

Narrative Function in Karen M. McManus's *One of Us is Lying*

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ABSTRACT

In literary studies, narratology provides tools to dissect such complex narrative structures. A.J. Greimas's actantial and functional models offer a systematic approach to analyze the roles of characters and the progression of events within a story. This research discusses about actantial and functional model in Karen M. Mcmanus's *One of Us is Lying*. This research aims to explain and describe the role of actant and functional model by Greimas' narrative in shaping the mystery novel. The theory and approach used as a guide to analyse and describe how the structure of mystery fiction portrayed in this novel. Descriptive qualitative is used in this research. The findings of this research show that is total one main actant and functional scheme. The results of this research show that functional model depict dynamic character interactions and plot progression, driven by factors of shifts in time and place, new events, character arguments, character's arrivals, and conflicts that significantly develop the plot and heighten the tension of the mystery fiction. Among the six actants, the helper actant is plays important role, assisting the subject actant in obtaining their goals through necessary clues and information. Without the helper, the subject would struggle to solve the mystery.

Keywords: Actant, Functional, Mystery, Narrative

INTRODUCTION

According to Asharudeen (2019) "Mystery means something is hidden and difficult to understand but it can easily drag the attraction." It means that mysteries have a natural attraction that pulls people into places where puzzles are waiting to be solved and secrets are buried. In addition, Goldman (2011) said that "mystery fiction provides relaxation through intellectual games or puzzles much like crosswords or like magic tricks when the puzzles cannot be solved." In the mystery fiction, readers are invited into a realm where their analytical skill are put to the test, where every clue and twist serves as a piece of a larger puzzle waiting to be pieced together.

Mystery fiction is a devastating reminder of the continuing ability of storytelling to illuminate the shadows and reveal the hidden truths that lie under the surface of our collective awareness in an age when the pursuit of justice and truth has taken on greater significance. Pollock (2003) in his quote says that There are different reasons why people read mystery novels. Some people enjoy the logical challenge posed by mysteries, while others want to gain and feel the pleasure of the ambience posed by mysteries. Some contend that the genre's enormous appeal stems from the fact that it stands for one of the few stable examples of morality and order in a chaotic world, where justice is always guaranteed to overcome. These are the things that make why mystery fiction today often become the center of attention for

readers. One of the story genres that is very popular amongst readers is mystery fiction because it has a lot of secrets that are kept secret to keep readers' interest and make them curious more about the storyline.

One of the mystery novels that has a unique narrative structure is “One of Us is Lying” by Karen M. McManus. This novel is interesting to discuss because the complexity of mystery narrative of the four main characters involved in the murder case where each of them has a different point of view in each storyline. This novel stands out for its well-developed characters, each with their own secrets and motives. The shifting perspectives allow readers to deep in into the minds of the suspects, exploring their vulnerabilities and inner struggles. Furthermore, the novel tackles relevant and timely issues such as social media, bullying, and the impact of stereotypes, resonating with readers on a personal level. Also, this novel is praised for its unpredictable plot and clever storytelling and win top ten best young adult fiction book nominee in America Library Association. The author skilfully plants red herrings and twists throughout the narrative, which keeping readers guessing until the end.

As literature developed, many people attempted to study it using novel approaches and from a variety of viewpoints. One of these viewpoints is to examine the structure of the element itself. According to Rizal (2019) Narratology is a branch of structuralism that studies narrative structures and how these structures influence the perceptions of the reader. The study of narrative as a concept and as an aspect of culture is known as narrative theory. One outcome of the author's cultural activities is their literary work beginning with the idea that a writer's ideas and feelings are expressed through their work of literature. The act of expressing one's ideas and emotions is an attempt to understand the events that take place around themselves. In the study of narrative structure, Greimas (1983) offered several key ideas for the theory in the study on his contribution to narrative structure. Those are actantial and functional scheme. Two of them are connected to one another to examine a story's overall structure. Its goal is to figure out a story's message or motive behind a more "objective" method as opposed to a subjective one. Greimas' theory was adaptable, so it could be used to study any book from both literary and popular fiction. It was adaptable since the theory serves as a "structure" as opposed to a fixed position.

