



The Rhetorical Structure of the Climax Plot in *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy (2004)

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Abstract

This research examined the rhetorical structure of the climax plot in the novel *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy (2004). This study employed a qualitative design, utilizing Swales' (1990) move analysis method to identify moves and strategies in the climax chapters, and supported the analysis with narrative plot mapping. The results showed that the climax plot was dominated by rhetorical moves that highlighted narrative shifts through tension, provided character struggles, highlighted character emotions, and built a dramatic atmosphere that served to strengthen the ideological and persuasive dimensions of the narrative. In addition, a length analysis of the climax revealed that measuring it through the number of chapters, pages, paragraphs, and dialogues effectively reflected the dramatic effect and maximized the communicative impact on readers. These findings indicate that rhetorical structure influences the persuasive power of the climax in conveying moral, cultural, and religious values. This study provides insight into how narrative design contributes to the creation of meaning in Indonesian popular literature.

Keywords: *Ayat-ayat Cinta*; climax plot; move analysis; rhetorical structure

Introduction

Research on the rhetorical structure of texts has become an increasingly prominent topic in linguistic studies because rhetorical structure plays a crucial role in shaping meaning in discourse (Warsidi et al., 2024). Literature, as one of the oldest forms of discourse, serves as a powerful medium for expressing complex ideas, social values, and philosophical perspectives through carefully structured language. In literary works, rhetorical structure often appears implicitly through elements such as plot development, character interactions, and narrative style, which all influence how readers interpret and emotionally connect with the text. Across cultures, writers

have employed refined language and deliberate structure to create meaning, inspire change, and persuade readers. Therefore, examining rhetorical structure in literature is essential for understanding how messages are crafted to engage readers and convey more profound meanings.

Rhetorical structure in novels refers to the way an author organizes and presents ideas, themes, and narratives to persuade or arouse the reader's emotional appeal. Writers may use different rhetorical strategies depending on the purpose of the novel, such as using first-person narration for intimacy or nonlinear storytelling for suspense. The arrangement of plot elements such as exposition, climax, resolution and others also determines how readers can interpret and connect with the story. Rhetorical structure in text means that an author can convey ideas through text that are not only clear and effective, but also have an attractive aesthetic value (Supriyadi, 2022). Furthermore, Rahmah (2020) said that rhetorical textual is the author's ability to describe and process every word and then pour it into every event in the story so that the reader seems to feel what the character in the story is experiencing.

The novel *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (AAC), written by Habiburrahman El Shirazy, is a literary work widely known for its storyline, which combines romantic narratives with Islamic values and moral teachings. According to Kasmawati (2021), the use of structured language in this novel is highly structured in building characters and dramatic flow, making it rhetorically enjoyable to analyze. Aflahah (2017) emphasized that the language styles in this novel, such as simile, metaphor, and climax, are used meticulously to strengthen emotions and character development. In addition, the use of pronouns and time signatures in the story helps readers feel closer to the main character (Iskandar, 2013). The language in this novel is deliberately chosen, not just for its beauty, but also used rhetorically to influence the reader and convey the author's desired values.

Safnah Billiyah (2020) analyzed the speech acts found in this novel using a pragmatic approach. Their research identified various types of speech acts, including assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative, which the characters used to perform communication functions in the narrative. The findings of this study reveal that speech acts in the novel serve not only as a means of interaction between characters but also convey ideological and emotional content, particularly in conveying religious, moral, and cultural values. The use of directive and commissive speech acts is prevalent in expressing obligations and commitments that align with Islamic teachings. This study demonstrates that the novel's linguistic elements serve a rhetorical function in building character relationships and conveying specific ethical messages.

