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An Analysis of the Screenplay Elements of the Short Film "The Note"

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to find out elements of the screenplay in the short film 'The Note'. The research methodology is qualitative descriptive based on the qualitative descriptive approach by Moleong (2018). The data is collected by using a literature study that finds out the other literature related to the screenplay element and documentation by downloading the script of the short film. To achieve the purpose, the stage of analysis data that the writer carried out was reading the script, and then classifying the elements based on the classification by Beck (2007) and Proofed (2019). The research finding showed that the screenplay of the film 'The Note' consisted of seven elements, namely scene headings, actions, characters' names, dialogues, parentheses, shots, and transitions. However, there is one unavailable element in this screenplay, namely extensions.
Keywords: *Analysis, Screenplay Element, Short Film, "The Note"*

INTRODUCTION

A film is a public communication medium that conveys a message to the audience in a certain group. Now, as a powerful public communication medium for its targets, the film is an appropriate medium for expressing messages implicit in the values of societal life. Its audio-visual nature allows a film to convey many messages in a short duration. Panuju (2019) states that films are not merely entertaining but can be a medium for conveying messages to the audience through dialogue, scene heading, and pictures so that they are effective in spreading missions and ideas. The contents of the story in films are usually made based on the producer's imagination and creative ideas, but it is not uncommon for films to be written based on true stories experienced by the producer or other people. This makes many people interested in watching and getting swept up in every scene because it relates to everyday life.

The development of world cinema has been very rapid, including in Indonesia, not only the box office is progressing but also films of other forms, one of which is short films. Komara (2021) states that a short film is a form of film that gives its producer freedom of expression with a duration of no more than 50 minutes. A short film aims to be a medium of

communication to the public in the shortest possible duration. The important value of a short film is not from a commercial perspective but the message contained in the film. A short film has more intense content with people's lives than a box office film.

A film, both short and box office films is built from a screenplay which becomes the reference for every scene in the film to make it livelier and more interesting to the audience. Karyadi (2022) states that a screenplay, which is also known as the main scene script, is a treatment of a film story that has been thoroughly developed, contains character dialogue, describes action sequences, and forms the basis of a shooting script. This complete screenplay will later function to facilitate the production process of a film to produce a perfect work.

Screenplay films are included in the type of literary work. The way of presenting the film screenplay is in accordance with the characteristics of the literary text and can also be explained in a textual framework. And also, every element of the screenplay describes a literary work, such as dialogue between characters, action, characters in the film, etc. Thus, many film and short film are produces now, one of which is a short film entitled ‘The Note’.

The Note which won awards in 2021 is a short film on the YouTube platform with viewers in April 2023 reaching 146,321 users. This film belongs to the drama genre. The film ‘The Note’ tells the story of the life of Noah (9 years old boy) and his father. Because of the genre and one part of a literary work, the writer was finally interested in analyzing the screenplay elements in short film ‘The Note’.

METHOD

The writer used the qualitative descriptive method in this research, because this research was related to something that involves the type of quality and the data come from personal documentation which is script/screenplay. Moleong (2018) explains that a qualitative descriptive is an approach to research where the data gathered is in the form of words, picture,

and not numbers. Interviews, field notes, photographs, videotapes, personal documentation, memos, and other documentation can be used to gather these data.

Shawn (2020) states that an object of study is a thing or phenomenon that exists in the real world and is unaffected by what people do. It also forms a component of the body of information being developed by a scientist (or student). The object is frequently closely related to the subject but does not repeat it. In this research, the research object was a short film entitled 'The Note'. The writer chosethe short film as the research object because this film won an award in 2021, so it was suitable as a source of literature for screenplay elements.

Data collection is carried out to obtain the information needed to achieve the study objectives. The data were collected through literature study and references. For the literature study, the data were collected by reading some literatures related to screenplay and screenplay elements. Meanwhile, for the references, the data were collected by downloading the short film and the script 'The Note' from YouTube and scriptwriter's private document

FINDINGS

Scene Heading

The writer found six scene headings in this screenplay. The scene headings are listed in Table 1 below, which also shows the place and time information for each scene heading.

Table 1 *Scene Headings*

Scene Headings	Place	Description	Time
EXT. GRAMMY HOUSE – AFTERNOON	Outside Grammy's house	In the afternoon	
INT. HOUSE- AFTERNOON	In a house	In the afternoon	

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INT. BEDROOM – AFTERNOON	In a bedroom	In the afternoon
INT. BEDROOM – EVENING	In a bedroom	In the evening
INT. HOUSE – NIGHT	In a house	At the night
INT. HOUSE – NEXT DAY MORNING	In a house	In the morning on the next day

(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

Action

This screenplay had 15 actions. These depicted the actions taken by the characters in 'The Note'. Seven of these actions were listed under the scene heading, which opened the scene as shown in Figure 1. seven were written in the middle of the scene which became a pause between dialogues as displayed in Figure 2. One action was closing the scene of the short film 'The Note ' as depicted in Figure 3.