One of the ways to analyze the narrative structure in “One of Us is Lying” is to use of A.J. Greimas' narratological approaches of actantial and functional models. According to Greimas (1983), he said that Actantial and Functional models offer a powerful lens for revealing a novel's narrative structure because they go beyond simply identifying plot points. This approach goes deeper than just summarizing the plot. It reveals the underlying structure, the characters' motivations, the thematic significance of events, and explain how the structure of the mystery novel is formed through the Greimas approach. Actantial and functional models offer a valuable tool for dissecting a novel's narrative structure. By understanding the actants' roles and desires, and how they translate into actions and challenges. In this study, the function of actant and functional scheme in applying the theory is to answer the first and second research question, how the actant and functional scheme is described in the novel “One of Us is Lying”, and how the role of actant and functional model in shaping the mystery novel.

METHOD

This research employed a narrative structure approach. According to Gilgun (1994), narrative structure can be used to understand stages or phases in the processes of investigating a phenomenon within its environmental context. The approach encompasses several important

aspects such as character, setting, and conflict, which are categorized as basic elements in narrative structure. Therefore, the most suitable approach to analyze the narrative structure in a novel is to apply A.J. Greimas's actantial and functional model, which was deemed relevant to the data in this study derived from the novel "One of Us is Lying" by Karen M. McManus.

The data source was taken from the novel "One of Us is Lying" by Karen M. McManus, published in May 2017 by Delacorte Press with a total of 368 pages. Furthermore, the researcher utilized data from the novel in the form of monologues and dialogues between characters, including words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. In constructing the actant scheme, the focus was placed on the four main characters across three parts of the novel, consisting of Bronwyn, Addy, Nate, and Cooper. Meanwhile, the construction of the functional scheme focused on the actant scheme of the four main characters that had been described and centered on the sequence of events and transformations that occurred in the story.

In collecting the data, the researcher created a table of functional schemes by identifying the main events in the novel through underlining and taking notes on the actions and reactions of each character to the events that occurred in the story. Subsequently, the researcher constructed a diagram of the actant scheme according to the functional scheme that had been formed by determining the role of each actant. In analyzing the data, the researcher defined the actants by identifying the six types: subject, object, sender, receiver, helper, and opponent. Then, the functional elements that were identified helped the researcher to determine the actants by connecting the roles and functions of the characters within the actant scheme to the events that occurred and how the actions of the characters drove the transformation and determined the outcome of the story.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Functional and Actant Scheme

The functional scheme presented in Table 1 illustrates the main storyline, beginning with Simon's death and culminating in the four main characters' discovery of the truth regarding the perpetrator.

The Beginning Situation

The beginning situation is a condition that describes the initial state of the story before events or problems occur. The beginning situation of this novel is marked by the incident of Simon who was poisoned when he drank water which turned out to be peanut oil, while he was allergic to peanut oil. Those involved in the incident are Bronwyn, Addy, Nate, and Cooper. At that time, they were in the detention room because one of them had brought a cellphone during class, then Mr. Avery told Cooper to look for an EpiPen, but unfortunately, he did not find any. Simon could not be saved and died after the incident.

"Cooper, the nurse's office has EpiPens. They should be labeled in plain sight. Hurry!"

"Cooper, did you find them?" Ms. Grayson, one of the teachers who'd entered the lab with Mr. Avery and Bronwyn, barrels into the room. (Karen, 2017:14)

The Transformation

The transformation stage is the stage where the subject is facing various challenges and struggles to achieve the object. The transformation stage in this novel begins at the proficiency test stage marked by the time line after Simon's death and the appearance of Simon's draft post and posts from anonymous people satirizing Bronwyn's personal secrets who cheated on her

test, Addy who cheated on Jake's friend named TJ, Nate who allegedly sold drugs, and Cooper who was actually gay.

"I'm Detective Laura Wheeler with the Bayview Police. I want to follow up on the discussion you had last week with Officer Budapest about Simon Kelleher's death." (Karen, 2017: 79)

"It was queued up the day Simon died, but he never got the chance to post it" (Karen, 2017: 82)

This causes them to be moved to look for the Main object, starting from Addy who's confess to Jake about her cheating until she curious why he broke the friendship with Simon back then. Meanwhile, Cooper dealing with his secret that has been revealed to the media about the fact that he's a gay, even he got bullied with students in the school.

"We got a bottle of rum and ended up getting really drunk. And I went to TJ's house and, um, I hooked up with him." (Karen, 2017: 102)

"Cooper Clay is Cooper GAY!" somebody calls out in a high, ..., and Cooper freezes in the door as something flies through the air and hits him across the chest." (Karen, 2017: 260)

Bronwyn, Nate, Cooper, and Addy dealing with the reporters because they want to interview them with the case that currently is on the rise.