Another previous study by R. Rohim (2010) analyzed the ideology contained in the novel *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* through thematic and aesthetic approaches. The study found that the author incorporates Islamic values, such as patience, sincerity, and firmness of faith, through the depiction of characters and storylines that are marked

by spiritual and social conflicts. The researcher explained that the power of ideology in this novel is built through symbolism, quotations of Qur'anic verses, and the selection of religious diction. This research makes a significant contribution to understanding how literature can serve as a medium for disseminating moral and religious values through an aesthetic approach. The implications of this research suggest that popular literature can serve as an effective means of internalizing ideological values in readers through engaging narrative strategies.

Maulida et al. (2021) conducted a study examining the use of figure of speech in the novel *Ayat-Ayat Cinta*, which aims to describe the stylistic expressions in the novel. Through a descriptive qualitative method with a literary anthropology approach, the study identified 73 sentences that employed various rhetorical devices, including hyperbole, simile, personification, metaphor, and litotes. These stylistic elements were found to enrich the emotional tone of the narrative and reflect the inner struggles and values of the characters. The use of figurative language effectively supports the author's imaginative expression, appealing to the reader's emotions and moral sensibilities. This study highlights the stylistic richness of the novel and its potential for analysis from a rhetorical perspective about the themes and values it conveys.

In a broader literary context, Wardani & Efendi (2021) identified the language style and rhetorical structure used by Andrea Hirata in the tetralogy of *Laskar Pelangi* novels. The research utilized a qualitative descriptive analysis method, focusing on narrative excerpts that contain linguistic styles and rhetorical patterns. The findings reveal that the author uses various types of figurative language, including metaphors, similes, personification, and hyperbole, alongside rhetorical structures such as repetition, climax, and antithesis. These elements serve to amplify the emotional depth and moral values embedded in the story. Additionally, Shokouhi & Shirali (2011) demonstrated the effectiveness of Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST) in analyzing EFL students' picture-based narratives, emphasizing relations like elaboration, cause, condition, and sequence as essential for cohesion and logical flow.

Further supporting the use of rhetorical models, Zein et al. (2023) applied Swales' CARS model to analyze the rhetorical structure of student-written academic introductions. They found a consistent use of moves 1 (making topic generalizations), move 2 (question-raising) and move 3 (indicating article structure), demonstrating how rhetorical structure effectively guides reader comprehension. Similarly, Indrian (2019) examined rhetorical moves in both English and Indonesian theses. While both languages followed comparable CARS structures, the study revealed that cultural and stylistic differences impacted the arrangement of these moves. Collectively, these studies confirm that rhetorical structure functions across various genres both academic and fictional and is shaped by linguistic, cultural, and contextual factors.

Previous studies have focused on linguistic elements, style, or ideology, while studies using rhetorical structure are more often applied to academic texts than to popular literary works. These studies also confirm that the use of rhetorical structure

in language can strengthen character development and increase the emotional depth of a story. However, throughout the researcher's review, studies that combine rhetorical structure with the identification of plot elements in fictional narratives, particularly the novel *Ayat-ayat Cinta*, are still limited. Additionally, this study aims to address this gap by examining rhetorical structure by mapping the communicative steps and strategies that emerge throughout the narrative. This analysis also includes the identification of plot elements based on Freytag's Pyramid model found in the novel.

This study refers to move analysis by providing a comprehensive overview of how rhetorical structure and climax plot interact to form a storyline that captivates readers. Theoretically, this study expands move analysis by showing how rhetorical analysis can be adapted to fictional texts. Practically, the results of this study can serve as a reference for researchers, educators, and readers in understanding the relationship between narrative form, moral messages, and emotional appeal in literary works. Therefore, to further explore the use of rhetorical structure and climax plot in the novel *Ayat-ayat Cinta*, this study answers the following research questions: (1) What are the rhetorical structures of the novel *Ayat-ayat Cinta*? (2) To what extent is the length of a climax plot in the novel *Ayat-ayat Cinta*?

Method

This study used a qualitative design with a move analysis method that refers to Swales' (1990). In this context, move analysis involves identifying and classifying the communicative functions (moves) and communicative events (strategies/steps) that authors use to create meaning within a text (Warsidi, 2023, 2022, 2024). This study enriches move analysis by examining plot element based on Freytag's Pyramid model which focused on the climax plot. Thus, the mapping of moves can be directly linked to plot development, providing a more complete picture of the author's rhetorical strategies.

