

*Nouvelle Vertes: Ecocritics for French Language Learning at
Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta*

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Abstract

The ecological problems humans face today are increasingly varied, along with the advancement of human knowledge. These ecological problems became a literary work in the French anthology of *Nouvelle Vertes*, which is the author's criticism of the destruction of nature by humans. This study aims to describe: (1) the forms of natural environmental damage in the anthology of *Nouvelle Vertes*, and (2) the implication of the results of the research with the learning of French at Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, on the subject of *Étude de Textes littéraires*. The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive method with Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach. The main source of the research data is the *Nouvelle Vertes*' anthology, with data collection techniques using participatory observation and member checking involving notetaking. Data analysis used by the research is an interactive analytical model by collects, selects, presents, and verifies data. After analyzing nine stories in the *Nouvelle Vertes*, the study results resulted in a total of 20 quotes describing the forms of natural environmental damage: air pollution, animal exploitation, illegal and massive deforestation, and water contamination. Based on the data obtained from the analysis, there is an implication on the learning of French in the subject of *Étude de Textes littéraires*; students can criticize words, phrases, and sentences according to the theory used for studying French literature. They learn new vocabulary and understand how to take care of the environment through literature.

Keywords: Ecocritics, French Language Learning, Literature

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Introduction

In this exploration of the marriage between learning French and literature in Indonesian education, we delve into the advantages of this approach, examining how it not only fosters linguistic prowess but also kindles a passion for reading and imparts valuable moral lessons. Dr. Isabelle Leclerc, a Linguistics Professor at Université de Paris-Sorbonne (as cited in Andriani et al., 2022: 180) said that using literature as a tool for learning French in Indonesian schools is a commendable approach. It not only accelerates vocabulary acquisition but also provides students with a contextual understanding of expressions and idioms, making the learning process both engaging and effective (Lustyantie & Rasyid, 2019). Literature has the power to transcend linguistic barriers and offer students a profound connection to the French language (During, 2020: 114).

Moreover, learning French through literature provides a unique avenue for imbibing moral values and teachings outside the immediate context of language (Pattiwael, 2019). Through it, students not only learn language but also gain exposure to diverse perspectives, fostering a sense of global citizenship (Stibbe, 2015). *Nouvelle Vertes* (Bordage et al., 2021), a carefully curated anthology of French short stories, stands as a pivotal medium for learning French at the higher education level. The anthology strategically presents cases of natural damage, offering real-world scenarios that engage learners in a meaningful exploration of French vocabulary related to environmental concerns (Prastitasari & Triyono, 2023).

Expanding on the intersection of French language learning and ecocritical literature in the Indonesian context, educators are increasingly recognizing the relevance of ecocritical literature due to its alignment with the natural conditions surrounding French language learners (Chen, 2016: 203). Ecocriticism, as a literary approach that focuses on the ecological aspects of literature, finds resonance in a world where environmental consciousness is gaining prominence (K.V & Mani, 2021).

Previous studies regarding ecocriticism in French language learning were carried out by Orr (2021) Its topics, genres and critical approaches prepare students both for their year-abroad encounters with francophone cultures and for honours modules offered in the post-Revolutionary period. Then research from Wampole (2021) using the analytical skills typically applied to the study of literary texts, scholars in French and Francophone studies should analyze the environmental metaphors in non-literary text and speech, such as journalistic articles, public policy, advertising, science writing, and industry documents. Greg Garrard's (Garrard, 2023) ecocritical approach, rooted in the analysis of literature through an environmental lens, proves highly suitable for dissecting the ecological issues within the stories of *Nouvelle Vertes*.

The aim of this article is to address this gap by conducting a specific study at Yogyakarta State University. This research seeks to describe the forms of natural environmental damage within the anthology of *Nouvelle Vertes*, a collection of French short stories, and to elucidate the implications of these findings on the learning of French at the university level, particularly in the context of the subject *Étude de Textes littéraires*. Through this study, we aim to contribute insights into how ecocritical literature can be harnessed effectively to enrich the linguistic and cultural understanding of advanced French language learners, fostering a holistic and contextually relevant educational experience.

