

Tribhuvan University

Escalation of Material Progress: Decadence in the Life of Once-ler in *The Lorax* by

Dr. Seuss

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, T.U.

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Philosophy in English

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July 2024

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. SundarBijay Ojha has completed his dissertation entitled "Escalation of Material Progress: Decadence in the Life of Once-ler in *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss" under my supervision. He carried out this research from January 2023 to June 2024 and completed it successfully. I hereby recommend his dissertation be submitted for the final viva voce.

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Date:

Approval Letter

This research work entitled "Escalation of Material Progress: Decadence in the Life of Once-ler in *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss" submitted to the Central Department of English in Tribhuvan University by Sundar Bijay Ojha has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled "Escalation of Material Progress: Decadence in the Life of Once-ler in *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss" submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, is entirely original research work carried out under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota, Central Department of English, Kirtipur. I have made due acknowledgement to all the ideas and information taken from different sources in the process of writing this dissertation. The findings presented in the dissertation have not been presented anywhere else for any reasons earlier to this dissertation. I declare that no part of the content of this dissertation has been published in any form before. I shall be fully responsible if anything is found against my declaration.

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Sundar Bijay Ojha

July 2024

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota, whose expertise, guidance and constructive feedbacks have significantly shaped this dissertation. I am grateful to my mentors, friends and relatives for their contributions for the completion of this research work. Similarly, I extend my words of sincere gratitude to my honourable mentor Prof. Dr. Dhruva Bahadur Karki, the Head of Central Department of English, for his untiring and scholarly encouragement, proper guidance, formative comments, regular suggestions and inspiration in bringing this dissertation to completion. This research work would not have been completed in time without his affection and friendly cooperation. I am equally thankful to Dr. Shiva Ram Rijal for his continuous constructive feedback to complete the dissertation in time. Similarly, I extend my thankfulness to Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi for his invaluable suggestions in connection with subject matter. Similarly, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi, Prof. Dr. Birendra Pandey, Prof. Dr. Anurudra Thapa, Prof. Dr. Dhurba Karki, Prof. Dr. Hari Adhikari and all the faculties of this department for their scholarly suggestions.

At last, I want to extend my profound thankfulness to my family members who always encouraged me to complete this research work.

Sundar Bijay Ojha

July 2024

Abstract

This dissertation explores the decadence in the life of Once-ler due to the escalation of material progress in Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* by applying eco-critical perspectives. Once-ler in *The Lorax* shows his anthropocentric view guided by his hubris to accumulate infinite wealth so as to be wealthy in short time. The researcher's claim is that Once-ler feels alienated due to his inability to see the inseparable relationship between nature and human beings. Nature is always giving- A Gaia whose abundance is taken for granted by Once-ler whose material thirst becomes problematic for him as he does not get happiness. The focal point of my research hits on the very aspect of unhappiness which according to the common thought must be rewarding after material pleasure. The researcher draws the answer for the question whether material pleasures are true bliss or taking resort to nature is more rewarding to humans. The major argument of the research work Once-ler's alienation and inability to balance personal happiness and economic prosperity has been substantiated taking the insights from Jhan Hochman's "Green Cultural Studies", Paul W. Taylor's "The Ethics of Respect for nature", Claire Palmer's "An Overview of Environmental Ethics", "Eco criticism in Context" by William Howarth, Lawrence Buell's "Representing the Environment", Aldo Leopold's "The Land Ethic" and Arne Naess' "The Deep Ecological movement: Some Philosophical Aspects". The researcher selects these approaches as they give insights that the act of dishonoring the environment leads human beings towards chaotic life which Once-ler meets in *The Lorax*. The research work examines the act of Once-ler guided by the headlong thirst for material gain due to anthropocentric drive that ultimately declines the condition of human beings along with nature. After scrutinizing *The Lorax*, the researcher has reached to the conclusion that material pleasures are not true bliss, and taking resort to nature is more rewarding to humans. Once-ler, in the narrative, feels alienated due to the loss of affinity to the nature. As he can't blend his nature with nature, he develops the feeling of alienation.

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Chapter I

Once-ler's Obsession with Materiality in *The Lorax*

This dissertation explores the escalation of material progress and downfall in the life of Once-ler in *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss. It makes an endeavour to draw the answers for the question whether material pleasures are true bliss or taking resort to nature is more rewarding to humans. In the narrative *The Lorax*, Once-ler exploits Truffula trees excessively as long as their attainability in the environment. His interest to indulge in profligacy and live luxurious sophisticated life leads to the complete exhaustion of Truffula trees. He becomes so obsessed with the materiality that he ignores the appeal of the Lorax for protecting Truffula trees and all the biospheric communities. By applying Eco critical theories, the researcher argues that Once-ler in Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* is unable to give consistency to his happiness and economic progress due to his anthropocentric desire to accumulate infinite wealth proving that escalation of material progress is the main cause of the decadence in human condition. People feel alienated when they are unable to add their identity in connection with nature which Once-ler admits at the end of the narrative stating, "I have sat here and worried/and worried away" (n.p.). His feeling of alienation from his relatives and nature is the repercussion of his inability to balance his personal happiness and economic prosperity because of his head-long-thirst for material gain. The dissertation scrutinizes *The Lorax* and explores that Once-ler is unable to balance his material progress and happiness because of his inability to blend his nature and nature. Escalation of material progress cannot give him internal peace but leads to alienation. The thesis justifies that existence of human life is deeply rooted to nature and culture. It explores the alienation and inability of Once-ler to balance personal happiness and economic prosperity in association with his hubris and human-centric attitude.

Dr. Seuss is an American writer and cartoonist noted for children's literature. His full name is Theodor Seuss Geisel. He writes children's literature under his pen name 'Dr. Seuss.'

His narrative entitled *The Lorax* begins with a great inquisition of a curious child to learn about the Lorax Lifted Street. He finds the place very unexciting and gloomy as he notices only Grickle grass and old crows as Dr. Seuss writes, "No birds ever sing excepting old crows" (n.p.). When he notices a board with a sign 'Lorax Lifted Land', he develops his curiosity to be acquainted with the cause of the disappearance of the Lorax from the place. Some people inform him that the Lorax remained in the place as long as there was tolerable environment for him to survive. For the purpose of getting information about the Lorax, he sends fifteen pence and a nail to Once-ler. Then, Once-ler confesses his crime of lifting the Lorax away.

In fact, Once-ler gives much value to material prosperity rather than the components of environment. So, he indulges himself in massive deforestation of Truffula trees going to South Stitch. He takes the availability of the trees as the chance to be rich mightily by exploiting them as he says, "Listen here! Here's a wonderful chance/for the whole Once-ler Family to get mighty rich!" (n.p.). Because of his wish to be mighty rich in short time, his greedy eyes reach to the Truffula trees. He does not care the importance of Truffula trees for the survival of other creatures. He only prioritizes the accumulation of wealth exploiting nature. His environment unfriendly nature shows that he lacks biospheric outlook. He does not give any value to the existence of animals in the forest. Though he is a new comer to the place, he does not hesitate to cut the trees at a large scale and remove the species one after another. The deep ecologists view the land and the forest with their intrinsic values. As the land is not just a land and forest is not just a forest, the massive deforestation brings ecological imbalance. Once-ler establishes industries and factories to make Thneed out of Truffula Trees. He stresses that all the people need Thneed that he makes out of Truffula trees. He remarks, "A Thneed's a Fine –something- That -All –People- Need!" (n.p.). Because of utilitarian thinking, he does not think that good condition of environment is the pre-requisite

for the survival of all the non-human communities. The attitude of expanding his factories challenging the vital needs of non-human communities shows that Once-ler has obsession with material prosperity. Lorax, an animal and mouthpiece of Dr. Seuss, frequently warns Once-ler not to cut trees as he says, "I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees" (n.p.). However, it is nothing than Once-ler's feeling of superiority due to which he ignores the voice of the Lorax who frequently makes Once-ler aware of possible consequences of massive deforestation. However, Once-ler thinks that business is business which shows his thirst of material gain. His desire for material prosperity inclines in such a way that he develops scientific tools to accelerate the speed of cutting the trees. He makes Super Axe Hacker to cut four Truffula trees at a smacker. By taking the support of his relatives, he excessively misuses Truffula trees. Once-ler flourishes his business by exploiting nature. By expanding his factories, he gets material prosperity. He widens the roads, biggers his factories, invents scientific tools like Super Axe Hacker, but narrows his heart because he does not care non-human communities at the time of conducting developmental activities. Material progress gives transitory happiness to him. The Lorax makes earnest appeal to Once-ler not to be human-centric. He is conscious about the necessity of the protection of trees and says that he raises voice for trees as they cannot express their sufferings.

Due to the environment unfriendly activities of Once-ler, Humming fish get extinct. The disappearance of the species touches the Lorax as he is conscious about environmental degradation and its repercussions. The Lorax again appears in front of Once-ler and appeals him to think about the fate of all the creatures. He wants to be the voice of voiceless creatures as he says, "I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues" (n.p.). He repeatedly makes Once-ler aware of the rights of all the biospheric communities to survive. However, Once-ler gets angry with the Lorax saying, "All you do is yap-yap, and say 'Bad! Bad! Bad!'" (n.p.). His negligence over the Lorax shows his feeling of superiority. The frequent appearance of Lorax

annoys Once-ler as he is not ready to accept that the world belongs to all the biospheric communities. However, the Lorax does not remain silent as long as a single Truffula tree remains there. Finally, all the Bar-ba loots disappear along with the Lorax when they do not find livable environment. Once-ler's environment unfriendly act leads to the closure of his factories and industries due to the complete exhaustion of raw materials from nature. When the Bar-ba-loots, Humming fish, and singing birds leave the place due to intolerable exposure, Once-ler expresses his sympathetic words towards their departure but still continues exploiting nature as he thinks, "But.../ business is business/ And business must grow" (n.p.). He shows his supremacy behaving not only as an industrialist but also as a colonizer upon nonhuman communities. He interferes the wilderness of the place and spoils the sonority of the forest and the beauty of wildlife. Though Once-ler expands his business, the place cannot be livable due to the pollution created by his factories and industries. Not only the environment but also the soul of Once-ler gets polluted along with the degrading condition of environment. As a result, the relatives of Once-ler also leave the place when the factories and industries are closed. His detachment with the nature and relatives makes him feel alienated.

His realization of his mistake prevails when he gives the single remaining seed of Truffula trees to the curious boy thinking that children can take care of nature well. He provides the seed of Truffula tree and says, "Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack" (n.p.). It shows his realization of his mistake. He starts to think about the importance of livable environment for the existence of all the species. The declination of environment, his departure from relatives and disappearance of the Lorax and his friends make Once-ler nostalgic. He hopes the arrival of the Lorax and his friends in the Lorax Lifted Land again.

Once-ler's act of providing the seed of Truffula tree to the child keeps the readers in dilemma whether the environment will be restored or not. The open-endedness of the

narrative shows that our present activities determine the future of our offspring. There is not any certainty in the act of the small child about planting the seed. However, the realization of *Once-ler* shows that it is required to cultivate the idea of planting trees from young age. Everyone can contribute in the journey of the conservation of trees no matter how small they are. Even nonhuman beings like *Lorax* can have wise role for the protection of nature. The narrative cultivates the idea that all the beings in nature are equal.

Nature is always giving. The abundance of *Gia* is taken for granted by *Once-ler* whose material thrust becomes problematic for him as he cannot give consistency to his happiness. The focal point of the research hits on the very aspect of *Once-ler's* unhappiness which according to the common thought must be rewarding after material pleasure. The research draws the answer for the question whether material pleasures are true bliss or taking resort to nature is more rewarding to humans. The very concept of progress is based on baseless grounds of human hubris. The researcher comes to the conclusion that true bliss lies on blending human nature with nature for prosperity which *Once-ler* neglects resulting in unhappiness. The researcher asserts that the escalation of material progress is the cause of the decadence in human condition.

