Akademika 94(1), 2024: 1-13

https://doi.org/10.17576/akad-2023-9401-01

The Production Materials Analysis of Popular Novel in *Meniti Rindu*

Analisis Bahan-Bahan Panghasilan Novel Popular dalam Meniti Rindu

Mohamed Nazreen Shahul Hamid, Phat Awang Deng & Rohaya Md Ali

ABSTRACT

Generally, it is known that the presence of popular novels in the local literary scene is not a new phenomenon. However, the enthusiasm for this genre still persists to this day and continues to dominate the local novel sales market. Nevertheless, popular novels have never been free from criticism due to their tendency to adhere to the same writing formula. Furthermore, they are often accused of placing women in improper positions. Nonetheless, Affifudin Omar succeeded in proving otherwise through his popular novel, Meniti Rindu (2013). The distinctiveness brought about by Affifudin Omar, particularly concerning issues, sets this work apart from other popular novels. Therefore, this paper aims to analyze the materials used in producing popular novels within Meniti Rindu. It is conducted using textual analysis methods on the novel Meniti Rindu, guided by the framework for producing popular novels introduced by Deborah Hale (1999), consisting of seven materials: characters, conflict, a hook, plot, romance, dark moment, and a happy ending. The study found that Affifudin Omar critically and creatively succeeded in utilizing all seven materials in producing Meniti Rindu. Affifudin Omar departed from the conventions of writing popular novels without discarding its seven main materials. Instead, by addressing issues such as identity, apostasy, and more, he continually distinguishes Meniti Rindu as a significantly different popular novel within the market. This study is essential in showcasing the dynamics of authors' efforts to uplift popular novels towards improvement.

Keywords: Popular novels, Meniti Rindu, Affifudin Omar, Hale, textual analysis

ABSTRAK

Umumnya mengetahui bahawa kehadiran novel popular dalam arus sastera tempatan bukan satu fenomena baharu. Namun, kegilaan terhadap genre ini masih kekal hingga ke hari ini dan terus-menerus menguasai pasaran penjualan novel tempatan. Meskipun begitu, novel popular tidak pernah lekang daripada kritikan kerana masih lagi berpegang kepada formula penulisan yang sama. Malah, ia juga dikatakan sering meletakkan wanita pada kedudukan yang tidak sepatunya. Walau bagaimanapun, Affifudin Omar berjaya untuk membuktikan sebaliknya melalui penulisan novel popular Meniti Rindu (2013). Kelainan yang dibawa oleh Affifudin Omar terutamanya dari segi isu membuatkan karya ini berbeza dengan novel popular lain. Oleh itu, makalah ini bertindak bagi mengkaji bahan-bahan penghasilan novel popular dalam Meniti Rindu. Ia dilaksanakan menggunakan kaedah analisis tekstual terhadap novel Meniti Rindu berpandukan kerangka penghasilan novel popular yang diperkenalkan oleh Deborah Hale (1999) yang terdiri daripada tujuh bahan, iaitu watak, konflik, "a hook", plot, romantis, detik gelap dan pengakhiran yang membahagiakan. Kajian mendapati bahawa, Affifudin Omar secara kritis dan kreatif berjaya menggunakan ketujuh-tujuh bahan tersebut dalam penghasilan Meniti Rindu. Affifudin Omar lari daripada konvensi penulisan novel popular tanpa membuang tujuh bahan utamanya. Malah, melalui pembawaan isu seperti jati diri, murtad, dan sebagainya terus membuatkan Meniti Rindu sebagai novel popular yang sangat berbeza dengan yang ada di pasaran. Kajian ini adalah penting dalam memperlihatkan dinamika pengarang dalam usaha mengangkat novel popular ke arah lebih baik.

Kata Kunci: Novel Popular, Meniti Rindu, Affifudin Omar, Hale, analisis tekstual

INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of popular novels within the local literary scene isn't a recent development, having held a steadfast position among readers since the 1990s. Notably, authors like Ahadiat Akashah soared in popularity during that era, amassing a staggering 86 novel titles and earning recognition in the *Malaysia Book of Records*. However, as the 2000s emerged, a shift occurred, drawing reader attention towards female authors in the realm of popular novels. Renowned figures like Sharifah Abu Salem, Aisyah Sofea, Damya Hanna, and Norhayati Berahim emerged, their works continuously reprinted and widely available in today's market (Mohamed Nazreen, 2018).

