

# Ecological Metaphor in Shinkai Makoto's Animated Film Tenki No Ko

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# Ecological Metaphor in Shinkai Makoto's Animated Film Tenki No Ko

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## Abstract

This paper discusses a 2019 animated film entitled Tenki no Ko by Shinkai Makoto. This film is Shinkai's most commercially successful work. Like other Shinkai's works, Tenki no Ko talks about a romantic story between two teenage characters. The film is not only a work of fantasy or romance, but it also brings up natural elements that are expressed in the plot. Not only do the natural elements expressed in the film send the message of global warming, but they also show the reality of human life. Therefore, the analysis will be carried out with an epistemological method to prove the truth of the reality of life that the film expresses. The explanatory element applied to the object is a metaphorical expression of the scenes with reference to the multimodal metaphor theory through an ecological perspective. The analysis aims to trace ecological metaphorical expressions in the film. The findings show that the dominant metaphorical expression is "human life is like the weather" which can be called an ecological metaphor in connection with the ecological relationship between the human characters and their environment.

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## Introduction

Anime, the Japanese word for animated film, is a product of Japanese popular culture that has attracted large audiences since Tezuka Osamu's Tetsuwan Atom (Astro Boy - 1963). It has now become a part of the Japanese industry with viewers and fans from all over the world. When film studies began to firmly set their feet as part of literature studies in the 20th century, anime has also become a part of literature research and made the window to see the world wider through research on anime in this 21st century (Bolton, 2018, p. 22).

The anime movie Tenki no Ko (Weathering with You), which was released in 2019, is the work of Japanese animator Shinkai Makoto, who rewarded him the Best Director award at the Tokyo Anime Award Festival (Arcadio, 2020). Thelen (2016) declares that

the Shinkai's anime work before *Tenki no Ko* entitled *Kimi no Na wa* (Your Name), which was released in 2016, managed to hold the status as the most commercially successful anime film work beating Miyazaki Hayao's anime work, *Sen to Chihiro no Kamikushi* (*Spirited Away*) as the first anime movie to win an Academy Award. Such success has been achieved by the director Shinkai through his work *Kimi no Na wa*, however, *Tenki no Ko* as his latest work, has now succeeded in attracting 28 percent more viewers compared to *Kimi no Na wa*, with more varied audience ages (Makoto Shinkai's "Tenki No Ko" Anime Grosses \$15 Million in 3 Days, 2019).<sup>4</sup>

*Tenki no Ko*, like some of Shinkai's previous works: *Kimi no Na wa*, *Koto no Ha no Niwa* (*The Garden of Words*), *Hoshi o Ou Kodomo* (*Children Who Chase Last Voices*), *Byōsoku Go-Senchimētoru* (*5 Centimeters per Second*), and *Kumo no Mukō Yakusoku no Basho* (*The Place Promised in Our Early Days*), tells the story of the romance between two teenage characters. Even so, as Yoneyama (2020, p. 2) says that Shinkai Makoto's works, like Miyazaki Hayao's, cannot just be categorized as fantasy works, because they focus on the struggles of the life the protagonists.

The animated film *Tenki no Ko*, which is the object of study in this paper, apart from raising the romantic story between the two main characters Morishima Hodaka and Amano Hina, is characterized by an element of natural events which is also found in several recent works of director Shinkai (Riandi, 2021). Referring to the opinion of Flint et al, Mumcu and Yilmaz (2018, p. 2) assert that in Japanese folklore, human's existence always appears to be related to nature. Human relationship with the surrounding natural environment cannot be separated. Therefore, the analysis of the anime movie *Tenki no Ko* will be carried out through an ecological review. Ecology can be understood as a part of science that studies the reciprocal relationship between living things and their natural surroundings (Wulandari, 2017). How films can contribute to ecology, Read (2019) says that when we watch a film, what happens to us is that we are connected to a world that has previously been drifted away because of our individualism in everyday life. Then, the ecological review in the anime movie *Tenki no Ko* is to pay attention to the relationship between human characters and the surrounding environment which includes the relationship among humans and between humans and nature, so this analysis does not merely focus on the romance of the main characters, the romance will act as the part of the main character's relationship with the surrounding environment.

