

Margareth Truman “*Murder Inside the Beltway*” Novel: The Structure and Construction of Identity

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Abstract

This article examines multicultural literature as a significant and strategic object of study in responding to problems. Multicultural literature is focused on multicultural issues that are often found in literary works. The main issues are related to certain identities or characteristics. This article examines the structure and identity construction of the murderous character in the novel *Beltway* (capital crime #24) by Margaret Truman, with the main focus on identity issues: (1) identity and identity issues; (2) articulation of identity; (3) text representation of identity discourse in the novel. The sociology of literature approach is used to understand reality in multicultural literary texts, especially in novels and their relation to the phenomenon of identity issues in other fields of study. The results of the study show that the process of identity articulation and text representation in identity discourse in multicultural social phenomena as well as identity issues and the process of identity articulation in multicultural societies deserve more serious attention. An identity is not stable but dynamic in the face of development.

Keywords: *character identity, mystery, construction, Margareth Truman*

Introduction

In essence, humans have different characters. Thus, it can be easily distinguished between the characters. Character is a set of traits that are believed to be a sign of a person's goodness, virtue, and moral maturity. Etymologically, the term character comes from the Latin language, namely character which means character, psychological nature, character, personality and morals. Character is a collection of good behavior from a human child, this behavior is a form of awareness in carrying out the roles, functions and duties of carrying out the mandate and responsibility given, otherwise the character on the contrary shows "a number of bad traits of a person" Sudewo (in Nasir, 2013 :10). Character consists of elements of goodness. Kindness itself has elements such as honesty, courage, justice, and compassion which are dispositions to behave morally in social life. Character is a good objectivity representation of human qualities, whether known to humans or not. This virtue is affirmed by societies and religions around the world. Because in essence good, has the right to human conscience.

Literary work is a social phenomenon because it relates to the author, relates to the reader, and relates to aspects of human life expressed in literary works. Literary work is a complex structure, so to understand it requires analysis, namely the breakdown of its parts or elements. Recently, literary experts have realized the importance of readers as recipients of information and givers of meaning in a literary work. Literary works are autonomous but

are characterized by coherence, namely the existence of a relationship or harmony between form and content. In this view, the form, discourse, composition (structure) of a literary work can describe its content. Even the title of the novel can describe the contents of the novel. In this case, it is necessary to conduct literature studies and research. Research in the field of literature in this case is a novel. The novel is a work of fiction that expresses deeper aspects of humanity and is presented subtly (Nurgiyantoro, 1995: 9).

In the novel, the author tries to describe life in the family and society to readers. Through the novel, many things can be interpreted by society. Both, language means the message conveyed by the author through the plot in this novel. A novel can be said to be successful depending on how the reader interprets and interprets the meaning of the storyline conveyed by the author and then relates it to the thoughts, feelings, experiences and life around it so that the novel becomes more meaningful. This is in accordance with Teeuw's thinking (in Pradopo, 2013: 106) which says that literary works are artifacts, inanimate objects have meaning and become aesthetic objects when connoisseurs of the work give meaning as ancient human artifacts which have meaning if they already exist. defined by archaeologists.

This paper only focuses on describing the genre structure and explaining the identities of the main characters in Margaret Truman's novel *Murder Inside the Beltway* (Capital Crimes #24). It is considered one of the most popular mystery novel genres in the US. Matters that are important in research will be solved by applying several theories and methods as well as their developments. This theory can also be used to analyze other literary works. This study uses a sociolinguistic perspective because it is considered the most appropriate to the topic. As we know, sociolinguistics studies language by paying attention to the relationship between language and society (Spolsky, 2010). Likewise, this topic will reveal the social identity of the main characters in the *Black Panther* film through social aspects. This approach tries to see how language forms can perform certain functions in a social context. Sociolinguistics has carried out various ways to investigate identity, especially by considering different social identities.