Method

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method (Moleong, 2017), guided by Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach (Garrard, 2023), to delve into the linguistic and ecological dimensions of French short stories within the *Nouvelles Vertes* anthology (Bordage et al., 2021). The primary data source is the anthology itself, selected for its richness in cultural narratives and environmental themes. Participatory observation and member checking, facilitated by notetaking, constitute the data collection techniques, ensuring a nuanced exploration of linguistic and ecological nuances (Sudaryanto, 2015). The interactive analytical model guides data analysis through four iterative stages: collection, selection, presentation, and verification. This approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between language and ecological themes within the selected French short stories, aligning with the principles of Garrard's ecocritical framework.

Findings

Based on the research that has been done, then the ecological crisis found in the anthology of the *Nouvelles Vertes*. As for the representation of the ecological crisis contained in the nine short stories in the anthology of *Nouvelles Vertes* the stories are classified according to each short story listed in table 1.

No	Title	Ecological Crisis	Relationship between humans and nature
1	<i>Césium 137</i>	Air pollution from nuclear explosions	Pollution, dwelling
2	<i>Bas Les Masques</i>	Air pollution and degradation	Pollution
3	<i>Chasse aux Gorilles</i>	Hunting and exploitation of animals	Animals
4	<i>Je Suis La Vigie et Je Crie</i>	Global warming	Apocalypse
5	<i>Les Grumes</i>	Tropical forest extraction massively	Wilderness
6	<i>Après Moi, Le Déluge</i>	Global warming, ecosystem destruction	Apocalypse
7	<i>Délivrance</i>	Drought, water shortages.	Apocalypse
8	<i>Longue Vie à La Monsieur Moustache</i>	Shortage of plants	Animals, Wilderness
9	<i>Noir Destin pour Plastique Blanc</i>	Excessive use of plastic, oil exploitation	Animals, Apocalypse, Pollution

Table 1: Analysis of the Ecological Crisis in the *Nouvelles Vertes*

Based on the provided table 1, which outlines various titles along with their corresponding ecological crises and the relationship between humans and nature, we can derive several key:

1. Ecological Crises:

- Air Pollution is highlighted in two titles: "Césium 137" and "Bas Les Masques."
- Global Warming and Ecosystem Destruction are the focus in "Je Suis La Vigie et Je Crie" and "Après Moi, Le Déluge."
- Hunting and Exploitation of Animals are discussed in "Chasse aux Gorilles."
- Tropical Forest Extraction is addressed in "Les Grumes."

- Drought and Water Shortages are the main issues in "Délivrance."
 - Plant Shortage is examined in "Longue Vie à La Monsieur Moustache."
 - Excessive Use of Plastic and Oil Exploitation are the concerns in "Noir Destin pour Plastique Blanc."
2. Relationship between Humans and Nature:
- Pollution is a recurring theme, linked to the titles "Césium 137," "Bas Les Masques," and "Noir Destin pour Plastique Blanc."
 - Apocalypse scenarios are suggested in "Je Suis La Vigie et Je Crie," "Après Moi, Le Déluge," "Délivrance," and "Noir Destin pour Plastique Blanc."
 - Animals and their exploitation or shortage are discussed in "Chasse aux Gorilles," "Longue Vie à La Monsieur Moustache," and "Noir Destin pour Plastique Blanc."
 - Wilderness is a theme in "Les Grumes" and "Longue Vie à La Monsieur Moustache."

The table 1 illustrates a diverse range of ecological crises portrayed in various titles, emphasizing the intricate and often detrimental relationship between humans and nature. Key issues include pollution, global warming, exploitation of natural resources, and the impact on wildlife and ecosystems. The recurrent themes of apocalypse and wilderness indicate a significant concern for the future of the planet and highlight the urgent need for environmental awareness and action. These ecological crises are then ripped out one by one of each story in the discussion as follows.

Césium 137 (Cesium 137)

Cesium 137 tells the story of three children who venture to find the origins of cesium 137, who are portrayed as monsters to them and as invisible enemies to humanity living on land and abroad quarantine.

