

EXTERNAL CONFLICT FACED BY THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN ELEMENTAL: FORCES OF NATURE MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the external conflicts faced by the main characters in the movie *Elemental: Forces of Nature*. External conflict is a struggle between a character and an outside force. This force can be another character, society, nature, or a physical obstacle. It's when a character faces challenges that come from their environment or other people, rather than from their own mind or emotions. The objective is to categorize the different types of external conflicts encountered by the characters. Data analysis was conducted using Kenney's (1966) theory. The data obtained were collected through observation and note-taking, which involved watching the movie and marking parts that expressed the conflict. The data was analyzed using qualitative method and presented descriptively. This study uncovers various external conflicts that the characters face in *Elemental: Forces of Nature* movie. These conflicts predominantly occur between Ember and Wide, the main characters and their surrounding environment. The findings illustrate how the main characters' interactions with external forces shape their journey and development within the storyline. By categorizing these conflicts, the study provides a deeper understanding of the character dynamics within the movie.

Keywords: External Conflict, Main Characters, Movie

I. Introduction

Literature, a term that encompasses any written or spoken content, including fiction, prose, poetry, and drama, is most often associated with works of creative imagination. Unlike mere historical or cultural artifacts, literature holds greater significance as it represents the language and cultural heritage of people, introducing readers to entirely new experiences. As Aristotle, quoted by Noor, explains, a communication system involves interpersonal interaction, and literature serves as a means of communication, as well as a source of satisfaction and utility. It comprises three elements: the writer as the sender of the message, the literary work as the medium, and the audience as the recipient of the message (2006: 63). Similarly, movies also

function as a form of communication, but through a different medium. A movie, as Hornby describes, is a collection of moving images displayed on television or a screen to narrate a story (Hornby 434). While the primary purpose of a movie is to provide entertainment, it also fulfills educational, informative, and persuasive functions, thereby enriching the audience's experience in much the same way as literature does. Central to the storytelling in movies is the concept of conflict, which typically involves the main character. Conflicts arise from various sources but generally occur when characters are unable to fulfill their needs and desires (Sari, 2013; Truman et al., 2017). As Cattrysse (2010: 83) suggests, a protagonist must have a dramatic goal to achieve to make the story engaging, highlighting how conflict is deeply intertwined with the characters. These characters, who usually experience conflict, are essential for conveying it. While characters are generally people, they can also be any personal identity or entity originating from a fictional work or performance (Lapandja et al., 2016: 3).

Kenney (1966) outlined two types of conflict: internal and external. Internal conflict, as described by Kenney (1966:19), occurs within a single character, such as a struggle between desire and duty. This conflict is an internal struggle within the character's mind, involving personal dilemmas and decisions. For instance, a character may be uncertain about which solution to choose, leading to internal confusion and self-conflict. External conflict, according to Kenney (1966:19), involves conflicts between man (man against man), between man and society, or between man and nature.

The reviewed literature includes three significant studies on conflict analysis in movies. The first study by I Wayan Adhya Utama et al. (2023) titled "CONFLICT ANALYSIS FACED BY MAIN CHARACTER IN THE MOVIE FAST & FURIOUS: HOBBS & SHAW" aims to examine the conflicts experienced by the main characters and how these conflicts shape the plot. Utilizing Kenney's (1966) conflict theory and Freytag's (1863) plot theory, the authors conducted a descriptive qualitative analysis, identifying 22 conflicts distributed as 7 in the Introduction, 13 in the Rising Action, and 2 in the Climax, with no conflicts in the Falling Action and Resolution. The second study by Ketut Nudhi Angga Bramaditha et al. (2020), titled "The Analysis of Conflict of the Main Character in the Movie 'I am Sam'," seeks to categorize the main character and analyze the types of conflicts faced, applying Wellek and Warren's (1995) character theory and Kenney's (1996) conflict theory. This study categorized the main character into static and dynamic types, as well as protagonist and antagonist roles. The third study by Ni Made Prana Diansari Artawan et al. (2020), titled "The External Conflict Faced by The Main Character in Five Feet Apart Movie," identifies the external conflicts and psychological motives of the main character, using theories by Kenney (1966) and Bernhardt (1953). The qualitative analysis revealed the main character faced primarily man versus man conflicts and some man versus nature conflicts, driven by psychological motives such as wanting, emotions, and feelings and attitudes. The fourth study, conducted by Ni Wayan Rusminiati et al. (2023), is titled "The Main

Character's Conflict and Personality Analysis in the movie 'ENCANTO'." This research utilized Kenney's (1966) conflict theory alongside Freud's psychoanalysis theory (1896). A qualitative approach was employed to provide a detailed explanation and a concise summary of the conflicts and the protagonist's personality, represented by the id, ego, and superego, which are considered the primary structures of human personality.