In literary works there are characters which are one of the intrinsic elements. Minderop (2005:2) says that "Character can also be a person, society, race, mental and moral attitude, quality of reasoning, famous people and figures in literary works". In works of fiction, characters can be interpreted as representations of humans. Through behavior, traits and descriptions, the author describes characters who deserve attention, love and support. The main character in a story is generally known as the protagonist, while the opposing character is the antagonist. There are several types of characters, but the main character is the character that catches the attention of the audience the most and becomes the center of attention of the audience. Characters are generally divided into two categories, namely protagonist and antagonist. However Lutters (2006:81) divides the character or role according to its nature into three things as follows:

- a. The main character. The role of the protagonist is a role that must represent positive things in the needs of the story. This role is likely to be the one that hurts the most, and the suffering that will elicit sympathy for the audience.
- b. Antagonist. The role of the antagonist is the opposite of the role of the protagonist. This role is the one that should represent the negatives in the story needs.

- c. Tritagonist. The tritagonist role is a companion role, both for the role of protagonist and antagonist.

The character and attitude of the characters develop, by themselves they will experience development and change from the beginning, middle and end of the story according to the demands of the coherence of the story as a whole. Characters who experience changes and character development in line with the storyline. In line with the development of the plot which displays various events and conflicts which are also increasing, the characters also experience changes and developments to respond and adapt to the demands of the plot. Thus, changes and developments in the flow remain related to the flow and can be accounted for. That is, character change and development does not just happen without a conflict that triggers it. (Nurgiyantoro, 2005:230).

According to Sadewo (2011: 15) characters are divided into main characters and selected characters. The main character is the character that forms the basis of the chosen character, regardless of his profession. The main character includes basic figures, superior figures, and leading figures. The basic character consists of three traits, namely selflessness, honesty, and discipline. Superior character consists of seven good qualities, namely sincerity, patience, gratitude, responsibility, sacrifice, self-improvement, and sincerity. The character of a leader includes nine traits, namely fair, wise, wise, polite, humble, simple, visionary, solutive, communicative, and inspiring. While the character of choice is good behavior that develops attached to the work profession, each of which has a teacher character that is different from the military character according to their profession.

The way the author presents characters or actors is called characterization (Aminudin, 2002:79). Characters with good character traits usually become protagonists because readers will tend to side with that type of character. The protagonist is a character who carries a mission of truth and moral values as opposed to an antagonist who actually brings evil or disaster (Nurgiyantoro, 2005:226). The protagonist is often used as a hero, a hero because he is tasked with bringing values into the ideals of the reader. On the other hand, antagonists tend to be characters that readers anticipate because of their evil nature.

Nurgiyantoro (2012: 167) argues that although the characters in the story are only characters created by the author, they must be characters who live naturally, as human life consists of flesh and blood, who have thoughts and feelings. According to Nurgiyantoro (2005:78) in general, character can be expressed in two ways, namely the direct method and the indirect method. The explanation is as follows. a. The analytical method, namely the author explains or tells directly with the description by the author. The author clearly shows or describes the character's character. Then there is what is called the dramatic way, namely by expressing the character's character indirectly through the storyline. So, the character is not described and described directly, but is revealed covertly through the story.

There are several ways that can lead us to recognize the characters in a story. Sumardjo & Saini, (1997:65) suggests the following; a. Through what he does, his actions, especially how he behaves in critical situations. A person's character is often clearly reflected in his attitude in critical (important) situations, because he cannot pretend, he will act spontaneously according to his character: Critical situations here do not have to be dangerous, but situations that require him to act. make decisions quickly. From what a character says in a story, we can identify whether he or she is an old man, a person with low or high education, his ethnicity, a woman or a man, a refined or violent person, and so on. Through the physical

depiction of the character. The author often makes a description of the body shape and face of the characters, namely about how to dress, body shape, and so on. In older fiction, physical depictions were often used to strengthen characters. d. Through his mind. Depicting what a character is thinking is an important way to develop character. In this way the reader can find out the reasons for his actions. In real life, such a description is impossible. But this is a fictional convention. Through direct lighting. In this case, the author describes at length the character of the character directly. This is very different from the indirect way, which reveals character through his actions, what he says, by the way he thinks, and so on.

According to Aminuddin (2002), the main character will always be present in every event that occurs in the story and can be found on every page of the novel or storybook in question. But there are also those who don't appear in every incident because they are not immediately shown in each chapter after chapter in the story, instead the presence of the main character is told through other characters. Usually the main character or character in a novel can be more than one character. So the priority level is different. In that case the main character appears by showing his dominance in the story. To determine the main character in the story can be done by involving the character with the theme or meaning of the story. The character can master everything in the story so that the main character will always be in contact with other characters automatically. In this case, the reader can determine for himself which character is the main character and which is the secondary character.