Even though the anime *Tenki no Ko* is characterized by natural events as the dominant element, Yoneyama (2020, p. 6) emphasizes that what Shinkai expresses in his work is not just about the global warning issue, but about staying alive and fighting for life through the teenagers' expression in their relationships with nature and the environment. Therefore, the interpretation of this anime work apart from being carried out through an ecological review, is through how "life" is expressed. The expression will be traced through metaphorical reflection in connection with the message "live" which Yoneyama states that it does not appear denotatively. For this reason, this paper aims to trace ecological metaphorical expressions in the animated film *Tenki no Ko* (Shinkai, 2019) using the epistemological method.

Ecological metaphors are metaphors whose emergence is due to the dynamic relations between the human brain, body, and real world ecologies (Gibbs, 2019, p. 33), which results in ecological context being the main reference in finding metaphorical expressions. Confirming Gibbs' statement, Jensen and Greve (2019, p. 13) explain that ecology is a relationship that takes place in the environment, as a location for the emergence of metaphors in human cognition, and thus, metaphorical expressions will be closely related to the environment. As one example, Ghazinoory (2021, p. 578)

introduced the expression “innovation ecotone” which he called the most rigorous metaphor for innovation and its environment, to show the contribution of the ecological metaphor to environmental problems. This statement shows that the expression of metaphors, which are specifically called ecological metaphors, can be traced through the relationship between humans and their environment. In this study, the environment that is expressed in the animated film *Tenki no Ko* acts as an ecological context as a ‘location’ for tracking metaphors. <sup>1</sup>

This paper uses the epistemological method to prove the allegation that the finding of the metaphor “human life is like the weather” in the text of the animated film *Tenki no Ko* is the truth, through the application of causal logic by emphasizing the explanation process between scenes and ecological phenomena.

Tracing the metaphorical expressions of the animated film *Tenki no Ko* refers to the multimodal metaphorical theory which will be discussed in the discussion section. And as stated above, the message of “live” appears dominantly through the plot and the dominant metaphor in this anime appears as the phrase “human life is like the weather”. How this metaphor is expressed in the scenes of the plot will be discussed in depth in the results and discussions section below.

### Method

The analysis in this paper uses the epistemological method, as stated in the introduction above. Epistemology is the study of knowledge, namely how something is expressed as knowledge through justification and explanations (Ejnavarzala, 2019, p. 94; Santos, 2018) by causal contact with the object of study (Jenkins, 2020, p. 118). In this research, the causal contact occurs through intense observation of the scenes in the entire *Tenki no Ko* anime plot, which is limited to diegetic elements by focusing on the actions of the characters.

In identifying and validating knowledge to get the truth, it is important to pay attention to avoiding errors, that is by looking for reliable and competent aptness (Sosa, 2017). To avoid the occurrence of errors, it is as stated earlier that the explanations play a role in achieving a valid and justifiable understanding. McCain (2020) says that the way of explanations depends on the existence of two elements: “the explanandum” and “the explanans”. The explanandum refers to the object being explored, specifically causal contact with the object of the film *Tenki no Ko* through scenes in the plot that focus on the actions of the characters. Then, the explanans is the elements that support the explanandum to get the truth, namely by understanding the phenomena that are expressed metaphorically by the scenes in the plot through an ecological review. The findings of the metaphors expressed in the scenes use multimodal metaphor theory which will be described in more detail in the following chapter. Therefore, the scenes in *Tenki no Ko* will serve as a location or source to track and find ecological metaphors. The way to collect data is through scenes that express ecological metaphors.

The expression of metaphorical scenes with an ecological view serves as explanatory models, and the formation of this model is what generates understanding (de Regt & Baumberger, 2020) and attains knowledge based on causal relationships, that is based on truth, that is in accordance with the context of the ‘world’ shown through this animated film.

