

Narrative Structure in Ahmad Fuadi's Novel Trilogy Negeri 5 Menara and Feasibility as Literature Teaching Material in High School

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Abstract

This study attempts to find and formulate the story structure pattern of the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy, so that a storytelling technique is obtained that Ahmad Fuadi uses in creating a storyline. The data studied are in the form of acts and conflict events that build the story structure in the novel. The research data is then analyzed using the AJ Greimas narrative structure study with the heuristic semiotic reading technique to obtain a research idea scheme, and hermeneutics to obtain an interpretation of the meaning of events and storylines. The results of the analysis of the act scheme and functional model in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy produce a pattern of event development and storyline. The events or conflicts developed in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy always depart and center on the problems imposed or faced by the main character in achieving a goal. The subordinate characters occupy the functions of helping and opposing actants. The functional model that is determined as the storyline also shows the same pattern where the story always begins at the initial situation stage, then continues to the complete transformation stage and ends at the final situation stage. The Trilogy of Negeri 5 Menara has met the criteria for the suitability of teaching materials from the aspects of language, psychology, and cultural background. The analysis of the narrative structure of the Trilogy of Negeri 5 Menara is also in line with and can be adapted in literature learning in high school, especially in the text material of class XII novels in Phase F of the Merdeka Curriculum.

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INTRODUCTION

Literary works as creative products must be able to present good and interesting works as a place to convey ideas that the author thinks about human life. Literary works built by authors with good and interesting substance will create an extraordinary existence in their works, so that the success of a literary work through the power of its existence can lead to the work as canon literature. Canon literature refers to a term where a literary work is considered to meet undoubted quality standards, so that the work is considered eternal for its existence (Sumarno, 2015).

One of the many famous novelists in the 2000 literary period is Ahmad Fuadi. The author from Maninjau, West Sumatra won an award as the favorite fiction writer in the 2010 Indonesian Reader Award and became the best fiction book writer given by the National Library of Indonesia in 2011. Ahmad Fuadi was able to bring his works to receive great attention in the literary world in the 2000s with the characteristics of his works with the theme of education, the spirit of achievement, the struggle for life, and religiosity. In fact, some of his novels have been made into feature films such as *Negeri 5 Menara* in 2012, *Ranah 3 Warna* in 2021, and the latest *Buya Hamka* in 2023. This shows that the existence of novels by Ahmad Fuadi has managed to get a large audience from the public.

This research takes Ahmad Fuadi's novels, specifically the *Negeri 5 Menara* trilogy, as the object of research. Ahmad Fuadi's success in writing the *Negeri 5 Menara* trilogy is certainly built on the quality of a good story, so that it can bind many readers as well as literary critics. This is evidenced by several reviews of novels written by Ahmad Fuadi. When reading Ahmad Fuadi's work, especially in the *Negeri 5 Menara* Trilogy, readers and researchers here realize that Ahmad Fuadi's work has the strength of the complex storyline of the trilogy. Ahmad Fuadi is able to present a series of problems with an interesting story chronology so that readers can feel the story and journey of his life in real life.

According to Ratna (in Hidayat et al., 2019), the theory or discourse on narrative text is

defined as the concept of story and storytelling. Narrative in literary works discusses the story created by the narrator, about how the characters involved, the story that is intertwined, and the plot contained in it. In line with Ratna's opinion, Kosasih (in Ridholia et al., 2023), stated that as one of the narrative texts, novels must have a narrative structure in which they contain story building elements. These structures make novel literary works that can be studied widely.

Talking about novels as narrative texts, according to H. Porter Abbott (in Didipu, 2020), narrative is represented by a series of events. The key word of a narrative is 'event'. Events in the narrative context are directed to what is called 'action'. A piece of writing cannot be said to be a narrative if there are no events or actions in it, maybe it can only be said to be a description, argument, exposition, or something else. The concept of narrative leads to the focus of this research, which is on the narrative structure that will be studied using AJ Greimas' theory of narratological structuralism.

