



***THE NOTEBOOK* THROUGH DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES:  
AN ECRANISATION STUDY**

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## **THE NOTEBOOK THROUGH DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES: AN ECRANISATION STUDY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research, entitled “*The Notebook Through Different Perspectives: An Ecranisation Study*”, analyses the differences between *The Notebook* novel and its film adaptation. The research method in literature that was used in this thesis was descriptive qualitative to analysed the data and to find the Ecranisation process between the objects. The structural approach was used to analysed the general description of main character, plot, conflicts, and settings. Ecranisation theory was used to analysed the differences between novel and film *The Notebook*. The result shows that Noah Calhoun is described as strong, tough, sincere, mature, patient, persistent, loyal and optimistic in both the novel and the film. However, in the novel, Noah is more religious. Meanwhile in the film, Noah is more realistic, straightforward and sarcastic. Noah also experiences internal and external conflict against Allie, Doctors, and Nurse in both novel and film. But, in the novel, Noah has conflict with Allie’s mother. Meanwhile in the film, he has conflict with his children. The setting in this novel is divided into setting of time, place, and social. The setting of time and place in both novel and film are almost the same. Only the name of the place in the novel is different from the film such as Noah’s hometown in the novel is New Bem and in the film, is Seabrook. The setting of social in both novel and film is also the same. Noah is from low class society meanwhile Allie is from high class society. These social class differences made Noah find difficulties to be with Allie. The differences between the novel and its film adaptation bring up different theme. The novel’s theme is about Noah finding miracle for Allie’s recovery, meanwhile the film’s theme is about love story between Noah and Allie in general.

**Keywords:** *Ecranisation, Novel, Film, The Notebook, Sparks*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Novel has caught the world’s attention since the 16<sup>th</sup> century as one of literary works. The story inside a novel can take the readers into a new dimension of their own imagination. Moreover, novel is not only entertain the readers but also inspire them in many ways because the author of the novel always give a message through the work.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, filmmakers are interested in adapting a novel into film. This opportunity comes from the readers who wish their favourite book to be produced into a film. The readers are often curious about the visualization of the characters and settings of the novel in a film because they know that some authors of the book get involved in the film-making process when their novel is adapted. Also, film is more attractive than novel. Film catches people’s attention through the visualization of the story and the sound effects. Film also can deliver the message to the viewers more easily. Furthermore, people

need less effort to watch a movie than to read a novel because they only need one or two hours to watch it.

Nowadays, film adaptation has been a big issue of the film industry because there are so many films based on novels released and have made their successful debut in the 'big screen'. This phenomenon catches people's attention around the world. Some of well-known novels which have been adapted into films are *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling, *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien, and *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley.

The process of a novel into a film in literature is known as ecranisation, derived from the French word 'ecran' that means screen. This term has been used in Indonesia since Eneste introduced it through his book "Novel dan Film" in 1991. Some of the ecranisation studies that have been done in Indonesia are *Perbedaan Makna Novel dan Film Ayat-Ayat Cinta* by Karkono (2009), *Transformasi Novel ke Film Kajian Ekranisasi terhadap The Scarlet Letter karya Nathaniel Hawthorne* by Arida Widyastuti (2012), and *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih Transformasi Novel ke Film* by Siti Isnainah (2015).

Ecranisation explains the differences between novel and its film adaptation. There are so many perspectives to judge the adaptation from its original work. People who have read the novel beforehand often think that the film adaptation is different from the original work, whether it is good or bad mark. Usually, the differences lay on the characters, story line, and settings because a filmmaker has different ideology from the author of the book to represent the story into film. Sometimes, it makes the film adaptation deliver different message from the original book.

*The Notebook* tells about an old man called Duke who reads a story from a notebook to an old woman in a nursing home. He reads the notebook every day in order to recall the woman's memory about her life before. The story inside the notebook is about a young boy who works at lumberyard named Noah. He falls in love with a girl from rich family named Allie, who comes to the town for summer vacation. Allie's parents forbid her to have relationship with Noah because they are from different class society.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher discussed about the comparison between the novel *The Notebook* and its film adaptation with the same title. The researcher explained the changing process from novel into film using Ecranisation theory. In addition, the researcher also used structural approach to help her answer the research questions.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Data and Subject**

The data of this study were the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Classic Movie edition of *The Notebook* novel by Nicholas Sparks which is published in 2014 and film *The Notebook* by Nick Cassavetes released in 2004.