The dissertation explores the alienation and inability of *Once-ler* to balance personal happiness and economic prosperity in association with his hubris and anthropocentric attitude. It examines how economically affluent people forget the symbiosis with nature and show their strong presence in the deterioration of the environment. This research revolves around the issue of environmental crisis caused by human hubris.

The research revolves around the issues of environmental crisis that will eventually lead the society to inferno. By pinpointing the crisis caused by human hubris, my research also complements the scholarship of Environmental Studies. *The Lorax* has been scrutinized through eco critical perspectives. To the researcher's best knowledge, no researches have

been conducted taking this issue. So, the researcher hopes that the research will be beneficial to fill the gap by analyzing *The Lorax* from eco-critical parameters to explore the escalation of material progress: the decadence in the lives of characters in *The Lorax*.

The researcher has derived different theoretical prospective to explore that the escalation of material progress is the cause of the decadence in human condition. This research work is based on textual analysis of Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* as it is a library research. As human being is a part of nature, he/she runs his/her livelihood depending on nature. However, the anthropocentric culture destroys nature by manipulation, unsustainable development and hubris feeling caused by instrumentalism and consumerism. Such things prevent the environment from being intact. In JhanHochman's view, "Donna Haraway's concept of the Reinvention of Nature probably indicates that technology is a particular production of nature"(189). The balance of nature depends on how much importance the culture valorizes for the protection of nature. The major argument of the research work Once-ler's alienation and inability to balance personal happiness and economic prosperity will be substantiated in culture and nature taking the insights from JhanHochman's "Green Cultural Studies, Paul W. Taylor's "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", Claire Palmer's "An Overview of Environmental Ethics", "Eco criticism in Context" by William Howarth, Lawrence Buell's "Representing the Environment", Aldo Leopold's "The Land Ethic" and Arne Naess' "The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects". The researcher selects these approaches as they give insights that the act of dishonoring the environment leads human beings towards chaotic life which Once-ler meets in *The Lorax*. The dissertation examines the act of Once-ler guided by the headlong thirst for material gain due to anthropocentric drive that ultimately declines the condition of human beings along with nature.

Jhan Hochman in "Green Cultural Studies" talks about the connection of nature and living beings and non-living things. He writes, "The project of Green Cultural Studies is the examination of nature through words, image, and model for the purpose of foregrounding potential effects representation might have on cultural attitudes and social practices which, in turn, affect nature itself" (187). He states that green cultural studies teaches to merge nature with the living beings and non-living things. It helps humans to understand the autonomy. He opines that the primary concern of Green Cultural Studies is to pin point the potential effects on nature due to anthropocentric behaviour.

William Howarth states that eco-criticism is the way of judging a text keeping the nature and culture in mind. It is not only judging a text, but also raising voice against environment unfriendly unwise activities. He writes:

Eco-criticism is a name that applies more ecological literacy than its advocates now possess, unless they know what embedded course ecology has run during its history. Eco and critic both derive from *Greek*, *oikos* and *kritis*, and in tandem they mean 'house judge', which may surprise many lovers of green, outdoor writing. A long-winded gloss on eco-critic might run as follows: "a person who judges the merits and faults of writings that depict the effects of culture upon nature, with a view toward celebrating nature, berating its despoilers, and reversing their harm through political action." (163)

Howarth thinks that the task of an eco-critic is to judge a text on the basis of merits and faults of the text as per the effect of culture on nature. They can reverse the harm on nature due to anthropocentric attitude. Eco-criticism examines any text on the basis of the relation between nature and culture. It explores the loophole in the anthropocentric culture that is detrimental for nature, and raises the issue to reverse the harm created by anthropocentric activities.

Arne Naess developed eight essential principles for deep ecology in 1984. He valorizes the intrinsic values of the entities and human interference over them. He states, "The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human Life on Earth have value in themselves. These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes" (49). He was the pioneer of deep ecology movement. Sallow environmentalists raised voice for biospheric egalitarian thought, but deep ecology prefers to be back to nature, pre-industrial society and pre-urban societies. Naess argues, "The decisive difference concerns willingness to question and to appreciate the importance of questioning every economic and political policy in public. The questioning is "deep" and public. It asks "why" more insistently and consistently, taking nothing for granted" (55). Naess is in the opinion that deep ecology inspires people to raise question about every economic and political policy so as to stop anthropocentric irreparable charge upon nature. There should be self-realization that human and nature are non-separable things. The self of non-human being's world is as important as human world. In the view of Naess, even the deep ecologists do not deny the practical effectiveness of homocentric activities. He remarks, "Deep ecology can readily admit the practical effectiveness of homocentric arguments" (55). His claim is that homocentric arguments should prove their practicality. If the homocentric activities are beyond practical effectiveness, so-called technocratic achievements are useless. Naess further argues:

It is essential for conservation to be seen as central to human interests and aspirations. At the same time, people from head of state to the members of rural communities will most readily be brought to demand conservation if they themselves recognize the contribution of conservation to the achievement of their needs, as perceived by them, and the solution of their problems, as perceived by them. (55)

He is in the opinion that all the living beings are equally important. The root of human suffering is the desire for accumulating wealth and the headlong thirst for materialistic prosperity. He states that every being, whether human, animal or vegetable has an equal right to live and blossom. He calls for the return to nature. He focuses on living with minimal rather than maximal impact on other species and earth. He states, "Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs" (50). The act of satisfying non-vital needs of human beings challenges the vital needs of non-human communities. There should be bio-centric equality to respect nature so that all human and non-human communities can fulfill their vital needs.

Edward O. Wilson in "Apocalypses Now" talks about human interference over nature. He presents the causes behind the extinction of marine floras and faunas. According to him, the major causes include the damming of streams and rivers, industrialization, great boasters of local economy due to the destruction of habitat and pollution. He states that the rate of extinction is 877 times greater than before the origin of humanity. When these species disappear, we erase the whole life ultimately. He argues, "The biology of extinction is not a pleasant subject. The death of a species is especially disheartening to the scientists who study endangered and newly extinct species. Together these vanishing remnants of Earth's biodiversity test the reach and quality of human morality" (44). Wilson is in the opinion that the disappearance of species is a great challenge for scientists as they cannot conduct their research activities due to the extinction of the species. The impact on biodiversity is irreparable. The extinction of a species is not just the disappearance of a creature but the disappearance of human morality too. He feels the necessity of human care and attention for the conservation of biodiversity. Wilson further argues, "Species brought low by our hand now deserve our constant attention and care. Religious believers and nonbelievers alike would do well to sacralize God's elegant command given in the Judeo-Christian account of

Genesis: Let the waters teem with countless living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of heaven"(44). Wilson opines that fresh water species of all kinds are at high risk of extinctions as people in all the continent except Antarctica people are tolerating the shortage of clean water. Moreover, there is indirect competition with floras and faunas for water. Differentland birds of the Pacific Islands are verge of extinction due to human interference over them. He opines that when these and other species disappear we erase the existence of all the biotic communities. He focuses on the preservation of water sources and land so that countless creatures can be saved from extinction.

In "The Ethics of Respect for Nature", Paul W. Taylor gives emphasis on the bio-centric outlook on nature and denial of human superiority. He talks about the interdependence of all the living things in an organically unified order whose balance and stability are necessary condition for the relation of the good of its constituent biotic communities. He states:

There remains the problem of competing claim, even when wild plants and animals are not thought of as bearers of moral rights. If we accept the biocentric outlook and accordingly adopt the attitude of respect for nature as our ultimate moral attitude, how do we resolve conflict that arises from our respect for persons in the domain of human ethics and our respect for nature in the domain of environmental ethics? (84)

Environmental ethics of respect for nature consists of three basic elements: a belief system, an ultimate moral attitude and a set of rules of duty and standards of character. He states that we have to look all the non-human things with their intrinsic value. Only biospheric outlook can respect all the living communities. Humans are just the members of the Earth's community of life. The functioning of each being depends on the sound biological functioning of other organisms. He opines that each individual organism is conceived as a

teleological center of life. The concept of thinking that human as superior to other species is groundless claim. So, human-centered ethics is irrational and bias.

In "The Land Ethic", Aldo Leopold talks about community concept. The land ethic enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soil, water, plants, animals or collectively the land. He states that human beings are only concerned with human welfare and betterment. They use plants, animals, water, etc. for their material prosperity. While using them, human beings do not care about pollution, and extinction of different aquatic and terrestrial organisms. He argues "A land ethic, then, reflects the existence of an ecological conscience, and this in turn reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity" (45). He states that the land is not merely the soil. It is the thing that gives identity to all the inhabitants. There are native plants and animals that keep the energy circuit open. He focuses that man made changes are of a great order than evolutionary changes. He talks about the land pyramid. He writes, "An ethic to supplement and guide the economic relation to land presupposes the existence of some mental image of land as a biotic mechanism. We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in" (42). Leopold is in the opinion that there will be greater possibility of successful readjustment in the pyramid on the condition that there is less violent manmade changes. Hence, the land ethic transforms the role of human beings from the conquerors to just a plain member of it. There is biotic interaction between land and people. The ethical relation can only be maintained if human beings have love, respect and admiration for land. High regard for land is the only way to respect our existence.

"In Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis" Cheryll Glotfelty talks about the relation between biotic and abiotic world. He states:

Despite the broad scope of inquiry and disparate levels of sophistication, all ecological criticism shares the fundamental premise that humanculture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Eco-criticism takes as its subject the interconnection between nature and culture, specifically the culture artifacts of language and literature. As a theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and nonhuman. (xix)

Glotfelty states that eco-criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment. It is an eco-centric approach. Earth is mother of all beings and things. Beauty, integrity, inter-connectivity, harmony and organicity are protected by the earth. He observes the close relationship between physical world and culture. He states that culture affects the physical world and culture is also affected by physical world.

Various critics and researchers have examined Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* from various perspectives. It has been analysed with children's issue. However, a few critics including Robert Snyder, James E. Davis and Robert A. Weinstock have analyzed Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* keeping the environment issue in their center. Robert Snyder, an associate professor at Slippery Rock University in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania opines that the Lorax is a literary work that associates art and science together. He argues, "*The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss (Geisel, 1971) connects science to language arts while serving as a natural introduction to an activity addressing this theme. Now that *The Lorax* is a hit movie. Use this opportunity to engage students in a rich exploration of renewable and non-renewable resources" (70). According to Snyder, *The Lorax* has provided the proper exposure to the students to study the scientific facts along with the mystery of language. As it consists of the issue of environment, the students can explore the renewable and non-renewable resources present in nature. In Seuss' *The Lorax*, Once-ler only thinks of consuming the natural resources ignoring the side of protection which sends different animals and fish to extinction. As he ignores the warnings of

Lorax, his hubris spills over non-human world. In Snyder's view, the act of Once-ler makes the students think of their responsibility towards nature.

Snyder forwards his opinion in the favour of environment. He opines that the protection or declination in the condition of environment depends on how the components of the environment are treated. Regarding to the importance of wise use of natural resources, he further argues, "All materials, energy and fuel that human use are derived from natural sources and their use affects the environment in multiple ways" (70).