In the study of narrative structure, AJ Greimas focuses his attention on acts or actions which in his terms are called actants. The actant structure functions to describe the actions of characters in a story to form a narrative. This structure seeks to find the pattern of a narrative text that emphasizes the function of the character as an actant that drives a story, although the actant is not always human (Robert Stam in Karnanta, 2015). In addition to the idea of actants in the narrative structure, Greimas also talks about a fixed story model as a plot. This story model is built with various actions called functions. Functionally, a series of events can determine the plot of the story. Therefore, the study of this narrative structure will find and formulate conflict patterns and storylines from the series of events intertwined in the *Negeri 5 Menara* trilogy.

This research on narrative structure contributes theoretically on how to write a storyline in a novel. Novel as one of the prose texts in the form of a story conveyed using narration, must be formed with a series of interesting stories. As Nurgiyantoro (1995) said,

reading a novel for some people just wants to enjoy the story presented. Readers tend to be interested in plots or stories that they find interesting. Therefore, most readers will prefer to read novels that are widely known or talked about by many people because of the interesting content of the story.

In connection with the statement that the quality of a novel is seen from the attractiveness of the story, it will support the fulfillment of the novel's function as a literary text. Novels as literary works that are narrative have various benefits, one of which is the most often talked about is the benefits of the didactic aspect. According to Lazar (in Joyo, 2023), novels as literary works provide various benefits in literary learning such as providing motivation, knowledge of cultural backgrounds, as access to language acquisition, paying attention to students' language, and developing students' critical and interpretive skills.

As stated in the Learning Outcomes (CP) of the Merdeka Curriculum, the signs in Indonesian language learning imply a target that students must achieve in their learning outcomes, which is to improve students' ability to appreciate works of fiction (short stories, novels, and dramas). Learning to understand the structure of novel literary works is included in the target achievement of literature appreciation learning in schools, especially in Phase F class XII, expecting the ability of students to analyze and criticize the intrinsic elements (characterization, plot, setting, point of view) and generalize the ideas contained in a novel, as well as write and review the strengths and weaknesses of a novel. Through these learning outcomes, learners are expected to gain the benefits of novels as literary works as previously explained.

In reality, the expectations outlined in the CP still do not meet the criteria as targeted. Previous research history regarding the ability of students to appreciate fictional literary works such as those conducted by Lubis & Nurelide (2019) and Sari & Wartiningsih (2015), in their research on the literary appreciation skills of high school students, stated that students in their ability to interpret the content of short stories,

conflict, plot, setting, characterization, and point of view still obtained scores below the average. Research conducted in order to explore problems in literature learning, such as those conducted by Mirnawati (2015) and Tundreng (2022), found several causes of the low quality of literature learning, including the lack of teacher talent in providing an understanding of the concept of literary science to students and the inability of students to read literary works correctly, so that students cannot fully understand the literary works they read.

This research intensively aims to find the pattern of the story structure of the Negeri 5 Menara novel trilogy by using the analysis of the actant scheme and the functional model of AJ Greimas, so that through this pattern the storytelling technique used by Ahmad Fuadi in stringing the stories in the trilogy is obtained. The results of the analysis of the narrative structure are then examined for their feasibility as teaching materials for literature in high school, so that this research also contributes to providing a source of understanding for students in analyzing prose literary works as part of literary appreciation learning activities.

METHODOLOGY

The objective approach contextually leads to narratological structuralism used in this study. AJ Greimas' narratological structuralism is used as a theory as well as a method of analyzing the structure of narrative texts to reveal the structure of the story by analyzing substantial schemes and functional models. Then, in order to be eligible as teaching materials, a document study approach is also used. This study uses a qualitative descriptive research design with a narrative analysis strategy. Narrative analysis is a paradigm with a way of thinking to create a description of the themes written in the story or taxonomy (Safrudin et al., 2023). Therefore, the data studied in the form of actants and conflict events that build the story structure in the novel. The data comes from three novels that are part of a trilogy (Negeri 5 Menara, Ranah 3 Warna, Rantau 1 Muara).