As previously stated, the entire plot of the *Tenki no Ko* film expresses the metaphor of “human life is like the weather”. The determination of the metaphor refers to the multimodal metaphor theory put forward by Forceville (2009), which is the metaphor

“whose targets and sources are represented exclusively or predominantly in different modes”. The definition of the metaphor shows two things, they are “the first: the metaphor structure consisting of ‘target’ and ‘source’, and the second: a multimodal metaphor is a metaphor expressed through various modes” (Sutanto et al., 2021, p. 6131).

In principle, when we mention a metaphorical expression, there will be two domains that arise in connection with the understanding that metaphor is making a supposition towards something. Rohdin (2009) states that in films, the target and source of multimodal metaphors appear in the form of pictorial signs, written signs, spoken signs, nonverbal sounds, and music. In connection with these modes, the verbal mode in films is inseparable from the visual mode that underlies the appearance of the verbal mode, and the visual mode that forms targets and sources is not shot to shot, but as a series of shots with a certain duration, as said by Sutanto et al (2020, p. 87) that “The target and source of metaphor are determined according to mise-en-scene, ... referring to the type of mode proposed by Rohdin”. This is in line with the statement of Ureña Gómez-Moreno (2017) which quotes Kappelhoff and Muller, that the scenes in films are seen as narrative units presenting “cinematic expressive movements” as areas where metaphors emerge. By referring to the target and source as a metaphorical structure, tracking the metaphorical expression is carried out by identifying which part of the scene reflects the target and which reflects the source, and what mode forms it. The process of setting targets and sources found in these scenes is a work of interpretation or a process of understanding, to produce a conclusion that Tenki no Ko represents an ecological metaphor.

## Results and Discussion

### Results

The plot in the early part of the anime movie Tenki no Ko tells the story of the main character Morishima Hodaka (called Hodaka), a 16-year-old teenager, who is on a ship that is anchored to Tokyo because he flees from his hometown. On the ship, Hodaka begins his interaction with the major character Suga Keisuke (called Suga) who became his lifesaver. After arriving in Tokyo, Hodaka has difficulty surviving, causing him to meet the main character Amano Hina (called Hina), a 15-year-old girl who has lost her mother and lives alone with her younger brother Nagisa. Hodaka, who accidentally finds a gun that he thinks is a toy, starts having problems when he fires the gun to help Hina, who is about to be hired as a comfort girl. Hodaka's relationship with Suga continues with being Suga's assistant who gives him a place to live and causes him to interact with Natsumi, Suga's niece. When Hodaka later finds out that Hina is a hareonna (a girl who can change the weather), he invites Hina to make this talent a business. Their business turns out very successful, but the repeated requests make them decide to stop the business. The conflict between the two main characters culminates with Hodaka being a fugitive from the police due to the possession of the gun he shoots so that he is kicked out by Suga. Hina and her sister Nagisa must flee due to their age being too young to live alone without supervision. At that time, the weather is in bad condition with heavy rain pouring down on Tokyo, and apparently, Hina's role in controlling the weather causes her to have to pay compensation for losing her human existence and becoming hitobashira (victim). Hodaka, caught by the police, struggles to escape to save Hina and searches for her in a rooftop in an abandoned building in Yoyogi Kaikan, where a torii (gate of a Shinto shrine) is located and turns Hina into a hareonna. The climax of the plot takes place with a change in Suga's attitude, preceded by Natsumi, to help release Hodaka from the police so that he can save Hina back into a human being. Hodaka manages to return Hina back to earth, even though the

rain continues to flush Tokyo and eventually drowns a part of the city. The anticlimax of the plot is when Hodaka returns to Tokyo after he finishes high school in his hometown and ends with a happy ending with Hodaka's reunion with Hina.

In the metaphor of "human life is like the weather" which is expressed through the entire plot in *Tenki no Ko*, "human life" is the one that acts as the target, and "weather" is the source.

#### **Hodaka and Tokyo – The Beginning of The Plot**

The scene at the beginning of the plot is conveyed with the monologue of Hodaka at 03:28 saying "Ano natsu no hi, ano sora no ude de, bokutachi wa sekai no katachi o kaete shimattan da" (That summer day, above the sky, we changed the shape of the world), expressing this metaphor through the statement "we have changed the world", and "above the sky".

