



## IS ECO LITERACY INTEGRATION FEASIBLE? INSIGHTS FROM ENGLISH LANGUAGE LECTURERS ON CRITICAL READING

**Neni Nurkhamidah, Ratna Dewanti, Miftahulhairah Anwar**  
**Universitas Negeri Jakarta**  
**neninurkhamidah@gmail.com**

### ABSTRACT

Indonesia is facing critical environmental challenges such as deforestation, pollution, and climate change that pose serious threats to sustainability and public well-being. In response, education plays a vital role in promoting ecoliteracy and equipping learners to become environmentally responsible citizens. This study explores the integration of ecoliteracy into critical reading instruction in Indonesian higher education by examining English lecturers' perceptions, teaching practices, and challenges. A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving three lecturers from a private university in Jakarta selected for their experience in teaching critical reading and interest in sustainability. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. The findings reveal that lecturers view ecoliteracy as a transformative process that fosters environmental awareness, ethical responsibility, and critical reflection. Critical reading is seen as a suitable platform due to its focus on analyzing texts and underlying ideologies. However, exam-oriented curricula, a lack of localized materials, and unclear assessment strategies hinder implementation. The study concludes that with institutional support, curriculum flexibility, and targeted teacher training, ecoliteracy can be effectively embedded into English language instruction to enhance sustainability education and foster ecological citizenship among students.

Keywords: *critical reading; ecoliteracy, perception, higher education*

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, recognized for its rich biodiversity, is currently facing pressing environmental challenges such as deforestation, pollution, and the impacts of climate change, which threaten ecosystems, public health, and socio-economic development. Extensive deforestation, primarily caused by agricultural expansion, logging, and infrastructure development, results in the loss of important habitats and increased carbon emissions that exacerbate climate change (Indrajaya et al., 2022). Additionally, pollution and environmental degradation compromise the quality of ecosystems and public health, highlighting the urgent need to protect essential ecosystem services (Nugroho et al., 2022). In this context, education emerges as a pivotal force in raising awareness, fostering sustainable practices, and empowering communities to participate actively in environmental conservation. Therefore, addressing environmental challenges in Indonesia must be supported by integrated policies, active community participation, and strong educational initiatives to achieve sustainable development goals aligned with SDG 13 and SDG 15 (Puspitaningrum et al., 2022). Through environmental education, individuals become more conscious of the impact of their actions and are motivated to adopt behaviors that reduce harm to the environment. Furthermore, incorporating

sustainability into education enhances critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and innovation in addressing environmental issues.

Integrating environmental awareness into formal education aligns with the broader SDGs vision of cultivating global citizenship and responsible environmental stewardship (Slade, 2020). Language education, particularly English as a global lingua franca, offers unique opportunities to engage students with environmental topics, facilitate international dialogue, and empower learners to participate actively in sustainability initiatives (Ortín, 2021). By incorporating environmental themes into language curricula, educators can enhance students' critical thinking and intercultural communication skills while raising their ecological consciousness. This approach aligns closely with the principles of ecopedagogy, which, as discussed by Sterling (2001) and Orr (1992), promotes interdisciplinary and holistic education aimed at fostering ecological responsibility, social justice, and transformative learning. Moreover, language classrooms serve as platforms for students to engage in discussions on global ecological challenges, facilitating the exchange of diverse perspectives essential to collaborative problem-solving (Özçelik, 2024). This approach broadens students' understanding of sustainability and motivates them to become active agents of change in their communities and globally.

Despite the increasing global acknowledgment of Eco literacy's crucial role in fostering sustainable development, its effective incorporation within English language teaching in Indonesia remains limited (Kazazoglu, 2025a; Perwitasari et al., 2025). A primary obstacle is the lack of pedagogical materials tailored to local environmental issues and the Indonesian socio-cultural context (Giyatmi, 2020; Parlindungan et al., 2018; Sapoetra, 2020; Stockton, 2018; Suarlin, 2023). Many existing teaching materials tend to focus on generic or Western-centric environmental issues, which may not fully capture local environmental realities or motivate meaningful learner engagement. The textbooks do not sufficiently highlight stories or themes that focus on cooperative efforts and partnerships for environmental conservation. Furthermore, current textbooks often lack narratives or themes emphasizing collaborative environmental conservation and partnerships, which are critical for promoting a collective sense of ecological responsibility (Seli et al., 2025).

