

**DAVE'S JOURNEY IN SEARCHING FOR A FAMILY'S LOVE
IN DAVE PELZER'S *THE LOST BOY*: A NEW CRITICISM STUDY**
Perjalanan Dave Mencari Kasih Sayang Keluarga dalam Novel *The Lost Boy*
Karya Dave Pelzer: Sebuah Studi New Criticism

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan alasan dan proses tokoh Dave melakukan perjalanan untuk mencari kasih sayang keluarga dalam novel *The Lost Boy* (2009) karya Dave Pelzer. Masalah utama yang diteliti oleh penulis adalah bagaimana latar tempat dapat mempengaruhi perubahan penokohan Dave. Terdapat dua poin utama yang dianalisis oleh penulis yaitu latar tempat dan penokohan dari tokoh utama novel, Dave. Untuk memecahkan masalah tersebut, penulis menggunakan teori New Criticism dengan melakukan metode close reading untuk menguji elemen formal dalam novel, seperti latar tempat dan penokohan. Melalui penelitian ini, ditemukan bahwa kekerasan yang dilakukan terhadap Dave adalah alasan utama mengapa ia mencari kasih sayang keluarga. Latar tempat ketika Dave berpindah-pindah rumah asuh memiliki peran penting dalam mengubah karakter Dave pada akhir cerita.

Kata kunci: kasih sayang keluarga; penyiksaan anak; new criticism; latar; penokohan

Abstract: This study aims to discover the reasons why Dave did the journey and the process that he had been through in order to find family love in Dave Pelzer's *The Lost Boy* (2009). There are two main points analyzed by the writer: the setting and characterization of the main character of the novel, Dave. To accomplish this study, the writer applied New Criticism theory by closely reading the novel to examine the formal elements such as setting and characterization. Through this study, the writer found that Dave's experience traumatizes and makes him hard to trust other people. The setting that appears in the novel has an important role in changing his characterization in the end of the story.

Keywords: a family love; child abuse; new criticism; setting; characterization

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INTRODUCTION

The story of child abuses can be found in many literary works. Those stories are usually taken from true stories. There are many authors use child abuse as the theme of their literary works, for example *The Boy from The Basement* by Susan Shaw (2006) and *Little Chicago* by Adam Rapp (2002). They do not only

write fictional stories, but also write true stories about child abuse such as *Sicken-ed: The True Story of a Lost Childhood* by Julie Gregory (2004) and *The Lost Boy* by Dave Pelzer (2009) whom the writer chose to be the object of this research. Child abuse can also be related to the child psychology. A story about child abuse is more than just to be

understood and learned because it is connected with experience.

In choosing the novel, the writer is interested in Dave's character and the setting that can change Dave in a positive way from his dark life. This study attempts to describe how Dave's character is portrayed in *The Lost Boy* and how the setting works to create Dave's new characterization in the end of the story. Setting and characterization are two intrinsic elements that can be used by the writer to analyze the story.

Dave Pelzer's *The Lost Boy* tells step by step about what happened to Dave after his rescuing, especially after the court, when he has to pass the rough days in foster house. In order to analyze the novel, the writer used New Criticism theory by examining the formal elements: setting and characterization. Lois Tyson (2006: 160) said in her book *Critical Theory Today* that, "*Settings described with images of harmony, refinement, and plenitude imbue even the most vulgar scenes with a sense of unfulfilled longing that yearns toward a paradisaical beauty ironically at odds with the current action*". Buchbinder (1993: 12) added that New Criticism is a term that started to be known around 1920s and 1930s that used to be recognized as objective theory or intrinsic approach.

The analysis began with the close reading, examining the formal elements such as the settings and determining the theme. Bressler (2007: 55) said in his book that New Criticism does not even need to find extra textual information outside the text, the text itself contains all the necessary information to discover the meaning. This also proves that New Criticism is different from Structuralism where the formal elements is used to find the binary opposition. That is the reason why the writer use New Criticism in this research.

The writer found out that there were some other writers who used the same object in their researches. The first is *Dave's Personality Development as Seen in His Trilogy A Child Called 'It', The Lost Boy, and A Man Named Dave* by C. Yoani Wulandari (2015) in which Yoani described and analyzed the personality development of Dave by using psychosocial by Erikson. In this research, the writer found that Dave's character is dynamic as he succeeds to pass 6 of 8 phases of the development. The second is *Representasi Pencarian Jati Diri dalam Novel The Lost Boy karya Dave Pelzer* by Raissa Mathilda (2011). Mathilda used semiotic by Roland Barthes to analyze Dave's searching of self identity and his role in society. The third is *Habitus Tokoh David dalam Novel A Child Called It dan The Lost Boy karya Dave Pelzer* by Adeline Grace M. Litaay and Dheny Jatmiko (2018). They used Pierre Bourdieu's habitus theory to analyze David's action and attitude where they finally found that Dave's habit results from his addiction to alcohol and his mother's rude parenting style. The last is *Anxiety in Dave Pelzer's The Lost Boy: A Psychoanalytic Approach* by Johan Rifqi (2008). Rifqi used Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to analyze Dave's mental condition. He found that Dave encounters the conflict of his mental condition by using some kind of defense mechanism.