1. *« Maman avait toujours un peu de mal à prononcer le nom de l'ennemi invisible et terrible de l'humanité... Césium 137 et son compère Strontium 90 sortaient de leur antre et se répandaient dans l'air, dans les champs, dans les forêts, dans les ruines, dans tous les recoins du pays quarantain »*
(Mom still find it hard to pronounce the name of that invisible and terrible enemy of mankind. Cesium 137 and his friend, Strontium 90, came out of his nest and spread in the air, in the fields, in forests, in debris, and in every corner of the quarantine country.)
2. *« Le césium 137, un démon ? s'étonna la voix. C'est juste un radionucléide, une saloperie qui provoque des malformations congénitales, des trous dans les reins et des cancers variés »*
(Cesium 137 is a monster? Say that voice. No, cesium 137 is a radioactive waste that causes birth defects, kidney damage, and a variety of cancers.)

Based on the above quotations and Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, the Cesium 137 cylinder describes ecological crisis factors of pollution and habitat. (dwelling). As a result of the nuclear explosion in June 2008, 148 years ago, people living in already contaminated zones had to evacuate to the underground so as not to be directly exposed to air pollution contaminated with compounds of cesium 137 and strontium 90.

Bas Les Masques (Behind the Mask)

The *Bas Les Masques*, tells the story of humans who were obliged to always wear gas masks. The ecological crisis described in the *Bas Les Masques* is air pollution and degradation that requires all humans to continue wearing gas masks because of the highly polluted air.

3. « *Simplement, mon grand âge et mon passé de militant écologiste font que je connais assez bien le problème de la pollution atmosphérique* »
(As simply, my age and as a former environmental activist makes me much more experienced in this issue of atmospheric pollution.)
4. « *On connaît mal, finalement, la cause principale de la dégradation de l'air* »
(Until the end, we still don't know many of the main causes of this air degradation.)

Based on the above quotations and Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, the *Bas Les Masques* is experiencing an ecological crisis of pollution that is still unknown as to its root cause.

Chasse Aux Gorilles (Gorilla Hunting)

The short story of *Chasse aux Gorilles* tells the dream of a boy who wants to be an animal hunter and the past of his family members imprisoned for hunting wild gorillas. The ecological crisis described in the *Chasse aux Gorilles* is the hunting and exploitation of animals.

5. « *On y parle de chasseurs d'animaux sauvages et de gros fusils* »
(We're talking about wildlife hunters and big guns.)
6. « *Justin fut alors rattrapé par la rage qui l'habitait. Il prit son fusil, s'y cramponna de toutes ses forces, visa les gorilles un à un et tira méthodiquement. Il les abattit tous.* »
(Justin was then filled with anger. He took his gun, held it tightly, hit the gorilla one by one and shot him. He killed all those gorillas.)

Based on the quotations above and Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, the *Chasse Aux Gorilles* is experiencing conflict connections between humans and animals. Humans are destroying nature by exploiting animals for personal purposes.

Je Suis La Vigie Et Je Crie (I See and I Cry)

Je Suis La Vigie et Je Crie It's about a time traveler carrying a message from a meteorologist in the form of a letter. The ecological crisis described in *Je Suis La Vigie et Je Crie* is global warming. This is proved by extreme climate change, ozone damage, acid rain, and global warming.

7. « *Les premiers signes de cataclysmes contemporains sont apparus au cours du XIX^e siècle* »
(The first signs of temporary natural disasters appeared in the 19th century.)
8. « *Entraînait la disparition programmée de la couche d'ozone, l'augmentation du CO₂ et, indirectement, la montée de la température et le début de profondes modifications climatiques* »
(This leads to a gradual loss of the ozone layer, an increase in CO₂, and indirectly a rise in temperature and the onset of major climate change.)

Based on the quotations above and Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, the story *Je Suis La Vigie et Je Crie* suffered disaster (apocalypse). Garrard referred to a disaster as a condition in which natural and environmental conditions differ from usual, climate change, damage, biodegradation, ecosystem extinction, and increasing natural disasters.

Les Grumes (The Tree)

Les Grumes tells the story of a son whose father worked in a company that required to cut trees in the tropical forest. The ecological crisis described in *Les Grumes* is the massive deforestation of tropical forests.