By 2010, the surge in the popularity of novels expanded significantly, attributed to their adaptation into movies and television series (Misran, 2021). During this time, audiences eagerly anticipated their beloved novels being transformed into TV dramas, prompting publishing houses to accelerate the release of numerous titles annually. When a novel was adapted for film or TV, authors were often prompted to create a sequel, further driving the desire to adapt all popular novels and boost book sales. Consequently, the continuous rise in the sale of popular novels in the market has remained unsurprising to date.

This surge in popularity prompts an exploration of the distinctions between popular novels and literary novels. While both genres engage readers, they differ in various aspects. Popular novels often prioritize engaging storytelling, relatable characters, and accessible language, appealing to a broad audience with their entertainment value and ability to captivate readers swiftly (Gelder, 2004). On the other hand, literary novels tend to delve into deeper themes, employing intricate prose, complex characters, and a focus on artistic expression (Fry, 2012). They often challenge readers with thought-provoking narratives and explore nuanced human experiences, aiming for critical acclaim and deeper intellectual engagement.

However, unlike literary novels, critics have frequently scrutinized popular novels for their adherence to a repetitive and predictable writing formula, often accused of lacking originality and depth in storytelling. These books, spanning from past to present, face reproach for perpetuating stereotypical portrayals of women, depicting them primarily as passive individuals confined to traditional roles as wives and mothers, as asserted by Halimah (2015). Moreover, critics argue that such novels tend to maintain an unrealistic, idealized portrayal of life, particularly in romantic relationships, potentially fostering unrealistic expectations among readers. The thematic depth of popular novels is another point of contention, with critics highlighting a perceived lack of engagement with complex societal issues, favouring entertainment over intellectual stimulation (Nurul et al.,2020). Authors such as Ian McEwan and Ali Smith echo these concerns, emphasizing the detrimental impact of reinforcing gender stereotypes and stifling literary innovation within the genre (Zhang & Wu, 2023).

Nonetheless, proponents of popular novels defend them as providing a much-needed escape and entertainment, catering to a diverse readership seeking accessible and enjoyable stories without the demands of more complex literature. They maintain that the ongoing debate centres on the balance between entertainment value and critical engagement, reflecting the multifaceted role that popular novels play in readers' lives. In this context, this research examines a popular novel by Affifudin Omar called *Meniti Rindu* (2013). This work marks a significant change in Affifudin's writing, as his previous focus was mostly on history-based novels. Despite this shift, *Meniti Rindu* explores weightier themes such as apostasy, cultural clashes, and identity confusion. It successfully blends these serious subjects into a traditional popular novel, maintaining essential materials of popular novels while addressing significant societal issues. This unique combination makes *Meniti Rindu* an interesting topic for study, potentially setting a standard for future high-quality popular novels. Furthermore, scholar Rahimah (2015) emphasizes the importance of *Meniti Rindu* for diverging from typical popular novels, tackling deeper societal issues while maintaining reader appeal. Rahimah (2015) also highlights the novel's accomplishment in balancing entertainment with complex themes, offering a fresh perspective on storytelling within the genre. Integrating these themes into a popular novel not only enhances the reading experience but also positions *Meniti Rindu* as a trailblazer in reshaping popular literature's boundaries. As a result, this study aims to analyse the innovative techniques used by Affifudin Omar, shedding light on how similar approaches could enhance the quality and depth of future popular novels.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of popular novels as a distinct category within literature has been a subject of scholarly inquiry for several decades. Scholars such as Glover (2015), Mayerson (2010), and Othman (2005) have contributed valuable insights that collectively delineate the defining characteristics of popular novels. Primarily, these novels pivot around themes that intricately weave elements of love, conflicts, and societal issues. Glover's (2015) analysis emphasizes the thematic focus on the spectrum of love, spanning from youthful infatuation to the complexities of mature relationships. Mayerson (2010) and Othman (2005) underscore the portrayal of human attitudes,

social problems, and the clash between traditional values and modernization, particularly affecting the younger generation.