II. Methods

Data source

The data source of this study is Elemental : Forces Of Nature movie, which available at the following link <https://www.hotstar.com/id/movies/elemental-forces-of-nature/1260147564>. This animated film narrates the story of two contrasting characters, Ember (Leah Lewis) a fire element and Wade (Mamoudou Athie) a water element. Like fire, Ember has a fiery nature, while Wade has a calm nature like water. Even though they are different, they both fall in love and try to find common ground. Elemental : Forces Of Nature is a 2023 animated romantic comedy-drama movie directed by Peter Sohn and features a voice cast that includes Leah Lewis, Mamoudou Athie, Ronnie del Carmen, Sheila Ommi, Mason Wertheimer, Wendi McLendon-Covey, and Catherine O'Hara.

Data Collection

The data for this study were collected using the observation method, with the following steps:

1. Watching the movie: The movie "Elemental: Forces of Nature" was carefully and repeatedly watched, focusing on the actions and conversations to identify the types of conflict and their resolutions.
2. Taking notes: I use thematic approach in note-taking while analyzing a movie because it helps organize and interpret the information more effectively. After watching the movie, notes were taken to identify the types of conflict and how the main character resolved them. Notes are made carefully, focusing particularly on moments where conflict was evident. Each instance of conflict was documented with attention to the characters involved, the nature of the conflict, and the context within the story. These notes included direct quotes, and observations about the characters' emotions.
3. Classification: The conflicts identified were then classified based on the actions of the characters and the dialogue in the movie. The classification process considered how each conflict impacted character development. For each conflict, notes were made on how it influenced the protagonist's journey, and the resulting character growth. This encompasses all forms of external conflict, including man against man, man against nature, and man against society.

Data analysis

In this study, the data analysis aimed to answer the research question. The theory from Kenney (1966) was used to analyze the types of conflict found in The Elemental : Forces Of Nature movie because it offers a comprehensive, relevant, and theoretically valid framework for analyzing the types of conflict in The Elemental: Forces of Nature movie. By using this theory, the study is able to systematically explore and categorize the conflicts in the movie, leading to a deeper understanding. The second theory from Deetz and Stevenson in Fleetwood (1987) was used to analyze the way the main characters resolved the conflict because the theory provide valuable frameworks for understanding how conflicts are resolved, particularly in the context of character interactions in narratives. Their theories can be used to justify why characters behave the way they do in conflicts and how those conflicts are ultimately resolved. The data analysis was carried out using qualitative methods. The collected data were first identified and then classified based on the types of internal and external conflicts, along with how the main character resolved these conflicts.

III. Findings and Discussion

The finding was to find the types of external conflict that were found in Elemental: Forces of Nature movie. The external conflict can happened from outside factors, whether from other characters, nature, and also the society.

The number of occurrences was shown in the table 1.

Table 1. Types of External Conflict

No	Types of External Conflict	Number of Occurrences
1. External Conflict	Man against man	2
	Man against nature	4
	Man against society	-
TOTAL		6

Based on the table 1, shows that the man against nature has the most dominant data. The man against man was 2 data, the man against nature was 4 data. The total data was 6 data. The explanation about the data as below :

Data 1

"You splash it, you buy it “ (shouting)

Analysis :

The data above shows Ember's anger towards her customer who splashed something. The external conflict arises from the customer's action of splashing something, likely causing damage or disruption, which Ember demands be compensated for. Ember's shouting reflects her frustration and insistence on order, expecting the customer to pay for the disruption caused. However, because the customer is afraid of Ember, they run out of the store in fear. The external conflict between Ember and the customer not only exemplifies the clash between Ember's need for control and the customer's fear but also underscores the significant influence of power and authority dynamics on how people interact and make decisions.

