



THE CONCEPT OF HERO IN RICK RIORDAN'S "*PERCY JACKSON AND THE OLYMPIANS: THE LIGHTNING THIEF*"

A THESIS

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
The Sarjana Degree Majoring Literature in the English Department
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PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer honestly confirms that he compiles this thesis by himself without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3, and in diploma degree of any university. The writer ascertains that he does not quote any material from other publications or someone's paper except from the reference mentioned.

Semarang, 27th of September 2017

M.HilmanRasyidYudistira

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Everyone in this world is a guest, and the money is a loan. The guest will surely leave, sooner or later, and the loan must be returned.

IbnMas'ud

Your time is limited. Do not waste it by living someone else's life.

Steve Jobs

*This thesis is dedicated to
my beloved family and to everyone
who help and give me an endless love and support to accomplish this thesis.*

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Semarang, 28th August 2017

M.HilmanRasyidYudistira

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of writing this thesis is to analyze the concept of hero in *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*. The thesis is completed by using Vladimir Propp's Narratology. The analysis will be focused on the concept of hero of the main character, Percy Jackson. In order to analyze and collect the data, the writer uses library research and internet. After conducting the analysis, the result shows some points. First, the writer found out that there were some functions that had to be completed by a hero. Second, from those functions, the writer could explain the roles of action of the characters in the novel. Finally, the type of hero could be identified which could describe the concept of hero in the novel.

Keywords: Hero, Seeker-hero, functions, Narratology, Vladimir Propp

ABSTRAK

Tujuan penulisan skripsi ini adalah untuk menganalisis konsep pahlawan yang ada dalam *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*. Penelitian ini diselesaikan dengan menggunakan Narratologi dari Vladimir Propp. Pembahasan ini akan diutamakan pada konsep pahlawan dan karakter utama, yaitu Percy Jackson. Untuk menganalisis data yang ada, penulis menggunakan metode studi pustaka dan riset internet. Setelah melakukan analisis, penulis menemukan beberapa hasil. Yang pertama, penulis menemukan bahwa ada beberapa fungsi atau tahapan-tahapan yang harus diselesaikan seorang pahlawan. Kedua, dari fungsi-fungsi tersebut, penulis dapat menjelaskan peran-peran dan karakter di dalam novel. Yang terakhir, jenis pahlawan dapat diidentifikasi yang akan menjelaskan konsep pahlawan di dalam novel.

Kata kunci: Pahlawan, pahlawan pencari, fungsi-fungsi, Naratologi, Vladimir Propp.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains some aspects to introduce, explain, and analyze the novel. Those aspects are, background of the study, research problems, purposes of the study, methodology, short glance of theoretical framework and organization of the thesis. These aspects will be explained in the following paragraphs.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Reading and understanding a novel may give us all happiness and pleasure when we enjoyed it. It also contains of many histories of popular people in the past and how those people could get their success or even failed in the past which we can learn through their experiences. Reading novel can be something to help us to escape from the reality into a fictional world which can satisfy our soul.

In *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief*, there are so many aspects that can be analyzed, but the writer only focuses his analysis on the concept of hero that can be found in this novel. The writer hopes this paper can help the readers to understand about how to analyze the signs of hero which can be found from the character of Percy in "*Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*".

Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief* tells about a 12 years old boy who suffered from dyslexia and hyperactive. At that time, there is a dispute between Zeus and Poseidon who accuses Percy of stealing his lightning. He is then mixed up in an adventure in order to return the lightning

and to save his mother as well. This novel is actually aimed to children, so that the writer can give wide-imagination about the adventure of Percy Jackson in a fantasy world. It also can be easily understand by children. There are also many moral values that can be taken from this novel which gives the representation how the hero must be. The hero must pass certain stages in order to complete his quest. Based on the reason above, the writer is interested to do an analysis on this novel.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The problems which are intended to be analyzed in this research are:

1. What are the stages or functions that must be completed by a hero?
2. What are the roles of action that can be identified in *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*?

1.3 PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The purposes of the study are:

1. To describe the roles of action in *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*.
2. To analyze the type of hero of the main character.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

In this section the writer uses the library research methods in analyzing Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief*. By using

library research methods, a variety of important and reliable information can be obtained and used as a reference. In conducting his research, the writer does not only get the sources used in this study from the books, but also from another sources, for example the Internet. Through the internet, the writer can get various sources, such as electronic books, journals, and etc.

Actually, the writer only uses one approach in this thesis. It is intrinsic approach. In intrinsic aspects, the writer analyzes character and conflict of the story, and also the Structure of Narratology from Vladimir Propp.