Previous research examined the stage of role identity, but did not find a true identity, giving rise to the question who am I. The results showed that the character experienced identity confusion with symptoms of not being able to answer the question "who am I", changing the meaning of life, and his life was divided into before and after. Several possible factors cause the character to experience identity confusion. They receive less support from their parents. Their parents forced them to create an identity, and they didn't decide anything for their life.

Method

At this stage a descriptive method approach was applied, which means that the data is broken down in the form of words and not in the form of numbers (Semi, 2012: 30). This method was applied to describe the structure and construction of identity contained in the novel *Murder Inside the Beltway* (Capital Crimes #24) by Margaret Truman. The reason for using the qualitative form is to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects such as speech, actions, behavior and others that describe the characters contained in the novel. The source of the data was written text novels. The data are the characters in the form of words, sentences, and related events in the novel. In this case, a library approach is also carried out, namely by collecting data that can support the content. Classify and verify data. That means collecting and selecting data from the novel, recording data related to the topic in a notebook computer, disclosing data based on the psychoanalytic anxiety of the main character in the novel and drawing conclusions.

Results

Social identity is related to society because it needs interaction with other people to construct. Social identity refers to certain assumptions about human nature and society and their interests (Hogg, 2004). Social categories divided into some categories namely age categories (e.g., young or old), social class, nationality, ethnic, and cultural categories. Thus, the first stage that must be done by an individual before obtaining social identity is the categorization process. The second is social identification shows how identity is explained as a self-concept as seen from behavior, knowledge, and background in the social context. Below are the excerpts from the novel texts that show us the phenomena of social identity.

The cops knew her name. The building's super, who sat in the apartment's living room with two other residents of the building, had provided it: Rosalie Curzon. She'd been a tenant for two years: "Always paid her rent on time," the super had told the cops. "Nice lady."
Hatcher called headquarters to run the name. Her history was brief. Ms. Curzon "Gotta run," he said. "I'll see if I can leave today at a decent hour, maybe grab something out tonight. Okay?"
"Okay, boss," she said, tossing him a snappy salute.
As she watched him drive away, her sunny face turned cloudy
"Please answer Detective Hatcher's question," Jackson said.
"How did you first become a client of Ms. Curzon's?"
"A friend of mine told me about her."
"Who was that?" Hall followed up.
"I don't want to involve other people."

In the past, the word "cop" had different meanings in that it basically had the task of being a law enforcer. But the word is also sometimes used for a profession of slur such as thieves, though most police officers are fine with that in today's context. School police are the same as law enforcers even in informal situations, but most of them prefer to be called police. Boss means someone who gives orders to others in a superior manner. The word boss can be interpreted as a lord which in ancient times was used to avoid or replace the word master. Because the word Tuan has a slightly lower meaning because it is often used for bone mass in a certain area. While the word detective means a police officer or police officer who is generally in charge of investigating criminal crimes, by carrying out several investigative steps such as monitoring, interviewing, checking records, to carrying out raids to arresting something. A detective has an important task because he specializes in shrouding a crime case that falls into a serious category such as robbery, murder, fraud or assault on certain persons.

Experts argue that the concept we have about ourselves is our own identity, while our expectations and the opinions of others will shape our social identity. This is in line with the understanding that cultural identity represents a certain character of a group communication system that appears in certain situations. This concept has shown that social, cultural, and self-identity have different domains and have different positions that can contribute to a situation where one attempts to define one's identity. It is completely unacceptable for one to want to establish an existence without a complete identity. Meanwhile, established identity will contribute to established existence. Below are excerpts from novel texts that show us the phenomenon of identity problems.

"Looks like some

John figured he didn't get his money's worth."

"She's a hooker?" Jackson said.

Hatcher looked at the young detective as though he'd mispronounced a simple word. "What do you figure she was, Jackson?" he asked. "Your mother decorate her bedroom like this?"

Sections were reserved for home decorating books, murder mysteries by big name authors, and for biographies of a variety of famous names in business, politics, the military, and religion.

"The well-read hooker, huh, Matt?" Hatcher said, joining his young colleague in perusing the books.