### **Unit of Analysis**

In this research, the researcher discussed about intrinsic elements from both novel *The Notebook* and its film adaptation through the events that happens in the story. Moreover, the researcher analysed the data to find Ecranisation process.

### **Technique of Data Collection and Analysis**

Before analysing the data, the researcher used library research to collect the data. The researcher read the novel and watch the film. For the novel, the researcher identified the narration, dialogue between characters, and the events in the story. For the film, the researcher identified the dialogue between characters, the main character's thought, behaviour and facial expression through the events that happens in the story.

After identifying the data from both novel and film, the researcher classified them into the intrinsic elements (general description of the main character, conflicts, plot, and settings). Then, the researcher juxtaposed each intrinsic element from the novel and the film to find the similarities and the differences between them. The researcher analysed the ecranisation process from the novel into its film adaptation through the differences. Then, the researcher took the conclusion from the analysis as the result of the research.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **Finding**

#### **General Description of Noah Calhoun as the Main Character**

##### **Strong**

Noah Calhoun as the main character in *The Notebook* is described as a strong person. Noah works on lumberyard since he was young. His experience in the lumberyard for years strengthen his body. He is also good in sports which mostly requires strength.

##### **Tough**

Noah is emotionally strong and he can deal with harsh condition. Allie's parents do not agree with the relationship between Noah and Allie because Noah is poor. He is just a laborer. They think Noah does not suit for their daughter. The worst part is Allie's mother says it directly that Noah can hear it clearly. In this situation, Noah cannot do anything because it is true that he is poor. All he can do is hold the pain and stay strong for Allie even though they must break up.

##### **Care**

Noah is a caring person. He cares for his neighbours, Gus and Martha Shaw. He knows that Gus's family did not have a car. So, every time he is going to the store, he stops by Gus's place to pick his daughter up and goes to the store together.

##### **Sincere**

Noah is a sincere person. He had loved his wife with all his heart and his soul. Usually, to tell someone they love, people just simply say 'I love you'. But Noah adding the word '...with all my heart and soul' means he wants to make it clear that he sincerely loves Allie.

##### **Mature**

When Noah and Allie's family have lunch together, Allie's mother tells him that Allie is going to attend Sarah Laurence in New York when the summer ends but Allie does not tell him before. Allie explains that she just got the letter. Noah is not angry that his

girlfriend did not tell him in the first place even though it is an important information because he understands Allie's situation. This event shows that Noah is a mature person because he is not easily influenced when Allie's mother try to make him misunderstand to Allie.

### **Patient**

In the past, Noah faced difficulties to be with Allie. Her parents opposed their relationship because Noah was poor. Then, the past three years, Allie is sick which makes her lost her memories and even forget her husband and family. Since then, Noah keep trying to make his wife get back her memories by reading the notebook for her. He follows Allie lives in the nursing home to take care of her. People tend to complain when they have hard times. But Noah chooses not to complain. Otherwise he accepts the obstade in his life and goes on. This proves Noah as a patient person.

### **Loyal**

Noah has been working for Goldman for eight years at the scrap yard. It is rare to find people who can work for more than five years in the same company. But Noah did it. He shows constant support to Goldman, his boss. So, Noah can be described as a loyal worker.

### **Persistent**

Noah shows persistency since he was young. He fell in love with Allie at the first sight when he was seventeen years old. He met Allie at the night carnival. He directly shows his feeling toward her by asking for a date but Allie rejects it. He even climb the Ferris wheel to make Allie accept his date. Noah keeps trying to win Allie's heart even though she keeps rejecting him. Fortunately, his efforts paid off. Allie accepted his date because she fell in love with him. This explanation shows that Noah is a persistent man because he keeps trying to get what he wants.

### **Confident**

Noah seems confident about the path he has chosen in his life and it has always been the right one. Despite of his hard times, he believes that he is in the right path. This confidence comes from his experiences. He might have his prediction right in the past. Maybe, marrying Allie is one of the right path he had chosen in his life so far. So, he is confident about the future.