Furthermore, there are three students who used New Criticism in terms of setting and character, but in different novels. The first study was conducted by Alia Bahalwan (2011), an Airlangga University student, *Typical Settings and Their Influences Towards the Inner Self Qualities in Dumas' The Count of Monte Carlo*. In this study, the writer analyzed the setting influences towards the inner self qualities of the character. The next two studies had been also done by Airlangga University students, *The Function of Setting in*

Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies* by Putri, (2009). She explained the significant correlation between setting of the object, the theme and how it revealed the morals of the story. *The Influence of Lady Macbeth to Her Husband's Characterization as Seen on William Shakespeare's Macbeth* (2007) by Rosalien D. M. talked about values of human life into a specific study of certain characteristic of determined the ambition of Lady Macbeth and how it influenced another character.

Considering the aforementioned previous studies, this research is different from those researches since the writer's focus was in the process of how the setting influences the change of Dave's characterization and makes him do the journey to find a family love.

Regarding the statement of the problem, the analysis in this paper tried to answer the following questions: (1) Why does the main character, Dave, want to search a family love in the novel? (2) How do the setting, plot, and character create an organic unity to support the Dave's process in search of a family love?

METHOD

The writer uses the descriptive qualitative method. The intrinsic aspects of *The Lost Boy* (2009) by Dave Pelzer are the primary objects of this study. Following the New Criticism theory, the writer uses close reading method to analyze the text. The analysis is based on the setting, plot, and characterization that appeared in the text. Therefore, the writer divides the close reading method into two steps based on the issue; those are close reading to find data related to the reason why Dave begins his journey in search of a family's love and the process he finds it.

The writer identifies Dave's condition, his relation to other family members, and the assumption why his mother hates him. The three formal elements are the writer's focus in searching and

analyzing the relations. In addition, the writer also analyzes the influence of setting and plot towards the character to reach the organic unity so that the writer can determine the theme and get the result of the analysis. The text of the novel itself is the primary data. Besides that, the analysis will be supported by data taken from secondary sources such as other thesis which used New Criticism theory, but on different objects.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Reasons of Dave's Search for Family's Love

Dave Pelzer is the main character of *The Lost Boy*. He is a 12 year old boy who has had a hard life because his mother has abused him. He lives in Daly City, California with his family: father, mother, and his four brothers. He is the youngest in his family. Dave has become his mother's prisoner since he was 9 years old. He was placed in the garage by his mother with nothing except an old army coat to sleep that is why he always felt cold. He was not allowed to eat before finishing his household chores. Furthermore, even after finishing his chores, his mother never gave him good food but the left-over from his brothers' food (Pelzer, 2009: 3).

Dave was just a little boy and his body resistance was not strong enough to restrain the cold weather during the winter. Therefore, Dave states several times in his novel that he cannot feel anything from his hands and his other parts of body are stiff (Pelzer, 2009: 3). The condition has not only affected Dave physically, but also mentally. Moreover, his mother has been treating Dave and his brothers very differently. Even though it is not described explicitly in the novel, the writer can assume that Dave's brothers have not gotten the same treatment as Dave has. Dave's brothers were never placed in the garage since it is stated in the novel that Dave was placed there

alone. Besides, his mother actually gave him too much house chores such as doing the dishes and cleaning the house since he was just a nine year old boy. He was forced to do it all alone and if he did not obey the order his mother would beat him. Moreover, the writer also notices that Dave was not given good and nutritious food that was needed by a boy like him. He was just given a leftover food or sometimes he did not get any food at all. Therefore, sometimes he was forced by the condition to steal some food to eat when he was outside the house; for example, when he was in the school. It is actually a really bad condition for a growing child. With less food, many things to do, violence, and an improper place to rest, Dave must be oppressed mentally and physically. By looking at the condition of the house described by Dave, the writer can conclude that it is not good for a child to live there.

Furthermore, the relationship among members of Dave's family is not good at all. Dave's mother and father were alcoholic and almost every day they quarreled. It was not good for Dave's mental development. Moreover, he always became the topic of their quarrel. The relationship between Dave and his mother was very bad. Although his father always tried to save him but his mother did not care at all about him. Dave always received beatings or other violent treatments from his mother as if he was a real prisoner who was deserved to be punished. At first, Dave thought that he really deserved to be punished because his mother told him that he was a bad boy. Even so, as the time went by, he did not really understand why his mother was violent to him only. He did not know the reason of that. Dave also thought that he was no longer considered as a part of the family. He was just something from outside that had been dumped off to the house and began to ruin the family. He

just knew one thing that his mother never loved him. His mother thought that the family was better as long as Dave did not exist (Pelzer, 2009: 8 – 9).

After explaining about Dave, the situation and condition of his house, and the relationship between Dave and the other members of family, the writer then explains about the reason of Dave's journey in searching family's love. According to the novel, there are two reasons that finally make the main character, Dave, to begin his journey in searching family's love. The first reason is because of his mother's abuse and the second reason is that he wants to find a place that can make him feel save. The second reason can also be categorized as the impact of the abuse. So, the analysis below attempts to explain about those two reasons of Dave's journey.

