

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Background of Research

Survival games are categorized as a popular genre or topic in literature in which the characters are left in the forest or open-world setting with minimum or no equipment and must survive to stay alive. The players must consider how to free themselves from all of these constraints in order to avoid dying from hunger, cold, or fear. Typically, survival games include problems outside of nature. The winner will be chosen from among the many participants. The protagonists must also elude the threat of other rivals who are required to win the game and survive death.

Survival games reflect society's attitudes towards wealth and lack of wealth. The concept of limited player agency within survival games is an important factor to consider. The idea of player agency is essential to game research for many reasons, and its role across game gamification and narrative conceptualizations is important (Joyce, 2015). The popularity caused by survival is closely related to actual human life. The survival game in the literature supports by chosen pattern to build a great story delivered for the readers when reading a text.

*The Most Dangerous Game* (1924) is an adventure fiction by Richard Connell. He was one of the most phenomenal American writers of short stories. *The Most Dangerous Game* tells about a hunter named Rainsford who is accidentally trapped in Ship Trap Island when he wants to go to the Amazon River basin for hunting. Surprisingly, he found a large house in the middle of the forest owned by Zaroff. Lately, Rainsford is forced to join Zaroff's invitation for hunting if he wants to go out from that island. The requirement is that Rainsford has to live through the next three days, whatever he can do to survive. As stated by Mambrol (2021), *The Most Dangerous Game* is considered popular literature because it illustrates many potential conflicts that an author can incorporate into a compelling plotline.

*The Hunger Games* was initially set as a trilogy titled *The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), and *Mockingjay* (2010). This trilogy classifies as young adult dystopian novels

without any specific time. In *The Hunger Games*, Collins states that sixteen years old Katniss Everdeen is an execution when she comes forward to replace her sister's place in the Games.

Nevertheless, to win the game, Katniss must make decisions considering survival against humanity and life against love (Collins, 2008). This novel portrays a girl, Katniss Everdeen, who has to survive in various arenas, which designed the tribute volunteers to kill each other if they want to remain alive. Katniss tries to survive in the arena by relying on her archery skills and hunting hobbies.

*The Hunger Games* has a significant impact on literature. Johnny Ranniger, vice president of the Motion Picture Club, said, *The Hunger Games* series has also led to a resurgence in popularity for dystopian books and movies. Jeff Harman (senior film and video studies major and member of the Motion Picture Club) claimed that dystopian fiction is nothing new, but *The Hunger Games* has just made it popular again. Moreover, the popularity of this novel inspires many survival games of dystopian fiction, such as *Divergent* and *The Maze Runner*.

Survival games become exist not only in literature but also on other platforms. In literature, there are; *The Long Walk* by Stephen King, *Battle Royal* by Koushun Takami; a new translation by Nathan Collins, *Arena* by Holly Jennings, *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, *The Running Man* by Stephen King, *The Lottery and other stories*, *Endgame: The Calling* by James Frey, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner. On the one hand, PUBG, Green Hell, The Forest, and many others exist in survival video games. A phenomenal South Korean survival drama entitled "Squid Game" has become a trending topic worldwide. The dreadful nine-part survival drama, through its dark themes, "Squid Game" has reached a nerve in famous culture twists on cheery childhood games like tug of war and Red Light, Green Light, which in the show are played to death for substantial cash prizes (Vineyard, 2021, *The New York Times*). Dr Sung-Ae Lee, an expert in Korean film and television from Macquarie University, says the show is focused on the ever-increasing gap between rich and poor and has proved timely for audiences.

Survival Game gets famous because of the way the narrator narrates the story. Survival narrative is used to create stories for having more deeply involved by readers. Readers usually place positions with the first-person point of view, so the reader feels part of the story or becomes the story's main character while reading. Narrative in survival games also makes the

reader enjoy every challenge faced in the story through the plot created by the author. Therefore, in analyzing those two works, the writer investigates using the narrative pattern proposed by Tzvetan Todorov. Moreover, the title of this research is "Narrative Pattern of Survival Games: From *The Most Dangerous Game* to *The Hunger Games*."

## 1.2 Identification of Problems

I am interested in scrutinizing *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games* to comprehend how the story is narrated and what patterns were applied which build those two literary works that made them exist and become interesting until the present. I argue that Katniss and Rainsford survive for the greater good of themselves and others. However, the consequence of participating requires them to be someone else against themselves. It forces them to kill others even though they face many horrific incidents, completing with an unpredictable moment and being a dangerous decision.

Here, the narrative in both works is helpful to analyze due to uncovering the value of life, being aware of the existence of time, and the fundamental life principles of someone by analyzing the narration applied in *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games*.

## 1.3 Review of Related Literature

The writer has read some journals and articles to support this research. The sources on the internet discuss the same literary works: *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games*. It aims to give me a good understanding of the issues of the stories.

