

DRAMATIC ELEMENTS IN DASHNER'S MAZE RUNNER NOVEL AND FILM ADAPTATION

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Abstract. The research aims to reveal how the application of dramatic elements of Dashner's *Maze Runner* is transformed into its film adaptation. To achieve the purpose, the researcher analyzes seven dramatic elements by Gustav Freytag's Pyramid which consist of exposition, inciting moment, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, and denouement. This research uses the descriptive qualitative method. The results of this research are the differences of the dramatic elements in the novel and film adaptation are not significant because only the scenes of exposition and rising action are not similar.

Keywords: *Dramatic Elements, Maze Runner, Freytag's Pyramid*

INTRODUCTION

The narrative study is a vital aspect of literary work, particularly in a novel, a short story, a drama, and a narrative poem. Narrative not only shows in novel or short story but also happens in other activities, such as newsreader on television or explanation of teacher at school. Narrative has a coherent relationship between the sequence of events and characters. In a story, a character is part of events or plots which create the story that is interesting to read. A story without structures cannot make it is alive. Fludernik (2009) said that the study that learns about the narrative is called narratology.

Based on Fludemik (2009) said that narratology is a description of the constants, variables, and combinations typical of narrative and explaining how the characteristic of narrative texts connects within the structure of the theoretical model. Also, Keraf (2001) said that narrative tells more about dynamic life in a time series. It means a discourse that tells about the story as a reader who experiences the events. In short, a narrative is a structured form of communication, especially on literary work.

As a structure in a story means a text which contains about the collection of events chronologically until a story unity formed. It means that narrative study focuses on the events or plot of the narrative texts.

Gustav Freytag, a German scholar, recognized a plot as dramatic elements. In his concepts, Freytag (Griffith, 2006) explained that there are seven stages in the story's plot that is made into a pyramid. The stages are exposition, inciting moment, rising action, climax, falling actions, resolution, and denouement. Narrative opens with an exposition which establishes the setting and character. In the next stage, the story starts to act. There is something happen that triggers a conflict until the climax. After the climax, falling action follows and shows a result from conflict. The dramatic elements go down to a resolution in which character solves the conflict until the story ends. Freytag's pyramid facilitates an analysis of the plot from the moments in a story. It also organizes the ideas or points in the story when explaining through the basic problem of drama (Freytag, 1900). Those stages can be seen below;

No	Codes	Name	Operation
1	BGN	Begin	The story begins
2	TP1	Turning Point 1	Any indications that lead to climax
3	RA	Rising Action	Any indications of suspense or thrills
4	CP	Climax Point	The ultimate action of intense
5	FA	Falling Action	Any indications of anti-climax
4	TP2	Turning Point 2	Any indications that lead to resolution
5	END	End	The story ends

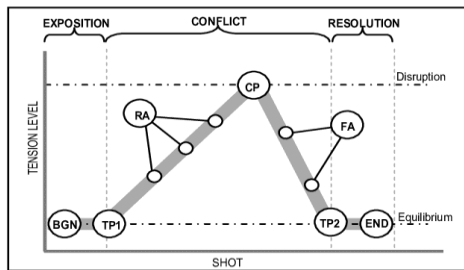


Figure 1 Freytag's Pyramid (Harun,2013)

Despite Freytag's dramatic elements approach emphasis the narrative structure, this concept facilitates the researcher to analyze more about the change of sequences of events or logical and chronological events that appears in the narrative text. As a result, this study urge to help the researcher to find logical and chronological events that appear in the novel and film adaptation. The concepts of Freytag's dramatic elements as the facility to find out the transformation in the novel and film adaptation by comparing the plot. this approach is very helpful for literary researchers in understanding changes in story plots so that they can show transformation in narrative structure. So, the researcher uses a novel and its adaptation to find the transformation in both plots.

