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Analysis Of Narrative Element (Plot): Case Study Of 5 Short Stories In English From American Literature Website

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Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk melakukan analisis dalam bentuk studi kasus dari 5 cerita pendek bahasa Inggris dari Situs Web Sastra Amerika. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, yang bertujuan untuk memberikan deskripsi yang kaya dan penjelasan yang mendalam dan terungkap melalui pengumpulan data plot, klasifikasi data plot, deskripsi dan penjelasan terperinci, dan perumusan kesimpulan yang diambil dari data yang diperoleh dari plot cerita. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa di antara lima cerita pendek bahasa Inggris yang dianalisis, empat (80%) menunjukkan plot progresif normal, sementara satu (20%) menyajikan penyimpangan yang khas dari plot ini. Cerita 1, 3, dan 5 dibuat dengan plot progresif normal, memastikan urutan yang koheren termasuk eksposisi, aksi pemicu, aksi meningkat, klimaks, aksi menurun, aksi akhir, resolusi, dan penutupan. Cerita 5 juga menggunakan plot progresif normal, hanya saja tidak mengandung aksi menurun, aksi akhir, dan penutupan. Sebaliknya, cerita 2 menyajikan alur progresif menyimpang, sehingga menimbulkan rangkaian yang tidak berkesinambungan dan pengulangan yang tidak perlu, yang dapat menimbulkan kebingungan bagi pembaca yang tidak menyimak teks dengan saksama.

Kata Kunci: *Alur, Amerikan Literature, Analisis, Cerita Pendek, Studi Kasus*

Abstract

The aim of this research is to conduct an analysis in the form of a case study of 5 short English stories from the American Literature Website. This research employs a qualitative approach, aiming to provide a rich description and insightful explanation and unfold through the collection of plot data, the classification of the plot data, the detailed description and elucidation, and the formulation of conclusions drawn from the insights gained from plot of stories. The research results show that among the five English short stories analyzed, four (80%) exhibit normal progressive plots, while one (20%) presents a distinctive deviation from this norm. Stories 1, 3, and 5 are crafted with normal progressive plots, ensuring a coherent sequence including exposition, trigger action, escalating action, climax, descending action, final action, resolution, and closing. Story 5 also uses a normal progressive plot, only it does not contain descending action, final action, and closing. In contrast, story 2 presents a divergent progressive plot, creating disjointed sequences and unnecessary repetition that may lead to confusion for readers who do not engage with the text attentively.

Keyword: *Analysis, Case Study, Plot, Short Story, American Literature*

INTRODUCTION

Language serves as a powerful instrument for expressing the emotions and ideas that define the human experience. It is not merely a means of communication; it is also integral to the realm of literature, where language reaches its highest form of artistry. Literature transforms language into a vibrant medium that encapsulates thoughts, feelings, aspirations, and vivid imagery, evoking profound enchantment. Unlike everyday conversation, literary language is carefully crafted, with authors and poets selecting words imbued with rich meanings and associations that resonate deeply. Through literature, cultures articulate their collective thoughts and perspectives, exploring the complexities of human life and its intricate surroundings (Pratama and Desnaranti, 2022). Engaging in the analysis of a literary work allows us to uncover the underlying evidence that supports its themes and messages, enhancing our understanding of its content and characteristics. Literature can be categorized into two main forms: fiction and non-fiction, each offering unique insights into the tapestry of human experience.

Among the myriad forms of literary expression, the short story holds a distinguished place. The term "story" itself evokes a rich and diverse landscape of narrative forms, ranging from fables and short tales to expansive narratives and full-length novels (Nurchayati, et al, 2019). A short story is a concise work of fiction that captures a fragment of an individual's life or an imaginary existence, concentrating on the development of a character (Rahmatullah et al, 2018). As a cherished form of literature, it often reflects the nuances of everyday life, frequently drawing from the personal experiences of the author.

The roots of short story can be traced back to the rich tradition of oral narratives that have given rise to many renowned tales, with ancient anecdotes serving as precursors to

the modern short story, which emerged in the early 19th century. Defined as a prose work that can be enjoyed in a single sitting (Maryanti et al , 2018), short stories tend to possess a simplicity that distinguishes them from novels. They typically revolve around a singular event, unfold within one plot, are set in a limited location, feature a small cast of characters, and cover a brief timeframe. Short stories are constructed from intrinsic elements such as theme, plot, setting, characters, point of view, language style, and underlying values. These narratives encapsulate a pivotal moment in a character's life, rich with conflict, events, and experiences.