Another major challenge is the limited ecoliteracy training and exposure among English lecturers, which results in a lack of clarity on how to meaningfully embed environmental themes into their instruction. This limitation hampers lecturers' ability to design lessons that simultaneously enhance language proficiency and environmental awareness. Traditional English teaching methods, which emphasize linguistic accuracy, communicative competence, and test preparation, often neglect broader thematic concerns such as environmental justice and sustainability. This narrow focus inhibits students' capacity to think critically about ecological issues and weakens the potential of language education as a transformative space for social change.

The disconnect between language instruction and interdisciplinary knowledge further complicates the implementation of ecoliteracy, underscoring the need to adopt more integrated and transformative teaching approaches (Siyaswati, 2019). English lecturers play a central role in facilitating such pedagogical shifts. Their beliefs, instructional practices, and professional competencies directly shape students' engagement with both language and sustainability content (Fadhilah & Warni, 2024; Gelisli et al., 2024; Nasmilah, 2023; Tazuddin, 2020).



Critical reading courses represent a strategic entry point for ecoliteracy integration, as they encourage students to interrogate texts, evaluate arguments, and uncover underlying assumptions and ideologies. Through critical reading, students can explore environmental discourses, reflect on socio-political dimensions of ecological narratives, and develop the analytical skills necessary to respond to complex sustainability challenges (Christanti et al., 2023; Misaa et al., 2022). While previous research has explored ecoliteracy integration in science education, elementary teaching, and teacher training programs, little is known about its implementation in English language education—particularly in relation to critical reading. This presents a critical gap in the literature. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the perceptions of English language lecturers regarding the feasibility of integrating ecoliteracy into critical reading instruction in Indonesian higher education. Specifically, it examines lecturers' conceptual understandings of ecoliteracy, their perceived readiness, instructional practices, and the institutional or pedagogical challenges they face. By identifying these key factors, the study seeks to inform curriculum design, resource development, and professional training to support effective and context-sensitive ecoliteracy integration. Ultimately, it aims to contribute to the advancement of education for sustainable development by equipping students to become both proficient English users and responsible global citizens.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative research design, aiming to explore the meanings embedded in individuals' behaviors, perspectives, and subjective experiences (Woods, 2005). This approach was selected to examine English language lecturers' perceptions and instructional practices related to the integration of ecoliteracy into critical reading instruction. By adopting a qualitative approach, the study sought to uncover the depth and complexity of participants' conceptual and pedagogical engagement with environmental literacy within the context of higher education.

A case study approach was utilized to allow for detailed, context-specific exploration of teaching practices and beliefs. The study was conducted at a private university in Indonesia. Three English language lecturers were purposively selected based on the following criteria: (1) they had experience teaching critical reading courses, (2) they demonstrated an interest in environmental issues or education for sustainability, and (3) they agreed to participate in interviews and classroom observations. All participants voluntarily consented to take part in the study and contributed rich, experience-based data.

Data collection consisted solely of semi-structured interviews. Each participant engaged in a one-on-one, face-to-face interview lasting approximately 45 to 60 minutes. All interviews were conducted in English, which is also the medium of instruction for the courses taught by the participants. The interview protocol was designed to explore four key thematic areas namely conceptual understanding of ecoliteracy, feasibility of ecoliteracy integration in critical reading, instructional strategies and materials, challenges and advantages

Interview data were transcribed verbatim and did not require translation since the interviews were conducted in English. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generation of initial codes, (3) identification of themes, (4) review of themes, (5) definition and naming of themes, and (6) construction of the narrative report. Thematic

analysis was chosen for its flexibility and its effectiveness in capturing complex patterns across qualitative data in educational settings. To ensure ethical integrity, the study received ethical clearance from the institutional research ethics committee at MNC University. Participants were fully informed of the study's aims, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their involvement. Written informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. All names cited in the report are pseudonyms to protect participant confidentiality.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study and interprets them in relation to the research questions and relevant literature. The results are organized based on emerging themes and patterns identified during the data analysis. Each finding is discussed to highlight its significance, its alignment or contrast with previous studies, and its implications for theory and practice.