"I hear the rumors before I see the news vans. Three of them parked out front of the school with reporters and camera crews waiting for last bell to ring." (Karen, 2017: 162)

The main test stage is characterized by the timeline after the meeting between the four of them who managed to find clues about things related to Simon. However, Nate, who is innocent, is suddenly arrested and suspected of being the one who steals Simon's EpiPen. Hearing this, Bronwyn decided to find a way to release Nate through her lawyer. Then she meets with Sam Baron, the owner red Camaro that crash during detention and he tell to Bronwyn that Simon is the one who give a task about the incident.

"Me and my buddy. We had the accident on purpose. A guy paid us a thousand bucks each to do it. Said it was a prank. I mean, wouldn't you? The fender barely cost five hundred to fix. The rest was pure profit." (Karen, 2017: 307)

Knowing that, Bronwyn asks Cooper, Addy, Maeve, Ashton, Kriss and Eli to meet up to try to reveal the person behind Simon's case using all the clue-notes that she gathered by others. It found that Jake is suspected while Janae is the last clue to be found to reveal about how Simon died.

"This time we're at a coffee shop in downtown San Diego, crammed into a back table because our numbers keep expanding. Kris came with me, and Ashton with Addy. Bronwyn's got all her Post-it notes on a bunch of manila folders, including the newest one: Simon paid two kids to stage a car accident. She says Sam Barron promised to call Eli and let him know." (Karen, 2017: 309)

Addy and Cooper decided to find Janae to ask about her relationship with Simon, which in the end she admitted that she was threatened and forced to cooperate with Jake who turned out to be the perpetrator behind Simon's death and the only person who lied and told Addy to take the EpiPen and give it to Jake. An actual enemy then confronts Addy, and she must survive. where Addy tries to get away from Jake after getting discovered in Janae's home. Jake

wanted to kill Addy, but he captured Addy and beat her. Cooper came to save Addy, even he fought with Jake.

“I was supposed to plant all the evidence on you. You remember that day I came to your house? I had the computer with me then. But I couldn’t do it. After that, Jake kept harassing me and I panicked. I just dumped everything on Nate.” “It was easy. Nate doesn’t lock anything. And I called in the tip about him instead of you.” - (Karen, 2017: 326)

The glory stage is marked by Jake's defeat. Cooper managed to defeat Jake, then he is arrested by the police. Nate is released because he is allegedly of being innocent. Addy rush to the hospital because her condition is bad enough after got smashed by Jake.

“I was in the right place at the right time and managed to flatten Jake with a well-aimed punch.” (Karen, 2017: 336)

The Final Situation

The final stage is the stage of determining whether the Subject succeeds or fails to obtain the object. At this stage, the police decided to release Nate from the jail and the case about Simon's death is declared over because the four of them have revealed the real suspected.

“You’re free. You’re out. This whole thing was a hoax that’s been blown wide open. So get out of that jumpsuit and into civilian clothes, and let’s get you the hell out of here.” (Karen, 2017: 339)

At the end of the story, Nate believes Bronwyn would be better off without him, yet his lack of warmth for his is hurts Bronwyn. A few months later, the group gets together to see Bronwyn give a recital. After that, Nate gives Bronwyn a surprise apology. Nate's life has been wrecked by so many beautiful things, yet he doesn't want to lose Bronwyn. They decide to get back together.

“Okay. Since I’m being honest here, more than a friend. I’d still like to take you to a shitty movie and hang out with you for a couple hours. If you’ll let me.” “If you’ll admit that Insurgent is a cinematic tour de force and you’re dying to see it, I’ll consider your proposal.” (Karen, 2017: 356)

The Table 1 presents the comprehensive functional scheme that synthesizes the entire narrative arc of Karen M. McManus’s *One of Us is Lying* through Greimas’s functional model. Table 1 captures the main storyline from the initial crisis, Simon’s death by poisoning, to the resolution where the truth behind the mystery is uncovered and the protagonists are freed from suspicion. The functional scheme demonstrates how the functional stages map onto the novel’s plot development, showing the dynamic interaction of challenges and resolutions that sustain the mystery’s tension. Moreover, the table highlights the critical roles of various actants, especially the helpers, whose contributions are indispensable for the subjects’ success.