Hatcher called headquarters to run the name. Her history was brief. Ms. Curzon had twice been arrested for prostitution four years ago when she worked for one of D.C.'s myriad escort services. She'd paid a fine—or someone did—and she walked.

"Williams and Shrank are considering filing a bias complaint against him."

"I didn't know that."

"He evidently got into it with them the other day, called them stupid, said there's proof that blacks' IQs are lower than whites', the usual garbage from him."

"Do you think being a separated and soon-to-be-divorced man will hurt your Chances to win in November?"

"It didn't hurt Ronald Reagan," he responded. "He was the first divorced man to win the presidency, and I intend to be the second

Identity conflicts often occur just to get and build a certain existence. Mystery of murder shows that there is a big problem done by someone. Having been arrested twice for prostitution shows that there have been big problems in the past due to prostitution. And he was imprisoned for many years. Being a separated man and soon to be divorced will hurt your chances of winning indicates that there is a major bankrupt problem at the moment.

Identity, which was previously assumed to be constant and single, is actually the result of temporary, specific and historical establishment as an arbitrary closure. Meanwhile, other experts argue that articulation is the relationship between two different elements in certain situations. The unity of identity is the articulation of two separate and distinct elements in different historical and cultural settings. That is, there is no automatic correlation between identity, social class, gender, and race discourses. Therefore, it can be assumed that individuals who share the same racial background have different identities. Furthermore, this concept can be seen in the text of the novel as follows:

"And you leave them alone in there to get their formal stories straight?"

"Hatch, I—"

"Get back in there!"

Jackson avoided Hall's exasperated look as she left the room.

"The nine-one-one call came in at ten thirty-seven," Jackson said.

"Somebody in the building said she heard noises in here, like a fight.

That pins down time-of-death."

"She's warm but starting to cool," said the ME. "It didn't just happen. I'd say two, two-and-a-half hours ago."

"Tell me about the lady in there," Hatcher said, nodding toward the bedroom.

"Miss Curzon? What about her?" His English was good.

"How long has she been here?"

"Must be two years now."

"She sign a lease?"

"Sí. Everybody does."

"Don't sí me, José. You're in America, so speak American. English."
The super's expression mirrored his confusion, and fear.
"How much she pay you on the side?"
He stared blankly at the detective.
"Come on, José, don't give me that dumb look. You knew she was turning tricks. She's a puta, right? A whore. How much she pay you to look the other way?"
"Oh, no, no, sir, you are wrong. I do not care what the tenants do as long as they don't bother nobody else. I say live and let live." He forced a smile in the hope it would indicate sincerity.

From the above quote, some interesting things can be found, namely that Jackson avoided Hall's irritated look as he left the room," said Jackson. "Someone in the building said he heard noises that looked like a fight. It can be seen that the process of articulation of identity in the concept of relative situation. Meanwhile, America is well known as a native that was created to become an energy of resistance against ethnic groups that are seen as more established and dominant. Americans look modern and more confident because they dare to articulate themselves. In America one has to speak American English. This shows a different phenomenon when the process of articulation of identity seems to be more adaptive as a result of the political oppression of ethnicity. Such a phenomenon results in ethnic suffering towards the articulation of identity which is more directed to the context of cultural groups as a force in the form of a silent minority. People unintentionally brought about the evil on which the story is based. Below are excerpts from the text of the novel that show us examples of crimes.

Questions about the tape on which he was captured with a prostitute were nimbly skirted and quickly turned to what he intended to say about his policies versus those of his opponent. and I have been investigating a crime," Jackson explained.
"That doesn't give him the right to drive like a maniac I want him strung up as much as you do."
"I'm not looking to string anybody up," Jackson said
American people want to lead them through these perilous times?" they asked, always adding, it would go a long way to dispelling those rumors

Prostitution is sexual activity carried out for commercial reasons because doing so is considered a job. However, the word 'prostitution' does not only have a meaning that refers to commercial sex. The word also contains negative connotations that reflect ugliness. Even though it is known that work is despicable, many are still trapped in the practice of sexual activity. While this may be more appropriate in certain contexts it is still considered to contain elements of a crime. A detective works to solve the mystery. They question every suspect, search for clues, and follow new leads in hopes of finding the guilty party. Below is an excerpt from the text of the novel that shows us an example of an investigation.