According to Nurgiyantoro (2018), the framework of short stories comprises both intrinsic and extrinsic elements, which critics frequently examine to gain deeper insights into literary works. The researcher has chosen five short stories from AmericanLiterature website in order to analyze each plot in the story. As Nurgiyantoro (2018) and Yuliawati et al (2020) asserts, intrinsic elements are fundamental to the structure of literary works, encompassing events, storylines, character development, themes, settings, narrative perspectives, and stylistic choices. This understanding aligns with Nurjanah's (2006) perspective, which emphasizes that the intrinsic elements of short stories include theme, plot, setting, characters, point of view, language style, and the values they convey.

The researcher has chosen the short stories from AmericanLiterature website with titles "The Tortoise and The Hare", "Jack and the Beanstalk", "Thumbelina", "How The Moon Became Beautiful" and "Belling The Cat", for its compelling intrinsic element called plot. The plot serves as the backbone of any narrative, intricately weaving together a sequence of actions that drive the story forward. (Nurchayati et al, 2019). The essence of a storyline lies in its events, each one influencing the next in a manner that cannot be overlooked, as these connections shape the very fabric of the tale (Pratama and Desnaranti, 2022). Aristotle (in Pratama and Desnaranti, 2022), advocates that the plot stands as the cornerstone of storytelling. He asserts that a compelling narrative must encompass a clear beginning, middle, and end, with the cadence of their arrangement enhancing the reader's enjoyment. Furthermore, Bordwell and Thompson (2008) illuminate the plot as encompassing all that is visually and audibly presented in a film, where the primary events depicted form the foundation of the narrative structure.

The five English short stories featured on the AmericanLiterature website were thoughtfully curated by the researcher, who was captivated by both the richness of their narratives and the depth of their plots. Each selection reflects a deliberate interest in the unique themes and storytelling techniques employed by the authors.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research employs a qualitative approach, aiming to provide a rich description and insightful explanation of a particular phenomenon (Firmansyah et al, 2021). Specifically, it explores the narrative element of plot as a means to illuminate the trajectory and direction of story. By concentrating on key aspects of the research problem, this approach facilitates a comprehensive analysis through the collection and examination of data derived from short English stories featured on American Literature website, utilizing an inductive methodology.

Research Data Source

Qualitative research often draws upon a rich tapestry of document-based sources that serve as authentic representations of real-world narratives. Researchers explore short English stories, curated from AmericanLiterature website (<https://americanliterature.com/childrens-stories>), each of which is readily accessible online.

Research Object

Qualitative research often delves into various elements that influence human behavior and shape preferences, eliciting feelings of attraction or aversion. In this research, researchers focus on the narrative structures of five short stories sourced from the American Literature website. These stories exemplify four distinct types of plots: progressive, episodic, parallel, and flashback. The classification of each narrative type is determined by examining the sequence of events, which spans from the initial setting (exposition) through the inciting event, rising action, climax, falling action, denouement, resolution, and ultimately, ending.

Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

Qualitative research employs case study to derive overarching principles from documentary sources. Stake (Assyakurrohim et al, 2023) stated that the essence of case study research lies in uncovering the distinctive qualities and attributes inherent in the case under examination. Thus, the primary objective of case study research is to delve deeply into the particularities of the case itself, illuminating its unique narrative and significance. In this research, the data must undergo processing to enable a thorough analysis grounded in the nuanced observations of language and text (Rahardjo, 2017). This research unfolds through several key steps: first, the collection of plot data of 5 short English stories from AmericanLiterature website; second, the classification of the plot data; third, the detailed description and elucidation of the plot within these stories; and finally, the formulation of conclusions drawn from the insights gained from plot of stories.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Findings

The English stories in this research are quoted from AmericanLiterature website, namely "The Tortoise and The Hare", "Jack and the Beanstalk", "Thumbelina", "How The Moon Became Beautiful" and "Belling The Cat".