The object of this research is the novel *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (AAC) by Habiburrahman El Shirazy (Shirazy, 2004). This research was conducted by analyzing four climax chapters to ensure that the overall rhetorical structure of the narrative was accurately described. The primary instrument in this research is the researcher, who serves as a human instrument. In this role, the researcher actively engages in reading, interpreting, and classifying the rhetorical structure and climax plot in the novel *Ayat-Ayat Cinta*. To collect data, the novel text will be read deeply and carefully, with a primary focus on rhetorical patterns, to identify the communicative events used by the author in each climax chapter.

The process of analyzing rhetorical structure data was carried out by identifying communicative functions (moves) in each chapter and mapping the strategies/steps that support each move explored by early studies (Warsidi et al., 2023, 2024; Warsidi & Adnan, 2024). Communicative events in each chapter are mapped using criteria such as "introducing the main characters and setting in Cairo,"

“presenting social conflict,” or “providing a resolution to the main conflict”. Therefore, to analyze the plot elements in the novel, the plot structure is classified based on Freytag's Pyramid Model (1863), which focuses on the climax plot. This analysis aims to explain the relationship between rhetorical structure and the development of the climax plot in *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* as a medium for conveying moral, emotional, and religious messages to readers.

Results

This section describes the rhetorical structure in each chapter by identifying move analysis and plot elements using Freytag's Pyramid model as a reference for data analysis. Both explore the communicative purpose in the text identified through recurring and dominant texts. This analysis aims to reveal the patterns of rhetorical structure and plot elements used by the author to attract the emotional interest of readers.

The Rhetorical Structures of the climax plot in the novel Ayat-ayat Cinta

The results of the rhetorical structure analysis in climax chapters of the novel showed that the author can use more than one strategy to achieve a specific communicative goal. Chapters 26 to 29 display different communicative functions supported by various strategies, which collectively serve to guide readers toward the message intended by the author. To illustrate how the rhetorical structure develops throughout the plot climax, the results of the summary analysis are presented in Table 1:

Table 1. A summary of the analysis in the climax chapters

No.	Chapters and their titles	Communicative functions/ Moves	Strategies to reach the moves
1.	Chapter 26: <i>Penangkapan</i>	Triggering a major narrative shift through arrest	Creating emotional contrast through Aisha's pregnancy Showing Fahri's sudden arrest
2.	Chapter 27: <i>Dalam Penjara Bawah Tanah</i>	Providing Hopes from Suffering	Describing Fahri's suffering in prison Introducing other characters (cellmates) Demonstrating steadfast faith in characters
3.	Chapter 28: <i>Tangis Aisha</i>	Highlighting the emotional toll of separation and injustice	Showing concern for cellmates Narrating Aisha's visit and what happened to her Receiving encouragement from the organizational leader

			Describing the preparations before the trial
			Telling the story of Noura's prosecution at the first hearing
4. Chapter 29: <i>Persidangan</i>	Establishing tension	dramatic	Telling the news about Maria's condition
			Telling the story of the second trial
			Telling about Fahri's steadfastness

Table 1 indicates that there are 4 communicative functions with 13 strategies employed by the author to complete the narrative at the climax of the plot. Overall, the rhetorical structure in the climax demonstrates the author's flexibility in arranging the development of the storyline, thereby creating depth of meaning and maintaining the reader's attention. The following section focuses on chapters 26 to 29, which constitute the climax of the story, with detailed explanations of how communicative functions are applied.

Chapter 26: *Penangkapan*

Move 1: Triggering a major narrative shift through arrest

This move serves as a transition from a happy situation to a tense one and is the culmination of the conflict of the story.