No	Theme	Lecturer 1	Lecturer 2	Lecturer 3
1	Conceptual Understandings of Ecoliteracy	Sees ecoliteracy as the development of environmental awareness and ethical responsibility through education.	Understands ecoliteracy as helping students care about nature and think critically about environmental issues.	Views ecoliteracy as the connection between language learning and fostering ecological consciousness and social responsibility.
2	Perceived Feasibility of Integration in Critical Reading	Believes ecoliteracy can be integrated into critical reading if the curriculum is flexible and teachers are encouraged to innovate.	Considers it feasible, especially since critical reading naturally invites reflection on complex topics, including sustainability.	Thinks it's feasible in theory, but current curriculum and institutional focus on exams limit the opportunity for integration.
3	Instructional Strategies	Uses multimedia and non-fiction texts, such as journalistic articles, in critical reading lessons to engage students in analyzing and reflecting on global environmental issues.	Assign students to search for types of environmental damage in articles from English-language newspapers, both print and online, and explain them	Uses sustainability-focused readings obtained from TOEFL or IELTS practice texts to integrate ecoliteracy with language learning
4	Challenges in Planning, Teaching, and Assessing	Finds it difficult to allocate time for lesson planning and align assessments with both language and ecoliteracy goals.	Lacks integrated materials, making planning time-consuming; unsure how to measure both reading skills and ecological understanding effectively.	Struggles to create lessons that embed ecoliteracy meaningfully; no clear assessment tools for evaluating interdisciplinary learning.
5	Perceived Advantages	Notices increased student engagement and critical thinking when environmental issues are included in texts.	Students are more motivated and participative when reading topics relate to real-world environmental problems.	Even with minimal materials, students show genuine curiosity and deeper discussion when environmental themes are introduced.



### **Conceptual Understandings of Ecoliteracy**

The lecturers demonstrated a strong and thoughtful understanding of ecoliteracy, aligning it with core educational theories, particularly Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1991) and Ecopedagogy (Orr, 1992; Sterling, 2001). These theories focus on fostering critical reflection, facilitating perspective shifts, and encouraging students to engage deeply with societal and environmental challenges through education. They emphasize that ecoliteracy is not just about acquiring knowledge of the environment but is a transformative process that encompasses the development of ethical responsibility, environmental awareness, and critical thinking. They believed that ecoliteracy should not only raise awareness about environmental issues but should also encourage action and reflection, positioning students to engage as responsible members of society. This conceptualization of ecoliteracy reflects a broad, holistic view of education that involves the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions of learning.

The following excerpts from the lecturers further clarify this holistic conceptualization:

Excerpt 1:

“For me, ecoliteracy means fostering environmental awareness and ethical responsibility through education. It’s about helping students care, act, and reflect.”

In this excerpt, the lecturer underscores the dual aspects of ecoliteracy: fostering environmental awareness and encouraging ethical responsibility. The emphasis on helping students care, act, and reflect highlights the interconnected nature of environmental literacy, which is not limited to knowledge but extends to attitudes and behaviors. Ecoliteracy, in this sense, is seen as a transformative learning goal where students are encouraged to develop both awareness of environmental issues and responsibility to act in ways that contribute to sustainability.

Excerpt 2:

“I understand ecoliteracy as encouraging students to care about nature and to think critically about environmental issues in their surroundings.”

This quote emphasizes the importance of critical thinking in ecoliteracy. The lecturer sees ecoliteracy as encouraging students to engage with environmental issues critically, which involves analyzing not just the problems but also considering potential solutions and their own role in the issue. This cognitive component is central to the lecturers’ understanding, as it enables students to move beyond surface-level awareness to a deeper, more thoughtful engagement with environmental issues in their own local contexts.

Excerpt 3:

“I see ecoliteracy as a bridge between language learning and building ecological consciousness and social responsibility.”