A scene that also expresses the metaphor of "human life is like the weather" is when the main character Hodaka is on a ship that is taking him to Tokyo. The deteriorating weather brings heavy rain to take down the ship, and Hodaka, who is standing on the deck of the ship, sees the rain coming, then skids (the scene at 5:23) due to the ship being shaken by the torrential downpour of rain. He slips and almost falls into the sea before being saved by Suga, who grabs and holds his hand. As soon as Hodaka is saved by Suga, suddenly the sky turns bright again, and the sunlight shines on the location where he is helped by Suga and then illuminates the entire ship.

The ecology in this scene reflects the relationship between humans and their environment, which is not only about the relationship with nature but also with other human beings. Hodaka's meeting with Suga as the savior of his soul then builds an emotional relationship, and in the end, it shows how the relationship expresses the metaphor "human life is like the weather".

#### **Hareonna Compensation – The Middle of The Plot**

The middle part of the *Tenki no Ko* plot focuses on Hina, who appears to be a hareonna (a girl who can change the weather), and she must pay compensation for her actions to control the weather. After meeting with Hina, beside making Hodaka fall in love with her, he also learns Hina's ability to change the weather, which is known as hareonna. This leads to the idea that Hodaka, who is in trouble getting money to survive, invites Hina to make her extraordinary ability a business. Hina, who is also in a state of economic difficulty, agrees with his idea. Furthermore, it is told that the condition of the city of Tokyo, which was constantly raining, turns their business very successful with many requests to make the sky clear.

Hina's role as a hareonna which has become a successful business for Hodaka and Hina, shows the part of "human life". As expressed through Hina's gesture at 34:44, she is trying hard in a prayer position to make the sky clear. She closes her eyes so tightly that her lips seem to tremble, and her sweat is running down her face. Her environmental condition, in which she has lost her mother, makes her try hard to earn income so that she can support her life with her younger brother Nagisa. Thus, she can keep staying with her brother due to their underage to live independently.

The following Hodaka monologues express the metaphor of "human life is like the weather" and reflect the human attachment to the natural environment. The first monologue at 36:43 states "Hito no kokoro tte fushigi da. ... Sora ga aoi dake de, ikite ite yokatta to omoetari, tonari ni iru dare ka o motto itoshiku omoetari suru" (The human

mind works mysteriously. ... <sup>2</sup>A blue sky makes you feel happy you are alive. It makes you feel more in love with that someone by your side), and the second dialogue at 38:10 states "Tada no sora no you ni konna ni mo kimochi ga <sup>2</sup>ugokun da. Hito no kokoro wa sora ni tsunagatte irun da to boku wa hajimete shitta" (We are influenced by the weather. I just realised the human mind relates to the sky).

In connection with Hina's role as hareonna, several parts of the scene described through the following dialogues show the existence of the hareonna, which simultaneously marks the relationship between humans and nature. A fortune-teller who is visited by Natsumi and Hodaka at 16:06 explains that a hareonna who takes action to control the weather, "shizen o sayuu suru kouji" that is, deliberate action to "control" nature, will get compensation which is called kamikakushi or disappearing from the real world.

Following the fortune teller's statement, the explanation of an old man who guards the temple visited by Suga and Natsumi emphasizes the compensation that must be paid by a hareonna. The old shrine guardian mentions that historically, hareonna used to be a miko (female shaman) whose role was curing the weather, "tenki o chiryou suru" (46:08). The phrase "curing the weather" emphasizes the intense relationship between humans and nature, especially with the weather. However, "curing the weather" does not mean "dominating or controlling" the weather that shows domination over the nature, but as the old grandfather <sup>2</sup>says at the minute 46:46, "Somosomo tenki to wa ten no kibun" (In the first place, the weather is a heavenly mood), that in fact humans cannot be superior to nature because human existence on earth is only as a karizumai (tenant).

The following part of the plot that talk about the compensation that Hina bears due to her actions controlling the weather. It suggests that human life is very fragile and has changed as well as the weather. The cinematic expression at 56:33 shows Hina suddenly floating in the air, and after coming back down to earth, she is depicted holding her hands together because some parts of her arms appear to be transparent like water with her sad and scared facial expression. This scene confirms that the connection between Hina and the weather is imbalance. What Hina has done is to act superiorly to nature.