METHOD

This study uses narrative theory, especially the theory of the dramatic elements from Freytag. Moreover, the researcher also uses the ecranisation theory. Ecranisation is the study about how literary work can be adapted into a film (Eneste, 1991). It is used for analyzing the transformation that happens between novel and film. Dramatic elements or plot is include the intrinsic element so that the researcher uses the

intrinsic approach as research. The subject in this research is a film adaptation entitled *Maze Runner* which is directed by Wes Ball (2014) and adapted from a novel by James Dashner (2009). The object of this research is limited to dramatic elements that are contained in *Maze Runner* novel and film. To apply the dramatic elements the research makes the comparison of Freytag's Pyramid between the novel and its adaptation. The plot is divided into seven stages, then each plot diagram is identified as the number of transformations in each stage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Dramatic Elements in *Maze Runner* Novel

a. Exposition

Exposition is the introduction of the story which contains what is needed for reader understanding. In this stage, the researcher finds out eight events that explain the introduction of the character, place, and situation. In the first evidence, the narrator explains the main character's name, Thomas. As it is explained "My name is Thomas", he thought" (Dashner, 2009:5). The second evidence is the introduction of the main character situation in the story. In the novel, he is depicted lost his memory and just knows about his name. It stated at this moment, "It was as if his memory loss had stolen a chunk of his language—it was disorienting. Different emotions battled for dominance in his mind and heart. Confusion. Curiosity. Panic. Fear." (Dashner, 2009: 7). Third, the introduction of the other character appears at this moment. He meets with another character in this novel, Alby who is the leader of the group. "It's a long story, shank," the boy said. "Piece by piece, you'll learn—I'll be takin' you on the Tour tomorrow. Till then ... just don't break anything." He held a hand out. "Name's Alby." He waited, clearly wanting to shake hands." (Dashner, 2009: 8). The fourth and fifth are depict the situation

around the character that shows the situation of the place and the situation of another character's feelings. Sixth is the introduction of the name of the place and the real situation around the place, as stated "*Thomas barely heard him, shocked by how much bigger it was up close. At least twenty feet across, the break in the wall went all the way to the top, far above. The edges that bordered the vast opening were smooth, except for one odd, repeating pattern on both sides.*" (Dashner, 2009: 17). Seventh talks about the objectives of the main character, he said that he wants. He wants to know about the maze and explores into the maze. He thinks that if he goes to the maze, he will find something. At least, a reason he was here. Therefore, he says to Chuck that "I want to be a Runner." (Dashner, 2009: 22). Runner means someone who must go outside and search for an exit way. The last is the introduction of the main character's opponents, Griever. The griever is a combination of animal and machine, he thinks that the griever horrific creature.

b. Inciting Moment

Inciting moment happens before rising action and after the exposition. The narrator shows in the *Maze Runner* novel about what is the first trigger which makes the problem goes up. In this stage, the researcher finds one that is triggered the problem. The event comes with a strange situation when there is another newbie come up after Thomas that nothing like this happened before.

"Newt, what's going on!" he yelled. Newt glanced over at him, then nodded and walked over, strangely calm in the middle of the chaos. He swatted Thomas on the back. "Means a bloody Newbie's comin' up in the Box." He paused as if expecting Thomas to be

impressed. "Right now."
(Dashner, 2009: 29)

The arrival of a newbie is an opening for a problem puzzle, because it causes a question, what will be happened next. Why are the creators sending them a newbie. The problem and the answers will appear after this moment.

c. Rising Action

In this stage find that thirteen rising actions that set up the problems into the climax. The presence of a girl inside the wall becomes the first big issue for the group because the creators always send a boy in each month. She only speaks one sentence, "Everything is going to change." *After the frozen moment, Newt steps forward to take a paper that is grabbed by her. The note is "She's the last one. Ever."* (Dashner, 2009: 33). The second rising action is when the girl leads him into his lost memory. Thomas is confused about himself. He denies an accusation that he knows her, but he doubts himself. He feels like he has a connection with the girl. The unusual situation comes after they arrived there. As said in this quotation "*Thomas's gut clenched. He knew that he and the girl were connected somehow. They'd come a day apart, she seemed familiar,...*" ((Dashner, 2009: 35). The third is when Thomas gets attacked by one of the groups, Ben. Ben is a boy has gotten a stung by Griever. He acts strange and rude to Thomas. He becomes such a monster, his teeth snapping open and closed a horrific clack. Thomas runs into the Homestead. Fortunately, they meet Alby who makes Ben can control himself. Ben is trying to tell Alby about his memory. He says that Thomas, "*He's the shank you wanna kill.*" *His voice was full of madness..... "He's not one of us!" Ben shouted. "I saw him—he's ... he's bad. We have to kill him! Let me gut him!"* (Dashner, 2009: 42).