Strategy 1: Creating emotional contrast through Aisha's pregnancy

Ex.1: *"Selamat! Setelah kami periksa air seninya dan kami lanjutkan dengan USG, istri anda positif hamil!"*

Ex.1: "Congratulations! After examining her urine and continuing with an USG, your wife is positively pregnant!"

Ex.2: *Untuk menghayati keagungan nikmat yang telah Tuhan berikan, kuajak Aisha sujud syukur dan shalat Dhuha. kepadanya aku berpesan untuk tidak beaktivitas keluar rumah.*

Ex.2: To appreciate the blessings that God has given us, I invited Aisha to prostrate in gratitude and perform the Dhuha prayer. I advised her not to leave the house.

In this strategy, the author depicts the happiness felt by the main character before reaching the climax.

Strategy 2: Showing Fahri's sudden arrest

Ex.3: *Menjelang Zuhur aku bersiap untuk menjenguk Maria yang sakit. Aisha kuminta di rumah. Tiba-tiba ada orang membunyikan bel dengan kasar sekali. Tiga orang polisi berbadan kekar menerobos masuk tanpa permissi dan meghardik, "Kami mendapatkan perintah untuk menangkapmu dan menyeretmu ke penjara, ya Mugrim!" bentak polisi berkumis tebal.*

Ex.3: By Dhuhr, I was getting ready to visit Maria, who was sick. I asked Aisha to stay at home. Suddenly, someone rang the bell very rudely. Three burly policemen barged in without permission and snarled, "We have orders to arrest you and drag you to jail, *ya Mugrim!*" snapped the policeman with the thick mustache.

In this strategy, the author begins to bring out the climax of the story by creating a dramatic and surprising effect for the reader.

Chapter 27: Dalam Penjara Bawah Tanah

Move 2: Provides Hope from Suffering

This move serves as a complement to the inner and social emotions Fahri experienced during the time of crisis in prison.

Strategy 1: Describing Fahri's suffering in prison

Ex.4: *Aku dibawa ke markas polisi Abbasea. Diseret seperti anjing kurap. Lalu diinterogasi habis-habisan, dibentak-bentak, dimaki-maki dan disumpahserapahi dengan kata-kata kotor.*

Ex.4: I was carried to Abbasea police headquarters, dragged away like a dog with ringworm. Then I was thoroughly interrogated, yelled at, cursed at, and sworn at with obscenities.

Ex.5: *Polisi gendut melepas pakaianku. Lalu menyuruhku berdiri menghadap tembok. Setelah itu aku merasakan sabetan cambuk yang perih di punggungku.*

Ex.5: The fat policeman took off my clothes. Then told me to stand facing the wall. After that, I felt the sting of the whip on my back.

This strategy uses strong and visual language to emphasize feelings of humiliation, pain, and helplessness so that the reader can feel the intensity of Fahri's suffering.

Strategy 2: Introducing other characters (cellmates)

Ex.6: *Pemuda berwajah putih sejak tadi mematung di pojok ruangan menyahut sambil mendekat, "Beliau adalah Prof. Dr. Abdur Rauf Manshour, guru besar ekonomi pembangunan di Universitas El-Menya.... Oh ya perkenalkan namaku Ismail, mahasiswa kedokteran tahun ketiga Universitas Ains Syam..."*

Ex.6: The white-faced young man who had been standing in the corner of the room said as he approached, "He is Prof. Dr. Abdur Rauf Manshour, professor of development economics at El-Menya University My name is Ismail, a third-year medical student at Ains Sham University..."

This strategy serves to expand the scope of the story, provide social dimensions, and add background information on other characters that may influence the plot development.

Strategy 3: Demonstrating steadfast faith in characters

Ex.7: *Aku lalu tayamum dan shalat. Selesai shalat Professor Abdul Rauf memimpin kami membaca doa dan zikir sore hari. Ditutup dengan doa rabithah yang dibaca oleh Haj Rashed. Tak lama setelah itu adzan Magrib berkumandang.*

Ex.7: I then performed tayamum and prayed. After the prayer, Professor Abdul Rauf led us in reciting the afternoon prayers and zikr. It was concluded with the rabithah prayer recited by Haj Rashed. Shortly after that, the Maghrib call to prayer sounded.