EXT. GRAMMY HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A car stopped in front of the house. Inside the car, there are a grown man talking on the phone and a boy sitting in the backseat.

Figure 1. *Example of Action Under the Scene Heading*

(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

JOHN

so

After Noah fall asleep, John saw his old notebook lying on the bed, he grabbed the book and opened it. The, he smiled and walked out of Noah's bedroom.

Figure 2. *Example of Action in the Middle of the Scene*

(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

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Behind the wall, Noah's Grammy secretly watches the warmth of the affection of his children and grandchildren in every verse of the song Noah writes. She smiles happily.

FADE OUT

END

(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

Figure 3. *Example of Action to Close the Scene*

Character's Names

There were three characters' names in this screenplay, Noah, John (Noah's Father), and Noah's Grammy. After the writer read and watched the screenplay and short film, it was known that Noah and John were the main characters, while Noah's Grammy was a side character that supported the storyline.

Dialogue

The writer found that there were 75 dialogues between the characters of the short film 'The Note'. The writer also found that the dialogue in this screenplay occurred in every scene. The following are examples of dialogue between two main characters, John and Noah (Figure 4) and between main character and side character, Noah and Noah's Grammy as shown in Figure 5.

JOHN

Hey, sleepyhead come on over here come on, I've got a surprise for you.

NOAH

(Sleepy tone)

a surprise for me?

(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

Figure 4. Example of Dialogue Between Main Characters

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NOAH

I love that idea! but my dad?

NOAH'S GRAMMY

(Smile)

I think he would absolutely love anything you write because it came from you.

(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

Figure 5. Example of Dialogue Between Main Character and Side Character

Parentheses

The screenplay contained 24 parentheses, including the parentheses in the synopsis on the second page of the screenplay. These parentheses in each scenegave information about the expressions and movements of the characters in the short film. The parentheses in the synopsis provided information about the film and the name of Noah's father. Table 2 shows the functions of the parentheses in thisscreenplay and an example of each function

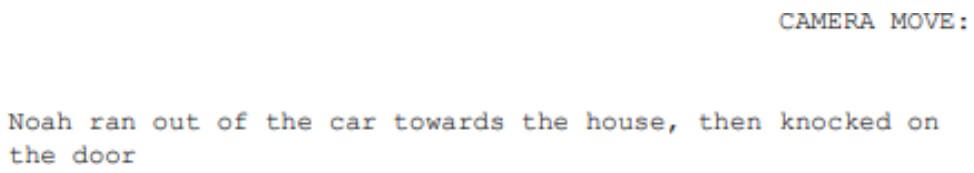
Table 2. Functions of Parentheses

Functions of Parentheses	Examples
1. Showing expression	NOAH'S GRAMMY (Smile)
2. Movements	(Turn around) We're gonna be okay Noah.
3. Information about the film	Synopsis (Based on a True Story)
4. The name	his father (JOHN).

(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

Shots

In this screenplay, there were two shots written by the screenwriter. These shotswere in the first and fifth scenes which described the camera moving from the car to the terrace of the house (see Figure 6) and from the inside of the bedroomto the outside of the bedroom (see Figure 7).



(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

Figure 6. Shots from a Car to the Terrace

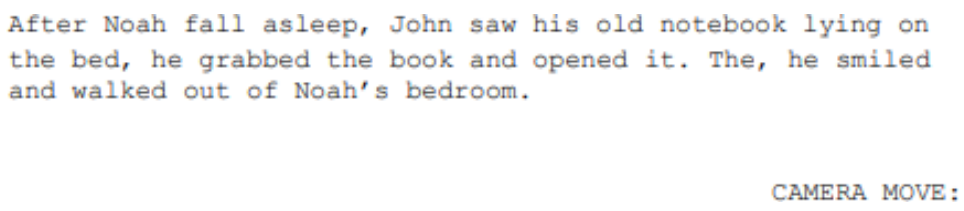


Figure 7. Shots from Inside the Bedroom to Outside the Bedroom

(Source: Scriptwriter of 'The Note': Gaming, 2021)

Transitions

There were three transitions written in the screenplay, namely, Fade In, Cut To,and Fade Out. In this screenplay, Fade In was only written once on the first page of screenplay in the film and it was located above the first scene heading whichwas to open the scene. There were five Cut To transitions at the beginning of all the scenes before the scene heading which was to cut the previous scene and switched to the new scene. Fade Out which was on the last page of the screenplay to close the story of the screenplay.