Here, the lecturer highlights the interdisciplinary nature of ecoliteracy, positioning it as a bridge that connects language learning with ecological consciousness and social responsibility. This reflects the view that language education can serve as a vehicle for fostering ecological awareness and social engagement. By connecting ecoliteracy with language learning, the lecturer suggests that language classes are not just about mastering linguistic skills but also about developing a deeper sense of responsibility towards the environment and society. This perspective aligns with the goal of Ecopedagogy (Orr,

1992; Sterling, 2001), which calls for education that promotes sustainability through holistic, interdisciplinary approaches.

The lecturers' understanding of ecoliteracy aligns well with Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 2018) which posits that critical reflection can lead to a profound shift in students' perspectives and attitudes. In the context of ecoliteracy, this means that students do not just learn about environmental issues but also undergo a transformation in how they view the environment and their role in addressing it. The idea of shifting perspectives through critical reflection is at the heart of ecoliteracy, which encourages students to think deeply about social, political, and economic factors that contribute to environmental degradation.

Similarly, the lecturers' views are in line with Ecopedagogy (Orr, 1992; Sterling, 2001), which advocates for interdisciplinary education that integrates environmental issues with other fields of study. Ecopedagogy emphasizes that sustainability education should not be confined to specific environmental science courses but should be integrated across disciplines. The lecturers' framing of ecoliteracy as a bridge between language learning and ecological consciousness reflects this interdisciplinary approach, where students use their language skills to critically engage with environmental issues and consider their social responsibilities.

Together, these views illustrate a comprehensive conceptualization of ecoliteracy that combines emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of learning. Emotional engagement with the environment encourages students to develop a personal connection to nature, motivating them to act responsibly. Cognitive engagement promotes critical thinking, allowing students to analyze the complexities of environmental issues and explore solutions. Behavioral engagement encourages action whether through adopting more sustainable practices or contributing to environmental advocacy. By positioning ecoliteracy as an integrated, holistic educational goal, the lecturers underscore the importance of making meaningful connections between environmental awareness and students' everyday lives. This approach not only helps students understand environmental challenges but also prepares them to become active participants in addressing those challenges. They are encouraged to engage in reflection, action, and social change, positioning ecoliteracy as a crucial aspect of education for sustainable development. Thus, the lecturers' views on ecoliteracy provide a robust foundation for integrating environmental education into language curricula, particularly in critical reading courses. This integration allows students not only to improve their language skills but also to become responsible, environmentally-conscious citizens equipped with the tools to tackle the global sustainability challenges of the 21st century.

### **Feasibility of Integration in Critical Reading**

The lecturers in this study generally agreed that integrating ecoliteracy into critical reading courses was both theoretically feasible and pedagogically valuable. Critical reading, by its nature, encourages the analysis of complex, multifaceted issues, which makes it an ideal platform for discussing topics related to sustainability (Mohamed & Elsakka, 2019). Critical reading involves dissecting texts, evaluating arguments, and understanding underlying assumptions skills that are essential for exploring environmental topics in depth. The lecturers felt that ecoliteracy could naturally align with the objectives of critical reading, enabling students to engage with and critically evaluate environmental issues. However, while they acknowledged the potential benefits of ecoliteracy integration, the lecturers also pointed out significant institutional



constraints that could hinder its effective implementation. The following excerpts illustrate the lecturers' perspectives on the feasibility of integrating ecoliteracy into critical reading courses:

Excerpt 4:

“It’s really possible to integrate ecoliteracy into critical reading, especially if the curriculum is flexible and teachers are given space to be creative.”

This excerpt reflects an optimistic view on the integration of ecoliteracy. The lecturer suggests that with flexibility in the curriculum and freedom for teachers to innovate, the integration of ecoliteracy could be achieved. The key condition for success, according to this lecturer, is allowing educators the space to design their lessons in a way that allows for creative engagement with environmental topics. The openness of the curriculum would enable lecturers to take advantage of critical reading's inherent capacity for dealing with complex, pressing issues like sustainability.

Excerpt 5:

“Critical reading naturally deals with complex issues, so I think it’s very feasible to bring in sustainability topics.”