James E. Davis reviews the tradition of censorship of the children's literature which focuses on realism in 1970s. He states, "The Lorax, the fictional animal in Dr. Seuss' book, fights fruitless battle against the ax-wielding, smog-belching, water-fouling Once-ler family. Timber industry leaders want the book removed from the list, arguing that its environmentalist theme condemns an industry that is the life blood of the region" (144). Davies focuses on the cruel act of industrialists who want the censorship of informative piece of literature about environment. The censorship of such informative literature is against nature. The industrialists want to suppress the voice raised in the favour of environment as they feel unsecured in the process getting imbalanced material prosperity by exploiting nature. Davis further argues, "Becoming active and proactive in making use of our understanding is necessary to influence even our present, and influencing our present is really all we can do about influencing our future" (144). Lorax frequently speaks for the protection of Truffula trees which Once-ler neglects as he is an industrialist. He only valorizes the material gain. In Davis' view, our good reasoning should influence to our present and future without valorizing transitory pleasures. Regarding to the censorship of *The Lorax*, Davis again argues that the condition of young adult fiction is really serious. He states:

Not only is children's literature like *The Lorax*, but the fate of young adult fiction, as used in many United States Schools, is in great jeopardy. When writers of fiction for

adolescents began their cautious attempt to move out of the long tradition of adhering to rigid taboos in the early and mid-sixties, as my own study (1967) showed that they were doing, some censorship rumblings were expected and indeed came. (114)

The appearance of *The Lorax* was a great challenge for the industrialists who were consuming natural resources randomly. Davis shows his dissatisfaction on the censorship of *The Lorax* and states that it is very difficult for the adolescents' fictions which raise voice against environment unfriendly tradition.

Robert A. Weinstock points out the significance of *The Lorax* for bringing awakening to the threat of global climate change. He states:

In 1971, amidst America's environmental awakening, one small furry creature boldly declared: " I am the Lorax . . . I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues". In 2007, amidst America's awakening to the threat of global climate change, one Supreme Court opinion relived the Lorax of that duty and recognized the place of sovereign states in defending that without voice: the global commons. (798)

Robert's opinion is that the role of the furry creature named Lorax is remarkable, for he stood as an important source to bring awareness regarding to the decadence of the environment.

The duty of environmental awakening initiated by *The Lorax* in 1971 was assisted by Supreme Court in 2007 for America's awakening to the threat of global climate change.

Some of the pertinent scholarships have forwarded their arguments around the association of *The Lorax* and environmental awakening. The focus of the dissertation is on the claim that the sophisticated materials cannot give internal pleasure to Once-ler. This research, therefore, explores the cause of alienation and misbalanced economic progress and sadness in Once-ler's life.

The dissertation has been framed into four chapters. The first chapter introduces the author, primary text, theoretical perspectives and statement of problem, objectives, literature

review and the limitation of the study. The second chapter presents the detail critical analysis of the primary text *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss on the basis of theoretical parameters. The third chapter gives continuity to the critical analysis of the primary text. The final chapter incorporates the finding and concluding idea of the entire research work which is followed by the recommendation beneficial for further research activities.

Chapter II

Transitory Pleasure in Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*

The Lorax is Dr. Seuss' notable narrative in Children's literature published in 1971. It presents the plight of the environment and the Lorax, the major character personified as the environment consciousness in the narrative. The Lorax exhibits Dr. Seuss' huge concern about massive deforestation of Truffula trees, climate change and the degrading condition of environment in the world. The narrative has been presented in the setting of late 20th century. Throughout the narrative, the readers can realize the significance of the Lorax for bringing awakening to the threat of global warming. There was a massive deforestation in the USA from 1950s- 1960s. The industrialization and urbanization created massive pollution which was against the biospheric world. Robert A. Weinstock says "In 2007, amidst America's awakening to the threat of global climate change, one Supreme Court opinion relived the Lorax of that duty" (798). In fact, 1950s to 1960s was the decade of galloping progress of economy. In 1970s people started to raise voice on the issue of environmental degradation and against industrialism.

In the narrative *The Lorax*, the Lorax is an animal who is conscious about importance of environment. He exactly represents author's mouthpiece. Once-ler, being a human being, underestimates the loyalty of Lorax and his placial attachment with nature. The non-human being is raising the voice for the environment but the negligence of human beings ultimately declines the environment. He continuously makes Once-ler aware not to cut Truffula trees so as to respect the rights of all the species to survive as he says:

"Master!" he said with a saw dusty sneeze

I am the Lorax I speak for the trees.

I speak for the trees, for trees have no tongues

And I'm asking you, sir, at the top of my lungs. (n.p.)

Once-ler's environment unfriendly task of cutting down Truffula Trees compels the Lorax to speak for the protection of trees. Lorax raises voice as he is conscious about the suffocating polluted environment that is harmful for all the creatures. He also sneezes due to the pollution created by Once-ler. Due to the feeling of responsibility as a part of ecosystem, Lorax makes Once-ler aware of the possible environmental crisis created due to the act of Once-ler. He thinks that it is his responsibility to speak for the trees since they can't speak being plants. Arne Naess supports the idea of Lorax against the creation of pollution due to human activities as he writes "Pollution is evaluated from a biospheric point of view, not centering on its effects on human health, but on life as a whole, including life conditions of every species and system" (53). Lorax raises voice to protect nature not only for human beings but for the health of all the species as he is conscious about the repercussion of environmental degradation.

Lorax's endeavor to make Once-ler aware is in vain as Once-ler ignores his earnest appeal due to the obsession to get material prosperity. The industrialists try to suppress the voice against them who randomly cuts Truffula trees for their prosperity as Davies writes, "Timber industry leaders want the book removed from the list arguing that its environmentalist theme condemns an industry that is the life blood of the region" (144). In fact, nature is life blood for the existence of all the creatures in the world. However, people guided by anthropocentric attitude take industries as the life blood for their survival. Arne Naess highlights his view that all the living organisms have right to blossom and flourish no matter how small or big their size, number and shape are. All the human and non-human beings have their autonomous intrinsic value. Naess argues, "So called simple, lower, or primitive species of plants and animals contribute essentially too richness and diversity of life. They have value in themselves and are not merely steps toward the so called higher or rational life forms" (50). Naess is in the view that the existence of an animal depends on other

biotic and abiotic factors. In the name of getting prosperity, Once-ler dams care the role of biotic and abiotic factors for human beings. Value in himself lessens the richness and diversity of life. His obsession with material gain makes him forget the right of all the species to blossom and flourish. He valorizes only his infinite anthropocentric desire but does not accept the intrinsic value of all the species in the world.

The obsession of Once-ler for material gain contributes for the expanse of his industries which only gives transitory happiness to him. By exploiting nature, he gives job to his relatives. Once-ler knowingly exploits the nature for his benefits. He cuts Triffula trees to knit a Thneed, and builds a small shop that expands as a large industry later. Once-ler admits with a child, " In no time at all, I had built a small shop/ Then I chopped down a Truffula Tree with one chop" (n.p.). Due to his anthropocentric desire, Once-ler can't control his pattern of exploiting nature. His infinite wishes to expand his industries continue as long as Truffula trees and wild life remain there. He accepts that the reason behind his prosperity is the excessive encroachment over nature as he says, " I biggered my factory. I biggered my roads/ I biggered my wagons. I biggered the loads"(n.p.).He thinks that he is successful, for he has made his life luxurious by biggering his factory. He never thinks about the possible fall of his momentary happiness.

Once-ler's feeling of consumerism guides him to exploit nature as much as he can. He takes nature granted only for human's prosperity. His obsession with materiality gradually overwhelms him and calls his relatives to exploit the nature.His anthropocentricattitude becomes clear when headmits:

I called all my brothers and uncles and aunts

And I said "Listen here! Here's a wonderful chance

For the whole Once-ler family to get mighty rich!

Get over here fast! Take the road to North Nitch. (n.p.)

Once-ler's intention is just to be mighty rich as he thinks that exploiting nature is a golden chance to be wealthy. He can't give a glance to the importance of trees for the survival of other creatures. The exploitation of Triffula Trees gives transitory happiness to Once-ler and his family. Once-ler leads his relatives in this process of interfering nature. Naess argues, "Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs"(50). Naess opines that one should never make an attempt to exploit nature except touching it to satisfy vital needs.

The conflict between Once-ler and Lorax is about their opinions of destruction and creation. Once-ler thinks that he is waving Thneeds out of Truffula trees, however, Lorax opines that Once-ler is violating the rights of other animals' survival by destroying their habitat. In fact, the act of Once-ler is like removing colorful threads from a tapestry. Once-ler and his relatives work like bees not for the welfare of non-human beings and things but for the expansion of their business. They begin to see their happiness listening the only sound of chopping trees. Once-ler admits:

We were all knitting Thneeds
just as busy as bees,
to the sound of chopping
of Truffula Trees. (n.p.)

Once-ler and his relatives work jointly like bees only for human beings in the process of exploiting nature. But, the focal point is why they do not stand together in the process of conserving nature. Once-ler feels proud himself when he continuously hears the sound of chopping of Truffula trees. He never thinks that his excessive pride gets ruined along with the desertification of nature. Bees work for creation but, Once-ler works for destruction of food chain.

Ego and Alter Ego in *The Lorax*

Once-ler represents the human beings who knowingly exploit nature for their benefit. Once-ler thinks that he must grow his business at any cost as he says "Business is business / And business must grow" (n.p.). He represents the ego which becomes problematic to him later on along with his feeling of isolation from his relatives and nature. Lorax is the alter-ego of the ego of human beings. He frequently appears in front of Once-ler appealing to stop cutting down the trees. He advocates for trees saying, "I speak for the trees, for trees have no tongues" (n.p.). He is the environmental consciousness who tries to hint Once-ler about irreparable decadence which he will face. This tussle between ego and alter-ego is nothing but the conflict between human nature and nature. Through the tussle between the Lorax, a nonhuman creature and Once-ler, a hubris industrialist, Dr. Seuss presents the confrontation of human beings with nature in today's world. Arne Naess states that all the human and non-human beings have equal values on themselves which Once-ler neglects. Naess argues, "The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human Life on Earth have value in themselves. These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes" (48). The tussle between Once-ler and the Lorax gets accelerated as Once-ler does not keep in mind that all the creatures have their own roles in food chain.

The tussle between the Lorax and Once-ler inclines due to the disassociation between the Lorax's warning and Once-ler's environment unfriendly activities. From the beginning of the destruction of Truffula trees due to the anthropocentric attitude of Once-ler, the Lorax appears there to appeal not to cut the trees as the Lorax inquires, "What's that THING you've made out of my Truffula tuft?" (n.p.) However, Once-ler replies that he has just cut a tree which will not harm anyone. Once-ler admits, "Look, Lorax! I said. There's no case of alarm/ I chopped just one tree. I am doing no harm" (n.p.). The repeated destruction of the trees compels Lorax to blame Once-ler as a greedy person as he says, "Sir! You are crazy with greed" (n.p.). Once-ler thinks Lorax as a tiny creature and continues to exploit nature. He

believes that human beings have rights to operate all the biotic and abiotic factors. Arne Naess states that earth is the common home of all the creatures in the world. He writes:

Earth does not belong to human. The Norwegian landscapes, rivers, fauna and flora, and the surrounding sea are not the property of Norwegians, Humans only inhabit the lands, using resources to satisfy vital needs. If their non-vital needs conflict with the vital needs of nonhumans, human might yield. The destruction now going on will not be cured by a technological fix. Current arrogant notions in industrial (and other) societies must be resisted. (54)

The destruction turns to be irreparable when human beings exploit nature carelessly. When Once-ler begins to fulfill his non vital needs, then it challenges to the vital needs of other creatures. The destruction cannot be cured by using any sorts of scientific tools invented by Once-ler. Once-ler invents Super-axe-hacker which could accelerate the rate of cutting the Truffula trees so that he could be a rich man exploiting Truffula Trees. He agrees, "So I quickly invented my Super-Axe- Hacker/which whacked off four Truffula Trees at one smacker" (n.p.). Once-ler ignores the existence of other creatures. He ignores the frequent advice of the Lorax who frequently appears to advise Once-ler to be conscious of environmental degradation due to his headlong thirst for materiality.