9. « *Une fois débité, le bois coupé partait par bateau vers l'Europe où il servait à fabriquer des meubles exotiques très à la mode chez les Blancs* »
(Once cut, the cut wood was shipped by ship to the corners of Europe for exotic furniture and became very popular among the white people.)
10. « *Il était chargé des gigantesques troncs d'arbres fraîchement coupés dans la forêt* »
(The truck was filled with a giant tree rod that had just been cut.)
11. « *Peu à peu, il s'aperçut que les coupes de bois débordaient largement le périmètre qui avait été alloué à la concession par l'administration. S'ils continuent, la forêt va crever. Elle n'aura pas le temps de se renouveler* »
(Little by little, he realized that the woodcut largely exceeded the limits permitted by the administration. If it continues, the forest will die. The forest will not have time to grow anymore.)

Based on the quotations above and Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, the *Les Grumes* contains natural damage to the wilderness

Après Moi, Le Déluge (After Me, Flood)

The short story *Après moi, le déluge* tells a boy who protests against the destruction of nature on earth in a slightly strange way. The boy's character decorates his room like in the woods, full of plants and animals like chickens, sheep, snakes coupled for reproduction. The ecological crisis described in *Après Moi, Le Déluge* is global warming.

12. « *Des schémas détaillaient le système de chauffage et de propulsion solaire, la voilure, la machine à dessaler l'eau de mer* »
(Diagram details solar heating and propulsion systems, layers, seawater desalination engines.)
13. « *Quelque chose frôla le pied d'Isabelle ; elle baissa les yeux et vit un énorme python qui glissait lentement sur le lino* »
(Something touched Isabelle's leg; she looked down and saw a big piton snake slowly crawling over the floor.)

Based on the data above and Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, after *Moi, Le Déluge* is experiencing an apocalypse of global warming.

***Délivrance* (Freedom)**

The short story *Délivrance* tells the journey of a woman and a man who struggle to find a source of water. The ecological crisis depicted in the short story *Délivrance* is drought and water scarcity.

14. « *J'avais oublié à quoi ressemblait un animal* »
(I've forgotten what an animal looks like.)
15. « *J'ai cherché pendant trois heures et pas une seule goutte, Hugo. Les rivières ont disparu depuis longtemps* »
(I've been looking for three hours and haven't found a single drop, Hugo. The rivers disappeared a long time ago.)
16. « *J'ai oublié à quoi ressemble un arbre* »
(I've forgotten how a tree looks like.)

Based on the scripts above and Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, the short story *Délivrance* experiences an apocalypse in the form of drought.

***Longue Vie à La Monsieur Moustache* (Long Live Mr. Mustache)**

The ecological crisis described in the short story *Longue Vie à La Monsieur Moustache* is in the form of mass illegal logging of forests.

17. « *ce frère aventurier passant la moitié de l'année à travailler plus ou moins illégalement dans la forêt amazonienne* »
(His brother goes on an adventure, spending approximately half the year working illegally in the Amazon rainforest.)
18. « *dans cette étroite vallée sans nom dont ses hommes abattaient les arbres, pillaient le bois déjà vendu à prix d'or en France* »
(In a narrow, nameless valley where his men felled trees, plundering the wood that sold for gold in France.)

Using Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, *Longue Vie à La Monsieur Moustache* illustrates the ecological crisis of wilderness and animals. This is because when the character in this short story struggles to find medicinal plants for leukemia in the Amazon jungle, he is unable to find them.

***Noir Destin pour Plastique Blanc* (Black Destiny of White Plastic)**

The ecological crisis depicted in the short story *Noir Destin pour Plastique Blanc* is the excessive use of plastic and the exploitation of petroleum.

19. « *Gris et lourd comme les fumées chargées de monoxyde de carbone, de dioxyde de soufre, d'oxyde d'azote, de cadmium, de mercure, de benzène que crachent les vingt-cinq kilomètres d'usines* »
(Gray and heavy smoke containing carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, cadmium, mercury, benzene spewed by the factory for 25 kilometers.)