Life changes in Hina as compensation for her to bear are also followed by those in Hodaka. His action in the scene at 20:06 such as pointing a gun to frighten a man with bad intentions towards Hina, causes him to become a fugitive for illegal possession of weapon. This results in Hodaka no longer being able to live with Suga, and likewise with Hina and Nagisa, who cannot continue to live in their mother's apartment because they are too young to live independently. The plot begins to reach the climax with Hodaka, Hina, and Nagisa deciding to run away from the police's search. The climax of this plot shows their lives change drastically like the weather due to their bad relations with the environment. Along with the changes in the lives of the two main characters, the weather in Tokyo gets worse with heavy rain that even causes planes and electric trains to be halted, flooding in various locations, and snowing even though it is in the middle of summer.

The climax culminates in the scene at 74:59 when finally in the middle of Tokyo's deteriorating weather, the three characters manage to find a place to stay in a luxury hotel room at an expensive price. In the middle of the night, Hina's body suddenly disappears and moves to a meadow in the sky above the clouds. She becomes hitobashira (victim). Hina, who has previously been superior to nature, experiences the opposite. She becomes inferior and makes contacts with natural balance again and that makes the heavy rain stop, the sky clears, and the temperature returns to summer condition.

After Hina disappears, Hodaka is caught by the police. However, his emotional attachment to Hina pushes Hodaka to take action to run away from the police station to

save Hina. The plot section that tells his efforts to save Hina simultaneously expresses the relationship with Suga and Natsumi, which also expresses the phrase “human life is like the weather”. Suga’s words to Natsumi by stating that a hitobashira will make everyone happy because it will return the crazy weather back to normal (66:54), show his awareness of letting Hina become a victim. Suga also emphasizes that Natsumi’s act of allowing Hina to act as a hareonna is an act that plunges Hina. This scene expresses “human life” through Suga and Natsumi’s awareness and their choice of behavior.

The following drastic changes in the actions of Natsumi and Suga emphasize that human mind which drives human to stay alive as the weather is vulnerable to change. Natsumi’s action at 81:13 is expressed through Natsumi riding her motorbike to approach Hodaka who is running away from the police, then put Hodaka on her bike and rushed him to the abandoned building in Yoyogi Kaikan to save Hina. Furthermore, changes to Suga are expressed through a two-part scene. The first is the scene where the police visit Suga’s residence, convey the reason Hodaka fled to look for Hina, and convey the matter of Hina’s disappearance due to the weather. At first, Suga shows a negative reaction to the police’s words, but the following policeman says at 85:39 “Daijoubu desu ka? Iyaa, anata, naite masu yo” (Are you okay? Well, you are crying) shows Suga’s emotional expression towards his relationship with Hodaka and Hina as well. The second scene happens when Suga intercepts Hodaka, who has arrived at the abandoned building where Hina becomes a hareonna. Suga tries to persuade Hodaka to turn himself into the police, but finally, at 89:55, his emotional relationship with Hodaka dominates the action by helping Hodaka escape police violence to rush to torii (Shinto shrine gate) on the rooftop.

The climax of the plot is the scene of Hodaka’s success in bringing Hina back down to earth which means making changes to their lives. This resulted in the weather getting worse again with heavy rains pouring down on Tokyo. This scene again expresses the metaphor of “human life is like the weather”.

#### **Denouement - The End of The Plot**

The scene in this anti-climax plot section shows Hodaka following a high school graduation ceremony. Through this scene, it is understood that after successfully saving Hina from returning to earth, he must serve his sentence for possession of illegal weapon. But as a juvenile his punishment does not involve jailtime, Hodaka is punished by being sent back to his hometown, continuing his education in high school for 3 years, and separated from Hina. The next scene is Hodaka returning to Tokyo by ship.