The research data were then analyzed using the heuristic semiotic reading technique, to get the research idea scheme, and hermeneutic to get the interpretation of the meanings of events and storylines. Then, the data regarding the feasibility of the research results as literature teaching materials in high school were analyzed using content analysis techniques carried out on literature documents (books and research journal articles) that can theoretically state the relationship and feasibility of research results with literature teaching materials in high school, as well as educational documents in the form of Learning Outcomes (CP) and textbooks that support the interpretation of the feasibility of research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Narrative Structure of Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy

a. Actant Scheme

The analysis of the actant scheme in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy is to see how Ahmad Fuadi develops an event or conflict in the story. This scheme tries to find the pattern of a narrative text that emphasizes the function of the character as an actant that moves the story, although not all actants are human. Judging from the layout of the story, in an actant scheme, a function can occupy various roles, and from the character of the role, the character criteria can be observed. An actant scheme is defined as a unit of narrative syntax, that is, syntax that has certain functions (Greimas, 1983). When arranged in a scheme, is depicted as follows.

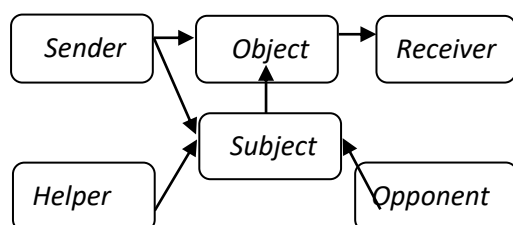


Figure 1. Actant Scheme

From the analysis of the whole actant, it was found that the functions of the sender, receiver, subject, and object were always filled or fulfilled. However, the functions of helper and

opponent in some actant schemes were not found. The fulfillment of the sender, receiver, subject and object actant functions implies that the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy has a complexity of story events/conflicts. As said by Robert Stam (in Kukatova, 2021), that in one actant scheme, sometimes not all actant functions are filled, sometimes the helper or opponent actant is not found in the story structure. The other four actants, namely the sender, receiver, subject, and object, are always present in the story structure.

All of the actant schemes in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy have the same pattern in each event. The sender actant function in Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy has the same pattern in trying to create story ideas. All sender actants in the three novels are not in the form of characters or characters, but in the form of abstracts that always give the possibility or positive power to the subject of the story to achieve its goal, namely the object. The sender actant in Negeri 5 Menara trilogy is filled with several forms such as desires or self-interest, situations and conditions, demands, and principles owned and imposed on the main character. The sender actant is always the source of ideas and the driver of the story developed in the novel. All sender actants in the three novels are always different or none are the same, meaning that the story ideas presented in the novels do not only raise one story theme, but many raise diverse story ideas, so this is what makes the content of the story in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy interesting. This is in line with Shany & Roekhan (2023) that the requirement for a novel is to have more than one story theme or at least must have sub-themes in addition to the main theme. Diverse story ideas or themes affect the success and attractiveness of a novel.

The subject actant in the Negeri 5 Menara trilogy also has the same pattern, the choice of the main character who is always the target imposed by the sender to achieve the object, while several subordinate characters participate in supporting the role of the main character. In the overall actant scheme in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy, it was found that the main character 'Alif' is inseparable and always occupies the subject position which functions as a character who

performs an action in every event. Devi (2021) states that as the main subject in the story, the main character plays an important role in bridging the reader's imagination to the world created by the author. The presence of the main character provides an opportunity for readers to witness the fictional life in the novel as well as to feel the feelings, challenges, and hopes experienced by the characters in the story.

The existence of the main character as the subject actant also affects the function of the object in shaping the story. These two actants are the most important in story events, there is an assumption about the relationship between character actions and the goals to be achieved (Qasim & Qasim, 2022). The overall actant scheme in *Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy* shows an intertwined relationship between the subject and object functions. If the subject function is always filled by the main character 'Alif' as the driving force of the story, then the object function is filled by the goals desired, sought, or imposed on the main character. The main character 'Alif' as a subject in the *Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy* is always successful in obtaining objects. This means that in every story event, the agreement relationship built by the sender and subject actants can be fulfilled. The achievement of the goals carried out by 'Alif' as a subject can be seen by the existence or position of the receiver function in each actant scheme. In the entire actant scheme in the *Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy*, the receiver actant function is also always filled with the main character 'Alif' as the main receiver who gets the object hunted by the subject of the story.