Table 1. Table of functional scheme

Beginning Situation	Transformation			Final Situation
	Proficiency Test	Main Test	Glory Test	
The death of Simon	Bronwyn, Addy, Nate, and	Bronwyn, Addy, and Cooper got the clues that	Cooper win the fight	Addy, Bronwyn, Nate, and Cooper are free from

Beginning Situation	Transformation			Final Situation
	Proficiency Test	Main Test	Glory Test	
after poisoned from his bottle of water	Cooper are dealing with the reporters and finding clues that related with Simon	they need, but unfortunately, Nate being arrested even though he is not suspected of being guilty. Bronwyn tried to help him through her lawyer. While Addy and Cooper are facing with the real traitor, Jake.	and Jake was arrested. Finally, Nate released from the prison.	investigation and the case about Simon's death is declared over because the four of them have revealed the real suspected. While Nate believes Bronwyn would be better off without him, yet his lack of warmth for his is hurts Bronwyn. A few months later, the group gets together to see Bronwyn give a recital. After that, Nate gives Bronwyn a surprise apology. Nate's life has been wrecked by so many beautiful things, yet he doesn't want to lose Bronwyn. They decide to get back together.

An actant scheme is created to find out who played a role in the story or event. In the Figure 1 show that the main object is to find out about the real person behind Simon's death case. The one who give the task is the desire to be free from the case because four of them feels the suffering, anxiety, and worry as the post in social media and the reporters satirized about their existence, it means the one who acts as the sender is the desire to be free. Meanwhile, the one who received the task are Bronwyn, Addy, Cooper, and Nate because they always wondering and wants to clear their name from the case knowing that four of them are not suspected, it means those who acts as the subject are Bronwyn, Addy, Cooper, and Nate. However, they got help from Ashton, Maeve, Kriss, Janae, Sam Baron, and some of post and notes to reveal the perpetrator behind the case, it means the one who acts as the helper are Ashton, Maeve, Kriss, Janae, Sam Baron, and some of post and notes. while Jake is the real enemy because he is the one who control the case after Simon died as he wants to get revenge to Addy who is cheating on him before. Bronwyn, Addy, Cooper, and Nate managed to reveal and tell to the media about the truth so that they can free and clear their name from the case, it means those who acts as the receiver are Bronwyn, Addy, Nate, and Cooper.