### **Optimistic**

Noah never knows if his effort to make his wife remembers him again will give him a good result. He knows very well that it is a difficult matter but he always believes that he can do that. He believes that anything is possible, that Allie remembering her memories is possible. He is optimistic that his wife might get back her memories today. He always says it every day even though the days he passed did not give him a good result.

### **Brave**

To enlist and join the army when the country in a war is a hard decision and needs a lot of courage. Noah shows his brave side when he decides to enlist. As a citizen, he has a choice to not to participate in war, but he choose to enlist which is a brave action.

### **Trustworthy**

In the past, Noah says to Allie that one day he wants to buy the plantation house and fix it up because it is his dream to have that house. He also promises to Allie that he will build his dream house based on what she wants the house to be like. Unfortunately they broke up. They meet again years later and Allie finds that Noah had built the house. It looks as same as she wanted. Even though they broke up long time ago, Noah still keep his promise to her.

### **Religious**

Noah's wife, Allie, whom he wants to help does not recognize him because of her illness. She treats him as a stranger, even though in fact he is her husband. He knows that it is difficult to face this kind of situation. So, he sincerely pray to God and ask for the strength he will need to going through the obstacle.

### **Realistic**

When Allie's parents oppose Noah's relationship with their daughter because he is a laborer and poor, Noah and Allie have argument about what they will do. Allie will also go to New York to continue her study. It means that she will leave Noah. Noah is happy about her school but she will have great future, which he will not have, meanwhile he stays in his hometown continue his routine. He cannot give Allie a good life like she already has from her family. He also understands that Allie is from a wealthy family meanwhile he only works in lumberyard. Noah knows the fact that he has different social background from Allie.

### **Straightforward**

Sometimes Noah spends the evening with Martha Shaw in his house. Martha often asks him to go out with her for a proper date because they are not in relationship but they spend times like one. Their relationship confuses her. In fact, Noah does not want to go out with her and he says it honestly even though she asks him many times. He knows that Martha wants his love and attention but he cannot give all of it because he does not love her. He is still thinking about Allie. So, he honestly rejects her because he does not want her to put her hope on him.

### **Sarcastic**

Noah sarcastically says to Allie that her parents must love her fiancée. He knows that Allie's parent like a wealthy man to marry their daughter because in the past, they rejected Noah to be with their daughter because he is poor.

### **Plot Occurred in *The Notebook* novel and film**

Novel and film share the same definition of plot which is a literary term used to describe a sequence of event in a story. According to Freytag, plot is divided into five stages: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

Novel and film *The Notebook* almost has similar plot. But, there is one difference, which is the rising action. The chart below shows that the film has longer rising action than the novel. Meanwhile the exposition, climax, falling action, and resolution have same portion between the novel and the film.

## **Conflicts Experienced by Noah Calhoun as the Main Character**

### **Internal Conflict**

As the main character, Noah experiences some internal conflicts in the novel which is as same as in the film. He experiences internal conflicts as he cannot forget Allie because he loves her. When Noah broke up with Allie, Noah is very sad. He feels stupid because a day before Allie left Seabrook, they fight and he breaks their relationship. He still loves Allie and he wants her back. He sends letter for Allie everyday for a year but he never get replies. It makes him desperate.

### **External Conflict**

#### **Noah against Allie**

Same conflict happens between Noah and Allie in both novel and film. After his mother came to them, Noah and Allie argue the things that should have done. She wants to be with Noah but she is already engaged with Lon. She does not want to hurt Lon by her decision. Noah cannot accept that. He thinks that Allie should follow her heart. She should listen to what she really wants because it is her life, not anybody's life. Then, Allie tells Noah that no matter what she chooses, she still hurt someone. Noah begs her to stay with him but Allie cannot decide right away because it is wrong to leave Lon too.

#### **Noah against Allie's Mother**

In both novel and film, Allie's mother, Anne, opposes their daughter's relationship with Noah because he is poor. In the film, it only shows when Allie argues with Anne meanwhile Noah only heard it from outside. But in the novel, there is a moment when Noah directly argues with Anne about her unfair decision. Anne frankly tells Noah the reason she forbids him and Allie together is not that she did not like him but she thinks that he does not deserves her daughter and she asks Noah to understand it. But Noah bravely refuses it.