Ex.8: *Karena tempat yang sempit kami tidak bisa berjamaah sekaligus. terpaksa dibagi dua jamaah bergantian. Aku diminta menjadi imam jamaah kedua, dengan alasan aku satu-satunya yang dari Al Azhar.*

Ex.8: Due to the limited space, we could not pray in congregation all at once. We had to divide into two groups and take turns. I was asked to be the imam for the second group, because I was the only one from Al Azhar.

This strategy serves to highlight moral and religious values so that readers can experience them as well.

Chapter 28: *Tangis Aisha*

Move 3: Highlighting the emotional toll of separation and injustice

This move aims to show the emotional impact on Fahri's loved ones of his arrest.

Strategy 1: Showing concern for cellmates

Ex.9: *"Hamada, ambilkan susu itu!"* kata Professor Abdul Rauf.

Ex.9: "Hamada, get the milk!" said Professor Abdul Rauf.

Ex.10: *"Minumlah lagi, biar tubuhmu segar!"* paksa Ismail.

Ex.10: "Drink some more, it will refresh your body!" insisted Ismail.

This strategy builds a sense of solidarity and empathy among the characters, and shows their humanity even in difficult circumstances.

Strategy 2: Narrating Aisha's visit and what happened to her

Ex.11: *"Bagaimana keadaanmu, Fahri, Suamiku?"*

Ex.11: "How are you, Fahri, my husband?"

Ex.12: *"Apa dosa kita berdua Fahri sampai kita harus menanggung cobaan seberat ini. Aku nyaris kehilangan sesuatu yang paling berharga yang aku miliki kalau seandainya tidak diselamatkan oleh Magdi."*

Ex.12: "What are the sins of both of us Fahri that we have to endure such an ordeal. I almost lost the most precious thing I had if Magdi had not saved me."

This strategy serves to increase emotional tension, show the impact of conflict on the characters' personal lives, and foster reader sympathy.

Strategy 3: Receiving encouragement from the organizational leader

Ex.13: *Aku dibawa keruang penerimaan tamu. Disana sudah ada Staf Konsuler KBRI dan ketua PPMI. Keduanya memelukku erat. Mereka berdua ingin tahu sebenarnya apa yang terjadi denganku. Aku ceritakan kronologis penangkapanku dan dakwaan yang dialamatkan kepadaku.*

Ex.13: I was taken to the reception room. The Indonesian KBRI consular staff and the PPMI chairperson were already there. They both gave me a big hug. They both wanted to know what had actually happened to me. I recounted the chronology of my arrest and the charges against me.

Ex.14: *Sesedih apapun, kunjungan KBRI dan PPMI menambah kekuatan dalam diri. Kedatangan mereka berdua seolah berisi dukungan moral dari seluruh saudara setanah air di Indonesia. Rasa cintaku pada mereka semakin membulat, juga pada segenap saudara di KBRI.*

Ex.14: No matter how sad I was, the visit from the Indonesian KBRI and PPMI gave me strength. Their arrival felt like moral support from all my fellow countrymen in Indonesia.

My love for them grew stronger, as did my love for everyone at the Indonesian KBRI. This strategy conveys a message of hope from the problems faced by Fahri, which can appeal to the emotions of the reader.

Strategy 4: Describing the preparations before the trial

Ex.15: *Amru dan Magdi akan membantu sekuat tenaga untuk membebaskan aku dari segala tuduhan itu. Semua saksi dan bukti yang kira-kira bisa membela diriku akan dia gunakan.*

Ex.15: Amru and Magdi will do everything in their power to exonerate me from the charges. They will use all the witnesses and evidence they can find in my defense.

This strategy builds readers' hope and curiosity about the continuation of the legal conflict faced by the main character.