In this quote, the lecturer highlights that critical reading already deals with complex subjects, making it particularly suitable for exploring sustainability. This view emphasizes the natural fit between the skills required for critical reading (such as analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting arguments) and the competencies needed to address environmental issues. Sustainability, with its layers of complexity—spanning economic, social, and environmental dimensions—aligns with the goals of critical reading, which is meant to challenge students to analyze and evaluate diverse perspectives.

Excerpt 6:

“In theory, it’s feasible. But in reality, the curriculum is very exam-oriented, and that limits how much we can explore environmental issues.”

However, this excerpt introduces a cautionary note, acknowledging that while the integration of ecoliteracy into critical reading is theoretically possible, practical barriers remain. The lecturer points to the exam-oriented nature of the curriculum as a major constraint. In practice, the pressure to prepare students for exams, with a focus on standardized testing, often prevents lecturers from dedicating sufficient time and resources to exploring more interdisciplinary or complex topics, such as sustainability. This points to a disconnect between the ideal pedagogical goals and the practical realities of institutional constraints. The test-driven culture of education, particularly in countries where exams hold significant weight, may prevent educators from engaging deeply with topics that do not directly align with exam content.

Together, these excerpts reveal a tension between the lecturers' pedagogical aspirations and the institutional constraints they face. On the one hand, there is clear enthusiasm for the potential integration of ecoliteracy into critical reading, especially when the curriculum allows for flexibility and when educators are free to innovate (Pompeii et al., 2019). On the other hand, the exam-focused structure of the curriculum creates challenges in practice, limiting the depth to which environmental issues can be explored in the classroom. This structural challenge is not unique to this particular study but is a common theme in sustainable education research. Many educators worldwide encounter similar challenges when attempting to integrate interdisciplinary and

sustainability-focused content within a curriculum that is primarily focused on standardized testing and content delivery for exams (Siyaswati, 2019).

In conclusion, the lecturers' views emphasize the feasibility of ecoliteracy integration within critical reading but also highlight that the institutional structure and curricular limitations pose significant barriers. To effectively integrate ecoliteracy into critical reading courses, education systems must rethink the focus on standardized testing and allow for more flexibility in curriculum design. Support for innovative teaching practices, alongside the development of more inclusive assessment methods, would be crucial in overcoming these barriers and ensuring that sustainability topics are integrated meaningfully into language education.

### **Instructional Strategies and Teaching Materials**

The lecturers in this study employed a variety of instructional strategies to incorporate ecoliteracy into their critical reading lessons. These strategies included using multimedia, real-world examples, and standardized test materials, all of which aimed to make environmental issues more engaging and relevant for students. Some lecturers had already developed or adopted materials with environmental content, while others were still in the process of planning how to integrate these topics into their lessons. However, a recurring theme across the lecturers' approaches was the need for localized, practical teaching resources that would allow them to connect language learning with sustainability in a more contextually meaningful way (Esposito, 2009)

One of the main strategies employed by lecturers was incorporating multimedia resources and non-fiction texts such as news articles into their lessons. This strategy enabled students to engage with global environmental issues while simultaneously developing their critical reading skills (Becker & Blell, 2018). Here's how one lecturer described their approach:

Excerpt 7:

“I use multimedia and non-fiction texts, like news articles, in critical reading lessons. This helps students learn to analyze and think about global environmental problems, such as pollution and climate change.”

By using real world news articles, lecturers can engage students with pressing environmental challenges such as pollution and climate change. These non-fiction texts provide an opportunity for students to analyze how the media reports on environmental problems, helping them hone their analytical skills and critically evaluate the information presented. This method bridges theoretical knowledge with real-world contexts, making ecoliteracy more relevant and engaging. It encourages students to think critically not only about language but also about how they interpret global environmental issues in the media.

Another strategy involved encouraging students to engage with real-world examples of environmental issues by searching for and analyzing news articles. This approach makes the material more relevant to students' own lives and interests. One lecturer described this strategy as follows:

Excerpt 8:

“I ask my students to search for examples of environmental damage in English-language newspapers. They look at both print and online articles and explain what they find. This



encourages them to connect reading practice with real-world issues.”