The next issue that appears in the novel is something that was found behind a wall by Minho, the runner. Minho finds out something important from his running. He informs to Alby

and Thomas that he finds a dead Griever. The dead griever is an unusual finding. *"I wouldn't believe me if I were you, either. But trust me, I did. Big fat nasty one."* It's definitely never happened before, Thomas thought. *"You found a dead Griever,"* Alby repeated. *"Yes, Alby,"* Minho said, (Dashner, 2009: 49). It, the founded dead Griever, leads the next problem that they want to check it. Thomas sees something in the Maze, there are Minho and Alby who go to walk into the Glade. Bravely, Thomas moves forward to the exit door and runs as fast as he can. The door was closed. Now, Thomas, Minho, and Alby are outside of the Glade. He disbeliefs what he has done (Dashner, 2009: 67). That makes them find other problems they hear the noise from one of the darkened stone corridors. They are scared of what happened at that time. Minho stands up and he runs for leaving Thomas and Alby. It's a Griever.

Seventh is Thomas's memory gradually recovered. The first that he remembered is the girl, Teresa. Alby wants to meet Thomas without anyone because of his change. He sees everything in the past and knows who Thomas and Teresa are. He becomes angry at Thomas and messes around the place. He said *"I know who you are,"* Alby repeated slowly. *"Seen it. Seen everything. Where we came from, who you are. Who the girl is. I remember the Flare."* Thomas. (Dashner, 2009: 96). The other issue is when Thomas meets with the girl, he admits to his friend Newt that he feels like he has been here before he first got here. By the time he visits Teresa, Thomas starts to get his memory about his relation with Teresa in the last life.

The next problem that leads the story into the climax is the unfolding of a code of Glade. This code appears after the Glade becomes strange, that usually the door closed at night but that day the door is opened. It makes the Griever attacked Thomas and his friend. That makes Thomas and his friend start to think about how to overcome it. When they realize that the maze is a code, Thomas and the others want to

find out the code from the wall movements. Minho and the others already compare all the patterns each day but they found nothing. Then, Thomas has an idea with the wax paper to solve the code. Finally, they find out the words but they do not know the meaning.

Thomas did, putting together the eight pages of each day, in order from Section One to Section Eight. Each time, an obvious letter formed in the center of the crisscrossed mass of lines. After the F was an L, then an O, then an A, and a T. Then C ... A ... T. (Dashner, 2009: 154)

The words that they have found from the Maze are not enough to get solved. They still have to find another clue. He knows it's the one way to solve the code that he must get a sting by a Griever. After he decides that, he never talks it with anyone. The day comes, he gets closer to a griever on purpose. He only wants to get a sting, not taken like anyone. After getting it, he runs with all his power and tries to escape from the Griever. The grievers do not chase him because they have already got a boy for them and they bring that boy and go into the Maze. Thomas collapse to the ground and get a coma for three days.

The last evidence of rising action is when Thomas finds that he knows the reality of the Maze. Thomas has known that the creators sent them for testing ability and finding the best among them. But he did not know the reason. He just knows that Teresa helps the creators to create the Maze with him. As stated *"Teresa and I helped design the Maze. We helped create the whole thing."* (Dashner, 2009: 178) It is the reason why Thomas and Teresa were hated by the boys who got changing. Now, it's the last test. That's why they send Teresa and shut everything down for final analysis. They have to

go through the Griever hole for getting out of the Maze and shutting down the Griever.