The situation of Tokyo is illustrated as a part of the city that has been submerged due to continuous rain for three years. In Tokyo, Hodaka meets Grandmother Tachibana, who previously receives Hina’s services as a hareonna. Grandmother Tachibana says that the part of Tokyo that has been sunk was originally a sea. Two hundred years ago, Tokyo, formerly known as Edo, was a bay (101:46). The cinematic expression on the depiction of Tokyo can be said to be a semi-apocalypse condition. Jones (2020) in his book states that ecology is a relationship between organisms and their environment, and when the relationship takes place imbalance, then what happens is they mutually destroy one another as an apocalypse event due to human organisms that are unable to go hand in hand with nature and the organisms around it. This is like the words of Grandmother Tachibana regarding the state of Tokyo, where parts of the city have been submerged, that when humans have changed nature, nature will react to return itself to its initial state.



Grandmother Tachibana says at 101:59, "sore o ningen to tenki ga sukoshi zutsu kaete kitan da" (human beings and the weather change little by little). Humans and the weather have changed the state of Tokyo and this shows that human life goes hand in hand with the weather and changes together. Likewise, the words of Suga in the following 103:24, when Hodaka meets Suga after he visits Grandmother Tachibana, he says "Sekai nan te sa, douze motomoto kurutten da kara" (The world has always been crazy anyway).

### Discussion

Scenes that express the metaphor "human life is like the weather" are found in all parts of the plot: the beginning, the middle, and the end of the plot, and the end of the plot.

At the beginning of the plot, there are two groups of scenes which express the metaphor "human life is like the weather". The first is the scene at minute 03:28 which is expressed explicitly through Hodaka's monologue, "Ano natsu no hi, ano sora no ude de, bokutachi wa sekai no katachi o kaete shimattan da" (That summer day, above the sky, we changed the shape of the world). The form of expressing this metaphor is spoken signs. The statement "we have changed the world" emphasizes human activity in his life, and the statement "above the sky" refers to the weather.

The second is the scene at minute 5:23 which is expressed through pictorial signs when Hodaka is on a ship that is taking him to Tokyo, namely the sudden change in weather along with a change in Hodaka's condition. The change in Hodaka's condition, who almost fell into the sea and was saved, reflects 'human life' which can change for a moment, marked by a description of the weather which also changes suddenly.

In the middle of the plot, the scenes that express the metaphor "human life is like the weather" are divided into three groups of scenes, namely scenes that show the actions of the first main character Hodaka, scenes that express the narration of the second main character Hina as a hareonna, and scenes that express the actions of the major characters Suga and Natsumi.

The scenes regarding Hodaka's actions are Hodaka's monologues at 36:43 and at 38:10, namely "Hito no kokoro tte fushigi da. ... Sora ga aoi dake de, ikite ite yokatta to omoetari, tonari ni iru dare ka o motto itoshiku omoetari suru" (The human mind works mysteriously. ... A blue sky makes you feel happy that you are alive. It makes you feel more in love with someone by your side), and "Tada no sora no you ni konna ni mo kimochi ga ugokun da. Hito no kokoro wa sora ni tsunagatte irun da to boku wa hajimete shitta" (We are influenced by the weather. I just realized the human mind relates to the sky). Hodaka's words show that human's emotion and mind that drive life are closely related and easily changed with the changing weather. These monologues are explicitly shown in the form of spoken signs that "human life is like the weather".

Hareonna is a form of a young woman in Japanese myth who is believed to be able to change the weather. The scene at minute 16:06: spoken signs through the words of a fortune-teller, the scene at minute 34:44: pictorial signs describing Hina's actions as a hareonna, and the scene at minute 46:07: spoken signs explaining hareonna's duties, indicating the target 'human life' in the metaphor "human life is like the weather", namely Hina's action that plays the role of a hareonna as a changer of the weather, expressing human activities related to nature. Then, the scenes at minute 56:33: pictorial signs describing Hina's physical changes, and the scene at minute 74:59 (the climax of the story): pictorial signs describing the sudden change in Tokyo's weather along with Hina's physical disappearance, indicating the source of "the weather", because these two scenes are directly related to weather matters and reflecting drastic changes.

