts.

This connection aligns with Basic Competency (KD) 4.8 in Grade XII of Taman Mulia High School, which requires students to present their interpretations of the author's perspective in the novel. Through this competency, students are guided to interpret the content, messages, and various life values contained in literary works. This process enables students to understand the author's perspective on various life issues, including environmental issues represented in the novel.

Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* contains various forms of environmental ethics that can be utilized in literature learning. These values include respect for nature, moral responsibility, solidarity with nature, compassion and concern for nature, and non-disruption of natural life. Students can analyze these values through interpreting the author's perspectives on life as represented in the novel.

Based on the research findings, Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* is relevant for use in literature learning for grade XII students at Taman Mulia High School based on the 2013 Curriculum. Through the novel, students can interpret the author's perspectives on the relationship between humans and the environment and understand the environmental ethical values contained within. Thus, literary works not only serve as learning media that develop literary appreciation skills but also play a role in fostering students' awareness and responsibility for environmental sustainability.

DISCUSSION

Keraf (2010:167–168) states that respect for nature is a form of human appreciation for its existence. This attitude is based on the awareness that nature has intrinsic value, the right to be respected, and possesses a complete and continuously evolving life. Therefore, nature is not viewed merely as an object to be exploited to meet human needs, but as a part of life that must be protected, appreciated, and preserved. The application of this respect for nature can be seen in the following data excerpt.

Keraf (2010:169) explains that a moral responsibility for nature is demonstrated through actions such as reminding, reprimanding, or prohibiting parties who potentially threaten the preservation of nature, whether intentionally or unintentionally. This attitude reflects an awareness and concern for protecting the environment from various actions that could disrupt the ecosystem's balance. This moral responsibility for nature can be seen in the following data excerpt.

According to Warren and Keraf (2010:152), this is demonstrated through an awareness that humans have equal status with nature and efforts to maintain the balance of the ecosystem. This attitude is manifested through actions to protect the environment and prevent environmental damage. This attitude can be seen in the following data excerpt.

Keraf (2010) explains that an attitude of compassion and concern for nature is manifested through actions to protect, nurture, and not harm living creatures. This attitude is based on the awareness that humans have a responsibility to protect and preserve nature without expecting any reward or benefit. This compassion and concern for nature is reflected in the following data excerpt.

Keraf (2010) states that an attitude of not disturbing natural life is a form of awareness to avoid actions that could damage the environment or threaten the survival of the creatures within it. This attitude is manifested through various efforts to maintain the balance of the ecosystem and limit activities that have the potential to disrupt natural life. This attitude of not disturbing natural life is reflected in the following data excerpt.

The results of this study demonstrate its relevance to literature learning in grade XII high school students, both those using the 2013 Curriculum and the Independent Curriculum. In the 2013 Curriculum, this connection is found in Core Competency 4.8, which requires students to interpret the author's perspective in a novel. Meanwhile, in the Independent Curriculum, literature learning emphasizes the ability to understand, interpret, and reflect on the values within literary texts.

This connection aligns with Core Competency 4.8 in grade XII high school, which requires students to present their interpretations of the author's perspective in a novel. Through this competency, students are guided to interpret the content, messages, and various life values contained in literary works. This process enables students to understand the author's perspectives on



various life issues, including environmental issues represented in the novel.

Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* (Traces of Balak) contains various forms of environmental ethics that can be utilized in literature learning. These values include respect for nature, moral responsibility, solidarity with nature, compassion and concern for nature, and non-disruption of natural life. Students can analyze these values through interpreting the author's perspective on life as represented in the novel.

Based on the research findings, Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak* is relevant for use in literature instruction for 12th grade high school students based on the 2013 Curriculum. Through the novel, students can interpret the author's perspective on the relationship between humans and the environment and understand the environmental ethical values contained within it. Thus, literary works not only serve as learning media that develop literary appreciation skills but also play a role in fostering students' awareness and responsibility for environmental sustainability.

Critical reading of the synopsis of the novel *Jejak Balak* is a highly relevant activity. Through reading, students are facilitated in understanding the concepts contained in the novel (Razak et al., 2020:7; Hatteberg & Steffy, 2013:339; Haghani & Bahmannejad, 2018:9).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, five forms of environmental ethics were identified in Ayu Welirang's novel *Jejak Balak*: respect for nature, moral responsibility for nature, solidarity with nature, compassion and concern for nature, and non-disruption of natural life. These findings indicate that this novel represents the relationship between humans and nature, emphasizing the importance of ecological balance. Furthermore, the results of this study are relevant to literature lessons for grade XII students at Taman Mulia Senior High School, specifically Core Competency 4.8, as they

can be used as teaching materials to develop the ability to interpret the author's perspectives and foster students' ecological awareness.

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