20. « *Du pétrole en forme de sac, avec des tas de cochonneries chimiques dedans! et rien qu'en France, on en distribue dix-huit milliards par an, cinq cent soixante-dix sacs par seconde, soixante-douze mille tonnes de déchets à la sortie!* »
 (Petroleum in bag form, with tons of chemical junk inside! Even in France alone, we distribute 18 billion of them per year, 570 bags per second, 72 thousand tons of waste in landfills.)

The short story is divided into three parts that begin with the time setting of three hundred thousand million years ago, when petroleum was formed in the ocean. Using Greg Garrard's ecocritical approach, the short story *Noir Destin pour Plastique Blanc* describes the ecological crisis of animals, apocalypse, and pollution.

Discussion

In this innovative approach to language learning, the relevance of the anthology lies in its ability to engage students critically and foster a multifaceted understanding of both language and culture (Moeller & Catalano, 2015).

Firstly, the short stories in "Nouvelle Vertes" introduce students to diverse themes, including environmental consciousness, human experiences, and societal issues. Students are encouraged to analyze and reflect on the narratives, cultivating a deeper understanding of the language through the exploration of complex ideas.

No	Speaker	Dialogue
1.	Student	I am very happy to read the short story anthology "Nouvelle Vertes." I found many new terms in those stories.
2.	Lecturer	That's great! What are some interesting new terms that caught your attention?
3.	Student	For example, terms related to nature and the environment. The stories teach a lot about sensitivity to the surroundings.
4.	Lecturer	Interesting. Did reading these stories expand your French vocabulary?
5.	Student	Yes, I feel my vocabulary is growing. I often come across new words that are very useful.
6.	Lecturer	Excellent! How about your critique of the stories?
7.	Student	Some stories emphasize environmental sensitivity a bit too much. Although it's important, it's a bit overwhelming.
8.	Lecturer	Thoughtful. Is there anything else that caught your attention while reading this anthology?
9.	Student	Yes, I found some new idioms in French that I had never learned before.
10.	Lecturer	Can you give an example?
11.	Student	For instance, "être dans son assiette," which means to feel good or healthy. It's very interesting and useful.
12.	Lecturer	Great! Overall, what is your opinion on learning French through this short story collection?
13.	Student	I am very pleased. The stories are engaging, and I feel closer to the French language through this reading experience.

Table 2: Conversation in the class after read the Nouvelles Vertes

The dialogue in table 2 presented showcases an exchange between a student and a lecturer discussing the student's experience with reading the short story anthology "Nouvelles Vertes." Here's a summary and conclusion based on the dialogue:

- 1) Student's Initial Reaction: The student expresses happiness and enthusiasm about reading the anthology "Nouvelles Vertes." The stories introduced many new terms, particularly related to nature and the environment.
- 2) Vocabulary Expansion: The lecturer inquires about specific terms that stood out. The student confirms that reading these stories has expanded their French vocabulary with useful new words.
- 3) Critical Perspective: The lecturer asks for the student's critique of the stories. The student feels that while the emphasis on environmental sensitivity is important, it sometimes feels overwhelming.
- 4) Discovery of Idioms: The student shares the discovery of new French idioms, such as "être dans son assiette," meaning to feel good or healthy.
- 5) Overall Learning Experience: The student finds the short story collection engaging and feels that it has brought them closer to the French language through this reading experience.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research and discussion of the Nouvelle Vertes anthology as presented in table 1. The author can conclude according to the problem formulation as follows.

1. The relationship between humans and the natural environment in the anthology novel "Nouvelle Vertes" leads readers to be swept away by the close relationship between the two. 20 data describe the relationship between humans and the natural environment. The close relationship between humans and the natural environment in the Nouvelle Vertes anthology.
2. The inclusion of "Nouvelle Vertes" in the literature study curriculum for learning French in higher education is a forward-thinking and effective strategy. By marrying literary exploration with critical thinking and language acquisition, students are not only immersed in the beauty of French literature but are also empowered to think, express, and communicate in the language with depth and nuance.

This research is very suitable if it is relevant to learning *Étude de Textes littéraires*. The "Nouvelle Vertes" anthology material is taught to students by carrying out activities to interpret the author's views on life in the stories. From this activity, you can use environmental literature, especially the "Nouvelle Vertes" mythology, and include ecocriticism in the process of interpreting the author's views.

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