#### **Noah against Doctor**

In both novel and film, Noah has conflict with the doctor in the nursing home. In the film, Noah argues with Dr. Barnwell, a doctor whom take care of Noah and Allie in the nursing home. Meanwhile in the novel, the name of the doctor who argues with Noah is not mentioned. In both novel and film, they have the same arguments which is about Allie's condition. The doctor do not agree with Noah's opinion about reading Allie a notebook to help her remember again because Allie's illness is worse than Noah thinks.

#### **Noah against Nurse**

In the novel and film, Noah also has the same conflict with the nurse in the nursing home. The difference is in the novel the nurse named Janice, meanwhile in the film the name of the nurse is not mentioned. Conflict between Noah and the nurse happens after Noah wakes from his coma and he goes to Allie's room secretly. At that time, he misses his wife but he knows that he is forbidden to meet her.



## **Settings Described in *The Notebook* novel and film**

### **Setting of Time**

#### **Morning**

Novel *The Notebook* and its film adaptation have the same setting of time in the beginning of the story. The story in the novel begins when the main character, Noah Calhoun, wakes up in a cold morning and sits by a window in his room.

#### **Early October 1946**

The story inside Noah's notebook has different beginnings between the novel and its film adaptation. In the novel, the story inside Noah's notebook starts at the early October 1946. The time when Noah lived alone after he broke up with Allie and his father passed away. He is thirty-one years old at that time.

#### **June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1940**

Meanwhile in the film, the story in the notebook which Noah reads for Allie starts on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1940. It is the time where they are still young. It is the first time Noah meets Allie and the beginning of their love story.

#### **Before Noon**

Novel and film share the same setting of time where Allie's mother comes to Noah's house looking for Allie. Allie wakes up in Noah's bed before noon while Noah still prepares breakfast/lunch. Then, Allie's mother unexpectedly comes to tell her that Lon is in his way to find her because he already knows about Noah. This is the moment where Noah must persuade Allie to stay with him. Meanwhile Allie is confused to choose between Noah and Lon.

#### **Dinner Time**

Novel and film also have the same setting of time where Allie remembers her memories again. It is when dinner time. Noah prepares a dinner for Allie in the nursing home. In this moment, finally Noah's prayer gets answered. Allie remembers her memories again. She remembers Noah as her husband and all the memories they had.

#### **Anniversary Day/Night**

The story ends in the night where Noah goes to Allie's room in both novel and film. The difference is it is an anniversary night in the novel. Meanwhile in the film, it is just an ordinary night. But, both novel and film share similar endings. In the novel, Noah goes to Allie's room. He must meet her because it is their anniversary day and he misses her so much. It is the most precious moment he had with Allie because in this time Allie got her memories back again for the last time.

### **Setting of Place**

#### **Creekside Extended Care Facility/Nursing Home**

The story from both novel and film mostly happens in the nursing home. In the novel, it is mentioned that the nursing home where Noah and Allie live is named Creekside

Extended Care Facility. Meanwhile in the film, the name of the nursing home is never mentioned.

### **New Bern/Seabrook**

In both novel and film, the story mostly takes place in Noah's hometown. Noah's hometown in the novel named New Bern, meanwhile in the film named Seabrook. Noah meets Allie at the first time whom visits his hometown on summer vacation.

### **The Neuse River Festival/The Night Carnival**

Both novel and film also shares the same setting of place where Noah meets Allie for the first time. It is in a night carnival or festival, in Noah's hometown. In the novel, it is called The Neuse River Festival. Meanwhile in the film, it is mentioned as a night carnival.

### **Noah's House/The Windsor Plantation**

Noah's house was a plantation house before Noah buy and fix it up in both novel and film. When he was still dating Allie, Noah told Allie that his dream is to buy the plantation building and to rebuild it into his own house. He also dreams to live in that house with Allie. He even built it the way Allie wanted. In the novel, the name of the plantation house is not mentioned. Meanwhile in the film, it is called The Windsor Plantation house.

### **Brices Creek/The Creek**

In both novel and film, Noah and Allie spend an unforgettable moment together in a small lake near Noah's house. In the novel, the lake is called BricesCreek. Meanwhile in the film, the name of the lake is not mentioned.