Suga and Natsumi's actions in the following scenes emphasize human's life which tends to change, namely the scene at minute 66:54: spoken signs through Suga and Natsumi's dialogue which emphasizes their stance on allowing Hina to become a victim, then the scenes at minute 81:13, minute 85:39 and minute 89:55: pictorial signs and spoken signs that express changes in Suga and Natsumi's attitude. 'Human life' which changes easily like the weather as shown implicitly through these scenes is in harmony with the definition of ecology stated by Jensen and Greve. It emphasizes relations in the environment, namely that relations in the environment are relations between the elements contained therein including between humans as one element.

At the end of the plot (denouement), the metaphor "human life is like the weather" is expressed explicitly through two scenes in the form of spoken signs. The first scene is at minute 101:59: Grandmother Tachibana's words that "sore o ningen to tenki ga sukoshi zutsu kaete kitan da" (human beings and the weather change little by little). The statement "human beings" clearly refers to 'human life' which changes with the weather or with another expression "human life (changes) like the weather". The scene at minute 101:46 which shows the changes in the city of Tokyo emphasizes that human life constantly changes. The second scene is at minute 103:24: Suga says that "Sekai nan te sa, douze motomoto kurutten da kara" (The world has always been crazy anyway). The phrase "world" denotes "human life", and "has always been crazy" refers to changes associated with the weather.

The analysis shows that ecological metaphors have been found in ecological context (as Gibbs said), namely the imaginative world in animated films that is traced through plots. As Jensen and Greve emphasized the role of the environment, the imaginative world built in animated films shows the environment which contains the relationship between humans and nature, and the relationship between humans and humans. The depiction of nature in *Tenki no Ko* is dominantly expressed by the weather.

Regarding the relationship between the animated films *Tenki no Ko* and the weather, there are two other studies that state the following. Mulyadi (2022), who raises the issue of environmental problems, states that this animated film is an expression of the negative impact caused by global warming, as a message conveyed by the director to the audience to protect the environment. The second study shows that this animated film raises the issue of anthropogenic climate change through relations with myths which are understood as human constructions. The plot of this film is an allegory with a message that humans should not try to control the weather (Furuhata, 2022). This paper also emphasizes that the animated film *Tenki no Ko* expresses the weather as part of today's environmental problems. However, the study conducted in this paper is a tracking of metaphorical expressions which shows the result that the meaning of the story does not only focus on climate ('the weather'). The narrative also focuses on the problems of human life, so that the result of the interpretation of the entire film narrative is a reflection metaphor "human life is like the weather". The mythical element (hareonna) contained in the narrative is part of the plots which is indeed a human construction, but its role is to strengthen the metaphorical conveyance that human life is a unit with its environment, which is like the weather. Thus, this animated film is not only propaganda about environmental problems, but a story of human life.

### Conclusion

Film plays a role in helping us as viewers who realise ourselves as the parts of ecological system (Read, 2019: 1). This role has been carried out through the ecological

metaphor “human life is like the weather”, which expresses the message of the reality of life. The metaphor of “human life is like the weather” is “the truth” which has been proven epistemologically in the above analysis section. This metaphor is expressed in all parts of the plot, and its expression is related to the ecological concept based on the relationship between human characters and their environment. The metaphor of “human life is like the weather” is expressed in a visual mode through cinematic expressive movements and verbal modes which are also always related to cinematic expressions.

The metaphor of “human life is like the weather” includes the content from the animated film *Tenki no Ko*, which delivers the message of “reality” of human life that is always dynamic like the weather. And it is formed through the results of human relationships with the environment. Thus, the metaphor expressed through the scenes in this film can be called an ecological metaphor in connection with cinematic expressions that are always based on the ecological relationship between human characters and their environment including their relationship with humans and nature. The message of the reality of life, as stated by Yoneyama above, is that this animated film does not only convey global warming but on how humans, represented by the two main characters, must survive by maintaining their relationship with their environment.

The findings of the ecological metaphor “human life is like the weather” are limited to the scenes in *Tenki no Ko*, and this is the limitation of this study. Shinkai Makoto's animated films seem to be closely related to ecological phenomena, such as in *Kimi no Na wa* and *Byosoku 5 Senchimotoru*. Thus, tracking metaphorical expressions needs to be carried out on his other animated film works to draw connective conclusions between Shinkai Makoto's works.

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