1.5 SHORT GLANCE OF THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

The thesis is completed by using Vladimir Propp's Narratology. Propp said that the character must complete some stages or function so he can be called a hero (1968: 80). There were 31 functions that Vladimir Propp mentioned. However, in analyzing this thesis, the writer did not apply some of those functions. It was related to the case that not all of the functions could be found or described in this novel. Therefore, only 20 functions which had been applied by the writer in this thesis. Then, those 20 functions were also divided into 4 groups of sphere. Those are: introduction, the body of the story, the donor sequence and the hero's return.

1.6 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The writer arranges this thesis into five chapters as follows in order to make a systematic writing:

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

It shows the background of the study, research question, purposes of the study, methodology, short glance of theoretical framework and writing organization.

CHAPTER II BIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITER AND SYNOPSIS

It describes a biography of the author of *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief* and a synopsis of the novel. The synopsis purposes on giving the correlation between the story of the novel and the content written in this study.

CHAPTER III THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

It contains literary review which gives explanation about all of the theories used in the thesis. The theories included in this study give the definitions and explanations of intrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements include character, conflict, and also the Structure of Narratology from Vladimir Propp.

CHAPTER IV**ANALYSIS**

It contains the discussion of the thesis which will analyze all of the theories' application on the novel.

It includes the analysis of the Vladimir Propp's stages or functions which must be passed and overcome by a hero in order to complete his mission.

CHAPTER V**CONCLUSION**

It contains the conclusion of the discussion which is described in the previous chapter.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER II

BIOGRAPHY AND SUMMARY

2.1 BIOGRAPHY OF RICK RIORDAN

The information about Rick Riordan was taken from three sources those are famouswriters.net; primaryfacts.com; and rickriordan.com. All of those sources were accessed on January 10, 2017.

Richard Russel Riordan Jr. who is famous known as Rick Riordan is an American author who writes many children's books and mystery series novel for adult. He was born on June 5, 1964, in San Fransisco, Texas (United States). He was a student of University of Texas and graduated in 1986. After graduating from the University, he chose to be a teacher for 15 years at various middle and high schools in the San Francisco Bay Area and in San Antonio where he taught English, Greek Mythology and also history. Riordan had started to enjoy writing since he was young but he never took it seriously until after his graduation from the University. Since that time, he became a writer beside a teacher at various middle schools.

Riordan started his own journey as one of the great world children's book writer when he read a bedtime to his eldest son, Haley. Riordan has two sons Haley and Patrick. Riordan once got his motivation to narrate a story of Gods in

the Greek mythology from a request of his son, Haley, who bored with Riordan's bedtime story. His son asked him to bring with something new, although it still has similar character to his previous story. Riordan then managed to come up with a new story that creates Percy as the main character. So he told his son, Haley, the story, which took three nights to finish. The story is about Percy's long quest to recover Zeus's lightning bolt in modern-day America. When Rick finished writing the story, his son suggested him to write children books.

Rick Riordan is best known for his major successful writing of *the Percy Jackson and the Olympian* series. There are six books in the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series: *The Lightning Thief*, *The Sea of Monsters*, *The Titan's Curse*, *The Battle of the Labyrinth*, *The Demigod Files* and *The Last Olympian*. The two of them had even been filmed by Twentieth Century Fox in February 2010, those are *The Lightning Thief* and *The Sea of Monster*. Beside *The Percy Jackson and The Olympians* series, Riordan has also written a mystery series for adults (the *Tres Navarre* series). Rick Riordan has also written three books in the series of the *Kane Chronicles*, as well as six books in *The Heroes of Olympus* series.

2.2 SYNOPSIS OF PERCY JACKSON AND THE OLYMPIAN: THE LIGHTNING THIEF

Percy Jackson was a 12 year old boy who suffered from dyslexia and GPPH (hyperactive). Whenever he read, the letters would fly irregularly. Due to

his illness, he was often dropped out from school before he was accepted at the School for children with problems.

After Grover, Percy loyal friend, and Mr. Brunner, the Latin teacher at the Percy's school, told the truth about Percy and explained all the oddities that often happened to him, he was escorted to the Half-Blood camp by her mother, Sally Jackson, and Grover. He was known as a Satyr (half-goat creature). On the middle of the way, they were attacked by a Minotaur (half-bull monster) who then abducted her.

The Half-Blood camp was a special place for the descendants of gods. There were 12 cabins which represented well-known gods included Aphrodite, Ares, Athena, Hermes etc. Percy was placed in 11th cabin called Hermes cabin because his status was still unknown. Only children who had obvious parents could occupy each cabin which represented the name of each parent. Hermes cabin would always receive new campers, because Hermes was the patron god who was also the god of the travelers.

