Exploring Critical Thinking and Creativity in Students' Climate Change-Based Short Stories in the Creative Writing Course at English Education Study Program, Sriwijaya University

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FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

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Certify that the thesis entitled "Exploring Critical Thinking and Creativity in Students' Climate Change-Based Short Stories in The Creative Writing Course at English Education Study Program, Sriwijaya University" is my own work and I did not engage in any plagiarism or inappropriate quotation contrary to the ethics and regulations set forth by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 19, 2010, regarding plagiarism in higher education. Therefore, I acknowledge that I deserve to face legal consequences if I am found to have plagiarized this work.

Palembang, 24th July 2025 The undersigned

Muhamad Hanip Nurohman

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DEDICATION

With heartfelt gratitude, I dedicate this thesis to:

- The Almighty Allah SWT, who has granted me health, strength, and unwavering motivation throughout the journey of completing this thesis.
- My dearest parents, Endang Sudrajat and Suko Mujiati. Thank you for your boundless love, constant prayers, endless support, and every blessing you have given me.
- All those who have contributed directly or indirectly to the realization of this thesis

Motto

"Fiction is the lie through which we tell the truth."

— Albert Camus

PREFACE

First and foremost, all praise be to Allah, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful, who has bestowed upon the writer the strength, health, and opportunity to complete this thesis. Without His mercy and divine permission, none of this would have been possible.

The author would also like to extend her deepest gratitude to Dr. Rita Inderawati, M.Pd. as a thesis advisor, for the unwavering guidance, patience, and passion given from the very beginning until the completion of this thesis.

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This thesis was not merely constructed from rows of theories and strands of analysis, it grew out of restless nights laced with uncertainty, and mornings that gently whispered the meaning of persistence and hope. Behind every paragraph lies a silent war between doubt and determination, between the anxiety of inadequacy and the quiet courage to begin again.

It was born from an unease about the planet's future, about the rising seas, burning forests, and fading certainties. But more than that, it was born from the voices of students who dared to imagine. Those who chose to write stories not only as a form of expression, but as an act of resistance. In their hands, fiction became more than storytelling; it became a way of thinking critically about the world, a creative space where fear turned into awareness, and despair became the seed of change.

The author would also like to express his heartfelt gratitude to all the friends who have been part of his memorable college journey, especially the 2021 English Class in Indralaya. May you all find the courage to chase your dreams boldly, and may the best things in life always find their way to you.

The author extends his deepest gratitude to Dwi Saraswati Thank you for being companions in this journey of becoming—for walking alongside me through the noise and shadows, in a world that often moves too fast and speaks too loudly.

In your presence, I found fragments of clarity, warmth, and shared silence. You have each, in your own way, helped me make sense of myself in the chaos.

May joy always find its way to you, just as your light found me.

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Thank you for nurturing growth, for holding space when words felt heavy, and for allowing dreams to bloom between books, conversations, and quiet moments. In your presence, I learned that growth is not always loud, it can be soft, slow, and deeply meaningful.

Palembang, 24 Juni 2025

Muhamad Hanip Nurohman

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EXPLORING CRITICAL THINKING AND CREATIVITY IN STUDENTS' CLIMATE CHANGE-BASED SHORT STORIES IN THE CREATIVE WRITING COURSE AT ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM, SRIWLJAYA UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

This study examines the manifestation of critical thinking and creativity in short stories concerning climate change authored by English Education students at Sriwijaya University. A descriptive qualitative method was employed to analyse ten short tales in conjunction with questionnaire responses from 90 students, aimed at assessing their perceptions of their critical and creative thinking abilities. The content analysis concentrated on narrative components like problem identification, logical reasoning, and imaginative expression. The findings indicate that although students believed they exhibited moderate to high levels of these skills, their narratives displayed inconsistencies, some lacked depth in argumentation or depended on traditional patterns. Nonetheless, some narratives effectively amalgamated scientific truths with imaginative tactics. The results indicate a necessity for more supervision in story development and environmental literacy to facilitate students' expression of critical and creative thinking in writing.

Keyword: Creative Thinking, Creativity, Climate Change, Short Story Writing

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

One of the most significant worldwide issues the world is facing right now is climate change. Several aspects of human life and the natural environment have been affected by the negative effects of this phenomenon, which include rising sea levels, changing extreme weather patterns, and rising global mean temperatures (GMT) (Hitz & Smith, 2004) Deforestation, air pollution, and increased flooding are only a few of the serious threats that climate change poses to Indonesia, an archipelagic nation with a high biodiversity. Thus, there is a pressing need to teach the next generation about climate change challenges and how to address them.

In the context of education, the subject of climate change involves not only the teaching of scientific facts as well as a more transformative approach that can foster in pupils a feeling of global responsibility, creativity, and critical thinking abilities. Incorporating environmental concerns into creative themes like creative writing is one creative strategy that can be employed. Students may use creative writing to not only explore their imaginations but also to write stories that illustrate how they fully understand environmental issues and give narrative solutions.