a. The Tortoise and The Hare by Aesop

This short story consists of 11 sentences with normal progressive plot. The 1st sentence is an exposition, the 2nd-4th sentences are trigger actions, the 5th-6th sentences are escalating actions, the 7th sentence is the climax, the 8th sentence is the descending action, the 9th sentence is the final action, the 10th sentence is the resolution, and the 11th sentence is the closing.

b. Jack and the Beanstalk retold by Flora Annie Steel

This short story consists of 56 sentences with divergent progressive plot. The 1st-6th sentences are exposition, the 7th-10th sentences are trigger actions, the 11th-15th sentences are expositions, the 16th-24th sentences are escalating actions, the 25th-27th sentences are descending actions, the 28th-29th sentences are exposition, the 30th-36th sentences are escalating actions, thr 37th-38th sentences are descending actions, the 39th-41th sentences are exposition, the 42nd-45th sentences are escalating actions, the 46th-50th sentences are climax, the 51st-52nd sentences are descending actions, the 53rd-54th sentences are final actions, the 55th sentence is resolution, and the 56th sentence is closing.

c. Thumbelina

This short story consists of 37 sentences with normal progressive plot. The 1st-9th sentences are exposition, the 10th-20th sentences are trigger actions, the 21st sentence is escalating action, the 22nd-24th sentences are climax, the 25th-28th sentences are descending actions, 29th-34th sentences are final actions, the 35th-36th sentences are resolution, and the 37th sentence is closing.

d. How The Moon Became Beautiful by Anonymous

This short story consists of 45 sentences with normal progressive plot. The 1st-4th sentences are exposition, the 5th-11th sentences are trigger actions, the 12th-21st sentences are escalating actions, the 22nd-34th sentences are climax, the 35th-39th sentences are descending actions, 40th-42nd sentences are final actions, the 43rd-44th sentences are resolution, and the 45th sentence is closing.

e. Belling The Cat by Aesop

This short story consists of 13 sentences with normal progressive plot. The 1st-3rd sentences are exposition, the 4th-5th sentences are trigger actions, the 6th-8th sentences are escalating actions, the 9th-12th sentences are climax, and the 13th sentence is the resolution. There is no descending action, final action, and closing in this story.

2. Discussion

The research findings reveal a compelling plot types among the five short English stories examined: four exhibit conventional progressive plots, while one stands out with a deviant progressive plot. Notably, the stories titled "The Tortoise and The Hare", "Thumbelina", "How The Moon Became Beautiful" and "Belling The Cat" follow a normal progressive plot, whereas "Jack and the Beanstalk" diverges from this norm. This distinction is succinctly illustrated in the accompanying diagram.

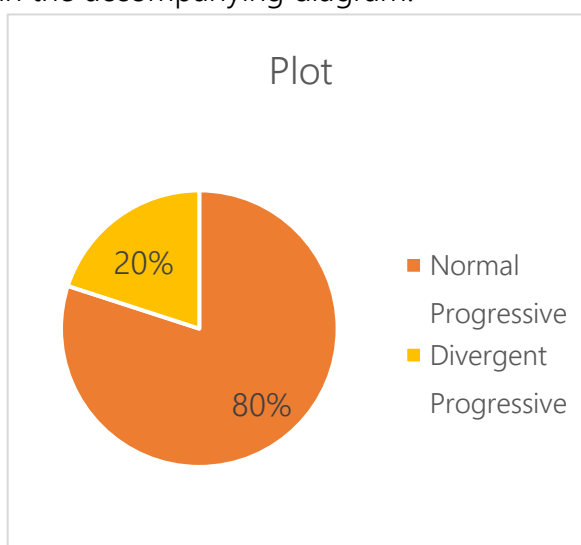


Figure 1. Type of Plot of 5 English Short Stories.

Then, this table below delineates the plot movements of five analyzed English short stories, showcasing the progression from beginning to closing. It highlights the distinct types of plot movements, which can be discerned through the inherent flow of each narrative. Consequently, the dynamics of the plot can be directed to enhance the unfolding of the story.