The Abuse by Dave's Mother

The first reason of why Dave wants to search a new family that can love and give him the warmth is because his mother's abuse towards him. He was just nine years old at that time and he had been abused by his mother since he was four years old. His mother forced him to sleep in the basement, gave him the leftover from his brothers' meal, and told him to do the household chores. The condition was the same every day, repeated and repeated again.

In the novel, it is not explained why she treated Dave like that but it is only described about how much his mother hates him. It does not make any sense because Dave is her own son. Even her other sons were treated much better than him. At first, Dave felt that he must have done some mistakes so that his mother beat him as the punishment. However, when the abuse was always repeated and moreover with the fact that only him who received that abuse, he started to think that his mother was crazy. Dave could

take that as a conclusion because his mother always abused him when there was nobody else in the house. When his father and brother were not in the house, then it would become the best time for his mother to 'play' with him (Pelzer, 2009: 4).

Actually, the reason of why Dave's mother abused him is not explained explicitly in the novel but how his mother felt about Dave, how she hated Dave, is completely depicted by her actions to always abuse Dave for a long time. She said that all this time she treated Dave like that to punish Dave after he did some mistakes. She did not feel guilty at all. She just thought that Dave deserved to be treated like that. And when Dave's father tried to stop her from expelling Dave, she became angrier than before and asked Dave's father to let him go for their bright future life. By looking at his mother's attitude, Dave believed that he became the main factor which brought unhappiness to his family (Pelzer, 2009: 9).

Based on how Dave's mother treated him, the writer can take assumptions about the reason why Dave's mother abused him. The first assumption is maybe Dave is the unwanted child. The family consists of father, mother, and five sons including Dave; he is the last child of the family. It means that there was a new member of a family that had to be financially supported. The second assumption is the family was not rich enough to pay out all the member of the family for their living. After Dave was born, it brought more burdens to the family. They had to feed all of the sons, school, and mortgage of their house. Presumably, it was enough to pay out their four sons but it was not enough to include Dave. That is why Dave's mother thought him as the bad luck for the family thus he deserved to be punished. She never stopped to ask Dave to do all the house chores. She also still liked to beat Dave if he did not obey her

order. It is really bad treatment that had been accepted by a boy like Dave until he has many pains, mentally and physically. Therefore, Dave has many different personalities compared to other boys in similar age to him.

Looking for a Safe Place

After analyzing the first reason, the abuse of Dave's mother, in this section the writer would analyze the second reason of why Dave began his journey in searching family's love. This second reason is based on Dave's feeling after receiving many abuses from his mother. Dave felt uncomfortable and unsafe in his own house that he wanted to find a place that could make him feel safe. This reason is also depicted as the impact from Dave mother's abuse. For years, Dave felt that he no longer existed in his family. His family, especially his mother, never considered him as a family member. He did not deserve to be loved. He did not even a human, he was just *It* (Pelzer, 2009: 4 – 5).

This is the first time since he ran away from his own house to start his life again from the beginning. Dave did not feel comfortable in his own house because of his mother's way in treating him. He always felt afraid, worried, and apprehensive when he thinks for how long he would live in that 'hell'. He wanted to go to the place where he and his family were there a long time ago, Guerneville, the only place that could make him comfortable, safe, and happy with the memory when his family was still harmonious (Pelzer, 2009: 13). When Dave ran away for the first time, he felt like being reborn again to the world, free to breathe, and succeeded to break his mother jail. He wanted to go far away from the 'hell'. He was even frightened that his mother would chase and get him back to his house. But actually, he also thought that he was guilty. He knew that runaway was a mistake (Pelzer, 2009: 14).

Any kind of treatment will be kept in children's memory when they are in a golden age (0-8 years old) and it will be the prime factor in their personality expansion. So does Dave, what he accepted from his mother also influenced his personality expansion. Dave did not feel that his house was the only place that could make him safe. He always thought that his mother would kill him every minute, even every second if he did not obey what his mother told him. For a boy like Dave, the way the parents treat a child is an important point that can create their personality. For many years, since he was little, his mother always abused him, forced him to eat the left-over from his brother's meal, stabbed him in his stomach when he failed to finish the dishwasher in time, and so on. Dave never felt safe whenever and wherever he went. He thought that his mother would always spy on him and was ready to take him back anytime. Dave felt "unhomely" in his own house because of his mother's treatment.

Based on the novel, the writer can take a point that the main character, Dave, once again was being forced to live in his usual life. Once again, he had to accept all of the bad treatment including the violence from his mother. Because of that, Dave felt uncomfortable in his own house. He never thought that the house was a place that made him safe. It was just like a prison or hell that could depress him. Therefore, he wanted to search for a new life that could accept, love, and give him a hug.