Chapter 29: Persidangan

Move 4: Establishing dramatic tension

This move aims to drive the plot through legal and moral tensions that reach the climax of the story.

Strategy 1: Telling the story of Noura's prosecution at the first hearing

Ex.16: *"Saya akan menceritakan dengan sejujurnya tragedi yang menimpa diri saya. Tragedi yang menginjak-injak kehormatan saya dan menghancurkan masa depan saya." Kata Noura dengan terisak.*

Ex.16: "I will tell you the truth about the tragedy that happened to me. The tragedy that trampled my honor and destroyed my future." Noura said with sobs.

This strategy is used to present emotional firsthand accounts, strengthen the moral dimension of the story, and increase dramatic tension in the courtroom.

Strategy 2: Telling the news about Maria's condition

Ex.17: *"Kenapa Maria, Madame?" tanyaku cemas. "Sakitnya sangat parah. Empat hari ini dia koma. Hanya kadang-kadang dia seperti sadar, mulutnya berkemat-kamit mengatakan sesuatu. Dia menyebut-nyebut namamu. Hanya namamu, Anakku. Dia ternyata sangat mencintaimu!"*

Ex.17: "Why Maria, Madame?" I asked anxiously. "She is very sick. She has been in a coma for four days. Only sometimes she seems to be awake, her mouth mumbling something. She mentions your name. Only your name, my son. She loves you so much!"

This strategy serves as an emotional driver by evoking pity and adding a layer of personal conflict that runs parallel to the legal conflict.

Strategy 3: Telling the story of the second trial

Ex.18: *Persidangan kedua sangat menegangkan. Tuan Boutros hadir memberikan kesaksiannya.*

Ex.18: The second trial was very tense. Mr. Boutros was present to give his testimony.

Ex.19: *Teman-teman satu rumah yang pada malam kejadian itu ada di rumah ikut memberikan kesaksian.*

Ex.19: Friends from the same house who were there on the night of the incident also testified.

This strategy serves to clarify the legal process and keep the storyline logical and tense.

Strategy 4: Talking about Fahri's steadfastness

Ex.20: *Mendengar semua pembicaraan itu aku merasa nasibku benar-benar di ujung tanduk. Jika nyawaku akhirnya harus melayang dengan sedemikian tragisnya, aku pasrah saja kepada Yang Mahakuasa.*

Ex.20: Hearing all that talk, I felt that my fate was really at stake. If my life finally had to pass away in such a tragic way, I would just surrender to the Almighty.

Ex.21: *Kata-kata professor Abdul Rauf itu mampu menyeka airmata kesedihanku. Aku semestinya malu pada diriku sendiri jika menangisi hilangnya sebuah gelar. Jika aku diharamkan belajar di Al Azhar, Allah mungkin akan membuka jalan untuk belajar di dalam penjara.*

Ex.21: Professor Abdul Rauf's words wiped away my tears of sadness. I should be ashamed of myself for crying over the loss of a degree. If I were forbidden to study at Al Azhar, Allah might open the way to study in prison.

In this strategy, the author shows the main character as a person who holds fast to his faith, thus providing moral values and inspiration for readers.

The length of a climax plot of the novel Ayat-ayat Cinta

In this section, the researcher analyzed plot elements using Freytag's Pyramid model, specifically at the climax stage. The analysis of the climax in the text focuses on the aspect of length, which is understood as the number of chapters, paragraphs, pages, and dialogues used by the author to maintain dramatic tension. The results of the analysis of the length of the climax are presented in Table 2:

Table 1. Measurement of length in the climax plot

No.	Plot Element	Number of Chapters	Number of Pages	Number of Paragraphs	Number of Dialogs
1.	Climax	26	5	11	13
2.	Climax	27	10	16	57
3.	Climax	28	15	20	66
4.	Climax	29	23	24	93

Table 2 indicates that the analysis length in the climax chapters is based on the consideration that each element contributes to building rhetoric at the story's peak. The comparison of the number of pages and paragraphs in each chapter reflects the narrative space provided by the author to help develop conflict and build a dramatic plot. Additionally, the amount of dialogue reveals the interaction between characters as the primary medium for conveying emotions, moral values, and tension.