The differentiation of popular novels from other literary forms lies in their presentation and impact on readers. They are crafted to entertain rather than evoke profound introspection. According to sources such as *The Fiction Dictionary* (Henry, 2005) and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2018), the prime objective of popular novels is entertainment, often at the expense of profound aesthetic or educational depth. These works aim for wide readership and commercial success rather than enduring artistic value.

Prince (2018) further elucidates distinguishing features of popular novels, highlighting their structural aspects. Shorter chapters and discontinuous character arcs are commonly employed to engender suspense and complexity, engaging the reader through multifaceted storytelling. Additionally, visual elements such as captivating cover designs, particularly featuring attractive characters, serve as marketing strategies to entice potential readers.

Recent studies by scholars like Carney and Roberstson (2022) have highlighted the evolving themes within popular novels. While love and conflicts remain central, there's an increasing exploration of diverse themes such as mental health, identity, socio-political issues, and environmental concerns. This shift reflects a broader societal interest and the authors' efforts to engage readers with contemporary and relevant topics.

Research conducted in Malaysia corroborates the global trends in popular novel creation and consumption. Kamariah's (2014) study underscores the predominance of romantic narratives in local popular novels. These works are strategically marketed through cover art and titles that emphasize themes of love and longing, targeting a predominantly female readership.

Talib (2013) contributes insights into the production process of popular novels in Malaysia. He suggests that these novels are often crafted to align with publisher guidelines, emphasizing elements like love and other relatable life issues. The aim is to cater to the preferences of the majority of readers, particularly women, who constitute a significant portion of the audience for popular novels.

The viewpoints of Malaysian National Laureate S. Othman Kelantan (2005) further reinforce the prevalence of romantic themes and conflicts within popular novels. The narratives predominantly revolve around romantic entanglements, family conflicts, and resolutions that often culminate in marriage or emotional struggle. These novels are positioned to attract readers by offering easily digestible content that prioritizes entertainment over intellectual depth.

In conclusion, the literature reviewed provides a comprehensive understanding of popular novels, elucidating their thematic, structural, and commercial attributes. The focus on love, conflicts, and entertainment value, as evidenced globally and specifically in Malaysia, underscores the enduring appeal and commercial success of these literary works among broad audiences, particularly targeting female readers.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses the textual analysis method to analyze the novel *Meniti Rindu* based on the conceptual framework by Hale (1999) related to the materials that must be present in developing a popular novel.

Textual analysis is a multifaceted method employed to dissect and comprehend various forms of written, spoken, or visual communication (Creswell & Clarks, 2018). This analytical approach involves several interconnected processes. Close reading serves as a foundational element, delving into the intricate nuances of language, syntax, and literary devices within the text (Mohamed Nazreen et al., 2022) Concurrently, contextual analysis broadens the scope, exploring the historical, social, cultural, and political backdrop against which the text was created, recognizing the influences shaping its meaning (Kroll & Harper, 2013). Thematic exploration entails identifying recurring motifs, symbols, and underlying messages to unveil the central themes embedded within the text. Structural analysis, on the other hand, focuses on the organization, narrative design, or rhetorical strategies employed, offering insight into how the text conveys its message. Interdisciplinary connections further enrich the analysis by drawing from diverse fields to provide additional perspectives.

By applying various critical theories and considering audience reception, textual analysis navigates through layers of interpretation, ultimately crafting a holistic understanding of the text's significance and meaning.

HALE'S CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Hale (1999) proposed seven essential elements that writers should incorporate to enhance the marketability or commercial value of their work. These include (a) well-developed characters, (b) compelling conflicts, (c) a hook to captivate the audience's attention, (d) a well-crafted plot, (e) elements of romance, (f) a pivotal 'black moment,' and (g) a satisfying, optimistic resolution or happy ending.