In this case, the story of the novel begins when the main character, Dave, moved out from his own house. Starting from the report of his teachers in Thomas Edison Elementary School about his condition to the police, this is the beginning of the story. It explains how the main character, Dave, started his beginning of the journey in finding a family love. It is

one of the sections of plot shown in the novel. According to Griffith, plot is the literary element that describes the structure of a story in which conflict is contained in the related events (Griffith, 1992: 29 – 30). Plot contains five major sections that bring the information to develop the story of a work. Those five sections are exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. The sections of plot are represented by *Freytag pyramid* (Griffith, 1992: 30). By following the *Freytag pyramid*, the writer categorizes the story when Dave was rescued by the police as the first section of plot, exposition, in the novel. Griffith said that exposition explains the nature of the conflict in the story (Griffith, 1992: 30). It means that exposition brings the information about the beginning of the story.

According to Richard Gill, there is a slight difference between story and plot. While story can be defined as the events in the order in which they happen, plot can be defined as the order of events in which the reader learns of them. In other words, plots are events arranged in a particular way by the author (Gill, 1995: 165). By understanding that theory, the writer takes a point from the novel that Dave's rescue has been described as the beginning of the story before finally he began his journey in searching a new place and family that could love him and made him feel comfort and safe. He did not only want to search a safe place, but also a person that could make him comfortable.

Dave's Process in Searching a Family Love

After analyzing the reason why Dave begins his journey to find a family love, the writer will analyze the process of how Dave tries to find it. Since the process begins with Dave's movement, the setting and plot of the story will be the main elements that will be used by the writer

to explain his journey. The journey will be explained through Dave's movement from one foster house to other foster houses. Dave lived in Aunt May's house, Rudy and Lilian Catanze's house, The Hillcrest, Michael and Joanne Null's house, Jody and Vera Jones' house, Harold and Alice Turnbough's house, and lastly in John and Linda Walsh's house.

Furthermore, the writer will explain about the condition of the foster houses; what has happened with Dave there; and how is the relationship between Dave, the foster parents, and the other foster children. While explaining the situation and the condition of the foster houses, the writer will also describe about how the story goes, about the other parts of the plot: rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. By explaining the setting and plot of the novel, the writer will show how Dave's characterization changes while he lived in the foster houses until the end of the story. This second step of analysis begins when Dave was rescued by the police when he was 12 years old.

Dave is the main character in this novel. As Kelley Griffith stated that round character is more complex than a flat one. It has more personality traits and harder to understand (Griffith, 1992: 33). Dave can be categorized as a round character because he has some personality traits as the impact of his mother's abuse. He has been through some different conditions that force him to adapt in each situation with different traits too. He tries so hard to be accepted in a new condition and when he fails in that one condition, he has to start from the beginning again to fit in with another condition.

In this case, the author does not describe the main character with the appearance details such as what he looks like, his eye color or hair style. The author shows the reader more about his condition by describing his feelings, actions, and dialogues like when he said in the

novel that he is his mother's prisoner (Pelzer, 2009: 3). Griffith (1992: 34) stated that:

When the method of revealing characters is *indirect*, however, the author shows us, rather than telling us, what the characters are like through what they say about one another, through external details (dress, bearing, looks), and through their thoughts, speech, and deeds.

This method of *indirect* characterization that has been stated by Griffith is similar with Richard Gill's theory of telling and showing character. In this case, the author uses more showing theory in presenting the main character than telling his appearance. The author shows the main character's trait through his behavior, thought, feeling, and speech. Not only that, the author also shows him from other character's perception. Gill stated that,

"In telling, the narrator directly informs the reader about a character whereas in showing, the reader is left to gather what the character is like from what he or she sees". (Gill, 1995: 134)

The author often shows the main character characterization in the novel by describing his thought and act in some condition and situation; how Dave thinks, feels, or behaves after he experiences something sad, happy, or even hurtful. Furthermore, with only one sentence in the novel, the writer can take a point that Dave has a sad and painful life. Dave Pelzer stated that he was his mother's prisoner (2009: 3). From that sentence the writer can imagine how dark Dave's childhood was. In analyzing this novel, the writer can take a point that Dave is afraid to open himself to other people. However, when he feels comfortable in one condition, he can become a wild child.

He just plays around, does not listen to anyone, and sometimes acts inappropriately. All of those things he does are just for refreshing himself after runaway from his house.

In Aunt Mary's House

After being rescued by the police from his own house, Aunt Mary's house is the first foster house in which Dave lived. When he arrived at Aunt Mary's house, his first impression was that the house was very beautiful. That house was his new home and he thought that he would love to live there. For Dave, Aunt Mary's house is like a big cabin, a place where he can share happiness and laughter (Pelzer, 2009: 41).

In Aunt Mary's house, there were seven other children like him who also lived there. Based on the novel, at first, Dave could not rely on the other foster children, but after sometimes he started to believe and played with them even though he did not talk about the reason why he lived in a foster house. It seems like the psychological impact of his mother's treatment for a long time. He felt so ashamed to share his reason why he had to live there and not with his own family anymore. He felt ashamed because he thought that the reason for all this time was that he was a trouble maker. But when he felt that the other children accepted him, he started to change. He became talkative and told them the reason why he left his own house. For the next day, he became more uncontrollable. He felt like he was a free boy and could do whatever he wanted to do (Pelzer, 2009: 42 – 43).