The complete sense of nature in the Lorax's incomplete statement supports to have biospheric outlook. The Lorax leaves the place as he can't live in the polluted ruined environment created by Once-ler. Once-ler cannot grasp the meaning of the word – "Unless" which the Lorax uses at the time of exiting the place. As the Lorax is environment conscious, by using the word "unless" he means to say that unless the pattern of exploiting nature is stopped, the Lorax and other species won't return to the place as he says:

And all that the Lorax left here in this mess
was a small pile of rocks, with the one word...

"Unless."

Whatever that meant, well, I just couldn't guess"(n.p.)

Although Once-ler's consuming pattern of nature turns to exploitation, the Lorax makes his continuous endeavor to inform him about the decadence of environment even at the time of his departure. However, Once-ler does not take the warning seriously as he lacks a life-centered system of environment ethics. Taylor writes, "A life-centered system of environmental ethics is opposed to human-centered ones precisely on this point. From the prospective of a life-centered theory, we have prima facie moral obligations that are owed to wild plants and animals themselves as members of the Earth's biotic community" (74). Taylor is in the opinion that human beings have to respect nature. Human treatment over wild animals, species, and communities of life determines the fate of all the creatures in the world. Our behaviors should be guided with regard to the good of all the creations of nature. However, Once-ler does not understand that nature is the common home of all the living creatures. By using incomplete sentence "Unless", the Lorax warns Once-ler to think that wild plants and animals themselves are the members of the Earth's biotic community which makes him existent.

The Lorax fights with Once-ler alone with his dignity not just to ruin the hubris of Once-ler but to repair the ruined environment created by him. The Lorax feels proud for being the member of this biospheric word. However, he is very much anxious about the declining condition of environment. Once-ler admits regarding to the advice of the Lorax:

He snapped, I 'm the Lorax who speaks for the trees
 which you seem to be chopping as fast as you please.
 But I'm also in charge of the Brown Bar-ba-loots
 who played in the shade in their Bar-ba-loot suits
 and happily lived, eating Truffula Fruits. (n.p.)

The Lorax wants to be the voice of all the species who cannot speak for their rights. He thinks that he is in charge of all the Bar-ba-loots who share the forest as their habitat.

Regarding to the interference of human beings over nature, F. R. Leavis and Denys Thompson state "The outward and obvious sign that the loss of organic community was the loss of a human naturalness or normality may be seen in the building of the building of the industrial era" (74). The Lorax is well aware of the consequence of the loss of organic community. Once-ler enjoys his sophisticated building, tools and luxurious life which vanish along with the declination of environment as he ignores that his naturalness or normality can be hampered due to anthropocentric attitude.

The acceleration of Once-ler's material progress inclines the happiness of Once-ler but threatens the existence of other creatures. The Lorax makes his frequent endeavor to stop Once-er to cut the trees as he says "Sir! You are crazy with greed/There is no one on earth/Who would buy that fool Thneed!" (n.p.). Here, the Lorax is the environment consciousness who tries to hint or gives cue about the sorrowful decadence which he will face. Once-ler represents the ego which becomes problematic to him later on. The environment unfriendly activity of Once-ler gradually leads to the disappearance of poor Bar-ba-loots due to the scarcity of leaves of Truffula Trees and harmful gases produced by the industries of Once-ler. It shows Once-ler's intolerable inhuman treatment imposed against the rights of nature.

Hochman writes:

When it comes to the rights of nature, even a certain Leftist element boards this 'special treatment' bandwagon, claiming that focus on nature hurts jobs, ignores third- and fourth-world peoples, is anti-human. Within the ranks of environmentalist, some Earth-First members and deep ecologists maintain that animal rights calls for the special treatment of animals. By and large, these are flawed arguments; 'special

treatment' is much more about getting decent, equal, or appropriate treatment, about avoiding the worse kinds of treatment. (190)

Once-ler's treatment to nature is the worst kind of treatment. The violation of special rights of animals challenges the nature greatly. As Once-ler devaluates the animals' rights, his existence is in question. To combat with the consequences of the worst kind of treatment over nature, special treatment is required which Once-ler neglects. The misuse of biotic world is a great challenge for the deep ecologists. Naess also argues "present human interference with non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening"(50). The worsening condition of environment ultimately troubles to Once-ler himself eventually.

Chapter III

Once-ler's Unhappiness in *The Lorax*

The bipolar situation of the escalation of material prosperity and environment decadence leads to the germination of Once-ler's alienation. His success to accumulate wealth by exploiting nature is no thing than destruction of his happiness as he does not keep in mind that taking resort to nature is more rewarding to human. Once-ler's material progress eventually creates environmental decadence. Once-ler accepts his involvement in the process of emptying the environment as he states:

Now all that was left 'neath the bad-smelling sky

Was my big empty factory . . .

The Lorax . . .

And I. (n.p.)

Once-ler also feels empty in spite of his huge accumulation of wealth due to the fall of environment. Once-ler thinks that his life is troublesome as he is compelled to live under the bad-smelling sky created by his factories. His empty factories only remind him of the Lorax's warning. F. R. Leavis and Denys Thompson argue "We all suffer by the loss of the organic community" (74). Once-ler devaluates organic community resulting in alienated life. His alienation increases along with the escalation of material progress as he cannot keep equilibrium between environment and material progress. In one hand, he gets material progress, on the other hand, he cannot get internal peace when he feels he has been detached with nature and his relatives that leads him to the feeling of alienation. This bipolar situation faced by Once-ler is the outcome of his hubris and his ignorance towards the space which makes him existent.

Once-ler remains unable to balance material progress and his happiness due to the lack of centric parallel attitude. He only focuses on human centric activities that ruin the

condition of environment. On the other hand, it creates alienation too. Plumwood focuses on centric parallel and states that it is a practical model as it focuses on replacement of mono-logical relationship with nature by dialogical ones. He argues:

The model can suggest the ways in which this human-centred structure can be counted through appropriate social change and what amount to good ecological education. Countering anthropocentrism is not only feasible, it is actually what good ecological activism is geared to accomplish. The general counter-hegemonic strategy suggested by the analysis may be summed up as the replacement of mono-logical relationship with nature by dialogical ones that are responsive to the other on their own terms. (100)

Plumwood is in the opinion that centric parallel can cultivate the habit of making biospheric outlook. His approach can minimize the interference over nature as the attitude is beneficial for imparting good ecological education. This approach helps to replace mono-logical relationship with by dialogical ones. As nature nurses human communities, people also should show their wise behaviour in the favour of ecology. Once-ler sees his satisfaction only in exploiting nature. He does not keep dialogical relationship with nature which ultimately leads him to feel alienation.

The ignorance of ecological soundness leads Once-ler to the fall of economic as well as mental condition. He neither protects the nature nor remains mentally sound due to the negligence to ecological soundness. Paul W. Taylor forwards his opinion as "This is the fact that the wellbeing of humans is dependent upon the ecological soundness and health of many plant and animal communities, while their soundness and health does not in the least depend upon human well-being" (77). As he cannot consider the health condition of nonhuman world, he cannot maintain his own bell being. His relatives' departure and the exit of other creatures show that he has been mentally very weak. His feeling of alienation is the result of

his inability to maintain ecological soundness His anthropocentric activities send most of the species to the verge of extinction.

Nature's patience and Once-ler's passion to accumulate infinite wealth only escalate material progress but gives germination to alienation. He enjoys material prosperity by using Truffula trees. His intention is just to be rich. In this process of lifting his economic condition, he appears to be successful. He elevates his economics status by accumulating the resources available. His small shop turns to factories. He widens his business but narrows biospheric outlook. However, whatever welfare Once-ler gets, just turns to momentary one as he does not care the biological soundness. Nature only tolerates and waits the cruel activities of Once-ler as she mothers all the creatures in the world. However, Once-ler takes momentary advantage from the patience of nature. His passion to be mighty rich by exploiting nature gradually inclines as he admits:

But those trees! Those trees!

Those Triffula Trees!

All my life I'd been searching

For trees such as these. (n.p.)

Once-ler only thinks about himself. His momentary happiness germinates when he notices Truffula trees in abundance. He gets lured with the trees. He never thinks about the ecological soundness. He cannot be happy with the material progress he gets by exploiting nature. His obsession with materiality becomes so intense that he forgets he gets Oxygen from trees for his survival. Taylorforward his opinion regarding to the ecological soundness as, "This is the fact that the well-being of humans is dependent upon the ecological soundness and health of many plant and animal communities, while their soundness and health does not in the least depend upon human well-being" (77). Once-ler's inability to realize the importance of ecological soundness leads him towards the excessive exploitation of nature.

Once-ler tries to get his identity as an industrialist isolating nature from him and ignoring his dependency in nature which ultimately leads him to the feeling of isolation. He treats the non-human communities as his only property. Being a human being, he does not show his humanity. His perception towards biospheric world is guided by consumerism. The ignorance of plant and animal communities turns his identity apart.

Dr. Seuss incorporates the ecological components such as human- non human, biotic-abiotic, etc. in *The Lorax* for exhibiting the necessity of the proper amalgamation among these components for the smooth running of bio-cybernetic communicating system. To maintain balance between biotic and abiotic communities, the importance of self-realization and the outlook of biospheric egalitarianism are essential. *The Lorax* shows that the fate of human being is determined by the fate of other creatures as all the human and non-human worlds are attached with symbiotic relationship. Removing the species one by one from biotic community like removing the threads from the tapestry, certainly leads to the extinction of all the species.

The supremacy of human being for controlling other non-human communities for their short term beneficial pursuit is detrimental even for human beings for a long term. In *The Lorax*, Once-ler is a representative of human beings filled with hubris thought who claims himself as the superior creature and tries to dominate other species as he says, "I yelled at the Lorax. Now listen here, Dad! / All you do is yap-yap and say, Bad! Bad! Bad! Bad" (n.p.). Once-ler thinks himself as a vigorous and intelligent creature who has a great skill and the capacity to invent the tools. Once-ler's feeling of superiority spills over when he states "So I quickly invented my Super-Axe- Hacker/ which whacked off four Truffula Trees at one smacker" (n.p.). In fact, he invents the tools to destroy nature but not for the protection of biotic communities. Paul W. Taylor denies so called supremacy of human beings and

forwards bio-centric outlook that the task due to which human beings claim themselves superior is only for the welfare of human kind. He argues:

We would begin to look at the whole of the Earth's biosphere in a new light. Our duties with respect to the "world" of nature would be seen as making prima facie claims upon us to be balanced against our duties with respect to the "world" of human civilization. We could no longer simply take the human point of view and consider the effects of our actions exclusively from the perspective of our own good.(75)

Taylor thinks that it is required to change our feeling of superiority as we are just superior not for other creatures but for ourselves. Human being is just a member of earth's community of life. Community of life includes different human and non-human beings and things. Among such community, human is just a member who shares with other species a common relationship to the Earth. Taylor's opinion is that if we view the evolutionary process, there are some sorts of affinity with other organisms. Laws of genetics, of natural selection and of adaptation are applied to all the biological creatures. So, human being is just a part of community of life. Human beings should consider the effects of their environment unfriendly activities before showing the attitude of supremacy. Once-ler's excessive pride over his material success can't remain long lasting as natural world is incomparably great. In fact, he does not show his respect towards nature and natural world due to the obsession with materiality. Taylor focuses his idea of respecting nature which is possible only if we remove the groundless idea that human being is superior to other living things. He states:

Now if the groundlessness of the claim that humans are inherently superior to other species were brought clearly before our minds, we would not remain intellectually neutral towards that claim but would reject it as being fundamentally at variance with our total world outlook. In the absence of any good reasons for holding it, the assertion of human superiority would then appear simply as the expression of an

irrational and self-serving prejudice that favours one particular species over several million others. (83)

Taylor takes human superiority as irrational, groundless and self-serving. Once-ler's treatment over nature and biospheric world is also irrational as he ruins biospheric world for his short term pleasure. As he is guided by anthropocentric feeling, he takes other creature as a tiny creature ignoring the function of non-human communities. He behaves as if human being is a supreme creature who has right to consume all the living and non-living things for the prosperity of human beings. . He thinks that human is the rational being who has right to control over the inferior beings. It is his anthropocentric view. He believes that human beings have no obligation to promote or protect the good of non-human living beings.