Actually there had been a dispute between Zeus (god of heaven) and Poseidon (god of the sea) at the time when Percy arrived to the camp. A few moments later, the lightning of Zeus which was a symbol of his power had been stolen. Because ancient law of the gods said a god could not steal another god's symbol of power without the help of his or her children, then Percy as Poseidon's son had been accused of being the main perpetrators. Percy had only 10 days to find and restore the sacred objects, and reconcile the war that almost rages in

Olympus Mount. Nothing could prevent this war unless Percy managed to find the lightning of Zeus and proved that he was not a thief as alleged to him.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter contains the theories that are used for analyzing the literary work. The theory is generally divided into two: intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic aspects that will be analyzed are character and conflict.

Other theory that is used in this thesis is Vladimir Propp's Narratology. According to Propp in Taum (2011: 121), this theory can be used to analyze the rules that dominate or determine the structure of the plot of the narrative text, such as stories, fairy tales, tale and legend. In conducting his research on narrative text, Propp focused on the use of functions according to the rules and the role of actors in a story. Propp concluded that the maximum amount of function contained in the narrative text which he analyzed was 31 functions (Ratna, 2013: 133).

After analyzing the structure of the story by using the Vladimir Propp's Narratology, the seven chambers of action or role of the characters in the stories can be known. Those seven chambers are: the villain, the donor, the helper, the princess and her father, the dispatcher, the hero and the false hero (Ratna, 2013: 133). Following Vladimir Propp's Narratology, the writer found the concept of hero in *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*.

3.1 Intrinsic Element

3.1.1 Character

Character is one of the elements whose existence cannot be separated from stories. Character plays very important role in building a development of the story. According to Potter in *Element of Literature*, character is "any person who figures in literary work his whole nature, his personality, his attitude toward life, his spiritual qualities, his intelligence, even his physical shape as well as his moral attributes" (1967: 63). Abrams in his book *A Glossary of Literary Terms: Seventh Edition*, explains that the character is the person who makes the reader feels blessed with moral and emotional qualities inherent in the drama or novel, he said:

Character is the persons represented in dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by interferences from what the person say and their distinctive ways of saying it and from what they do (1992: 32).

Another definition of character stated by Mario Klarer in *An Introduction to Literary Studies*. He claims that "the character in text can be rendered as either as a types or an individual" (2004: 17). From many definitions above, we can conclude that a character is an individual in a dramatic or narrative work which can be represented by a person, animal, or figure that makes the reader feels blessed with specific moral and emotional qualities.

3.1.2 Conflict

Conflict is one of many important parts that built a plot. Conflict in a plot involves a dispute and struggle between two or more character in the plot of a

story. Perrine writes in her books, *The Story Structure, Sound, and Sense*, that "Conflict is a clash of action, desire, ideas, or goods in a plot of a story or drama. Conflict may exist between the main character and some other person or persons (man against man); between the main character and some external force, physical nature, society, or fate (man against environment); or between the main character and some destructive in his own nature (man against himself)" (1988: 1408).

Basically, conflict is divided into two parts, external and internal conflict. External conflict is a conflict that stimulated by the outsider. External conflict may involve the character's struggle against other individuals, nature or society. Meanwhile, internal conflict is a conflict that arises from the inner side of character, such as moral or psychological problems which must be solved by the character of the story (Meyer, 1990: 45).

3.1.3 The Structure of Narratology

Narratology is a branch of structuralism which is learning about the structure of narratology and how the structure influences reader's perception. The structure of narratology is used to learn art works, such as novel, romance, short story, narrative poem, folk tale, biography, myths, and etc. Narratology derived from the latin language, narratio and logos Narratio means stories, tales, or legends; while logos means knowledge. Narratology can also be called as narrative discourse. Both narratology and narrative discourse are defined as a set of concepts about stories and storytelling. The development of narratology is based on

linguistic analogy, such as syntactic models, as well as the relationship among the subject, predicate, and object (Ratna, 2013: 127-128).

MiekeBal(Ratna, 2013: 128) states that the narrator or narrative agent is defined as the speaker in the text, the subject linguistically, neither the person, or the author. Either as a story or storytelling, narrative is defined as a representation of at least two factual or fictional events in chronological order.

Marie-Laure Ryan and Ernst van Alphen (Ratna, 2013: 131) states that narratology can be divided into three periods, those are:

1. Pre-structuralist period (until the 1960s)
2. Structuralist period (1960s to 1980s)
3. Post-structuralist period (1980s to present).