This scene in the movie reveals the intricate dynamics of power and vulnerability that often characterize everyday conflicts. Ember's response, marked by frustration and a demand for accountability, highlights the potential for individuals in positions of perceived authority to resort to intimidation as a means of asserting control. The customer's reaction fleeing in fear demonstrates a common behavioral response to perceived aggression or dominance, particularly in situations where there is an imbalance of power.

This interaction suggests that the conflicts depicted in the movie extend beyond the immediate actions, such as the splashing incident, to encompass deeper psychological and social dimensions. The customer's fear driven response illustrates the limitations of conflict resolution when communication is hindered by intimidation and fear. Instead of facilitating a constructive dialogue or reaching a mutually agreeable resolution, the power imbalance between Ember and the customer results in the latter's avoidance of confrontation, thereby perpetuating the conflict rather than resolving it.

Data 2

“ Help “ (screaming) (water rumbling)

Analysis :

The data presented delves into Wade's intense struggle, driven by a critical failure in infrastructure a broken canal door that serves as a catalyst for a series of life-threatening events. This malfunction triggers an uncontrollable surge of water, symbolizing a powerful environmental hazard that puts Wade's life in immediate jeopardy. The sheer force of the rushing water not only poses a significant physical threat but also heightens the psychological toll on Wade, who is thrust into a situation where his survival instincts are pitted against overwhelming natural forces. Wade's cries for help are emblematic of the deep fear and desperation that ensue when an individual is confronted with an imminent and severe danger.

This moment captures the profound sense of vulnerability that humans experience when faced with uncontrollable environmental hazards, revealing how quickly such threats can surpass one's ability to manage or respond effectively. The conflict illustrated here extends beyond Wade's personal struggle; it highlights the broader issue of infrastructure reliability and its critical role in ensuring public safety. The broken canal door serves as a stark reminder of how failures in

infrastructure can have cascading effects, leading to potentially catastrophic outcomes. This situation underscores the tension between human needs such as the basic need for safety and the formidable challenges posed by a compromised environment, where even a single failure can lead to widespread disaster.

Data 3

Ember : Who are you ? What are you doing here (in Ember house)

Wade : I don't know , I was searching for a leak on the other side of the river and got sucked in (because of Ember's anger which caused the pipe in her house leak and Wade was sucked in)

Analysis :

The data underscores a tense situation involving Wade and Ember, where a seemingly minor accident spirals into a significant conflict. Ember's accidental action, which causes a pipe in her house to leak, inadvertently draws Wade into a precarious situation—he is literally "sucked" into her home. Wade's explanation of being "sucked in" while investigating the leak highlights the unexpected and dangerous nature of the event, directly tying his predicament to Ember's mistake. This scenario sets the stage for a conflict fueled by emotions and unintended consequences. Ember's anger, perhaps triggered by frustration or guilt over the leak, contributes to the tension between the two characters. Wade's sudden and unintended intrusion into Ember's home exacerbates the situation, leading to a clash that is as much about the external circumstances as it is about their individual reactions to the event.

The narrative reveals how external conflicts can arise from a combination of accidental events and emotional responses, with small issues quickly escalating into larger problems. Wade's trouble, initially caused by a simple leak, becomes entangled with Ember's emotional response, resulting in a conflict that affects both of them.

This highlights the fragile nature of interpersonal relationships, where unintended actions can lead to significant disputes, and how external situations like a leaking pipe can serve as catalysts for deeper tensions between individuals. The data also sheds light on the broader implications of such conflicts, illustrating how minor accidents can trigger a chain of events that lead to more serious interpersonal issues. The situation between Wade and Ember serves as a microcosm of how external conflicts, when combined with emotional reactions, can significantly impact relationships, revealing the complex interplay between human actions, accidents, and emotions.

Data 4

Now I just got to stop water from coming in (firetown)

Analysis :

The data highlights a significant external conflict where Ember is confronted with a problem caused by forces beyond her control—an influx of water that poses a direct threat to her environment. Her statement, "Now I just got to stop water from coming in," succinctly captures

the urgency and seriousness of the situation, as she must act quickly to prevent the water from damaging Firetown.