d. Climax

The climax is the turning point of the story. The climax of this story can be found only one, it is when Thomas gets his memory and ask the other to leave the Maze. Most of them follow Thomas to go to the Griever hole. Even if there few people who decide to stay in the Glade. They keep trying to tell anyone that they are stupid if go through the Maze. But Thomas and the others are ready to fight and get out of this place. After that, they go into the Maze. When they get the Griever hole, the grieverers are waiting and ready to kill them. Alby sacrifices himself to save everyone but it is useless. Then, the others are ready for fighting the grieverers, while Thomas, Teresa, and Chuck go jump into the Griever hole and enter the code. They must fight with the Giever to escape from the Glade.

e. Falling Action

After they thrive to escape from Maze one by one the problem is resolved. The researcher finds two problems that are resolved, first is Thomas find creators of Maze and there is another life outside the Maze. In Maze Runner novel, this stage shows that Thomas and the others have fought Griever and entered the code. Then, they continue to meet the creators. *"Welcome back," the woman finally said. "Over two years, and so few dead. Amazing." Thomas felt his mouth drop open—felt anger reddden his face.*" (Dashner, 2009: 204). They find a lobby where W.I.C.K.E.D workers had been there. Then, a woman, whom Thomas knows, comes to them and says that the test is great because just a few people from them are dead. It makes Thomas and his friend anger about what the woman said. That also leads them to know about the creator of the Maze. After they meet with the creators, there is a group of people who destroy the lab and kill the workers. This group wants to rescue Thomas and the others, leads

them to the bus. They go to the place where safe from WICKED (Dashner, 2009: 205). It makes them believe there are lives behind the Maze.

f. Resolution

This is the completion stage. The problem which is suffered by them has done and they find out their fate. In this Maze Runner novel, Thomas and his friends are saved by a group of people and get some facilities that make their life better. As stated in this quotation, *"But despite that, despite everything, despite all the woman on the bus had told them about the world they'd reentered, Thomas felt safe for the very first time since coming out of the Box.* (Dashner, 2009: 213). They are going to go place named Scorch. Thomas and Teresa know that people who safe them are trying to get a cure from flare. Their purpose are attack the WICKED, stop experiments and tests, and hope that Thomas will join with them. After they get there, Thomas and the others have a rest.

g. Denouement

This is the last stage. This stage usually reveals something hidden from the story. Sometimes, the story can be done or continue to the next season because it has not finished yet. In the Maze Runner novel, the conclusion is the novel will continue to the second season. As said below;

By any reckoning, I think we'd all agree that the Trials were a success. Twenty survivors, all well qualified for our planned endeavor. The responses to the Variables were satisfactory and encouraging. The boy's murder and the "rescue" proved to be a valuable finale. (Dashner, 2009: 216)

The last, that is a memorandum that written by Ava Paige WICKED. It is about the success of

their experiment. They are never expected that this group can survive until the end. They also said that what they are planning now is good for them, because their purpose to create those experiments for serving and preserving humanity. Last, on the memo is noted that there is the second stage after they get a rest for a night.

B. Dramatic Elements in *Maze Runner* Film

a. Exposition

The researcher finds the expositions in the film are five events. The first is the introduction of some characters in this movie. The movie starts with a boy bought by the box and goes up to the Glade. He doesn't remember his life even his name. He feels strange, confused, curious, and gets panic when the box goes faster. He shouts asking for help until the box stops and opens itself. The next event is showing the place. After the box opens up, Thomas is bought by Gally and thrown toward the boys who gather there. Suddenly at minutes 02:28, he runs away from that place because he is too afraid of around him. He keeps running until he falls off and realizes the place. The place was named Glade is like a big yard and circled in the wall. The next event is telling about the situation inside the Glade that introduces by Alby. It found that need 16 minutes to introduce the character, place, and situation.

b. Inciting Moment

Inciting moment start when Thomas gets a dream. He sees people in a laboratory and there is a girl sound. It said 'he will be safe in here, WICKED is good, and everything is gonna change.' When Thomas wakes up because of that dream, he meets Alby. The other moment is when the other boy, Ben, attacks Thomas because Ben thinks that it's Thomas's fault, he saw him, Thomas made all this. Thomas defends himself when Ben wants to choke him. He runs away and asks for help. From Ben, he has just known that Ben is changing because of Griever's

stung. They don't have a cure for this stung, so they decide to throw Ben away from the Glade.