The first journal that the writer would like to review, entitled "*The Hunger Games: An Ecocritical Reading*" (2014) vol 1, issue 1, presented by Janice Bland, Visiting Professor of English Language and Literature Teaching at the University of Vechta, Germany, and Anne Strotmann, a graduate student of English and Theology for secondary school teaching at Paderborn University. The journal aims to prove how a popular series like Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy can motivate students to improve their language and literacy proficiency through extensive reading. Those two writers applied ecocriticism in analyzing *The Hunger Games* trilogy. They argue that the intentionally interdisciplinary approach of ecocriticism towards a literary text can contribute to global issues in education in English as a Second

Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Based on this research, I examine some dominant tropes: Apocalypse, Pastoral, and Wilderness. On the other hand, it also discusses the novel from an anthropocentric to an ecocentric perspective. The result of their analysis proposes a contribution to global issues education in the EFL classroom and concludes how ecocriticism might be included in *The Hunger Games*.

The second analysis was presented by Uliya Dzikriya (2019): "*Analysis of Actantial Model in Suzanne Collins's The Hunger Games*" at Semarang State University. Aliya's analysis was designed to determine the plot structure that builds the story and what kinds of the plot are applied in this novel. This research shows some elements of events and classifies the function of characters' actions called 'actant' based on structuralism theory by A.J. Greimas. From this analysis, I comprehend the roles of each character that build the story into a great plot. Also, it helps me to understand that a well-structured narrative will deliver a good story for the readers.

Next, a thesis was written by Michael Billy Surya Wijaya (2015), entitled "*The Personality Development of Katniss Everdeen through the Conflicts in Suzanne Collins's The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*" Diploma Thesis, Sanata Dharma University. This thesis explores the development of the main's character personality in the novel *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*. The researcher argues that the growth in Katniss' personality is seen through the conflicts in Katniss' life, which means the development is experienced by Katniss when she faces disputes between herself and others, and it has affected her personality unconsciously. The researcher concludes that at the beginning of the story, Katniss is known for her productive personality, but her character becomes a non-productive personality. Overall, this thesis finds out how Katniss' personality could change from effective to non-productive, even careless people, and it impacts my understanding in analyzing the character of the work.

The fourth review is an article written by Zoha Seddighi entitled "The impact of setting on the Lucifer effect in *The Most Dangerous Game*." This article talks about the significant impact of social setting on Rainsford's Lucifer Effect in *The Most Dangerous Game*. The researcher claims that Rainford faced a loss of personal identity, a struggle between life and death, helplessness, dehumanization, desperation, deprivation of sleep, as well as privacy, and constant fear due to General Zaroff's surveillance. It provides information about Rainsford's stability



which impacts each decision he makes in the story. Such transformation of Rainsford's self-identity changes when he faces some unpredictable situation that he has to win the game.

#### 1.4 Research Questions

In line with the background of the research explained before, this research is conducted to answer the following questions:

- 1) How does Connell narrate survival in *The Most Dangerous Game* and Collins narrate survival in *The Hunger Games* ?
- 2) How are the propositions, sequences, and semantic aspects of *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games* based on Todorov's Narrative Structure Theory ?

#### 1.5 Scope of the Research

In this research, I limited my scope of research to novels and short stories using the narratology method by Tzvetan Todorov. Because novels and short stories are supplied stories by presenting those major elements: character, plot, point of view, setting, and theme, it follows that this research is concerned with the text of the works only. More concretely, it focused on analyzing the narrative pattern in *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games*, where "survival" is the central motif. In this case, survival delivers the life and death game's version in literature.

Furthermore, I recognize how the story narrates significantly impacts the story's underlying messages. In the case of *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games*, this research is different because it will explore the analysis of narrative patterns applied in both primary sources. The first side is from Katniss that fights for herself by competing with other volunteers as a tribute. In contrast, the other side is a character named Rainsford, who only fights for himself with one competitor.

#### 1.6 Objective of the Research

Referring to the problem of the research above, the objectives of the research are:

Firstly, this study shows how Connell and Collins construct those two works. Secondly, I closely examine the patterns applied in those works, which return to make them exist and

categorized as popular literature until the present. Then, I engage specifically to show the proposition, sequences, and semantic aspects of *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games* based on the Narrative Structure Theory by Tzvetan Todorov.

Analyzing 2 works from different authors can show the way that they use to deliver survival based on their writing style, themes, and storytelling techniques and method to engage readers. It also allows for a more in depth understanding of how different authors approach the idea of survival and the distinct perspective they bring to the story. *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games* allow the writer to investigate survival as a topic in different contexts. It deals with surviving in difficult conditions by scrutinizing the portrayal of human nature, power relations, society structure, and arenas. Furthermore, the writer chooses this topic because the study regarding narrative patterns in *The Most Dangerous Game* and *The Hunger Games* is interesting to explore, but there is no research found yet.