Parts	Movement of Plot								Type
	E	TA	EA	Cli	DA	FA	R	Clo	
1 st story	E (1)	TA (2-4)	EA (5-6)	Cli (7)	DA (8)	FA (9)	R (10)	Clo (11)	NP
2 nd story	E (1-6) E (11-15) E (28-29) E (39-41)	TA (7-10)	EA (16-24) EA (30-36) EA (42-45)	Cli (46-50)	DA (25-27) DA (37-38) DA (51-52)	FA (53-54)	R (55)	Clo (56)	DP
3 rd story	E (1-9)	TA (10-20)	EA (21)	Cli (22-24)	DA (25-28)	FA (29-34)	R (35-36)	Clo (37)	NP
4 th story	E (1-4)	TA (5-11)	EA (12-21)	Cli (22-34)	DA (35-39)	FA (40-42)	R (43-44)	Clo (45)	NP
5 th story	E (1-3)	TA (4-5)	EA (6-8)	Cli (9-12)	-	-	R (13)	-	NP

(Abbreviations : E = Exposition, TA = Trigger Action, EA = Escalating Action, Cli = Climax, DA = Descending Action, FA = Final Action, R = Resolution, Clo = Closing; NP = Normal Progressive, DP = Divergent Progressive)

At its core, the plot of story unfolds through eight distinct stages. The journey begins with the exposition, gradually leading to the inciting incident, followed by the rising action, and culminating in the climax. From there, the story transitions into the falling action, proceeds to the resolving action, and ultimately reaches the resolution, concluding with final denouement. The findings of this research that a significant number of the stories examined adhere to progressive plot structure. Among the five English short stories analyzed, four exhibit normal progressive plots, while one presents a distinctive deviation from this norm. This divergence, as noted by Saksono and Rahmawati (2014), arises from the notion that the narrative elements of an adapted work may undergo alterations to align with the creator's intent.

Stories 1, 3, 4, and 5 are crafted with normal progressive plots, ensuring a coherent sequence that avoids confusion and ambiguity for the reader. Specifically, Stories 1, 3, and 4 follow a normal progressive plot that begins with exposition, leading seamlessly into trigger action, escalating action, climax, descending action, final action, resolution, and closing. In contrast, Story 5, while commencing with exposition and progressing through trigger action, escalating action, climax, and resolution, notably omits the descending action, final action, and closing segments. This distinction highlights the unique progressive plot of

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Story 5 while maintaining its overall clarity and coherence.

In contrast, story 2 presents a progressive plot, yet it suffers from a disjointed sequence and unnecessary repetition that may lead to confusion for readers who do not engage with the text attentively. This story, however, unfolds with clarity and structure. It begins with exposition (sentences 1-6), transitions into trigger action (sentences 7-10), and revisits exposition (sentences 11-15) before seamlessly moving into escalating action (sentences 16-24) and then descending action (sentences 25-27). This intricate story does not end there; it returns to exposition (sentences 28-29), progresses through escalating action (sentences 30-36), and descends once more (sentences 37-38). As the story approaches its ending, it restores a coherent sequence by revisiting exposition (sentences 39-41), followed by escalating action (sentences 42-45), leading to a climax moment (sentences 46-50), descending action (sentences 51-52), and culminating in final actions (sentences 53-54) before reaching a satisfying resolution (sentence 55) and a poignant closing (sentence 56).

The first story, titled "The Tortoise and The Hare," unfolds the story of an overconfident rabbit who underestimates his steadfast friend, the tortoise, in a race toward their shared goal. The rabbit, convinced of his superiority, dismisses the tortoise's determination. In his hubris, he overlooks the potential consequences of his actions and chooses to rest midway through the race, while the tortoise continues on, unwavering in his pursuit. Ultimately, the story culminates in the tortoise's unexpected triumph. The profound lesson conveyed through this story is a reminder to avoid complacency and to embrace persistence in our endeavors, for it is through consistent effort that we can achieve our greatest aspirations.