c. Rising Action

During rising action, the main characters get a basic problem and become complicated with others. The main characters frustrate and difficult to reach their goal. In this stage, the researcher finds the problem that leads to a turning point in the story, there are eight. The first is when Minho and Alby are going to the Maze for checking up something the place where is Ben got the stung. But, until the door almost closed, they both don't back. The Glader is anxious. Moreover, they are waiting for them in front of the door. Then, Thomas tries to help him to come inside the wall, but they trap inside the wall. That problem leads the main character into a new problem that he must face a monster inside the wall, the Griever. Fortunately, he can overcome the Griever. Then it leads him to another problem that the Glader wants to investigate the Griever dead body. Minho starts to investigate it, then find that there is a detection machine inside of the heart. After getting it, they discuss it and Thomas becomes a runner officially. Then, Minho shows up the map to Thomas in a room. He suggests that the detection machine is from section seven. In the early morning, Thomas and Minho are going to the Maze. They want to reveal the detection machine whether it is useful or not. Thomas is correct that the detection machine is key for opening a hole. They suggest that the hole is the way out for the Grievers at 01:10:23. Then, the hole is closed. They run over the place because the maze has moved.

The other event that shows rising action in this story is the sign that the box comes up to bring a new person. At minutes 44:44, they gather toward the box. The person is different from others because it is a girl. She brings a paper that written 'she is the last one, ever'. It means that no more boxes are sent to them. When the girl wakes up from her faint, she says

'Thomas' then she back to be faint. All of the people there are looking Thomas, while Thomas does not understand what happened. That leads to the other problem that Thomas wants to know about his lost memory. Then, Thomas stung himself with Griever's stung, then he remembers that he is part of the creator. Teresa and Thomas help the creator to observe the boys who are placed in the Glade. Thomas knows that the exit way is the Griever's hole. They have to pass the way. But, Gally and the others come to tie up Thomas and Teresa. Gally blames them that cause this chaos. At 01:27:53, Thomas defends himself and his friends also help him. So, there are two groups, between Thomas and Gally group. Thomas group leaves the Glade and gets ready to go to the Griever's hole, while Gally group is still in the Glade.

d. Climax

The climax of this story when Thomas and his group try to leaves the Glade. They get some problems when they want to escape. Arriving at the place, they set the strategy who entering the hole at first. Teresa and Chuck bring the key and enter the hole at first. The grieverers are waiting for them and they are ready for fighting. When they are protecting themselves and trying to kill the Griever, Teresa and Chuck enter the hole successfully. They shout what is the code to enter the door. Minho finds that based on the movement of the Maze in each section. Finally, they succeed to open the door and the grieverers are killed by the wall that falls to close. This moment is a climax in the film because it's a turning point from the problem. They decide their fate whether it has a good ending or bad ending.

e. Falling Action

In this stage, two events explain the falling action. First, After they enter the hall toward the laboratory of WICKED. They are out of the words because the laboratory is in a mess, many bodies lying on the laboratory's floor, and something

happens to that place. Thomas looks at the screen. At 01:37:09, there is a record that a woman speaks to them. The record is taken before something happened to them. The woman is a doctor Ava Paige, the director of WICKED. She says congratulation to them who survive until the end. She also says that there is dangerous sick called flare attacking people outside. It becomes the reason why WICKED test the young man. They are important to WICKED. They have to trust them that the WICKED is good. Until that part, she kills herself. Second, they know that there is someone on purpose to control Gally to kills Thomas and the group.

f. Resolution

The resolution on this stage is when they can escape from the Maze, overcome Gally and the WICKED. Then a group of people comes to them and they said *"You're safe now. Relax, kid. Everything is gonna change."* It shows that the problem that they get in the story is going to end. They go up to the helicopter without know who the group is. Inside of the helicopter, a man says to them that they are safe now, everything is going to change. Finally, they are leaving the WICKED and the Maze. This moment is a resolution for the story. They have to find their fate and solve the problem. From the story, their condition is safe because they have passed the test and help by a group to go to a safe place.

g. Denouement

The stage is the final of the story that is not only resolving the problem but revealing the secrets or misunderstandings that happens in the story. It also creates normality for characters and releases tension (Freytag, 1900: 137-140). In this stage, after revealing the creator of the Maze, the story reveals the other secret about the creator. As known, the woman that appears in the video is dr. Ava Paige has been killed. The recording is a fake for Thomas and the others. She says that the maze trial is a success. She feels amazing to Thomas because he shows the

progress for their trial. For now, they are taking the bait and will be the key to everything. She also says that WICKED can start test two. This moment is revealing something that hidden from the story.

