

Finding the Structure of Popular Light Novels from the "Hero's Journey"

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Background and Aim

The Rise of the Light Novels

Theory : Hero's Journey

summary of the structural elements of the stories

Case : Popular light novels

A case study to identify structural characteristics of appealing light novels.

Methods

Analysis of light novels using "Hero's Journey."

Works cited	Story development x 12-stage story pattern	Character x 8 basic archetypes
Otsuka	(1) Stage classification using "Story Maker."	(2) Archetype classification using "Character Maker."
Vogler	(3) Elemental detection at each stage using "The Writer's Journey."	(4) Functional detection of archetypes using "The Writer's Journey."

Light Novels surveyed
"This Light Novel is Amazing!" Survey
2010s overall ranking in the works category
Four works in the **Hall of Fame**

My youth romantic comedy is wrong AS I EXPECTED
Sword Art Online
A Certain Magical Index
The Ryo's Work Is Never Done!



Results and discussions

Definition

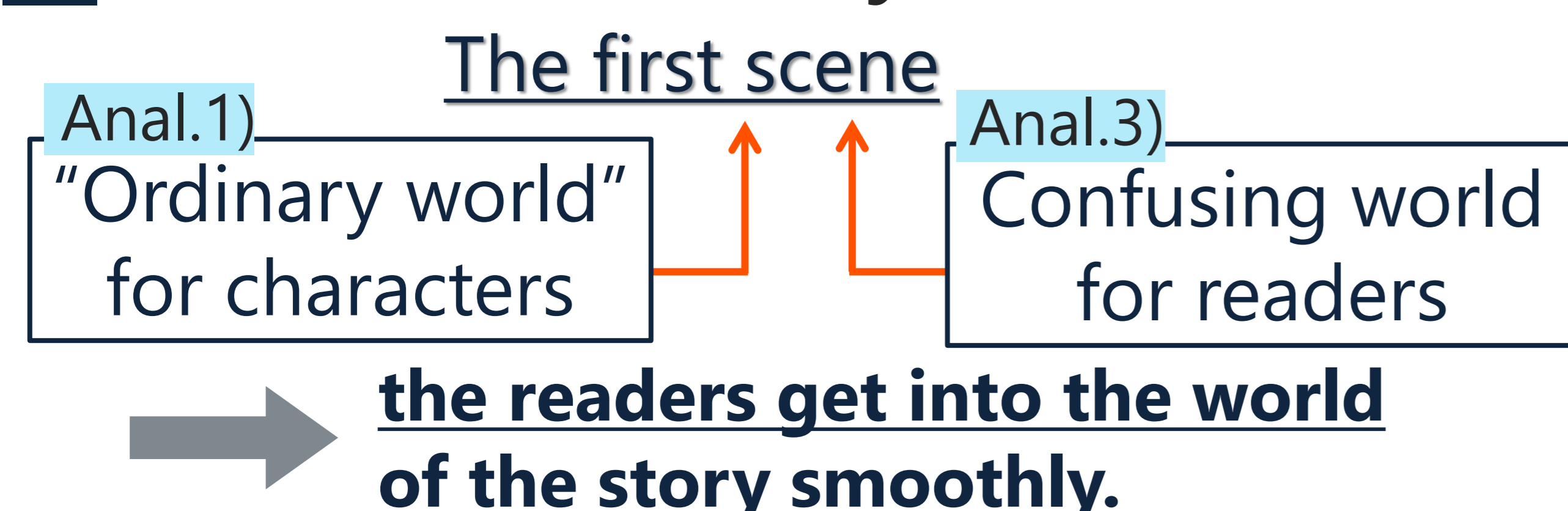
"Hero" is an archetype.
The protagonist is the main male character and the narrator.
The heroine is a female character who supports the protagonist.

1. Distribution of "Hero" characteristics between protagonist and heroine

Anal.2) Protagonist = **Willing Hero** **Herald**
Anal.4) & heroin & **Unwilling Hero**

One or the other is a "Hero as a catalyst" or a "sacrifice."
"The film takes an unorthodox but effective approach to the "Hero's Journey" by distributing the characteristics of the "hero" among the main characters, including the villain." (Vogler, 2022)
The characteristics of the "Hero" are shared **between the protagonist and a heroine. Interaction between positive and negative "Hero"** in all works.

2. Alien in the "Ordinary world"



Results and discussions

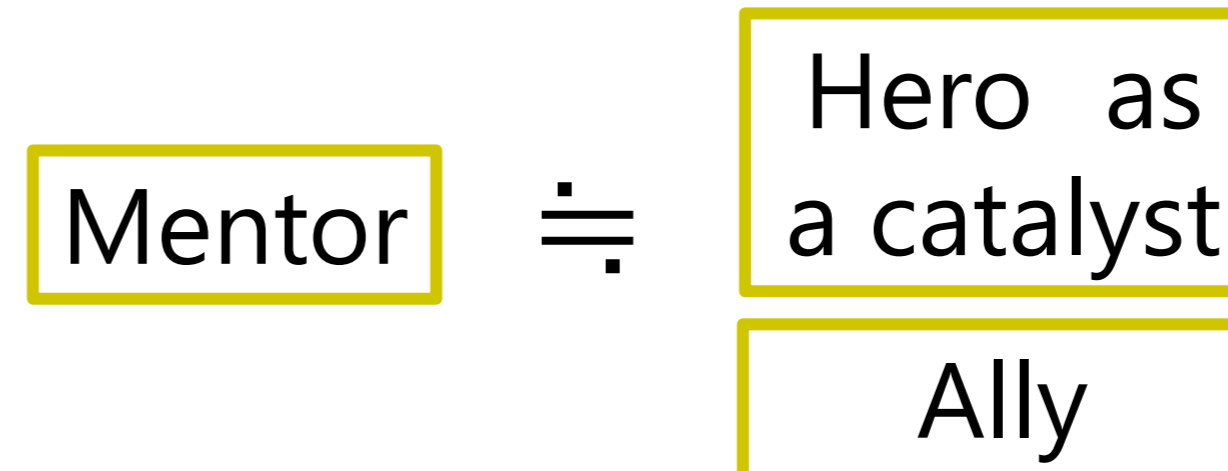
3. Ambiguity of "Mentor"