Some famous experts of narratology on those periods are Vladimir LakovlevichPropp, Claude Levi-Strauss, TzvetanTodorov, Algirdas Julien Greimas, and ShlomithRimmon-Kenan.

In analyzing *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*, the author chooses to use Vladimir Propp's narratology. The reasons for using Propp's Narratology are as follow:

According to Taum (2011: 122), Proppis considered asthe first structuralistwho discuss seriously about the narrative structure so the writer hopes the theory which isapplied or presented in this thesis will be more easily understood by the reader. The studies which were performed byPropp on the tales

had a purpose to find common patterns through the study of the action of characters which later called as the functions (Taum, 2011: 122). Then, the structures and roles in the fairy tale or a story can be analyzed through the studies. The studies that were conducted by Propp is suitable for the writer to help him to analyze the structures and roles in analyzing *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*.

3.1.4 Vladimir Propp's Narratology

Vladimir Propp was a Russian. He was the first formalist who made a serious study of the narrative structure. Propp did a study of 100 Russian fairy tales in 1928. The result he found was that every story had patterns and certain structures always remained the same. In other words, the qualities and the actors of a story may change, but the actions and roles remain the same, or unchanged (Taum, 2011: 122).

Propp (Ratna, 2013: 132) explains that the character is not the most important thing in the narrative structure, but it is the action of the characters which is important. Later he describes the character's action as function. The elements which will be analyzed are the motive, the smallest unit that makes up the theme. Motive is divided into three kinds. Those are actor, action and object. These three elements can then be grouped into two:

- A. The constant element (stable element), which does not depend on who is doing, the act.
- B. Elements which are not constant or unstable, actor and victim (object).

In both of these relationships, the most important element is constant element or the function itself. Propp said, "Function is understood as an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of the action" (1968: 8). Functions can be summarized as an action of characters that are restricted in terms of its meaning for the course of its actor. According to Propp (Taum, 2011: 123), all stories have a constant construction. He also stated (Propp, 1968: 26-65) that there are 31 functions contained in a fairy tale examined. These functions can also be grouped into 4 circles (spheres) narrative unit. Those are:

A. First Circle: Introduction

Step (function) 1 to 7 is the introduction of the situation and the perpetrators, which also serves to prepare the scenes for the next adventure.

1. (Absentation): A stage in which family member leaves home for a various reasons. Family members can be brother, sister, parent, husband, king or etc. Usually this figure can be identified as "myself".
2. (Interdiction): At this stage, the main character or hero will be banned. For example: "do not leave the house", "do not pick flowers", "do not pass this way", and others. The interdiction addressed to the reader as if that made them have certain expectations of the hero to follow or violate

the interdiction. The interdiction can be: "Do not go to that place", "get out of here" and so on.

3. (Violation of Interdiction): The prohibition is violated. At this stage, the villain begins to enter the story, though not frontally against the hero. But at this stage the hero still oppose the interdiction.
4. (Reconnaissance): Here it can be seen that the villain is trying to spy on the hero. This action has a purpose to find the location of valuables, missing children, and so on. At this stage, the villain actively looks for information to get the prey, a person's location to make an arrest, or to find valuable objects and others.
5. (Delivery): The villain obtains information about victim. Here is a phase that shows the story in favor of the villain. In this phase, the villain seemed to win the battle and the story looks as if it will end tragically.
6. (Trickery): The villain tries to convince and deceive the victim to take over the position of his or goods. With all the information that has been obtained previously, villain tries to deceive the victim by any means. This action strengthens the position of villain as a truly evil villain. Moreover, this stage shows the tension regarding the safety of a victim or a hero who had cheated.
7. (Complicity): The hero completely deceived and even unwittingly helping the villain. Victim (hero) is tricked into giving certain objects to

the villain who then used actively against good people, like magical weapons, maps, and so on.

B. Second Circle: The Body of the Story

At this stage, the main story began to enter, followed by the departure of the hero.

8. a. (Villainy): Villain hurts or harms a family member, such as killing people, taking the magical power, kidnapping or hurting a family member and so on.
- b. (Lack): This phase shows that one family member is losing or expecting something. For example, the hero who needs or lacks of a companion, a friend or other figures makes him/ her performs a search. Sometimes it (the loss or the need for something) is not mentioned verbally in the story. Usually, in conducting such searches the hero requires a magical agent or gets magical powers to conduct such search.
9. (Mediation): Lack or misfortune that even makes the hero known. Hero comes with a request or an order; he is allowed to leave or be arrested. At this stage the hero has realized the malicious action or the lack (absence) found in the family. Furthermore, in this function, Propp explains that there are two types of heroes, victim hero and seeker hero. **Victim hero** is a hero who sacrificed himself on the actions of villains, for instance, the hero is kidnapped, harmed, arrested, or banished. Meanwhile the **seeker hero** is a hero who helps others who are harmed,

or sacrifices himself on the villain, for example, the villain kidnaps someone who is close to the hero. Then the hero makes a search to find the one who has been kidnapped after realizing that he misses or lacks someone/something (Propp, 1968: 36).