Dave started to feel comfortable in Aunt Mary's house with his new friends, the other foster children. He opened himself to them. He felt like he could grab all of the things in the world. But it did not make him stop worrying about himself. He still felt afraid if one day his mother

would come and got him back. Sometimes, he still had a bad dream about his mother. He felt that there was no place he could hide and his mother would always watch him somewhere, and ready to put him back in their house. He always heard his mother's voice saying if she never let him go. When it happened, Dave's body would tremble and he promised that he would never sleep again if it meant to be a bad dream (Pelzer, 2009: 44).

According to the writer, Dave became traumatic because of his mother's bad treatment. He was so hard to adapt in a new place, not only because he was afraid of being unaccepted, but also felt that the situation limited his confidence. Dave felt that whatever he did was a mistake and it would make everybody believed that he really was a trouble maker like what his mother said. He was afraid that there was nobody who would like to stand beside him. He could not believe other people easily and he always thought no matter what happened, someday, he would be back to his mother.

By looking at the explanation above, the way that the author uses to introduce the main character to the readers is by showing his thought or his behavior. This way can also be categorized as the *indirect* method as Griffith stated. Besides that, Gill also explains the method of how characters speak, think, or do (Gill, 1995: 135–144). All of the methods can be used as the main tool in determining the characterization of the character. According to Gill's theory of what characters do, the way of a character that is shown in the novel by his action or reaction is one of the main ways in which authors establish the personality (Gill, 1995: 144).

In addition, the story when Dave had to go through the trial against his mother is the second section of the plot; it is the rising action. DiYanni stated in his book that rising action is the exposition which has developed by the intensifications of

the conflict (DiYanni, 2000: 45). According to the method, the writer believes that when Dave went through the trial against his mother and when he chose to live with the foster parent becomes the rising action of the story. It is the other conflict that has to be solved. He has to solve his conflict with his environment and conflict with himself. At this point, he has to force himself to fight his fear. From then on, he has to take care of himself. He must become a better person to make his family, especially his mother, believe that he was not the same Dave as they knew before. He had to make his mother proud of him (Pelzer, 2009: 75).

The writer also found another personality of the main character in the novel. The main character can be categorized as an introvert because of his dark experience. He could not easily befriend with other people because he felt ashamed with himself especially after he won the trial against his mother. He did not want other people know why he had to live with foster parents. Maybe he began to fight his fear but he could still feel that there must be one or two people who did not like him so the best way was being silent.

The characterization of Dave that is described in the novel shown how the impact of Dave mother's treatment to his personality. He became introvert, sometimes reckless, sometimes spoiled. But it did not make him hard to distinguish a good act from a bad one. He knew, he understood what was good or bad, what had to be done or not. But since he felt like a prisoner and now his time to go out, he just felt like he wanted to satisfy himself. He wanted to do anything he never did before. Therefore, he did all the things that other people said to him even if it was something bad. It did not mean that he did not know or he was a bad boy. He knew that but he still did it because he wanted to be accepted by other people.

In Rudy and Lilian Catanze's House

Rudy and Lilian Catanze's house was the first permanent foster house for Dave. In this foster house, Dave began to enjoy his life because Rudy and Lilian let him play or go to some places as long as he could take care of himself and act responsibly. Because of that, he began to feel safe and comfortable in his new house (Pelzer, 2009: 87-88). Dave met other foster children who lived in Rudy and Lilian Catanze's house, they were Big Larry, Larry Jr., and Connie. In this house, Dave could see how the member of a family honored each other. He began to understand how to share a problem with parents although it was still hard for him to open all his heart and believe his new parents but at least there was a time he wanted to share his feeling with Lilian Catanze (Pelzer, 2009: 94).

Even though his attitude was not really different from his attitude when he lived in Aunt Mary's house, he still obeyed what other people told him. He did not care whether it was right or wrong. At least, Dave had made a different attitude when he did not obey the 'bad' people's order. Actually, Dave felt comfortable in Rudy and Lilian Catanze's house except one thing, he could not be friendlier with Larry Jr. Larry Jr. always tried to disturb him with harsh words. Therefore, if there was someone, who hurt him like Larry Jr., told him to do something, he would not obey that order. On the contrary, when he lived in Aunt Mary's house, he did not care with what people thought about him as long as they accepted him then he would do anything they wanted even if they were using him. The defense mechanism shown by Dave when he lived in Lilian's house is stronger than before. He even dared to take revenge with a rude word or bad attitude, for example punching the bad boy who disturbed him.

According to the explanation above, the writer can give comment that Dave

becomes uncomfortable in Lilian's house day by day. It was not because of his new house or his new parents. He felt to be someone special when he was just alone with Mrs. Catanze (Pelzer, 2009: 98). He could not adapt well with the other foster children, especially Larry Jr. who always made him angry and finally he would get a new situation that made Lilian punish him because of his attitude to Larry. The writer understands how the bad treatment of Dave's mother affected his life so much. His mother treated him too bad for a little boy like him. Dave poured all of his dark experiences to Lilian Catanze. Dave's mother did not only abuse him physically but also mentally. She beat, slammed, stabbed Dave. She even forced him to eat dog's manure. Those kinds of treatment were really bad for Dave. That is why it affected his life so much.