## **Setting of Social**

### **Low Class Society**

In both novel and film, Noah as the main character is portrayed as a poor man. The setting of social that belongs to Noah in the story is Low class society. It shows in both novel and film that Noah works at lumberyard as a laborer. He receives low salary from his work. His social status as a poor person becomes an issue for his relationship with Allie because Allie is from High class of society and her parents does not agree with their relationship. Allie's parent force Noah and Allie to break up.

### **High Class Society**

Noah's fate changes when he comeback from the war. Noah buys the plantation house and he builds it as his dream house. The house is big and stunning which indicates that it must cost a lot of money to build it. Since then, Noah does not work at the lumberyard again. He lives in his dream house and spends most of time at there. Noah's house also catches the reporter's attention to write an article about its finest restorations. It means that Noah is not in the low-class society anymore. His social status changes to the upper class.

## Discussion

### General Description of Main Character

According to Eneste, ecranisation is the changing process from a novel into its film adaptation. Novel *The Notebook* (1996) is adapted into a film with the same title in 2004. There are differences between novel and its film adaptation that lays on the intrinsic element: character, plot, conflict, and settings. From the analysis in the previous section, here is the summary of the differences between novel and film *The Notebook*.

Ecranisation in <i>The Notebook</i> novel and film				
No.	Intrinsic Elements	Context	Differences	
			Novel	Film
1.	Character	General description of Noah	More religious	More realistic, straightforward, and sarcastic
2.	Plot	The beginning of Noah's notebook	Noah was 31 years old.	Noah was 19 years old.
		The beginning of rising action	Allie comes to Noah's house.	Allie's parent opposes Noah and Allie.
		Resolution	Happy ending	Sad ending
3.	Conflict	External conflict	Noah against Allie's mother	Noah against his children
4.	Setting of time	The beginning of Noah's notebook	Early October 1946	June 6 <sup>th</sup> , 1940
		Ending	Anniversary day	Ordinary night
5.	Setting of place	Noah's hometown	New Bern	Seabrook
6.	Setting of social	Noah's status changes	Low class society into High class society	

Noah, as the main character in both novel and film *The Notebook*, has contrasting character. In the novel, Noah is portrayed as a religious man who always pray and search miracle for his wife's recovery. Meanwhile in the film, Noah is more realistic about the different social background between Allie and him. He is also straightforward to Allie even though he knows that it hurts Allie's feeling but he is always honest to her. Being sarcastic is also Noah's way to show the unfairness in his life which all has relation with Allie.

In the novel, the story inside Noah's notebook starts at early October 1946. Noah was thirty-one years old at the time. He has separated with Allie for fourteen years and has built his dream house. Meanwhile in the film, the story inside Noah's notebook starts at June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1940. Noah was nineteen at the time. He was at the night carnival with Fin. It is the first time he met Allie and he fell in love with her at first sight. Because the story inside Noah's notebook in the film starts from the first time Noah meets Allie in his hometown, Seabrook, the film has longer rising action than the novel to reach the same climax point. In the novel, the rising action starts when Allie comes to Noah's house in New Bern to tell about the engagement. Meanwhile in the film, it starts when Allie's parent forbids their daughter to meet Noah again.

The novel also has different ending from the film. In the novel, it is their anniversary day when Noah goes to Allie's room in the nursing home. Allie gets back her memories once again that night. In the end of the novel, Noah and Allie cherish the moment and make love. It is a happy ending because finally Allie remembers Noah again and they can spend the rest of their life together happily. Meanwhile in the film, Noah goes to Allie's room in the night after he wakes up from his coma. Allie remembers him once again. They cherish the moment and die in their sleep. It is a sad ending because the time Noah spends time with Allie when she finally gets her memories back is short.

### Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, the differences between the novel and the film can bring up different theme from both novel and film. The novel's theme is about finding miracle because the plot and conflict in it tells more about Noah, as the main character, has gone through all the difficulties to make his wife recall the memory again by reading a notebook. Meanwhile the film adaptation's theme is about love story between Noah and Allie in general because its plot and conflict shows more about Noah's youth with Allie, how Noah and Allie fight for their love despite of the different social class between them, and how strong Noah's love to Allie which remains until the end of their life.

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