In achieving the goal of the story, *Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy* uses many helper actants whose task is to help the main character as the subject to get the object that has been imposed by the sender. In the three novels in the *Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy*, there are several characters who occupy

the function of helper actants. Although in general the function of the helper actant is filled with human formed characters, in some actants an abstract helper function is found that supports the subject to get objects, such as persistence, community culture, achievement, expertise, threats, situations and conditions that accompany the main character. The *Negeri 5 Menara trilogy* also uses an opponent actant that functions as an obstacle for the subject to get an object. Karnanta & Sukmawati (2022) state that the use of helper actants and opponent actants at the same time will give the impression of tension in every event or story conflict. Similar to the helper actant, besides embodying humans, the opponent actant is also filled with several forms such as regulations in society and limitations/doubts possessed by the main character.

The results of the analysis of the actant scheme in the *Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy* also show the characteristics of the characters who occupy the actants in each story event. Ahmad Fuadi is clearly describing the characteristics of the characters in the novel, this can be seen through the roles that are consistent in the actant function. In line with this, Kreminski & Martens (2022) stated that to write a fictional story, the author must consider consistency in the three elements such as character, story logic, and sequence of events.

b. Functional Model

The functional model is a plot that consists of actions referred to as functions. The functional plot is formed by a series of events that are logically and chronologically interrelated and are caused or experienced by the story actors. The functional plot consists of three stages, namely the initial situation, transformation (proficiency test, main stage, glory test), and the final situation (Greimas, 1983). In general, the functional model is depicted as follows.

I	II			III
	Transformation			
Initial Situation	Proficiency Test	Stage Main	Glory Test	Final Situation

Figure 2. Functional Model

Based on the findings and analysis conducted on the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy, each story event mapped in the actant scheme has a complete plot, which fulfills the initial situation, transformation, and final situation stages. The actants in each scheme in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy are represented in the form of the behavior of the characters described in a series of functional flows, so that to be able to see the roles of actants requires an analysis of the functional model set as a plot. Asyura et al (2021) state that the actant scheme and functional model have a reciprocal relationship because the relationship between the six actants is determined by their functions. Functional events also affect the pattern of actors' roles in the story.

Every story event in the actant scheme in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy always starts with an initial situation with the same pattern, which is the appearance of the sender actant who becomes the karsa or power that gives the story idea. At the initial situation stage, the story events in the three novels of the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy will display a person's statement or the state of the situation and conditions that require the main character 'Alif' as the subject to get his goal. The main character 'Alif' will get an instruction and make an agreement with the sender's actant to get the object. The description of events at the initial situation stage will be closed by the appearance of the initial movement or action that the main character as the subject of the story begins to make. The movement or action signals that the story events will enter the transformation stage.

The actants scheme in Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy has a complete transformation stage, although some events in the actant scheme stop at the main stage. In general, the events in Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy succeed in getting the 'glory' stage. This is characterized by the main character 'Alif' as the subject of the story getting repeated problems at the 'proficiency test' and 'main stage' stages. The fulfillment of the 'proficiency test' and 'main stage' stages leads the story events to the 'glory' stage, where at this stage the subject succeeds in getting the object he wants. The functional model concludes with the final situation stage. This stage is characterized by the

achievement of the object, so that then the balance of the story occurs as before (Smeets et al., 2021).

2. Narrative Structure of Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy as Literature Teaching Material in High School

a. The Feasibility of Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy as Literature Teaching Material

As one of the literary works that are utilized as teaching materials, it is necessary to look at the criteria for selecting novels that are in accordance with the characteristics of students. According to Rahmanto (in HMZ, R. F, 2022) to take a novel as literature teaching material, it is necessary to consider at least three main aspects, as language, psychology, and cultural background. Based on the identification and search process of the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy, it is found that the three novels in the Trilogy have reached the eligibility in all three criteria.