Anal.1) "Meeting with the mentor" is **parallel to other stages.**

Anal.2) **Herald** → **Mentor**

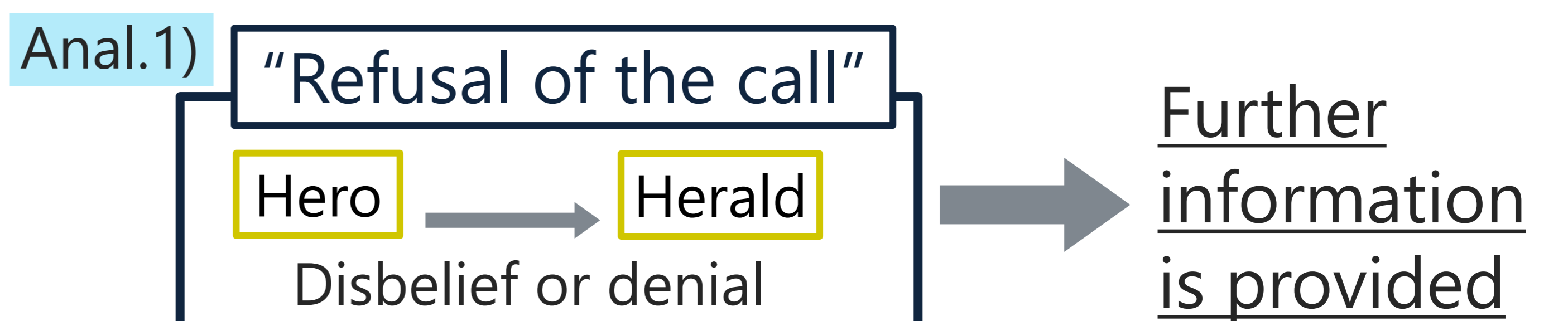
→ "Meeting with the mentor" stage is Difficult to distinguish.

Anal.4) **No typical "Mentor."**



This may be due to the fact that the protagonist is more than capable from the beginning.

4. Explanation of settings by "Refusal of the call"



"In many works, "the truth (information) is revealed through positive exchanges between characters." (Haraguchi, 2013)
→ Aren't these exchanges rather **negative**?

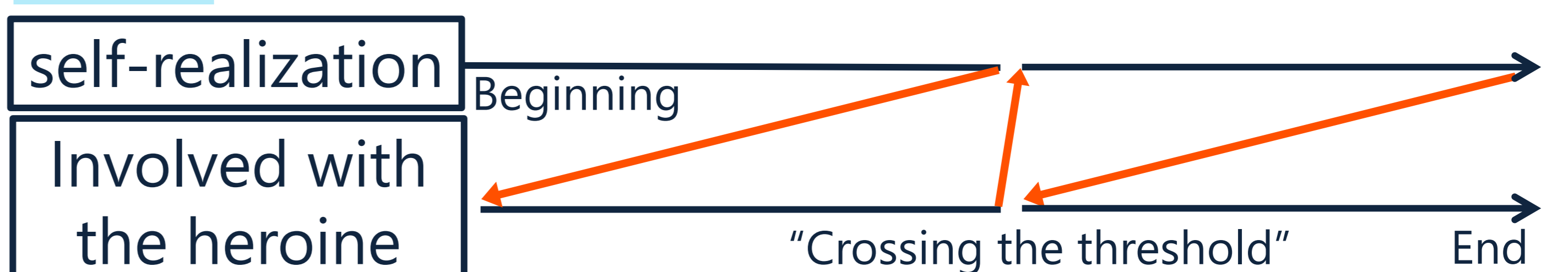
5. Two types of "Shadow"

Anal.2) **Shadow** → **Mentor**
Changing archetypes

Anal.4) **Shadow: Rival type** or **Guardian** → **Ally**

6. The comings and goings of "Hero's Journey"

Anal.1) For example, Protagonist's "Hero's Journey" about



Conclusion

Characteristics found

- Characteristic distribution of "Hero" characteristics between hero and heroine.
- Interaction between positive and negative heroes.
- The confusing "Ordinary world" of the first scene.
- Difficulty in identifying "Mentor."
- Explanation of the setting by "Refusal of the call."

Points that need to be considered

- The nature of the two types of "Shadow" and the reason for their existence.
- Consideration of two branches of the "Hero's Journey."
- Research in terms of both expression and structure.
- Analysis of individual profiles of the characters.

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