Once-ler is so cruel that he ignores the existence of other animals and supposes that inferior creatures are the prey for the death. His behaviour shows that human being is superior creature. However, the role of each species is greatly remarkable in ecosystem. The extinction of one species hampers irreparably to the food chain. In this regard, Wilson forwards his view in "Apocalypses Now" as:

Finally, there is a deeper meaning and long-term importance of extinction. When these and other species disappear at our hands, we throw away part of Earth's history. We erase twigs and eventually whole branches of life's family tree. Because each species is unique, we close the book on scientific knowledge that is important to an unknown degree but is now forever lost. (44)

Wilson's opinion is that extinction of a species leads to the disappearance of a part of earth's history. It is like the way of removing all the branches of a tree one after another. He opines that each species is unique, so our hands should be guided towards the protection of biospheric world. However, Once-ler underestimates the existence of the Lorax and his community that ultimately leads to their extinction. Once-ler's lack of biospheric egalitarian

concept creates the extinction of animals in the Lorax. The biosphere egalitarian concept only can save the non-human things and beings from extinction. He continuously cuts Truffula trees as long as it is found that sends all the animals towards extinction. Once-er accepts his involvements in the destruction of Truffula trees as he states:

And at that very moment, we heard a loud whack!

From outside in the fields came a sickening smack

of an axe on a tree. Then we heard the tree fall.

The very last Truffula Trees of them all! (n.p.)

Due to the lack of biocentric egalitarian concept, he cuts trees that decline the diversity of wildlife. He cannot maintain the diversity in the place due to his passion to accumulate infinite wealth. He continuously hacks the trees without caring the biotic world. Taylor argues, "Each individual organism is conceived of as a teleological center of life, pursuing its own good in its own way" (76). He argues that we have to follow the life-centric environmental ethics for the smooth running of natural eco-systems. The good or ill effects upon natural ecosystems depend on how we treat non-human beings. His opinion is that biocentric outlook is the single way to respect nature.

Once-ler takes animals, birds and plants as inferior communities as he lacks biospheric outlook, wisdom and consciousness. He takes non-human communities from instrumental point of view. He regards nature as inessential. He backgrounds the crucial biospheric and other services given to human beings by nature. Regarding to the drawback of human-centred attitude, Val Plumwood writes:

As human centred culture of our modern form of rationalism grows steadily more remote and self-enclosed, it loses the capacity to imagine or detect more remote and self-enclosed, it loses the capacity to imagine or detect its danger. But if this form of reason judges that nature is now inessential to its life, ecological catastrophe will

deliver the verdict of a higher, court that reason has failed to recognize its ground in nature. (100)

Val Plumwood is in the opinion that there should be the feeling of biospheric outlook. Plumwood's focus is that human beings keep them in self-enclosure due to the lack of parallel centric attitude. No one can escape from ecological catastrophe that has been invited by the feeling of supremacy of human beings. He further argues:

Human-centred culture springs from an impoverished and inadequate conceptual and rational world; it is helping to create in its image a real world that is not only ecologically, biologically, and aesthetically damaged, but also rationally damaged. That is, human- and reason-centred culture may be rationally damaged. That is, human- and reason centred culture may be rationalistic in its exclusionary tress on rationality, but human-centredness is not ecologically rational. (100)

Plumwood focuses that the ecological crisis is not just or even primarily a crisis of technology, but is rather a crisis of rationality, morality and imagination. Rationalist culture has fostered a version of human-self enclosure and human centredness as rationality is assumed as the exclusively identifying feature of human beings. Plumwood is in the opinion that reason-centredness leads to human-centredness which ultimately leads to human self-enclosure. His focus is that human-centredness creates various damaging forms of epistemic remoteness - human being is superior to nature, beyond nature and apart of nature. Once-ler, in *The Lorax*, has been guided by human-centredness that creates the feeling of superiority. Being the new comer to the place, he exploits Truffula trees and sends all the species to extinction. He is responsible for changing the peaceful place into a polluted and inhabitable due anthropocentric attitude in the name of materialistic progress. His human-centredness leads him to self-enclosure. He feels alienated when he does find internal peace, eventually, due to his imbalanced industrialization.

The extinction of animals does not bring anything than unhappiness in the life of Once-ler. He feels guilty for turning the heaven like peaceful place into inferno. Once-ler appeals the curious boy to be involved in the plantation of trees. Dr. Seuss writes:

"But Now," says the Once-ler,
 "Now that you're here,
 The word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear.
 UNLESS someone like you
 Cares a whole awful lot,
 Nothing is going to get better.
 It's not. (n.p.)

Once-ler also thinks that the cultivation of good habit is like the cultivation of plants. There should be the involvement of children in the process of cultivating plants. Moreover, the plantation of trees should be initiated by children so that they can bring huge changes in the anthropocentric views from the beginning of their life. Naess highlights, "Until deep changes are made, substantial decreases in richness and diversity are liable to occur: the rate of extinction of species will be ten to one hundred time greater than any other period of earth history. (51) Once-ler's feeling of alienation is the result of the lack of Truffula trees, extinction of species and his detachment of relatives and nature.

Land is the habitat for different territorial animals which has close affinity with human beings. Human beings should show presence not as a conqueror but just a member of biospheric community. Aldo Leopold argues, "A land ethic charges the role of Homosapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow members, and also respect for the community as such" (39). Leopold states that whatever activities we do, it must be ethically and aesthetically right. Land is to be taken as an organism; circuit of energy. Each species depends on other species in terms of food chain.

The role of all the living species for the smooth running of food chain should be respected. In *The Lorax*, Once-ler ignores the existence of other creatures that results in the extinction of all the animals. He acts as a conqueror with land. His activity is against stability, integrity, and the beauty of the organic community. He transforms the green land into desert. Hence, the reception of ignorance to other biotic community invites irreparable loss even for human beings. This irreparable loss is signaled ironically through the mouthpiece of Lorax. It shows that if human beings do not take care of the nature, the nature knows how to take care of the human beings. Naess also is in the favour of cultural diversity for the protection of nature and writes, "Cultural diversity is an analogue on the human level to the biological richness and diversity of life forms. We should give high priority to cultural anthropology I education in industrial societies" (54). However, Once-ler valorizes to the consumerism attitude rather than biological richness which eventually leads him to the feeling of alienation.

Lord Buddha thinks that we should be free from crowded environment and should go to forest to get peace. Reciting the words of Buddha, John Powers writes in "The Problem with Bodies," "In the "Discourse on Mindfulness of the Body", the Buddha provides detailed instructions for this practice. The mediator should go into a forest and sit under a tree or in an empty hut, fold his legs, keep the body erect, and breathe in and out while maintaining awareness that he is doing so"(122). Buddha instructs that peace is found in wilderness. Forest is not only the habitat of wildlife but also the source of peace. He also forwards his idea in the favour of the necessity of peaceful environment for human beings. He states that there should not be harm in nature. When we get disturbed, we should go to nature. Once-ler's peace in mind also gets destroyed when he destroys Truffula trees. He does not grasp the meaning of wilderness.

Once-ler's inability to generate generosity shows his hubris nature that creates discontent in his life. The miserable disappearance of other creatures was nothing for him but

the cause of his consumerism. His economic predicament appears as he is compelled to shut his factories due to the scarcity of raw materials as he says, "No more trees. No more Thneed. No more work to be done" (n.p.). Though Once-ler does not show any concern about the biospheric communities, the Lorax never stops raising his voice as long as he a single Truffula tree remains there. He does not feel humiliation to appear in front of the Lorax for making him aware of environmental declination. He feels that it is his duty to aware Once-ler being a member of biospheric community as plants have no tongue. Regarding to the necessity of persistent awareness against anthropocentrism, David Michie writes, "None of us can solve all the world's problems, but that shouldn't make us give up doing what we can to help. The amazing paradox of developing compassion and practicing generosity is the experience of just how much happiness we create for ourselves" (154). Creating happiness is associated with our deeds. If we can balance between generosity and compassion, there can be germination of happiness. Once-ler cannot maintain his happiness as he cannot blend his anthropocentric nature with the welfare of biocentric community.

Once-ler's negligence about the dependency of all the specie on the healthy biosphere creates tussle between him and Lorax. Val Plumwood writes:

Ecological thinkers and activists can try to counter radical exclusion (the first feature of anthropocentrism on the Othering model) by emphasizing human community with non-human nature and animals. The main theme of ecological thinkers like David Suzuki is that we have somehow lost sight of the fact that human are animals, and have the same dependency on a healthy biosphere as other forms of life. (111)

Plumwood is in the opinion that human beings can only reduce anthropocentric activities if they realize that they have the same dependency which other animals have on ecosphere. Self-realization about the importance of healthy biosphere can only contribute to make the healthy environment for the survival of all the nonhuman communities. Once-ler, in *The*

Lorax, is not aware about the necessity of healthy biosphere in time. Plumwood further argues, "By bringing a better understanding of human embeddedness in nature, we contest dualised conceptions of humanity which treat humans as 'outside nature' and above the ecological fate which has overtaken other species" (112). Plumwood believes in human embeddedness in nature for healthy ecology. Once-ler ignores the requirements of nonhuman communities like human communities. He never thinks that nature is home for all the creatures in the world. Nonhuman communities also require healthy biosphere. If there is imbalance in their health condition and their existence, it ultimately hampers the human community too. The Lorax frequently makes his effort to aware Once-ler about the degrading condition of environment and nonhuman communities thinking that every species has rights to survive as Nature is common home of all the species. Lorax says "Once-ler! You are making such smogulous smoke! / My poor Swomee-Swans . . . why, they can't sing a note! / No one can sing who has smog in his throat" (n.p.). However, Once-ler does not show any interest to understand the same type of dependency of human communities and non-human communities on the healthy biosphere.

Placial Attachment in *The Lorax*

Due to the placial attachment of Lorax, he does not take land just as a place where different fauna and flora show their performance but also treats land as a mother. As mother grows her children up by nursing, the land also gives all the requirements for different biospheric communities. Lawrence Buell in his essay entitled "Place-Attachment as Phenomenology vs. as Sociology" talks about place consciousness and bonding. He forwards five-dimensional phenomenology of subjective place attachment. The first phenomenology is "concentric circles of diminishingly strong emotional identification fanning out from the home base or home range close to which most of one's life is led"(72). It is traditional and still prevalent dimension of place attachment. Similarly, the second dimension

phenomenology is "place attachment spreads out to looks more like an archipelago than concentric circles "(72). It is applied in in modernized world. The third phenomenology is "one also becomes attached to places by the power of imaging alone"(72). Similarly the fourth and fifth phenomenology are "place attachment has temporal dimension" (73), and "place itself changes-It is not entitative- but eventmental, something in process "(73) respectively.

In *The Lorax*, ruthless modernization and industrialization have spoiled the placial attachment. Lorax has a sort of feeling of intimacy with land, forest and natural surroundings. He respects nature as a mother who nurses her offspring. He is in the favour of motherhood environmentalism. He respects the existence of all the non-human communities. He raises voice for trees as he says "I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees/ I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues" (n.p.). Once-ler is a greedy industrialist who spoils the Lorax's placial attachment due to his anthropocentric attitude. He detaches from nature and his relatives that ultimately creates the feeling of isolation in him.