Further explanation is shown in the text excerpts considered most representative of the climax of conflict in the climax chapters, as follows:

Climax

The climax is the turning point of the story or the highest point of the conflict. The climax is a series of scenes in which the protagonist's energy is fully displayed, whether for good or evil, sorrow or pride. In addition to the climax, the plot will also decline again and determine how the story will end.

Chapter 26: *Penangkapan*

"Kau yang bernama Fahri Abdullah?!"

"Are you Fahri Abdullah?!"

"Ya benar, ada apa?"

"Yes, that's tight. What's going on?"

"Kami mendapatkan perintah untuk menangkapmu dan menyeretmu ke penjara, ya Mugrim!" bentak polisi berkumis tebal.

"We have orders to arrest you and drag you to jail, Mugrim!" barked the thick-mustached policeman.

Chapter 27: *Dalam Penjara Bawah Tanah*

Dua anak buahnya itu lalu membawaku ke ruangan penyiksaan. Aku disuruh berdiri tegak. Si hitam mengangkat kursi kayu, dua kaki belakang kursi itu diletakkan diatas telapak kakiku. Dan Si Polisi Gendut lalu menduduki kursi itu. Terang saja aku menjerit kesakitan. Telapak kakiku terasa remuk tulang-tulangnya. Dan ketika aku menjerit Si Hitam menjejalkan roti keras ke mulutku hingga menyodok tenggorakanku. Aku mau muntah tapi roti kering itu tetap dijejalkan ke mulutku. Ketika aku sudah tidak tahan dan nyaris pingsan ia menarik roti itu dan si gendut bangkit dari kursi itu.

His two henchmen then took me to the torture room. I was ordered to stand upright. The black-haired man lifted a wooden chair, placing the back legs of the chair on top of my feet. The Fat Cop then sat down on the chair. Of course, I screamed in pain. My feet felt like their bones were crushed. And when I screamed, the dark-skinned man shoved a hard piece of bread into my mouth, poking my throat. I wanted to vomit, but the dry bread was still shoved into my mouth. When I could no longer endure it and was about to faint, he pulled the bread out, and the fat man stood up from the chair.

Chapter 28: *Tangis Aisha*

"Kurang ajar! Akan kucari dan kubunuh keparat itu!" teriakku dengan mengepalkan tangan kuat-kuat. Bagiku kehormatan istriku adalah segala-galanya, jauh diatas kehormatan diriku sendiri. Kesucian istriku sama dengan kesucian kitab suci, tidak boleh ada seorang pun yang menodainya apalagi menginjak-injaknya. Kesucian istriku adalah

nyawaku. Malaikat maut pun akan aku hajar jika dia mencoba-coba menodainya. Aku rela dijuluki apa saja untuk membela kesucian istriku tercinta.

“How dare you! I'll find that bastard and kill him!” I shouted, clenching my fists tightly. For me, my wife's honor is everything, far above my own honor. My wife's purity is like the purity of the holy book; no one should defile it, let alone trample on it. My wife's purity is my life. Even the angel of death would be struck down if he dared to defile it. I would gladly be called anything to defend the purity of my beloved wife.

Chapter 29: Persidangan

Dengan emosi yang kutahan aku menolak tuduhan Noura. Aku jelaskan bahwa Noura sama sekali tidak pernah masuk kamarku. Aku bahkan belum pernah menyentuh kulit Noura. Malam itu Noura bersama Maria sampai pagi. Tiba-tiba Noura berteriak menganggap diriku yang bohong.

With emotions I held back, I denied Noura's accusation. I explained that Noura had never entered my room. I had never even touched Noura's skin. That night, Noura was with Maria until morning. Suddenly, Noura screamed, accusing me of lying.