Because of Dave's explanation about his experiences, Lilian and Rudy finally decided to bring Dave to a psychiatrist. The impact of that action, Dave became wilder day by day because he hated other people treated him like a crazy or stupid boy. He even hated someone who thought him a little boy. He was twelve years old and he thought that he was not a child anymore. He became more introvert to other people around him, including Lilian and Rudy. The other impact that is shown by Dave is that he became tougher if he wanted to get a better life and he swore to himself that he would never let anybody hurt him again. The impact was started to come along with the pressure from the other people around Dave. He tried so hard to defend himself from anything that would hurt him. When Lilian's house did not give him comfort feeling anymore, he tried to find it in another place.

The writer believed that the story when Dave lived in Rudy and Lilian Catanze's house as the climax of the story. Just like Robert DiYanni's statement in his

book that climax is a section of the plot when the story reaches the greatest tension, in this case the real tension is the conflict that experienced by the character (DiYanni, 2000: 45). Similar to DiYanni, Griffith (1992: 30) also stated that climax is the most intense event in the literary work.

The writer determines the story when Dave lived in his second foster house as the climax because he lived longer here than the other foster houses. Besides, here, he got more complex problems both from his environment and himself. At Rudy and Lilian's house, Dave was hard to adapt. There were many conditions that forced him to be in a high tension. First, he had a small problem when he could not befriend with Larry Jr. Second, when his mother came to visit him, his mental condition dropped again until he could not hold it anymore and then shared all of his dark experience to Lilian Catanze. As the impact, Lilian decided to bring him to a psychiatrist which made Dave became more uncontrollable. He hated when there were other people considered him as a child or, worse, as a problematic boy who needed a help from a psychiatrist. Third, when he was slandered by his friend, John, a school burner who, in fact, was the real arsonist. Because of that, Dave realized that he could not live like that anymore. He had to make some changes in his life. If he wanted to have a better life, he had to be a better person first. At this point, the writer noticed that Dave has been through conflicts both from inside and outside of himself.

In The Hillcrest

Hillcrest is a rehabilitation center for teenagers who have problems in their lives. Rudy Catanze sent Dave to live there after he got a problem of burning the school even though he was not the real arsonist. Since Dave made a lot of

problems, Rudy did not believe in him anymore. Before wrapping in the school burning, Dave had made many problems that finally ruined Rudy's trust on him. For example, Dave once stole a toy from the store. It finally made Rudy lost his trust to him so he could not convince Rudy if the real arsonist of the school was not him (Pelzer, 2009: 187).

Since Rudy sent Dave to the Hillcrest, he started to rethink about his past experience. He tried to divide his good and bad attitude. In Hillcrest, he became more quiet than before. He tried his best to avoid all of the problems he met there. He tried his best to be a better person since he thought that he needed to change his life. He resolved to be a better person after his father visited him to Hillcrest. His father told him that he was so disappointed with what Dave had done; stealing and burning a school. His father told him that maybe for all this time his mother was right when she said Dave was a dangerous child and had to be disciplined. Moreover, his father also said that he could not forgive Dave and Dave really had to change his attitude to be a better person. That made Dave realized that he had worse attitude all this time and had to increase his determination.

From the explanation above, the writer understand how Dave's feeling. After hearing his father's complaints and sighs, Dave realized that since he lived with the foster parent, his attitude was precisely matched with what his mother always described about him. Because of that, Dave strengthened his motivation to change himself and become a better person. With the help from Rudy and Lilian Catanze and Gordon Hutchenson, Dave's new probation officer, Dave tried to fight against his mother. He had to change his attitude so that the counsellor from the Hillcrest would only take a note about his good behavior. The note then would be the weapon to fight his mother. Dave's

foster parents and the probation officer also helped him by accompanying him. They would always be ready to help and support him. But first of all, Dave had a strong will to start all over his life again.

In Michael and Joanne Nulls' House

The next foster house that lived by Dave after he moved out from Rudy and Lilian Catanze's house was Michael and Joanne Nulls' house. Different from Lilian's house, in Joanne's house, Dave was the only foster child who lived there. Joanne adopted him as her kid because she was alone and she could not have a child. Joanne was a kind of good mother to Dave. She was so kind and soft-hearted. She tried to take good care of Dave like he was her lovely doll. She insisted to wash Dave's hair, forbid him to ride his bike too far from the house, and gave him 50 cent dollars. To make her happy, Dave tried to act happy and obedient to all of what Joanne said even though he did not really like to be treated as a kid rather than 13 years old boy like what he always wanted (Pelzer, 2009: 233-234). Furthermore, Joanne's husband, Michael Nulls, did not want Dave to live in his house and it made him and Joanne yelled each other. He wanted Dave to move out of his house but Joanne did not agree. When they were yelling at each other, Dave remembered to his memories about his parents' dispute while he lived in his own house and it made him feel afraid again (Pelzer, 2009: 234-235).