Lorax's affinity with land from the beginning of the narrative and Once-ler's realization of his involvement in extinction of nonhuman communities at the end of the narrative shows human embeddedness in nature. Supporting the embeddedness of human beings with nature, Val Plumwood writes:

To counter the features of back grounding and denial, ecological thinkers and green activists try to puncture the illusion of Disembeddedness, by raising people's consciousness of how much we all depend on nature, and of how anthropocentric culture's denial of this dependency on nature is expressed in local, regional or global problems. There are many ways to do this One important way, for those with a theoretical bent, is to criticize institutions and forms of rationality which fail to

acknowledge and take account of this dependency on nature, such as contravention economics. (112)

Centric parallel attitude focuses on the fact of human embeddedness in nature which teaches that humanity is not outside nature. The embeddedness can be easily realized when we notice how much dependency we have with nature. The people guided by anthropocentric attitude only show their negligence about the affinity with nature. When we go to the depth, we can see that nature is always giving. Its abundance is real blessings for all the living communities. In Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax*, Lorax is thankful to nature as he feels affinity with nature. Due to his affinity with nature, he feels that it is his responsibility to aware about the declining condition of environment. He thinks that plants have no tongue so, it is his responsibility to speak for the plants. He speaks for the plants as it is also a component of nature. However, because of obsession with material progress, Once-ler is unaware about the contribution of nature. He exploits Truffula trees in such a way that they are grown only for him. He does not care about environmental decadence as he lacks the understanding about embeddedness with nature. He misuses the abundance of nature and transforms the beauty of land and forest into a gloomy and unexciting place. He views nature from instrumentalism. He thinks nature as just the instrument to fulfill his headlong thirst for material gain. On the other hand, the Lorax takes nature as a living organism that needs proper care and attention for its longevity.

Plumwood again adds:

Through local education, activists can stress the importance and value of nature in practical daily life, enabling people to keep track of the way they use and impinge on nature. They can create understanding of the fragility of ecological systems and relationships. Those prepared for long term struggle can work to change system of distribution, accounting, perception, and planning so that these systems reduce remoteness, acknowledge our embeddedness and allow for nature's need and limits.

Bringing about such systematic changes is what political action for ecological sustainability is all about. (112)

Plumwood thinks that people who realize placial attachment can take care of nature well as they are familiar with the advantages of nature on them. Moreover, they are well aware about their responsibilities towards nature. They are acquainted with nature's need, limit and caring capacity. Person having placial attachment never tries to exploit nature but treat nature as their mother. In *The Lorax*, Lorax only takes the components of nature to fulfill only his vital needs. He is well aware about the importance of sustainable environment for the sustainability of all the creatures. On the other hand, Once-ler's material thirst does not realize the importance of nature for all the human and nonhuman communities.

Due to his attachment with the land, Lorax appeals Once-ler frequently not to change the land into desert by destroying Truffula trees as he blames "Sir! You are crazy with greed" (n.p.). Before the encroachment of Once-ler into the land, it was really a glorious habitat for different species as Once-ler admits:

Way Back in the days when the grass was still green

And the pond was still wet,

And the song of the Swomee-Swans rang out in space...

One morning, I came to this glorious place. (n.p.)

He fights with Once-ler to protect the land from being polluted. He wants to maintain the serenity of the land raising voice against industrialization. He speaks for the land as an activist in spite of great insult upon him. He wants to see the continuity of the inseparable relationship between biotic and abiotic factors. However, Once-ler shows his indifference to the symbiotic relationship between the land and human beings. In fact, the exploitation of nature is Once-ler's inexcusable crime for his material prosperity. Regarding to the indifference to living beings, David Michie quotes the idea of the Dalai Lama in his book

entitled *Buddhism for Busy People* as, "Over the millions of lifetimes that we have experienced since beginningless time, we have known all living beings again and again. Without expectation each has even been a mother to us . . . how can we indifferent to them?" (142). The indifference towards biospheric world is the indifference to our mother. We do not have any rights to show our negligence when our mother gets trouble. It will be our foolishness if we assume the contribution of biospheric communities with superficial eyes.

Once-ler lacks the perception of the biorhythm of nature, so, he cannot understand himself as all the living beings and non-living things are interconnected. Due to his headlong thirst for materialistic prosperity, the integrity, harmony, beauty and stability of non-human things get declined which is cruel violence to biospherical community. Lorax frequently makes Once-ler aware about the degrading condition of environment created by the task of Once-ler as Lorax feels placial attachment. On the other hand, Once-ler does not think that human world also suffers due to the loss of organic community. F. R. Leavis and Denys Thompson writes, "That civilization may flourish a less civilized working-class must work. But it is not merely the working-class that is less civilized and suffers from 'unrest'. We all suffer by the loss of the organic community" (74). Lorax appeals Once-ler to stand in the favour of environment. However, Once-ler has been guided by anthropocentric attitude who wants to consume nature as much as possible. He ignores Lorax's warning and threatens him for being a barrier for his material progress as Once-ler accepts his misdeed as "I'm busy," I told him / Shut up, if you please." (n.p.). In fact, Lorax does not want to leave the place due to his placial attachment with it. He tolerates the suffocating environment created by Once-ler till the single Truffula trees remains there. Lorax again makes his appeal not to exploit nature showing his miserable health condition. Lorax appears in front of Once-ler and states "Once-ler! You're making such smogulous smoke!" (n.p.). He raises voice in the favour of

environment due to his placial attachment. Taylor forwards his opinion about the importance of individual organisms:

As our knowledge of living things increases, as we come to a deeper understanding of their life cycles, their interactions with other organisms, and the manifold ways in which they adjust to the environment, we become more fully aware of how each of them is carrying out its biological functions according to the laws of its species-specific nature. But beside this, our increasing knowledge and understanding also develop in us a sharpened awareness of the uniqueness of each individual organism.

(78)

As Once-ler is not well aware of the interactions among the organisms, their species specific nature and uniqueness of each organisms, he destroys the habitat creating desertification. The beauty, harmony and integrity of nature gradually vanish due to the misdeed of Onceler. Clare Palmer opines:

Discussion of sustainable development also frequently focuses on forms of resource management, with an emphasis on social justice and on the well-being of future generations of humans. Indeed, the most frequently cited definition of sustainable development taken from the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) report *Our Common Future* (1987), is anthropocentric: "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (18)

Palmer's concern is about the anthropocentric attitude of people even in the process of conserving nature in the name of sustainable development. Even the principal of sustainable development is anthropocentric in the sense that it appeals people to use nature without compromising the ability of future generation. In fact, wilderness is beyond human perception in *The Lorax*. The anthropocentric attitude of Once-ler leads to the claim that

beauty, organicity and bio-cybernetic communication of earth are beyond human perception. He does not show the capacity to be aware of the lives of individual organisms. According to Taylor, one should develop biocentric outlook so as to respect biospheric world as he says:

Thus, the biocentric outlook recommends itself as an acceptable system of concepts and beliefs to anyone who is clear-minded, unbiased, and factually enlightened, and who has a developed capacity of reality awareness with regard to the lives of individual organisms. (83)

Oncel-er only concentrates his life for materialistic prosperity exploiting the biosphere. Moreover, he ignores the importance of abiotic world too. Due to the excessive exploitation of Truffula trees, air gets polluted. In fact, industrialization initiated by Once-ler and his urbo-anthropocentric human settlement, badly pollute the world. As a result, so called greatness of Once-ler is greatly questioned which shows that human being is human being only for human being. The welfare of human beings seeks environment friendly nature of human beings. Whatever powerful Once-ler claims, it has been easily spoiled because of his own so called greatness.

The Lorax ironically satires the disaster of anthropocentric thought which is the amalgam of materialistic thought and consumerism. Materialistic thought focuses on 'earn as much as you can' and consumerism emphasizes on 'spend as much as you can' which badly affects naturalism. Oncel-er ignores the fact that there is a grand world beyond human world. Naess argues, "Exporting pollution is not only a crime against humanity, but also against life" (53). The anthro-urbo-technocratic domination over biotic and abiotic factor is poisonous to all the members of biotic community. Edward O. Wilson talks about land birds of the Pacific Islands and argues, "The wave of extinction began thirty five hundred years ago with

the arrival of humans in the western archipelagoes" (38). It shows that human's interference is the cause of extinction of different species.

Dr. Seuss expresses his disgust towards human beings satirizing the environment unfriendly misdeeds which is 'philosophy of in-humanism'. It is rejection of human solipsism and recognition of the trans-human magnificence. All the species are equal in the eyes of nature. Furthermore, the claiming one as the superior being is just the groundless view. The exploitation of nature creates suffocating environment for biotic community and for the destruction of the habitats of birds and animals. Such type of misdeeds send Bar-ba loots and fish along with the Lorax to extinction. Oncel-er is so greedy and guided by materialistic thirst. It shows that human being is a new comer in the biotic community. Being the newcomer, he/she is trying to control over other species to whom the earth was teeming with life long before human being appeared. Taylor argues "Putting the point metaphorically, we are relatively newcomers, entering a home that has been the residence of others for hundreds of millions of years, a home that must now be shared by all of us together" (77). He opines that human being is just a new species on the planet. Human being as a new comer does not have any rights to exploit nature to fulfill non-vital needs. The earth should be shared by all of the species with dignity. It is not the single property of human beings. Being the late comer, Once-ler cannot control his passion to get material prosperity and exploit nature excessively which leads him ultimately to the feeling of alienation.

Once-ler's discontent emerges as he disregards the environment ethics which inspires people to give equal value to biotic and abiotic components of environment. It advocates for the rights of all the biospheric communities. Once-ler valorizes to the fulfillment of his non-vital needs exploiting nature as he says " Now, chopping one tree/at a time / was too slow" (n.p.). Cutting trees is Once-ler's interference over nature which is against environmental ethics. David Michie states:

The happiness that derives from ethics is not all about delayed gratification. People who are truly ethical –as opposed to merely sanctimonious—are frequently the most pleasant to be around. They are open, rather than guarded, because they don't have to conceal things. They are relaxed, free from the concern that past actions may come back to haunt them. So the happiness that comes from good ethics is not all in the future, it is also here and now. (156-57)

Once-ler neglects Lorax's appeal made for the existence of all the creatures. Chopping trees and sending all the creatures to extinction is against environmental ethics. As he does not respect environmental ethics, he cannot feel relaxed. Initially he gets transitory happiness that disappears along with the disappearance of biotic communities. He excludes biotic communities from their existence but feels being excluded himself as he lacks environmental ethics.

Alienation of Once-ler

Once-ler, in the narrative, feels alienated due to the loss of affinity to the nature. Nature gets flourished beyond human encroachment but Once-ler's nature is anthropocentric which devaluates the existence of other creatures. His nature is against biospheric outlook. On the other hand, nature is always giving, a Gaia whose abundance is taken for granted by Once-ler whose material thirst becomes problematic for him as he does not get happiness. Once-ler cannot show his affinity with natural world where new life germinates only in favourable condition. He threatens the natural world so as to satisfy his non-vital needs. He does not grasp the importance of wilderness. His act of insulting the communities of plants and animals makes him feel isolated.

The imbalance between the material prosperity and environment leads to Once-ler's alienation. The excessive exploitation of environmental components not only spoils the serenity of nature but also declines the happiness of Once-ler as he cannot give continuity to

his material progress. Once-ler feels alienated from nature and his relatives when his relatives leave him after complete exploitation of Truffula Trees. Once-ler admits:

No more trees. No more Thneeds. No more work to be done.

So, in no time, my uncles and aunts, everyone,

all waved me good-bye. They jumped into my cars

and drove away under the smoke-smuggered stars. (n.p.)