10. (Beginning Counter-Action): The seeker agreed and decided to perform retaliation. The hero now decided to take action to overcome the lack, for example by finding magical items, saving those who were arrested or defeating the villain. This is the time for the hero to decide what action would make him a hero. The decision made should be done promptly, because if he/ she hero cancelled his/her decision he/she would embarrass himself/herself and could not be considered as a hero.
11. (Departure): The hero leaves home.

C. Third Circle: Donor Series

In this third circle, the hero is looking for ways to solve the problem, and also getting help which can be magical things from the donor. Indeed, through this series, a story can be completed and is said to be finished.

12. (First Auction of the donor): The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, and so on. This stage is a preparation for him to accept either the magical agent or helper.
13. (Hero's reaction): The hero reacts to the actions of future donor whether it is a success or failure of the helper, for example, freeing

prisoners, uniting warring parties, and using the power of the enemy to defeat.

14. (Receipt of magical agent): The hero is researching or finding out how to use a magical object.
15. (Guidance): The hero is brought, ordered, or guided to a place of a particular search object.
16. (Struggle): The hero and the villain are engaged in direct combat.
17. (Branding): The hero is recognized (known), for example he is found wounded, or receiving ring or scarf, etc.
18. (Victory): The villain is defeated, for instance, being killed in combat, defeated in contest, killed while asleep, or discarded.
19. (Liquidation): The hero faces misfortune, having the prisoner escaped, seeing people who have been killed back to life, etc.

D. Fourth circle: The Return of the hero.

This is the final stage of the series of the story, but sometimes it is optional, not mandatory. The hero is brought into the house, hoping there are no more incidents and hero is welcomed.

20. (Return): The hero backs home.
21. (Pursuit): The hero is sought. Someone sought to kill, took or weakened him.

22. (Rescue):The hero is saved from the pursuit (being protected by a miracle from the one who seeks him, hiding or being hidden, or being saved).
23. (Unrecognized Arrival): The hero, who has not been identified, arrives at home or to another country.
24. (Unfounded Claims):A false hero gives baseless claims / false claims.
25. (Difficult Task): A difficult task is given to the hero (ordeal, puzzles, skill test, and so on).
26. (Solution): The task can be completed well.
27. (Recognition):The hero is recognized/known (with the badge which is given to him).
28. (Exposure):The false hero or villain discarded.
29. (Transfiguration):The hero gets a new look (becoming more handsome, being given new clothes, and etc.)
30. (Punishment). The villain is punished.
31. (Wedding). The hero is married and received the crown as a reward.

Furthermore, Propp (Taum, 2011: 132-133) also states that those 31 functions can then be grouped into seven role of action, they are:

- a. The villain, the one who fights against the hero.
- b. The donor, the one who gives and prepares the hero with a certain magical items.

- c. The helper or magical helper, the one who tries to help the hero when he is in trouble.
- d. The Princess and her father, they are who give the task to the hero, recognize fake hero, and marry the hero. The Princess is the one who suffers the direct action from the Villain, while the father is the one who one who is be grieved at it.
- e. The Dispatcher, someone who sends the hero on a mission, quest, or search to be completed by the hero.
- f. The hero, a true hero who reacts to the donor and marries the princess.
- g. The False hero, the one who takes advantage of the actions of the true hero and tries to marry the king's daughter.

Those are the 31 functions and 7 roles of actions mentioned by Vladimir Propp. But those 31 functions are not always can be found fully in the story. Sometimes some functions may be skipped. Function can be concluded as an action of characters that are restricted in terms of its meaning for the course of its actor. As Propp described (Ratna, 2013:132), Propp's study purposed to find the general pattern in the plot of Russian tale. The result of his study is then recorded to *Morphology of the Folktale* in 1928. Since the first english edition of the book had been released in 1958, Propp's influence was started. His classification to character types is used in the education media and can be applied to almost all stories, such as literature, theatre, and television series (Taum, 2011: 124).

In the next chapter, the writer will apply those 31 functions mentioned by Vladimir Propp in order to analyze and determine those functions in *Percy Jackson and The Olympians: The Lightning Thief*. From the application of those 31 functions, then it can be drawn 7 roles of actions. Then, it is hoped the concept of hero can be identified from it.