Based on the explanation above, the writer knows that Dave was not comfortable in Michael and Joanne Nulls' house. It was not only because Joanne treated him as a little kid, but also because Michael and Joanne's quarrel reminded him of his dark experience when he lived in his own house. It is such kind of traumatic attitude shown by Dave after he accepted some physical and mental problem from his

parents. That is why Dave lived there for only around one month.

In Jody and Vera Jones' House

After moving out from Michael and Joanne Nulls' house, Dave tried to erase all of his feelings to his past foster parents, including Michael and Joanne Nulls and Rudy and Lilian Catanze (Pelzer, 2009: 238). His enthusiasm began to disappear slowly. He felt like his effort for all this time was useless. When Dave's probation officer, Gordon, drove him to the new foster house, Dave felt like there was something wrong with the address. Because this new foster house was located in Daly City, near to his own house. Dave shocked when he realized it. His fear of his mother suddenly back into his head (Pelzer, 2009: 239). But just like the other foster house, he had to accept this new house however the condition and wherever the location was. So, once again he tried as best as he could to fight his own fear and adapt in his new foster house.

This next foster house was Jody and Vera Jones' house. They were the first black-people who became Dave's foster parents. Dave felt a little bit shocked when he knew about his new foster parents even though they were so kind and warm-hearted. However, this was his new experience so he felt a little worried. At this time, Dave missed Catanze's family so much. He knew that he would never live there again but still, he missed the family and he wished he could live there again someday (Pelzer, 2009: 242).

There were other seven foster children who lived in Jody and Vera Jones' house. According to the novel, Jody and Vera were not a rich family. The writer can conclude that by looking at their house condition. The furniture that they used was mostly old and obsolete. But this time, Dave just like had a positive answer in his effort to adapt. He under-

stood that this family was harmonious although they were not rich. They might not rich in material, but they had rich love to share with all of the foster children who lived there. Because of that, Dave started to get his spirit back and hoped that he could live there for a long time like when he lived in Catanze's house (Pelzer, 2009: 243).

By looking at the explanation above, the writer understands how Dave wanted to adapt well to his new foster parents and the other foster children in that house. Dave finally felt relieved to accept his new foster house because this was the time he felt comfortable in a house. What he really wanted was that he could live there for a long time so he did not have to move out, forget the family, and try to adapt to the new situation anymore. But exactly like what he had always been afraid of, his happiness in Jody and Vera's house did not hold out for a long term. This new family got a big problem that finally forced him to move again. Jody Jones was accused of raping his foster child who lived there before Dave a few months ago. Dave had been trying so hard to adapt there and now when he succeeded, once again he had to move (Pelzer, 2009: 255).

In Harold and Alice Turnbough's House

The move finally made Dave started to feel surfeited with his life. It was not because he had no spirit left to live his life, but was bored to adapt in a situation and condition which he had to leave. Then he would get a new place and had to try to adapt one more time without knowing it would become his last place or not. Because there was no place which could receive Dave, the social worker who picked Dave up in Jody and Vera's house took him to Harold and Alice Turnbough's house for a few days until the social worker found the new family for him. Dave did

not care too much for that because he just wanted to be at home. He wanted to feel comfortable in a place that he could call as "home" (Pelzer, 2009: 257).

Different from Jody and Vera Jones's house, Dave felt better when he lived with Harold and Alice Turnbough's house. Even though he had to sleep on a couch and Harold's attitude was so cold to him but at least he felt that his presence was recognized by the other people, Alice, Harold, and his new psychiatrist who really different from his first psychiatrist when he lived in Catanze's house. In this house he was treated as a human (Pelzer, 2009: 264). That was the most important thing that he always wanted for all this time and it also created a new personality to him.

According to the novel, when Dave told his experience while spending time with Alice Turnbough, the writer noticed that Dave began to change his personality from introvert to extrovert. He had no doubt to tell Alice anything what he wanted to share. It needed only a short time for them to make a relationship as friends—actually a mother-son relationship. He had an important phase in his life when he lived in Harold and Alice's house (Pelzer, 2009: 265).

Although Dave lived there for only a temporary time, but finally Alice and Harold succeeded to make him live there permanently. Dave was very happy to hear that. Harold and Alice gave him a different love from the other foster parents that he ever lived with. They gave Dave a chance to be a kid one more time just as his preparation to enter his next phase of life. He was around 13 years old when he lived with Harold and Alice's house. Here, Dave for the first time shared topic about his future with Alice, something that he never thought before. Because Alice and Harold supported him, Dave finally tried to make his own money. He spent his time working as a shoe polish and a

parttime worker in a watch shop. He was proud of himself because he could make his own money. He could even buy a gift for Alice and Harold, while other children just playing around. He became a self-sufficient person and he proud to be like that (Pelzer, 2009: 268).

When Dave lived in Harold and Alice Turnbough's house, the writer notices that Dave had begun his adult life sooner than the other children. He began to think how he could make his money to support his own needs. Not only that, Dave also tried to think about his future, what he would be when he became an adult later, what he wanted to do to make a living, and the most important thing was how he built his own family, how he arranged his family until it became harmonious. According to the writer, it is also the impact of the dark experience that Dave accepted for all this time. He did not want to have a dark life anymore. He wanted to have and make a harmonious family. And the most important thing is he did not want his own child had the same experience like what he got. Actually not only for his own future child, he also had a dream to help people who had the same experience like him. Maybe someday he also wanted to become a foster parent.