The departure of his relatives and the closer of his factories due to the scarcity of raw materials makes him think over his environmental unfriendly behaviour. Once-ler's hubris gradually decreases and accepts that he is sad to step on the space which makes him existent. Taylor opines that the maintenance of the ecological equilibrium is prerequisite for the well-being of animals and plants. He states:

As far as the well-being of wild animals and plants is concerned, this ecological equilibrium must not be destroyed. The same holds true of the well-being of humans. When one views the realm of nature from the perspective of the biocentric outlook, one never forgets that in the long run the integrity of the entire biosphere of our planet is essential to the realization of the good of its constituent communities of life, both human and nonhuman. (78)

Once-ler never thinks about the co-existential relationship in biospheric world. The human and non-human communities are essential for integrity of the entire biosphere which Once-ler ignores. As a result, he can't maintain balance between environment and his material progress.

Once-ler's inability to understand the cybernetic communicating system of biotic communities inspires him to exploit Truffula trees excessively that sends non-human communities to extinction. Taylor writes, "The earth's land, air, and water would no longer be

the subject to the degradation they are now undergoing as the result of large-scale technology and uncontrolled population growth. (77)

The change in the mindset of Once-ler at the end of the narrative shows Once-ler's self-realization and regret upon his prior environmental unfriendly task. Taylor focuses on the importance of biocentric outlook for the soundness of ecology. He states:

To accept the biocentric outlook and regard ourselves and our place in the world from its perspectives is to see the whole natural order of the earth's biosphere as a complex but unified web of interconnected organisms, objects and events. The ecological relationship between the community of living things and their environment form an organic whole of functionally interdependent parts. Each ecosystem is small universe itself in which the interactions of various species populations comprise an intricately woven network of cause –effect relations. (78)

Taylor believes in ecological relationship between living beings and non-living things. Each species plays important role for the survival of other beings in the cybernetic communicating system. He respects in cybernetic communicating network system among the components of nature. He takes earth's biosphere as an organic whole. However, Once-ler ignores the cybernetic communicating network system of organisms. He takes nature not an organism but an object due to his materialistic thought. He neglects the ecosystems and the interactions of each species there. He only takes the biospheric world as a commodity so, he exploits Truffula trees the ultimately leads most of the creatures to extinction.

The escalation of material progress is the reason behind the decadence of human condition in the Lorax. Although Once-ler gets material prosperity, he cannot get fresh air, the sight of attractive landscape, the companionship of birds, fish, animals and relatives and internal peace. Naess argues, "Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves" (50). Due to the material thirst

to accumulate infinite wealth, Once-ler forgets the importance of richness and diversity of life forms. He thinks that the Lorax is a stupid creature who lacks the knowledge about business as he admits, "I laughed at the Lorax, "You poor stupid guy! /you never tell what some people will buy" (n.p.). His continuous interference inclines his material progress only for short time. Later, his headlong thirst for material progress declines the environment and his own condition as he feels lonely in the absence of biospheric world. Due to the unwise behaviour of Once-ler, aquatic animals also disappear. They also get extinct and Lorax says "You're grumping the pond where the Humming-Fish hummed! /No more can they hum, for their gills are all gummed" (n.p.). The Lorax also disappears from there as he does not find the place livable for his survival.

Material progress and good condition of human and nature do not occur simultaneously. Noticing the disappearance of Lorax and Bar-ba-loots, Once-ler feels alienated. At the end of the narrative, Once-ler realizes his mistake when he feels being detached from nature and his relatives. When these animals disappear, Once-ler says, "I, the Once-ler, felt sad/ as I watched them all go" (n.p.). As long as there is the availability of Truffula trees and other creatures, Once-ler is found busy in exploiting them. He never gives value to the environment friendly activities and the appeal of the Lorax. Jhan Hochman states:

Environment is not inclusive of all plants, animals, and elements, and furthermore the term has increasingly come to mean a nature tangibly important only to human health or livelihood. We thereby cease to pay as much attention when nature is destroyed by manipulation, development, consumerism, and dumping as long as our environment stays intact. (188)

Hochman is in the view that human beings do not pay attention to the importance of environment at the time of conducting development activities that ultimately hampers to stay

the environment intact. Once-ler destroys nature by manipulation, development and consumerism. His anthropocentric attitude continues as long as environment stays intact. After the disappearance of these creatures, only then his sadness germinates. He behaves as a destroyer of non-human world. The situation of nature turns to irreparable as he does not blend his anthropocentric nature with nature. His hubris attitude and feeling of superiority not only decline the condition of environment but also his internal peace. He appears as the destroyer of nature and his eternal peace. Hence, the researcher asserts that there is the necessity of good relationship between biotic and abiotic worlds for the existence of all the creatures.

As Once-ler lacks right attitude, he cannot think anything than material progress. Once-ler says, "I meant no harm. I must truly did not / But I had to grow bigger. So bigger I got" (n.p.). He shows his utilitarian view as long as he gets Truffula trees. Chopping Truffula trees was his detrimental attitude that creates the extinction of non-human communities. Regarding to the necessity of right attitude, His Holiness the Dalai Lama thinks that person lacking right attitude can neither be religious nor think properly. In the autobiography of the Dalai Lama, he writes:

If one has the right mental attitude, all actions of body and speech can become religious. But if one lacks the right attitude, if one does not know how to think properly, one will achieve nothing even by spending the whole of one's life in monasteries and in reading from the scriptures. So this proper mental attitude is the first essential. (226)

It is useless to accumulate excessive pride if we lack right attitude. Right attitude is considered to be beneficial not just for a community. As Once-ler's attitude is anthropocentric, his tasks are detrimental for all the biotic communities. In the view of Lama, Once-ler lacks essential thing i.e. right attitude.

Once-ler's anthropocentric desire spoils purity of water, the serenity of land and sonority of forest. Due to the Lorax's anxiety on the declining condition of environment and dis-integrity of biotic community, he tries to aware Once-ler raising questions frequently. Lorax states, "My poor Swomee-Swans...why, they can't sing a note! / No one can sing who has smog in his throat (n.p.). Along with the disappearance of Swomee-Swans, the sonority of forest also disappears. The industrial noise pollution replaces the melodious notes of the singing birds. The desire of Once-ler brings discontent in the life of all the biotic communities. Regarding to the anthropocentric desire and its impact, the Dalai Lama writes, "Desire brings discontent: happiness springs from a peaceful mind. For many Tibetans material life was hard, but they were not the victims of desire; and in simplicity and poverty among our mountains there was perhaps more peace of mind than there is in most of the cities of the world" (61). Lama opines that desire creates discontent. Peaceful mind gives birth to happiness. Once-ler gradually becomes unhappy in spite of huge accumulation of material wealth. As he exploits all the Truffula trees, he feels the necessity of biospheric world. Hence, peace is the main prerequisite for happiness which Once-ler lacks.

Once-ler's self-centric and human centric developmental activities alienate not only non-human communities but also his 'self' which shows that excessive focus on "self" eventually departs us from internal peace. His self-centric attitude becomes clear when he states:

I felt a great leaping

Of joy in my heart.

I knew just what I'd do!

I unloaded my cart. (n.p.)

Once-ler's act of cutting Truffula trees gives momentary pleasure to him but makes nostalgic when he starts to feel detached from nature. He interferes over the beauty of the Truffula

trees. His heart leaps up as he takes exploiting nature is a chance to be rich. He glorifies his 'self' due to his ability to exploit nature. Regarding to the glorification of self, David Michie writes:

By holding "self", we hold "other."

Through "self and other," attachment and aversion arise.

And in connection with this

All faults occur. (184)

David focuses that self is the cause of our dissatisfaction. Self-focusing leads not to happiness but to unhappiness. Once-ler only focuses on 'self' disregarding the existence of other biotic and abiotic world. The act of dishonoring nonhuman world ultimately leads him to alienation. His faults of devaluating non-human world are the repercussion of giving priority to self.

The reason behind Once-ler's discontent is less preference to the happiness of other members of biospheric communities. In the name of industrialization, he snatches the happiness of other creatures by hacking Truffula trees at a great speed that sends all the non-human communities towards extinction. Once-ler confesses his crime with a curious child:

And at that very moment, we heard a loud whack!

From outside in the fields came a sickening smack

Of an axe on a tree. Then we heard the tree fall.

The very last Truffula Tree of them all! (n.p.)

Once-ler's utilitarian thinking continues till the single tree remains there. He does not speculate what difficulties he has to face after the complete exestuation of trees. His admiration of consumerism ultimately leaves the place with no trees at all. His destructive activities lead him to restlessness. He cannot be happy as he does not contribute to the happiness of other creatures. Supporting the idea of the Dalai Lama about "Being wisely selfish", David Michie writes, "We want to be happy, so the best thing we can do is to

contribute to the happiness of others" (134). His anthropocentric desire turns to evil nature as he undervalues the existence of other creatures. He knowingly exploits the nature, without thinking his predicament due to the loss of biospheric world.

Once-ler's anthropocentric decision of unmanaged industrialization creates his identity crisis along with his departure with bio-centric communities. His unwise decision and environment unfriendly activities lead to the present condition of isolation. His obsession with materiality snatches his identity as he forgets where he is standing. His mental status after being detached with his relatives and nature can be read easily as he says, "I've sat here and worried / and worried away" (n.p.). As past determines the present, Once-ler's past activities are liable for creating present miserable situation of alienation. David Michie writes:

If we want to know how our life will be in the future, we should look at how we think and act today. We are the sum total of the decisions we make. Or, to quote the Dalai Lama, "Our present condition is not something causeless nor is it something caused by chance. It is something we ourselves have steadily constructed through our series of past decisions and the actions of body, speech, and mind that arouse from them.

(67)

Michie is in the opinion that the series of present decisions, speech and actions determine how our future will be. It is required to think about the repercussion of present actions while making any decisions. Hasty and unwise environment unfriendly decision and actions make Once-ler feel alienated. His decisions and activities create long term effects. His obsession with material progress only creates identity crisis.

Once-ler's Self-realization

The self-realization of Once-ler at the end of the narrative shows the unavoidable reciprocity between human and nature. Humming-fish, Barba loots, and Lorax get vanished

from their existence due to Once-ler's encroachment towards their habitat resulting in the scarcity of their food. Once-ler keeps himself busy with cutting Truffula trees as long as they are available in the beginning. It is his crime to exploit nature irreparably which he took as an opportunity to be mighty rich.

Once-ler's anthropocentric activities not only destroy biological wealth but also invites alienation in the life of Once-ler. It creates the loss of vegetation, medicines and crops which leads to the feeling of unhappiness and alienation in Once-ler's life. He admits:

I've sat here worried
and worried away
Through the years, while my buildings
Have fallen apart,
I've worried about it
With all of my heart. (n.p.)

Once-ler's material gain and prosperity are useless as they cannot give pleasures to him. His buildings are standing there in the Lorax Lifted Land but his heart has fallen apart due to his crime of complete exploitation of nature. The germination of alienation begins with destruction in nature.

Once-ler does not allocate time for listening the appeal of Lorax who frequently appeals for their survival. Now, Once-ler himself cannot survive in the polluted environment being created by him. Once-ler's self-realization begins after the complete extermination of Truffula trees. He realizes that trees are important not only for human beings but for all the creatures as he says "Truffula Trees are what everyone needs" (n.p.). It shows he is ashamed of the task he did in the past. He realizes the importance of biospheric world only at the end of the narrative and wants to inspire a curious child to be involved in the process of the returning Lorax, the Bar-ba-loots and other species in the Lorax Lifted Land. Once-ler

provides Truffula Seeds to the curious child thinking that children can grow a forest again and Lorax and all his friends may come back again. Giving the last seed of Truffula trees to the curious child, he states:

Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care.
 Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air.
 Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack.
 Then the Lorax
 And all of his friends
 May come back. (n.p.)