The second story titled "Jack and The Beanstalk" unfolds the story of a humble young man residing with his mother, their only possession being a single cow. One fateful day, Jack's mother urges him to sell the cow for much-needed money. However, in a twist of fate, Jack chooses to trade it for what he believes to be magical beans. Upon returning home, he faces his mother's disappointment and feeling despondent, discards the beans in despair. To his astonishment, the beans sprout into a colossal beanstalk that reaches high into the heavens. Driven by curiosity, Jack climbs this magnificent beanstalk and discovers a house inhabited by a giant. Within this peculiar abode, he encounters the kind-hearted wife of the giant, who generously offers him food, in stark contrast to her grumpy husband. During his first visit, Jack cleverly snatches a gold coin and narrowly escapes the giant's grasp. On his second adventure, he acquires a goose that lays golden eggs, once again evading the giant's clutches. In his final escapade, Jack seizes the giant's cherished harp, prompting a thrilling chase from the sky down to the earth. With quick thinking and nimble

feet, Jack reaches the ground and decisively cuts down the towering beanstalk, leading to the giant's demise. Ultimately, Jack and his mother find themselves transformed into a life of wealth and happiness. While the story may raise eyebrows with its whimsical logic, it captivates readers with its extraordinary plot, inviting them to think and imagine the unfolding events in a delightful manner.

The third story titled "Thumbelina" unfolds with the heartfelt longing of an elderly woman wishing for a child. Her wish is granted by a mysterious woman she encounters after offering her assistance. In exchange for her kindness, the woman bestows upon her a tiny seed, instructing her to nurture it with unwavering love and devotion. The old mother dedicates herself to this task, and in a wondrous turn of events, a minuscule girl named Thumbelina emerges from the seed, bringing immeasurable joy into the old woman's life. However, a shadow looms when Thumbelina is abducted by a frog. Fortuitously, she is able to escape with the help of a compassionate mouse. Yet, the mouse advises her to marry Mole, as he can no longer offer her assistance. On her journey to meet Mole, Thumbelina encounters a sickly bird and, with great tenderness, nurses it back to health. Grateful for her kindness, the bird transports her to a magical realm where all its inhabitants are her size. In this fairy-tale land, Thumbelina ultimately finds her true happiness by marrying the prince. While the story concludes with her joyful union, it leaves readers pondering the fate of the old mother left behind. Nevertheless, one truth remains clear: the old woman experienced a profound happiness that blossomed from her heartfelt wish.

The fourth story, titled "How the Moon Became Beautiful," unveils the enchanting origin of the moon's splendor. Once regarded as a mere blemish in the night sky, the moon lamented his unattractiveness and sought assistance from the stars and flowers. Unfortunately, they could offer no aid, as they were bound to their places in the cosmos. However, the flowers spoke of a kind and lovely woman whom they often admired. Intrigued, the moon sought this woman out and found himself captivated by her grace. Over time, he proposed marriage, yearning for a union that would magnify their beauty together. The woman, eager yet hesitant, sought her mother's blessing, only to be met with indifference. Nevertheless, love prevailed, and she ultimately chose to marry the moon. When her mother eventually inquired about her whereabouts, a friend revealed that she had joined the moon in a celestial bond. This tale is believed to illuminate the transformation of the moon into a figure of exquisite, majestic radiance.

The fifth story, "Belling the Cat," unfolds the plight of a group of mice eager to outwit their formidable foe, the cat. Wearied by the relentless threat of its sharp claws, the mice

convene to devise a strategy. During their deliberations, a spirited young mouse proposes a brilliant plan: to affix a bell around the cat's neck, allowing them to hear its approach and evade danger. The suggestion ignites excitement among the mice, yet a wise elder poses a crucial question: who will dare to place the bell on the cat? This thought leaves the assembly in a state of perplexity, and the story concludes without solution. Though entertaining, it imparts a profound lesson: while it is easy to proclaim intentions, the true challenge lies in the execution of those ideas.

CONCLUSION

This research examines five English short stories, all of which feature progressive plots characterized by a series of cause-and-effect events that guide the narrative from start to finish. The plots can be categorized into eight elements: exposition, trigger action, rising action, climax, falling action, descending action, resolution, and closing. Among the stories analyzed, four demonstrate normal progressive plots, while one deviates from this pattern. Stories 1, 3, 4, and 5 present normal progressive plots that provide a logical flow and minimize reader confusion. Specifically, Stories 1, 3, and 4 adhere to the typical progression, starting with exposition and transitioning through the various stages up to closing. In contrast, Story 5 begins with exposition and progresses through trigger action, rising action, climax, and resolution, but notably skips the falling action, final action, and closing segments. This difference underscores story 4's unique plot structure, all while maintaining clarity and coherence. Story 2 features a progressive plot but is hindered by a fragmented sequence and unnecessary repetition, which could confuse inattentive readers.

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