In John and Linda Walsh's House

Dave was 15 years old when finally he decided to move out from Harold and Alice Turnbough's house. Actually, he still doubted his decision because he really loved that family and it was the first family that he considered as his own family, his house, he even remembered the phone number, but he could not tolerate the two new foster children who just move in the Turnbough's house. He thought that they would take his place from Harold and Alice. He also hated when he noticed that his money was gone and he knew that there was connection with those two new children. Dave also

had a principle that he had to be responsible whatever he said. Therefore, when he decided to move out, Dave submitted to live in the Hillcrest for a few months before his probation officer took him to live in John and Linda Walsh family (Pelzer, 2009: 271).

John and Linda Walsh was a young married couple who had three children. Dave shocked when he lived in this foster house because of John and Linda's treatment to him. Not because they treated Dave as a human like Harold and Alice, but because they gave Dave freedom to do whatever he wanted. But its freedom was different with what Harold and Alice gave him. Dave felt it like it was too free when John bought him BB gun and a little motorcycle but it was not difficult for him to adapt the Walshes' life style (Pelzer, 2009: 272). Until someday Dave misunderstood with John and Linda's when they told him they had to move to another house. Dave did not think that John and Linda would take him too, even though in fact they wanted to take Dave, and soon he was angry with the situation. Dave stated that: "I was livid. It seemed that every time, every time, I adjust to a new environment, something happened" (Pelzer, 2009: 272).

By looking how Dave's expression, the writer can get a point that Dave still have problem in adapting to a new place. He hated to adapt in a place which was never be his true last place and he hated to start it all over again in some new places. What he always wanted was a place which could be the last place and he really wanted to consider it as his house. He wanted to have one last family that he could call as his own family. He wanted to have a family and a place which can be his support of his life.

In John and Linda Walsh's house, Dave lived in a different style with the other foster houses. According to Dave, John and Linda were the richest family

that he had ever had. When Dave came with John and Linda to their new house, Dave made friends with the neighbors faster. He could adapt to that new situation quickly. But like the other foster houses, it was not for a long term he could live there because John and Linda quarreled too much and it did not com-forting him when he had to take care of their children. He felt like he could not live in that such of condition. Then, he decided to call his probation officer to pick him up and sent him to another foster house (Pelzer, 2009: 284 – 285).

In this part of the story, the writer notices that this is the falling action of the plot. Just like what Kelley Griffith stated in his book that falling action contains events that are much less than the climax and it lead to the resolution or the end of the story (Griffith, 1992: 30). The writer believes that this section of the story when Dave lived in John and Linda Walsh's house is the falling action because it has less events than the climax when he lived in Rudy and Lilian Catanze's house. And it also leads the story into the resolution.

For the last time, Dave went back again to Harold and Alice Turnbough's house and lived there for the rest of his teenage time until he decided to enlist himself to United States Air Forces. He still wanted to hear his mother's voice, he wanted to know if his mother still recognized him or not but he knew that he could not meet his mother. Unexpectedly, his mother called him when she heard that Dave joined the United States Air Forces. She was Dave's kind-hearted mother, not the evil mother whom Dave knew for all this time. She told Dave that she was proud of him. Dave still hoped that he could hear the three words which he always wanted to hear from his mother that was *I love you*, even if it was not happening. But finally, Dave realized that he had another real mother and real

family who will always give him love (Pelzer, 2009: 303).

According to the explanation above, the writer understands that Dave finally ended his searching of a family love in Harold and Alice Turnbough's family. He finally found a place to come back every time he needed them. And the other important thing is that he got the love of family like what he wished all the time from his foster parents. He got a harmonious family like what he always wanted for all this time from Harold and Alice. The writer also assumed that Dave forgave his own parents. And now his journey as a man named Dave has begun (Pelzer, 2009: 304).

The writer also notices that this part of the story is the resolution. According to Robert DiYanni, resolution is the end of the story when the actions of the plot that show in the story are sorted out and get resolved (DiYanni, 2000: 45). That is why the writer believes that this part when Dave finally found and ended his journey in searching a family love for Harold and Alice Turnbough's family as the resolution because the conflict faced by Dave had been solved.

CONCLUSION

The writer concludes that this study describes the setting and plot that work together to create new characterization of Dave in the novel. In this case, there are three formal elements: characterization, setting, and plot used by the writer that have supported each others in order to reach the organic unity so that the writer could finally get the theme and the result of the analysis. The writer analyzed the novel into two big sections. In the first section of the analysis the writer found that the abuse of Dave's mother and Dave's intention to find a safe place are the main reason of why he began his journey to find a family love. While from the second section of analysis, the writer

found that the process in searching a family love had been experienced by Dave when he lived in some foster houses. By moving from one to the other foster houses, Dave had faced many different things and he tried so hard to adapt in those situations; that is why his characterization is also different in the end of the story.

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