He provides the last seed of Truffula trees to a child not to a matured person as he thinks that the habit of planting of trees should be cultivated from young ages so that the disappearance of creatures can be stopped. Children are innocent in nature and curious to be acquainted with new things. They have the habit to show sympathy over even non-human communities. They are human beings but their attitude is not anthropocentric. Naess argues:

Conservation strategy will be more eagerly implemented by persons who love what they are conserving, and who are convinced that what they love is intrinsically lovable. Such lovers will not want to hide their attitudes and values, but rather will increasingly give voice to them in public. They have a genuine ethics of conversation, not merely a tactically useful instrument for social and political ends. (49)

Naess is in the opinion that conservation is to be done by heart. It gets success only on the condition that the person involving in the process knows what he/she is conserving along with the reason behind the conservation. Once-ler provides the last seed of Truffula trees to the child as he is curious to learn the reason behind the disappearance of Lorax and other species. Once-ler thinks that the child is free from obsession with materiality having genuine ethics of conserving nature who can take care of the seed to grow Truffula trees again. The

child is really a serious and inquisitive in the sense that he shows interest to learn the reason behind the disappearance of Lorax and other species.

The feeling of superiority of Once-ler and his obsession with material progress turns him to inferno. So, the notion of human superiority should turn to the thinking of equal status of all the biosphere communities which create the space for the survival of all the species with harmony and co-operation. Once-ler realizes the importance of Truffula trees and biospheric world after the complete exhaustion of Truffula trees and non-human world. This research postulates that urbo-centric, anthropocentric attitude, lack of bio-centric outlook and so-called human superiority are responsible for the extinction of Lotax and other Bar-ba-loots in *The Lorax*. The environmental unfriendly activities of Oncel-er muddle the symbiotic relation between human and non-human world. This disorder brings chaos not only for other species but also for human beings too. The fall of Truffula trees and extinction of non-human communities ultimately create Once-ler's identity crisis as he can't imagine the reciprocal relationship of human beings with nonhuman communities. Once-ler does not imagine his predicament at the time of exploiting nature which shows that human identity is intimately reciprocal with the identity of nature and animals. Val Plumwood states:

Instrumentalism involves the assumption that all other species are available for unrestricted human use, although it is unlikely that many of those steeped in the ideology of human supremacy will see human as mutually and reciprocally available for non-human use (for example , as food). Instrumentalism in this form is clear expression of anthropocentrism and of an arrogant attitude to the other which sees it in the guise of a servant of the self. (113)

Plumwood is against the feeling of instrumentalism. People guided by instrumentalism think that nonhuman communities are available only for human beings. They take non-human communities just as an instrument to satisfy their non-vital needs. They forget the reciprocity

between the biotic and non-biotic world too. Plumwood further states, "One of the most important things to aim to establish in any strategy here is the cultivation of recovery of ways of seeing beings in nature in mind –inhabited ways as other centres of needs and striving, to replace the reductionist view of them as mere mechanical resources for the use of centre that is the self" (113). Plumwood forwards his view against anthropocentric view and states that it is required to honour the existence of all biotic and abiotic world to establish harmonious relationship between them. In *The Lorax*, Once-ler, does not understand the value of each species. He devaluates the reciprocal relationship with the components of nature. As he is not able to honour the existence of other elements, his identity also gets lost along with the extinction of other creatures. His predicament is the result of the predicament of other species as he is unaware about reciprocal relationship with the identity of nature and animals.

Focusing in instrumentalism, Val Plumwood writes, "Human centred ethics views nature as possessing meaning and value only when it is made to serve the human/colonizer as a means to his or her ends"(111). Human beings show their feeling of superiority because they think that there was not the involvement of plants and animals in the process of human civilization. They think that they lack negative qualities which animals possess. In *The Lorax*, Once-ler thinks that nature is available for use without restriction. He thinks that he is superiority to nature due to his rationality. Due to his feeling of superiority, he exploits nature in such a way that he feels alienated due to his own environment unfriendly behaviors.

Once-ler's material thirst is the reason behind the suffering of Gaia. He consciously creates hardship attacking on Gaia. Gaia hypothesis states that all the living matters from whales to viruses and oaks to algae could be taken as a single living entity. It consists of earth's biosphere, atmosphere, oceans and soil. J. E. Lovelock writes:

We have since defined Gaia as a complex entity involving the Earth's biosphere, atmosphere, oceans, and soil; the totality constituting a feedback or cybernetic system

which seeks an optimum physical and chemical environment for the life of this planet.

The maintenance of relatively constant conditions by active control may be

conveniently described by the term 'homoeostasis'. (12)

The hypothesis focuses that the earth is a single organism. Gaia is taken as mother. She keeps enduring all the fragmentations and manifestations Human culture is a part of nature. As a mother, she keeps bearing all the hardships created by human beings. In the Lorax, Once-ler's activities compel the nature to tolerate hard ship. Although, Onec-ler continuously cuts Truffula trees and changes the glorious land into inhabitable land, nature is found tolerating calmly.

Chapter IV

Decadence in Human Condition in *The Lorax*

The research work concludes that the escalation of material progress is the reason behind the decadence of human condition in *The Lorax*. The entire discussion on the previous two chapters on the issue has helped to get the insights on how a person feels alienated when he excludes other species from their existence. The discussion shows how the detachment with nature excludes the space for the survival of human beings with happiness. The chosen text *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss has been examined, analyzed and interpreted by applying Eco critical perspectives. The primary concern of the narrative is to inform the readers about the possible consequences if there is not the blending of human nature and nature. Once-ler is unable to give continuity to his material progress since he cannot blend human nature with nature.

After the thorough analysis of *The Lorax*, the researcher has reached to the conclusion that material pleasures are not true bliss, and taking resort to nature is more rewarding to humans. The protagonist in the narrative feels alienated due to the loss of affinity to the nature. The self-realization of Once-ler at the end of the narrative shows the unavoidable reciprocity between human and nature. Once-ler's realization of the importance of placial attachment adds the necessity of biospheric feeling. Dr. Seuss has admirably justified that existence of human life is deeply rooted to nature and culture. Due to the detachment with nature, Once-ler feels alienated. Lorax is very sincere about the importance of natural environment that Once-ler initially ignores. Lorax is well aware of the possible consequences of environmental degradation. His striving effort becomes useless due to head long thirst of Once-ler for material progress.

The obsession of Once-ler to accumulate infinite wealth by chopping Truffula trees gives transitory blisses in the beginning. Later on, his obsession of material prosperity not

only declines environment but also creates his identity crisis as he ignores the existence of biospheric community. He never pays attention to the warning of Lorax about the repercussion of excessive interference over nature. He transforms the glorious green land into Lorax Lifted Land with motive of getting affluence. In fact, he invites not only the economic predicament but also the alienation in his life.

Lorax, being an animal, continuously stands in the favour of environment which shows his placial attachment. He is environment consciousness who is aware of the reciprocal relationship between biotic and abiotic communities. He wants to maintain beauty, serenity and harmony of the biospheric communities which Once-ler devalues. He is well aware of the importance of symbiotic relationship between different species. He persistently makes Once-ler aware as a representative of non-human community. However, Once-ler's anthropocentric activities keep him aloof from rest of the species. He detaches not only with environment but also with his self as he lacks internal peace after the complete destruction of Truffula trees. He regrets upon his environment unfriendly activities and realizes his crime of chopping trees and the destruction of biospheric communities. He changes his idea from cutting to cultivation and inspires children to be involved in the act of protection of environment as the habit of cultivating plants requires being cultivated from childhood.

The tussle between Lorax and Once-ler is the conflict between human nature and nature. Nature is always giving, A Gia whose abundance is taken granted by Once-ler whose material thirst becomes problematic later on. He disregards the components of the environment and underestimates the biospheric outlook of Lorax. The tussle remains as long as the single Truffula trees remains there. His hubris disintegrates along with his detachment with biospheric community. Once-ler's feeling of alienation germinates as a result of his inability to blend his nature and nature.

Once-ler feels alienated as he ignores the fact that all living beings and things depend upon nature. He follows anthropocentric culture that denies the existence of other non-human communities. He just takes environment as an instrument for his material progress. Once-ler feels that he is superior to other species and exploits the Truffula trees as long as they are available to establish himself as a successful industrialist. Due to his obsession with materiality, he neither listens to the warning of Lorax nor becomes conscious about the importance of environment. The inclination of his hubris gradually becomes uncontrollable. When he uses up all the Truffula trees, he feels detached from nature. He feels alienated. Hence, the escalation of material progress creates the downfall in Once-ler's condition. The disassociation between Once-ler's anthropocentric attitude and Lorax's persistent warning to Once-ler not to abuse nature shows human hubris ultimately causes environmental degradation. Lorax utters incomplete sentence with complete sense of nature, however, Once-ler's happiness also disappears along with the disappearance of the Lorax which indicates that Once-ler is unable to give biospheric outlook that all the species are equal in biospheric cybernetic system. The existence of Once-ler is only possible in the existence of the Lorax as the Lorax represents nature.

Both Lorax and Once-ler admire nature for different purposes. Lorax's emotional attachment with nature and Once-ler's attraction towards nature due to consumerism and anthropocentric desire create tussle between them. The research shows the impacts of industrialization and modernization over natural environment. By consuming the resources of the nature, Once-ler, makes radio-phonewhich he uses to call his relatives to exploit the nature. He invents his Super-Axe-Haker which whacks off four Truffula trees at one smacker. He feels proud due to his gradual inventions; however, he does not think that the inventions have been possible by using the components of nature. He thinks that exploitation of nature is a great chance to get mighty rich. To be a rich person, he builds factories for knitting Thneeds

out of Truffula trees. However, he does not think what remains after the exhortation of the forest. Only at the end of the narrative, he realizes that all the living organisms have right to blossom and flourish no matter how small or big their size, number and shape are. After the disappearance of all the creatures and chopping all the Truffula trees, he thinks that human and non-human beings have their autonomous intrinsic value which becomes clear when he hands out the single remaining seed of Truffula tree to a curious child so that he can make a favourable environment for the existence of other creatures.

In this way, this research is based on alienation of Once-ler and excessive misuses of environmental components which proves that the escalation of material progress is the reason behind the decadence of human condition. Although Once-ler gets material prosperity, he can't get fresh air, the sight of attractive landscape, the companionship of birds, fish, animals and relatives, the internal peace. Material progress and good condition of human and nature do not occur simultaneously. As nature is mother, the physical attack of Once-ler over nature is against culture. As he cannot show his respect towards nature in time, he finds himself detached from nature and culture.

To sum up, the dissertation concludes that the objective of the researcher meets as per assumption in *The Lorax*. By following the insights of Eco critical perspectives and land ethics, *The Lorax* asserts that human cannot stay happily without the companionship of land, other creatures, culture and nature. Our respect for land and nature determines the harmony, integrity, happiness and serenity of all human and non-human world. As long as Once-ler devalues the intrinsic value of all the living and non-living things, he cannot make the world livable. He forgets his responsibility of taking care of the nature at the time of running his industries. He takes nature as his personal property forgetting the importance and rights of biospheric world. As a result, physical comfort cannot provide happiness to him. His transitory happiness disappears along with the disappearance of all the creatures around him

along with his relatives. His industries, factories, vehicles and Super-Axe Hacker become useless when he can't find raw materials for his industries, jobs for his workers, and livable environment for his family and relatives. The feeling of alienation is caused as he is unable to balance his personal happiness and economic prosperity. The excessive misuse of nature flourishes his economic condition as long as there is the availability of Truffle trees so as to run his factories which becomes the cause of his downfall. Once-ler's treatment of nature with monetary value makes him feel alienated from nature resulting in chaotic life.

At last, if any researcher is curious to carry out further research on the topic, the study will be beneficial. In addition to Eco critical issue, the text can be studied as a children's literature. Once-ler trusts only on children not to adult person, and provides a single remaining seed of Truffle tree to a child thinking that children can take care of the seed well to grow a forest so that Lorax and his friends can return into the Lorax lifted land again. Why does he select children to grow a forest? The further research can be conducted on the children's issue. Moreover, eco-linguistic reading of *The Lorax* can be an interesting area for further research.

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