The language used by Ahmad Fuadi in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy is in accordance with the level of language development of high school students. In general, the Negeri 5 Towers Trilogy uses language that is easily understood by high school students, this is because the story raised in the trilogy tells the experience and struggle of the main character in getting an education. The Negeri 5 Menara trilogy also uses a lot of varied vocabulary, the use of complex sentences, the use of foreign terms, and varied language styles. As stated by Kurniati (2017), high school students have entered the stage of complete and fluent competence, and continue to develop towards mastering complex language skills. In addition, in the three novels of Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy, there is no use of language that contains racial and abusive elements.

The Negeri 5 Menara trilogy has also met the feasibility in the psychological aspect. The stories raised in the three novels in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy have considered emotional closeness to readers as the target, especially students. Complex stories by raising phenomena that occur in the community can arouse students' curiosity about new things, so this is in accordance with the psychological development

stage of high school students who are already interested in complex things and abstract concepts in analyzing a phenomenon.

Feasibility in the aspect of cultural background in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy can be seen from the theme and setting of the story raised by Ahmad Fuadi in his three novels. The Negeri 5 Menara trilogy raises stories with themes of education, the spirit of achievement, the struggle for life, and religiosity. The characters, story settings, and community values raised in the novels also come from various cultural backgrounds in Indonesia, so this trilogy is suitable and appropriate for use by students.

b. Narrative Structure of Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy as Literature Learning in High School

Analysis of narrative structure as literature learning in high school is based on the Merdeka curriculum regulations listed in Decree No. 032/H/KR/2024 concerning Learning Outcomes of the Merdeka Curriculum. In high school literature learning, novel learning is at the level of phase F learning in class XII. The learning outcomes taken from the class XII Indonesian textbook of the Merdeka Curriculum are "*Menilai dan mengkritisi karakterisasi dan plot pada teks naratif, menilai otentisitas penggambaran masyarakat pada teks, mengenali bias pada penulisan teks naratif, informasional, dan argumentatif yang mengangkat tema yang baru dan kompleks*" which includes intrinsic and extrinsic element analysis material, and "*Menulis teks naratif dengan alur yang lebih kompleks, dengan dialog, konflik, pengembangan karakter beberapa tokoh, latar futuristik atau sejarah untuk memikat pembaca. Menulis dengan tata kalimat yang baik dan efektif*" which includes material on narrative text writing techniques (novels).

The results of the actant scheme analysis can be an alternative for learning to analyze novel elements such as theme, character and characterization, setting, and point of view. For example, in the analysis of the axial structure of the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy novel, it is known that the overall theme of the story raised is education, the spirit of achievement, the struggle for life, and religiosity. The themes and settings of the story can be seen through the analysis of

the function of the 'sender' and 'object' actants. The characters and characterizations in Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy can also be identified through the functions of the 'subject', 'helper', and 'opponent' actants. Likewise, the point of view of the story can be obtained by analyzing the function of the 'subject' actant as the mover of the story.

The analysis of the functional model of the novel Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy can also be adapted to the learning of the plot and the parts of the plot that become the structure of narrative text. For example, through the analysis of the functional model of the novel Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy, it can be seen that the plot in the novel is of the double plot type and consists of several types of plot such as forward plot, backward plot, and mixed plot. The plot also consists of several stages such as; initial situation, transformation, and final situation.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between the functions of the actant scheme in the Negeri 5 Towers Trilogy shows Ahmad Fuadi's consistency in arranging story events. The events or conflicts developed by Ahmad Fuadi in the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy always depart and center on the problems imposed or faced by the main character in achieving a goal. Ahmad Fuadi always places the main character as the driver of the story as well as the party who will receive the consequences of the problems created. Likewise, the placement of subordinate characters who often occupy helper and opponent actants. The functional model set as the plot of the story also shows the same pattern in describing the chronology of story events. The Negeri 5 Menara trilogy has met the eligibility criteria from the aspects of language, psychology, and cultural background. The analysis of the narrative structure of the Negeri 5 Menara Trilogy is also in line with and can be adapted in teaching literature in high schools, especially in learning to analyze intrinsic elements and learning to write novel texts for class XII in Phase F of the Merdeka Curriculum

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