C. Transformation in *Maze Runner* Novel and Film Adaptation

After knowing about the dramatic elements inside *Maze Runner* Novel and Film Adaptation, the research tries to compare the general structure between two-story, then finding the transformation of the story by each stage. To get better understand the dramatic elements illustrate into Freytag's pyramid, as below;

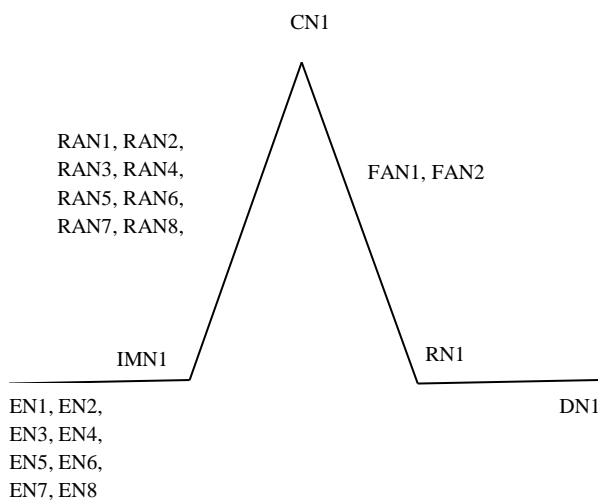


Figure 2 Pyramid of Dramatic Elements in Novel

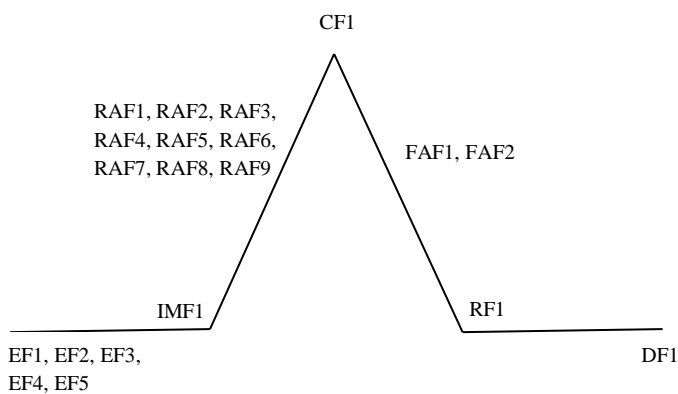


Figure 3 Pyramid of Dramatic Elements in Film

As displayed, each pyramid contains exposition, inciting moment, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, and denouement. Some moments have changed but the important point in the story is similar. For example, eight moments are important in exposition. But, the exposition of the film is five moments only. Furthermore, the rising action of the novel is thirteen moments which are important in the story. But, the rising action of the film is nine moments.

In short, this comparing dramatic element in the story between two-story will help the researcher to find the general structure and transformation that appears in the narrative text. Then, the researcher can use other approaches to analyze the context inside the text.

CONCLUSION

The dramatic elements in both of them are similar which have exposition, inciting moments, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, and denouement. the comparison between the dramatic elements in the novel and film are not significant. The differences are the number of scenes in exposition and rising action. It was found that the exposition in the novel consists of eight scenes and the rising action consists of thirteen scenes. But in the film, the exposition consists of five scenes and the rising action consists of nine scenes.

the transformation happens because of many reasons. The reasons are the first, it happens because of the changing of setting. For example, the novel tells that the sun disappears and the door cannot be operated. The place seems like a creature of human which can be turned off and the changing of character. Moreover, dramatic elements help the researcher to find the narrative structure inside the text, then it can be analyzed based on the transformation bot of the stories.

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