This strategy empowers students to take an active role in their learning by encouraging them to independently search for real-world examples of environmental damage in English-language newspapers, both print and online. Not only does this task help students develop their reading comprehension and critical thinking skills, but it also deepens their understanding of local and global environmental challenges. By working with current, real-life examples, students are able to connect reading practice directly with real-world issues, making the lessons more practical and relevant to their lives. This fosters a sense of ownership over their learning process and supports active learning, which enhances student engagement.

Lecturers also utilized TOEFL and IELTS practice materials to teach ecoliteracy while improving students' language skills. This approach combined standardized test preparation with sustainability topics, offering a dual benefit for students. Here's an excerpt from one of the lecturers:

Excerpt 9:

“I use sustainability-focused readings from TOEFL and IELTS practice texts to teach ecoliteracy. It allows students to improve their language skills while also learning about environmental topics, like conservation and renewable energy.”

In this approach, lecturers integrate sustainability-focused readings from widely used standardized test materials, such as TOEFL and IELTS. These readings cover environmental topics such as conservation and renewable energy, enabling students to enhance their language proficiency while simultaneously learning about global environmental issues. This dual-purpose method benefits students by allowing them to improve their language skills and gain critical knowledge about sustainability. It shows how language learning can be an effective tool for introducing students to important global environmental concerns, while also preparing them for language proficiency tests.

### **Challenges in the Implementation**

The lecturers reported significant challenges in integrating ecoliteracy into their teaching, particularly in the areas of lesson planning, material development, and assessment. Balancing the dual focus of language proficiency and ecoliteracy outcomes posed considerable difficulties. These challenges highlight the complexities involved in merging two important educational goals. The following excerpts illustrate these difficulties:

Excerpt 10:

“One of the biggest challenges is aligning lesson planning and assessments with both language objectives and ecoliteracy outcomes. It’s time-consuming.”

This excerpt emphasizes the time-consuming nature of lesson planning when attempting to balance multiple educational goals. The lecturers find it difficult to develop lessons that meet both language proficiency and ecoliteracy outcomes simultaneously. Designing materials that achieve both objectives requires careful consideration, as these two areas may require different approaches, methods, and resources. Balancing the two goals can be overwhelming without the proper resources or support, and this extra burden leads to more time spent on lesson preparation than would otherwise be necessary.

Excerpt 11:

“There are no ready-to-use materials, so everything takes longer to prepare. And I’m still unsure how to assess both reading and environmental understanding.”

The lack of ready-made materials that combine both ecoliteracy and language proficiency is another major challenge. Without pre-existing, interdisciplinary resources, lecturers must spend additional time creating or adapting materials to fit the curriculum. This process can be time-intensive and often results in materials that are not as well developed as standardized resources. Moreover, the uncertainty about how to assess students’ progress in both reading comprehension and environmental understanding adds another layer of complexity. The lecturers expressed confusion regarding how to develop assessments that effectively measure students’ skills in both areas. This uncertainty reflects the need for clear assessment frameworks that can guide educators in evaluating interdisciplinary learning.

Excerpt 12:

“It’s difficult to design lessons that truly integrate ecoliteracy in a meaningful way. Also, we don’t have clear tools to assess this kind of interdisciplinary learning.”

The difficulty in designing meaningful lessons that successfully integrate both ecoliteracy and language learning is underscored in this excerpt. Interdisciplinary learning, which combines multiple areas of knowledge, is inherently complex and requires careful planning and structured guidelines. However, the lecturers pointed out that they lack clear tools to assess interdisciplinary learning, which adds to the challenge. The absence of structured assessment methods makes it difficult for lecturers to gauge how well students are learning and applying both language skills and environmental awareness. Without these tools, the effectiveness of integrating ecoliteracy into the curriculum becomes difficult to measure.

These challenges reflect broader concerns in the literature about the need for professional development, curricular support, and the creation of assessment frameworks to effectively integrate ecoliteracy into education. Lecturers often struggle to balance the dual goals of language proficiency and ecoliteracy, especially when resources are scarce or insufficient. As noted in the literature, the lack of standardized interdisciplinary materials and uncertainty about assessment tools are significant barriers to successfully integrating ecoliteracy into teaching ((Kazazoglu, 2025a; Parlindungan et al., 2018) Addressing these concerns would require structured support for lecturers, including curricular resources, teacher training, and the development of clear assessment frameworks to measure interdisciplinary learning effectively.