That's impossible to say, Barbara," he replied, "but I wouldn't rule it out." His smile was charming, as it was throughout the interview, examination, inspection, exam, hearing,

Interview is part of the investigation to solve the case. The interviews were carefully planned and conducted. The location of the victim's interview and who will attend are equally important to consider. Everyone interviewed was required to explain their role in the

investigation. The word examination is considered as a supporting element of the investigation. Detectives uncover new clues, unexpected clues, or loopholes in a suspect's alibi. Below is an excerpt from the text of the novel that shows us an example of a twist.

"The hotel says that there's a slew of them downstairs.
He ignored the chorus of questions hurled at him, bounded up
the steps, and used his key to open the front door, shutting out the cacophony
behind him

Murder is a very serious violation of laws and social norms. There is no greater impact than the killing of a person's life, work and family. Sometimes the killings are triggered by the victims themselves. Experts have an overview of the phenomenon of murder in several countries which includes the profile of the perpetrator and victim, the context of the situation and the incident of the murder. Also trying to answer the question how is the relationship between the symptoms of homicide and criminology. The detective unravels the remaining puzzle pieces and solves the mystery. Below is an excerpt from the text of the novel showing us examples of variations.

"You're overwrought, and I can understand that, but you don't
just toss away years of working together to reach the goal we've had our eyes
on. Please, sit down and let's discuss this like two rational people, the way we've
always done when we've faced a problem."
Pyle and his people throwing the kitchen sink at us, character
assassination, gutter politics. We can overcome it. I know we can.
"Oh, now, wait a minute," he said. "I know this is rough, but we can get through
it. We have to get through it, and we can only do that together, as a team.
In completing a case, breakthrough is the last step to find the answer before concluding. Learning from the
problem that has been investigated and trying to overcome so it can go through to the conclusion.

After being analyzed, it was found that the elements of identity consisting of social identity, problem identity and articulation identity are important parts of a literary work, especially in novels. Although novels as literary works have various types of genres, basically all of the elements of identity above are contained in each novel. However, there are other elements that are also found in the novel besides the elements of identity that have been described previously, namely the discovery of other elements, namely identity discourse and negotiated identity.

Discussion

Discourse identity is the person or range of power that can be claimed by certain people in a certain discourse which consists of a series of roles interacting with social roles in which a person has the power, right, or obligation to make in a certain discourse. Identity is a concept of intercultural communication and relies heavily on the notion of culture itself where human groups can be analyzed even though they have different internal characteristics so that significant differences can be seen from members of other cultural groups. While this is a very useful idea in the context of cultural research it is often problematic in the study of discourse and communication. In this case, the novelist tries to present the characters in the novel in a very clear form of identity so that it is easy for the reader to understand. In analyzing a novel, one must also consider the elements supporting

the genre of the novel. In this novel found elements that are very supportive so that this novel deserves to be included as a mystery novel. These elements are elements of crime, investigation, twist and violation. The results found in the analysis of the novel, it can be stated that research on novels does not always get the same results as those carried out by other researchers even though they have the same research object. Likewise, analyzing a novel using the same theory does not guarantee the same results and conclusions at the end. This can be seen from the results obtained by researchers regarding the identity construction of the characters in the mystery novel *Murder Inside the Beltway* by Margaret Truman. There are five identities contained in the character identity novel, namely: social identity, problem identity, articulation identity, discourse identity and negotiated identity. Basically the author still refers to the theory applied in researching this novel so that it is easier to draw conclusions and of course it is different from what other researchers have done. In this case the researcher only concludes that this novel contains three main elements of identity, namely social identity, problem identity and identity articulation.

Conclusion

The identity of each individual can be seen from the aspects of one's identity and attitude. Identity and attitude are two things that are inherent in every individual. Stories, roles, and actors in novels are tools that can be used to find out individual identity. Each individual who plays the character in the novel will get input about the lifestyle, attitudes and beliefs that are built through the novel's story. The construction of the character's identity through the story in the novel can be seen from one's talent, personality and ability to develop himself. In addition to lifestyle and attitude, identity can be seen from the ability to develop talents through characterizations in performances or stories. By being willing to play the characters in the novel, each individual will certainly gain new experiences and also be able to develop himself and his personality into a stronger identity.

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