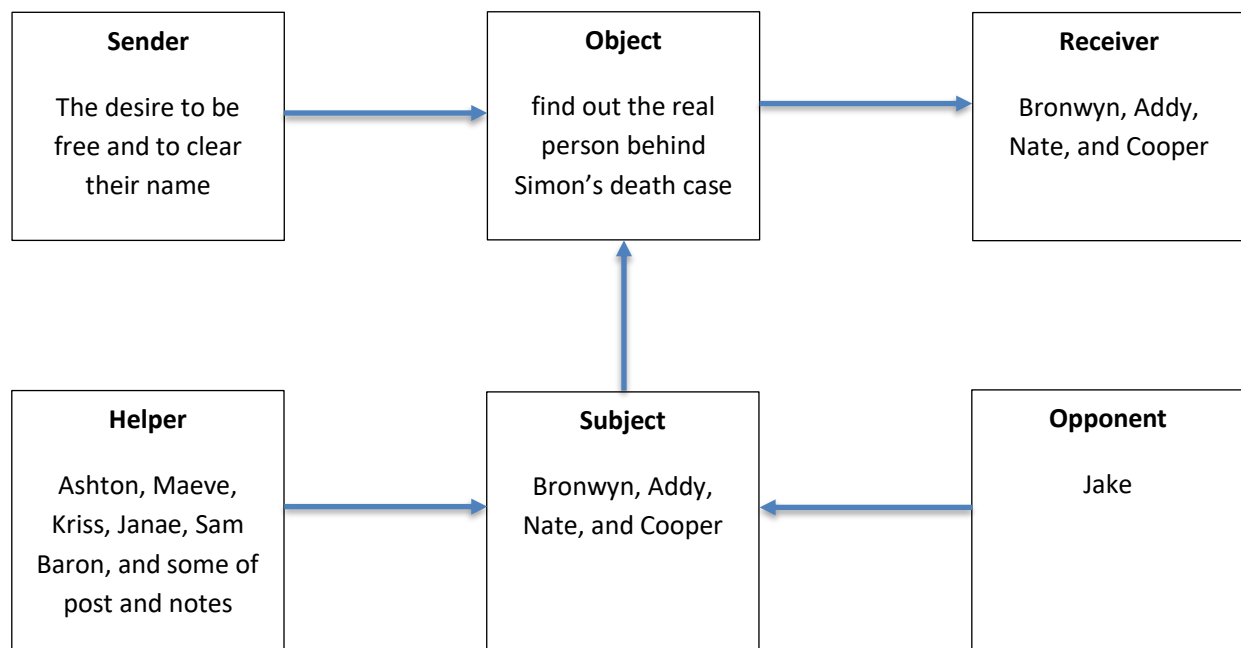


Figure 1. Diagram of actant scheme

The Role of Actant and Functional in Shaping the Mystery Novel

The Greimas actantial model, plays an important role in shaping the narrative of a mystery novel by defining functional role and six essential actants such as Subject, Object, Sender, Receiver, Helper, and Opponent. In the complex world of mystery fiction, these roles guide the development of characters and plot, ensuring a coherent and compelling story. Below are the roles of functional and actant model according to the scheme that has been analysed above.

Functional Model

The functional model plays an important role in the shaping mystery fiction in this novel, through the transformation of each situation, see Table 1. Taken from the functional scheme, it acts as a scheme that determines the formation of the roles of the actants through the events that are happening in the story to determine the actant scheme. The transfer of situations in the functional scheme is marked by the transfer of time, events, and conflicts. The transformation between these situations is used so that the reader can see how the functional model moves in the mystery story forward by maintaining the tension or conflict that occurs in the novel.

Actantial Model

Subject

In this novel, the role of the subject in this novel presents as a character who wants freedom and truth which is depicted through Bronwyn, Addy, and Cooper who work hard to collect clues as quickly as possible so that the real perpetrator can be revealed so that they can release the innocent Nate and clear their name so that it is not tarnished.

Object

In this novel, the role of objects presented as symbols of honesty because the existence of objects in the story motivates the subject actant to achieve justice and becomes the center of the subject actant's goal throughout the mystery story.

Sender

In this novel, the role of the sender in shaping the mystery of fiction is not always depicted through character, but also from the mindset and behavior, feelings of a person, situation, and the existence of a thing or item. In addition, the sender carry out indirect orders to the subject due to the existence or appearance of the problem in the event that indirectly makes the subject actant move to get the object.

Receiver

In this novel, the role of the receiver in shaping the mystery fiction in this novel is depicted through the characters. Most of those who receive the results directly are taken from 15 schemes because the results are intended for the related characters. While the remaining 3 schemes are those who receive the results indirectly because the person does not feel the impact directly which are found in the hide and seek chapter scheme V and schemes chapter truth or dare IV and VIII.

Helper

In this novel, the role of the helper in shaping the mystery fiction is described as a character who helps the subject in solving problems. In the last scheme, the role of the helper symbolizes the hero because he managed to save the main character from the main enemy.

Opponent

In this novel, the role of the opponent in shaping the mystery fiction is described as a character who disguises himself as another entity to support the smoothness of his plan throughout the story, that entity is the postthreads that satirized to the four suspects, Bronwyn, Addy, Cooper, and Nate. However, the character's disguise is revealed at the end of the story.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above, there is total one schemes of Actant and Functional found in this novel that presented as the overall main story of the novel. The transformation between situations in the story occurs due to several crucial factors, such as shifts in time and place, new events, arguments between characters, the arrival of other characters, and emerging conflicts. While the role of actant, among the six actants, the actant of helper plays the most critical role. The actant of helper helps a lot the actant of subject in obtaining the desired object, primarily by providing the necessary clues and information. Without the actant of helper's assistance, the subject would struggle to solve the existing mystery that make the actant of helper's role vital for resolving the story. There are several suggestions that can be given to various parties. First, for fans of mystery novels, readers can use this analysis to enrich the narrative through the actantial and functional structures described in this study, as well as enrich deeper insights into how characters in mystery stories interact with each other and how the mystery storyline develops. Second, for further researchers, this study can be used as a reference for further analysis of other mystery novels to see whether the actantial and functional patterns found in this study can be applied in other literary works. Third, readers can better appreciate the role of each character and how they contribute to the development of the mystery

story. Thus, this study is expected to provide a significant contribution to literary studies, especially in the analysis of narrative structures in mystery stories, as well as provide new insights for readers, writers, and further researchers, in creating and analyzing literary works.

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