Aku berharap suaraku berguna untuk membantu menyembuhkan Maria. Bahwa di dalam penjara sekali pun aku bisa melakukan sesuatu untuk orang lain. Namun begitu mengingat kata-kata Madame Nahed dan Yousef bahwa Maria sakit karena mencintaiku aku jadi sedih sekali. Aku jadi tidak mengerti apa itu cinta sebenarnya? Yang kutahu cinta adalah apa yang terjadi antara diriku dengan Aisha. Itu saja. Tapi apa yang dirasakan Nurul, yang dirasakan Noura, dan yang dirasakan Maria aku idak tahu. Apakah itu cinta? Ah cinta. Semacam duka. Mengiris jiwa.

I hoped my voice could help heal Maria. That even in prison, I could do something for others. But when I remembered Madame Nahed and Yousef's words that Maria was sick because she loved me, I became very sad. I no longer understood what love truly was. All I knew was what happened between me and Aisha. That's all. But what Nurul feels, what Noura feels, and what Maria feels, I don't know. Is that love? Ah, love. It's like sorrow. It cuts through the soul.

In this section, the main conflict begins with Fahri's arrest, which is a significant turning point and brings the tension to its highest point. This section also shows the injustice, emotions, and struggles of Fahri and Aisha in facing the dramatically built conflict. This climax is not only the peak of the external conflict, but also the most significant test of Fahri's faith and character.

Discussion

This study analyzes the rhetorical structure of climax plot in the novel *Ayat-Ayat Cinta*, which shows that each narrative segment performs a communicative function consistent with Swales' (1990) move analysis. As shown in Table 1, the communicative strategies used by the author vary in each climactic chapter. However, the strategies used are still interrelated in each chapter. Additionally, the moves in the climax chapter are supported by specific strategies such as describing the atmosphere of Fahri's arrest, expressing feelings through suffering, showing concern for fellow characters, and displaying religious values in the developing conflict to drive the story forward. These strategies reflect the author's communicative goals by following Freytag's plot stages.

Regarding length, analysis reveals that the climax spans four chapters, covering a substantial number of pages, paragraphs, and particularly dialogue. The dominance of dialogue, especially in chapter 29, shows the author's interest in character interaction as a rhetorical tool for building tension. Compared to narrative paragraphs, which tend to describe context and inner thoughts, dialogue serves as the most dynamic element in depicting conflict and persuasion. Thus, the rhetorical power in the climax is determined not only by communicative events but also by the distribution of narrative elements.

The findings on climax plot support communicative functions, particularly emotional tension, moral character, and resolution of the central conflict that marks the climax in Chapters 26-29. These findings are consistent with Aflahah (2017), who shows that language style is used strategically to strengthen emotions and character development, and also reinforces the findings of R. Rohim (2010) that Islamic values such as patience and steadfastness of faith are conveyed through spiritual and social conflicts that reach a climax. However, this study adds the perspective that the rhetorical structure at this stage also serves to expand the conflict, not just to deepen emotions.

This study reveals that Swales's moves analysis and Freytag's plot structure model provide a dual perspective on the structure of novels, focusing on the rhetorical functions that construct the meaning of a story. Overall, these two findings complement each other in answering the research question. Moves and strategy analysis shows how the author organizes the discourse to achieve communicative goals, while length of the climax analysis shows how dramatic structure shapes the reader's emotional experience. Therefore, the rhetorical structure in the climax plot chose by the author in this novel have a significant impact on captivating the reader's interest.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that literary works can also be comprehensively analyzed through a move analysis. The rhetorical structure is presented in a way that reflects the socio-cultural context and religious values promoted by the author. Moreover, the measurement of length through chapters, pages, paragraphs, and dialogues show that the climax is deliberately extended to maximize its rhetorical and emotional impact. These findings have fulfilled the research objectives, as both reveal how authors create works that can attract readers' interest. However, this study has limitations in terms of its research object, which focuses solely on one literary work of the narrative genre. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the research object by exploring other literary works with diverse cultural and ideological backgrounds.

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