This conflict arises from the environmental challenge of water intrusion, which stands in stark contrast to the elemental nature of Firetown, a place inherently vulnerable to water. Ember's efforts to stop the water from entering Firetown underscore her struggle against this external force that threatens not only her immediate surroundings but also the broader community she belongs to. The water, as an external factor, represents a powerful and uncontrollable element that disrupts the delicate balance of Firetown, highlighting the fragility of her environment.

Ember's responsibility to protect Firetown from such a threat becomes a central focus of the conflict, reflecting the broader theme of individuals standing against external forces that endanger their way of life. The data illustrates how external conflicts often arise from the clash between natural or environmental forces and human efforts to maintain control and order. Ember's situation is a vivid example of this dynamic, where she must navigate the tension between her duties to protect Firetown and the overwhelming force of the water, which threatens to undermine everything she holds dear. This scenario reflects the broader struggle many people face when external challenges put their values, responsibilities, and even their very existence at risk.

Data 5

Wade, Gale's deadline is tomorrow, we need more sandbag (to cover the damaged canal gate)

Analysis :

The data above shows external conflict in this sentence involves Wade's struggle with an environmental and logistical issue. The damaged canal gate presents a significant problem, potentially leading to flooding or other hazards if not properly addressed. Ember's mention of Gale's deadline highlights the urgency and the external pressure of needing to resolve the issue quickly. The need for more sandbags to cover the damaged gate indicates a battle against the uncontrolled environmental threat and the challenge of sourcing necessary materials. Overall, the conflict is driven by the factors of the damaged infrastructure and the time constraints to prevent further damage or disruption. This conflict illustrates how infrastructure damage not only disrupts the environment but also imposes logistical and temporal challenges, showing the intricate interplay between immediate response needs and broader environmental management.

Data 6

But it actually could be a disaster (if they touch each other)

Analysis :

The data above shows the encompasses external conflict because it highlights the dangerous consequences of the interaction between two opposing elements, such as fire and water. The conflict arises from the physical threat posed by their contact, where the properties of each

element can cause significant damage. This potential disaster creates an external danger that affects not only the characters but also their environment. This statement highlights the urgency and adds tension to their interaction.

This scenario serves as a powerful illustration of the struggle between elemental forces, emphasizing their potential for destruction when they collide. The clash between fire and water is not just a physical event; it also symbolizes deeper themes of balance, control, and the vulnerability of both natural and human systems. The interaction between these elements reflects the delicate equilibrium that exists in nature and the chaos that can ensue when that balance is disrupted. Moreover, this conflict touches on the broader idea of how uncontrollable forces can challenge human efforts to maintain order and stability.

The characters' struggle to manage the interaction between fire and water mirrors the larger human experience of trying to control or mitigate the impact of powerful natural forces. The scenario illustrates the fragility of both natural and human systems when faced with such uncontrollable elements, revealing the thin line between stability and chaos.

IV. Conclusion

The *Elemental: Forces of Nature* movie has several external conflicts in it. The findings indicate that external conflicts with the type of man against nature are more often found in this article. The data predominantly reflects "human versus nature" conflicts due to the recurring theme of characters grappling with environmental forces and natural hazards. In each instance, whether it's Wade contending with uncontrolled water from a broken canal door or Ember dealing with water intrusion threatening Firetown, the central struggle involves battling against uncontrollable elements. These conflicts are driven by physical dangers posed by the environment, such as flooding or elemental reactions, which underscore the characters' urgent need to manage or mitigate these natural threats. This focus on environmental issues underscores a broader theme of individuals confronting overwhelming and unpredictable natural forces, revealing the persistent challenge of balancing human actions against the power of nature. By depicting characters' struggles with uncontrollable elements, such as flooding and elemental reactions, the film highlights the urgent need for effective management and adaptation to environmental threats. In conclusion, the predominant "man against nature" conflicts in *Elemental: Forces of Nature* illustrate the film's central exploration of humanity's interaction with natural forces. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the movie's conflict dynamics, future research could delve into the internal conflicts experienced by the characters. Additionally, comparing the depiction of external conflict in *Elemental: Forces of Nature* with that in other animated films could provide further insights into how different narratives handle environmental and elemental challenges

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