The study of short stories about climate change written by Sriwijaya University students enrolled in the English Language Education Study Program is the main topic of this study. Students who take the Creative Writing course are encouraged to write narratives that not only describe the effects of climate change but also show how they may think critically and creatively to address these issues. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate how students' short tales might both serve as an instrument for their creative development and demonstrate their critical engagement with climate change issues.

This study's significance stems from both its contribution to 21st-century schooling and its applicability to global environmental challenges. Two crucial skills that are becoming more and more necessary for navigating a world characterized by complexity, quick technological development, and environmental uncertainty are critical thinking and creativity (Essien et al., 2024). The capacity for critical and creative thought is even more important in the age of artificial intelligence, when knowledge is widely available, and tasks are becoming more mechanized. Human abilities like assessing data, perceiving context, and coming up with

Dikomentari [R1]: As a whole, Al generated I can feel Please rewrite the parts that you were facilitated by ChatGPT

unique, meaningful ideas are what set learners apart in the digital age, even when AI systems can process data and create content (Melisa et al., 2025)

Students are encouraged to write short stories in order to not only thoroughly examine environmental concerns and comprehend their significance to human existence, but also to envision sustainable futures in a way that goes beyond computational thinking. Additionally, the creative writing process gives students a platform to express their individual viewpoints, feelings, and cultural narratives—aspects that are sometimes disregarded in conventional, standardized teaching methods. In this sense, educating students to think critically and creatively via storytelling not only tackles global issues like climate change but also equips them to be intelligent, creative citizens in a world driven by artificial intelligence.

In addition to developing individual skills, this study also highlights the importance of collaboration and dialogue in creative writing-based learning. For example, through writing workshops, students can share their stories, receive feedback from peers, and collaborate to produce stronger narratives. This practice not only helps students hone their writing skills, but also teaches them the values of collaboration and an appreciation for diverse perspectives. In the context of climate change, this collaborative approach reflects the real-world need to work together to find solutions to global challenges.

This study intends to investigate the connection between environmental literacy, creativity, and critical thinking through a qualitative examination of students' short tales. Students' tales are evaluated for their creative and thoughtful responses to climate change challenges, in addition to their narrative structure and stylistic components. This study offers a greater understanding of how creative writing may serve as a transformative instructional tool by examining how students view environmental concerns and suggest creative solutions through fiction. It increases students' ecological consciousness, sharpens their critical thinking skills about environmental problems, and motivates them to envision sustainable futures and engage in meaningful community service.

The addition of climate change issues into the curriculum is especially important to Indonesian higher education. Being one of the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases in the world (Climate Transparency, 2022)Indonesia has a difficult time raising a generation of youth concerned with environmental issues. Teachers can assist students in understanding the effects

of climate change and actively participating in the development of creative solutions by incorporating this problem into classes like Creative Writing.

Ultimately, this study aims to demonstrate that creative writing can serve as a tool for social change. By combining imagination, critical thinking, and a sense of responsibility, student-generated narratives can contribute to broader discourses on sustainability and environmental justice. Through storytelling, students not only become more aware of global challenges but are also empowered to become proactive agents of change in an increasingly complex world.

1.2 The **Problems** of The Study

Based on the background that has been explained, this research is focused on exploring the interaction between critical thinking and creativity in short stories on climate change produced by students. The formulation of this research problems is as follows:

- 1) How is critical thinking demonstrated in short stories about climate change written by students of the English Language Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University?
- 2) How is creativity exhibited in short stories on the theme of climate change written by students of the English Language Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University?

1.3 The Objectives of The Study

Based on the problem above this research aims to:

- To analyze how critical thinking is demonstrated in short stories about climate change written by students of the 5th semester of 2022 cohort English Language Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University.
- 2) To explore how creativity is exhibited in short stories on the theme of climate change written by 5th semester of 2022 cohort English Language Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University.

1.4 Significant of The Study

This research holds significant importance for the English Education Study Program at Sriwijaya University, particularly in curriculum development, enhancement of student competencies, and the relevance of the study program to global issues. The results of this research are expected to provide valuable input in curriculum development, especially for the Dikomentari [R2]: problems

Dikomentari [R3]: Add -s

courses Creative Writing and Literature in ELT, by integrating the theme of climate change. This not only makes learning more relevant to real-world challenges but also encourages students to sharpen their critical thinking and creativity skills.

Furthermore, this research supports the strengthening of student competencies, particularly in critical thinking and creativity, which are essential skills in the modern era. By utilizing climate change issues as the main material in the writing process, students can broaden their perspectives on environmental challenges while simultaneously developing their analytical and innovative abilities.

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