DISCUSSION

The discussion focuses on the screenplay elements found in the short film 'The Note'. The screenplay of the film had 16 pages which meant each page represented 1 minute of the film (Follows, 2020). The scenario in this film had seven elements namely scene heading, action,

characters' names, dialogue, parentheses, shots, and transition. This research finding really aligned with what Beck (2007) states that a screenplay needs to have scene headings, action, characters' names, dialogues, parentheses, shots, and transitions to attract characters and bring the team together under a shared vision. The point is that these elements can help the team and characters during the shooting and editing processes. Meanwhile, if it is compared to the classification of screenplay elements by Proofed (2019) something was unavailable in the extensions, namely sounds that were off- screen (O.S.) or Voice Over (V.O.).

Based on the writer's point of view, each element of this screenplay had been written according to the rules of writing standards for the screenplay, except for the shots. The first element was the scene heading. All of the scene headings were in line with MasterClass (2021) and Proofed (2019) that the scene headings describe the locations and time in which the action is situated or a specific location, and what time of day or night it is. Therefore, the characters and crews knew the locations and time when the scene was done, so this undoubtedly made the filming process easier.

Moreover, the writer indicated that the action in this screenplay was very detailed in describing actions that could be listened to and seen by the audience, which corresponded to the explanation provided by Lannom (2019) and Proofed (2019) that action is where the screenwriter describes visual and audible actions that take on-screen and the action descriptions should only mention things that can be seen or listened to by the audience. Besides, the scriptwriter also wrote every action by positioning himself as a third person who was not directly involved in the scene. The characters' names in this screenplay were also written in capital letters. Real names were used for two characters and role description was used for one character. It is the same as Proofed's (2019) opinion. Proofed (2019) states that characters' names are names written in capital letters in a screenplay, and may be written in a real name or a role description.

In addition, some dialogues in this screenplay were not only written when the characters talked to each other but also when the characters muttered to themselves. That was because any time a character talked it was considered a dialogue (MasterClass, 2021). An example of the dialogue was when Noah was writing song lyrics in his father's notebook'.

Furthermore, parentheses in the screenplay showed expressions, characters' movements, information about the film, and the name of Noah's father. Those functions were related to what MaterClass (2021) and Proofed (2019) explain that parentheses are used to imply singing, add a pause between two lines, or provide adjectives that imply tone, and show how a character says something or what the character does while speaking.

This screenplay used only three transitions. One of the transitions was Cut To. Cut To in this screenplay was the movement between each scene. This transition was in line with the explanation given by MasterClass (2021) that Cut To is a movement from one scene to other scene in a film. Additionally, transition is generated by the functions. This is related to what Proofed (2019) explained that transitions are made by functions for shooting and editing certain descriptions in film scripts. The example of transition with the function in this screenplay is Fade In as an opening, Cut To as a switching to a different scene, and Fade Out as a closing.

Moreover, when compared to the actual locking shots as it is displayed on YouTube at https://youtu.be/saT9elRG and the shots in the screenplay of 'The Note', it was very different because the screenwriter simply wrote "Camera Move" on it. When compared to Myers' (2019) and Proofed's (2019) explanations, shots in this screenplay are not written using certain rules for creating shots for camera angle. Myers (2019) and Proofed (2019) state that a shot not tells the kind of shot to use while shootinga scene. Furthermore, the scriptwriter should write the shots in detail (Antelope, 2021). The correct format for shots is using "a rule of third angle". As a result, the screenplay with incomplete shots descriptions does not support the purpose of making a script.

This script is based on guideline, supposed to facilitate the shooting (Aristo, 2017). Thus, it will increase the shooting time and make it difficult for the cameraman because cameraman needs to see the location to choose the optimal angle before starting to take a shot.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

There were seven screenplay elements in the film "The Note' namely scene heading, action, character names, dialogue, parentheses, shots, and transitions. All of the elements were very helpful in the process of making a film, especially for production team. Those elements become a guideline in shooting and editing process. Each of these elements also provided direction, so the production team could reach the appropriate results. However, the shots did not explain the camera position based on the angle. The shots had to be written a more detailed way that they explained the angle and how the camera moved. This could help and facilitate the work of the cameraman during the shooting process.

However, there was no extension element in the screenplay. The extension described Voice Over and Off-Screen sound. Actually, it was necessary to write extensions in the screenplay in order to remind the editing team to input the sound in the necessary parts.

In this section, the writer intends to give some suggestions for scriptwriters and other researchers. For the scriptwriters, it is crucial to create a detailed script, particularly focusing on shot descriptions. The script serves as a reference during the shooting process, and it is not only for the characters but also for all crew members including the cameraman. To ensure a smoother experience for everyone involved, it is advisable to hold a meeting with the entire crew to discuss the script thoroughly, leading to an improved final script. For other researchers, the writer suggests them to conduct more in-depth analyses of screenplay elements, considering the scarcity of the newest journals that cover this topic.

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