### **Perceived Advantages**

Despite the challenges, all lecturers highlighted the positive impact of integrating ecoliteracy into their critical reading lessons. The most frequently cited advantage was increased student engagement and motivation (Abas et al., 2023; Chaesar & Andayani, 2024). When environmental topics were included in reading materials, students demonstrated greater interest and critical thinking. The following excerpts capture these benefits:

Excerpt 13:

“When we use environmental texts, students become more engaged and think more critically. It really brings the reading class to life.”



This excerpt emphasizes how environmental texts can create a dynamic classroom atmosphere, sparking greater student engagement and fostering critical thinking. By introducing real-world environmental issues, such as climate change or deforestation, the classroom becomes more interactive, with students actively participating in discussions and reflecting more deeply on the material. The integration of ecoliteracy encourages students to not only read and understand texts but also analyze them from an ecological perspective, sharpening their ability to think critically about the issues presented.

Excerpt 14:

“I notice students are more motivated and active in class when the texts relate to real-world environmental problems.”

This statement reflects how real-world environmental problems, such as pollution or resource depletion, can significantly motivate students. When students can see the direct relevance of what they are learning to their own lives and the world around them, they become more active and engaged in class. By addressing environmental issues that impact their daily lives, students are more likely to connect with the material, which boosts their interest and participation. The increased motivation is key to creating a more productive learning environment. (Pramesthi & Supriatna, 2018)

Excerpt 15:

“Even though I’ve only tried it a few times, I can already see how environmental themes make students more curious and lead to deeper discussions.”

This excerpt highlights how the introduction of environmental themes encourages student curiosity and promotes deeper discussions. Even with limited exposure, students show increased interest and an eagerness to engage in more meaningful conversations about sustainability and ecological challenges. The incorporation of environmental topics not only enhances students’ awareness but also encourages them to explore complex issues, fostering a more inquisitive and reflective learning environment.

The finding underscore the transformative potential of integrating ecoliteracy into critical reading instruction. Despite the challenges lecturers face in adapting materials and balancing educational goals, the positive outcomes are clear. Environmental texts help create a more dynamic classroom environment, where students are more engaged, motivated, and curious. The integration of ecoliteracy encourages deeper thinking, active participation, and meaningful discussions, making it a powerful tool for enhancing both language learning and environmental awareness. These findings support the idea that even in the early stages of integration, ecoliteracy can have a significant impact on student learning, underscoring its potential as a transformative educational approach (Kazazoglu, 2025)

## **CONCLUSION**

This study has shown that integrating ecoliteracy into critical reading instruction in Indonesian higher education is both theoretically sound and pedagogically beneficial, though not without significant challenges. The lecturers recognized the value of using environmental texts to promote student engagement, critical thinking, and real-world relevance, all of which align well with the goals of critical reading and sustainable education. However, practical barriers—such as rigid, exam-oriented curricula, a lack of localized teaching materials, and the absence of clear assessment tools—continue to limit widespread implementation. Despite these constraints, the positive impacts observed, even in early or informal integration efforts, highlight the transformative potential of

ecoliteracy. When implemented thoughtfully, it enhances not only language proficiency but also students' ecological consciousness and their capacity to engage as responsible global citizens. To support effective integration, the study recommends a multi-pronged approach: revising curricula to allow more flexibility, developing context-relevant teaching resources, and providing targeted professional development for language educators. By addressing these structural and pedagogical gaps, ecoliteracy can become a core component of English language education, helping Indonesia advance both its educational goals and its commitments to sustainable development as outlined in SDG 4, 13, and 15.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all parties who supported the completion of this research. Special appreciation is extended to the English language lecturers who generously shared their time, insights, and professional experiences during the data collection process. The authors are also thankful for the constructive feedback and encouragement received from academic colleagues throughout the research and writing stages. This study was made possible through the collective contributions of individuals committed to advancing sustainable education and promoting ecoliteracy in language instruction.

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