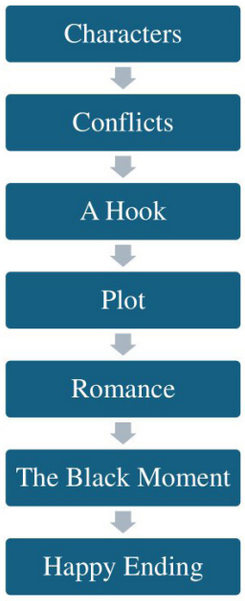


FIGURE 1. The main ingredient in the production of popular novels according to Hale (1999)

According to Hale (1999), every successful popular novels, irrespective of the language or author, encompasses the seven key ingredients previously outlined. Nevertheless, what distinguishes one author's work from another is the unique content of the story and the individual style of narration employed. Hale emphasized the significance of investigating these specific aspects when examining popular novels. Hence, in the analysis of the creation of the popular novel *Meniti Rindu* by Affifudin Omar, these seven elements will serve as crucial focal points. This examination aims to demonstrate that even when addressing weightier subject matters, a popular novel can still be crafted while adhering to its fundamental components.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dato' Wira Dr. Affifudin bin Haji Omar, also known as Affifudin Omar, embarked on his journey as a novelist in 2009, following his retirement from the political sphere. Notably, his literary repertoire includes acclaimed works such as *Paradoks* (2011), *Odisi Anak Kampar* (2011), and *Seri Dewi Malam* (2012), yet it was *Dendam* (2011) that propelled Affifudin Omar into the limelight among younger audiences. This particular work, published under the indie imprint Fixi, sparked widespread discussion, despite his dissatisfaction with the editing process and the prolonged duration of mainstream publishing. Consequently, driven by these challenges, Affifudin took the initiative to establish his own publishing company, Afif Books. In a remarkably brief span, he successfully released nearly 20 novels, predominantly rooted in historical narratives and factual contexts. Notably, holding a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from the University of Malaya and a Doctor of Philosophy in politics and economics from Cornell University, New York, USA, Affifudin Omar further contributes to scholarly discourse by frequently composing journals and articles addressing socio-economic issues prevalent in Malaysia.

Meniti Rindu, penned by Affifudin, unfolds against the backdrop of the 1950s to 1980s. This narrative follows Hakimi's journey from childhood to adulthood, shaped by the conservative values ingrained in Malay society. Hakimi's unrequited love for Mahani forms the crux of the story, as he, raised with staunch Malay cultural values and a deep devotion to Islam, falls for Mahani, whose

upbringing champions liberal ideals. Mahani's disdain for Hakimi stems from his unwavering adherence to Malay customs, his ardent love for Islam, and his strong anti-imperialist stance. Despite their differences, Hakimi eventually captures Mahani's affections after rescuing her from the torment of mischievous students. Regrettably, their love is short-lived, and upon completing their studies at Kolej Sultan Abdul Hamid, Alor Setar, Kedah, they part ways, navigating divergent paths filled with unexpected twists. However, fate orchestrates an unforeseen reunion, leading them down a path of unforeseen circumstances and encounters.

MATERIALS FOR MAKING A POPULAR NOVEL *MENITI RINDU*

Building upon the previously mentioned seven key components essential in crafting a popular novel—characters, conflicts, a hook, plot, romance, the black moment, and a happy ending—the forthcoming analysis will delve into these materials through a textual analysis of the novel *Meniti Rindu*. This exploration aims to examine how these ingredients interplay within the narrative structure, unraveling the intricacies of character development, the dynamic conflicts, the captivating hook, the progression of the plot, the interwoven romantic elements, the pivotal 'black moment,' and the ultimate resolution or happy ending. By conducting a textual analysis centered around these seven materials, this discussion seeks to elucidate how each element contributes to the narrative's depth, resonance, and eventual impact on the reader's engagement and reception of the novel.

CHARACTERS

Hale (1999) underscores the pivotal role of characters within a narrative, emphasizing their significance in bolstering the storyline. Characters serve as vital conduits through which authors can intricately weave complex and conflicted love stories. Similarly, Rout (2017) echoes this sentiment, highlighting the central role characters play in propelling narratives filled with conflict, heightened sensual tension, emotional depth, and compelling desires, particularly within the realm of popular novels. Both perspectives underscore the crucial function of well-developed characters in shaping the engaging and emotionally resonant trajectories of these stories, illustrating their importance in captivating readers and driving the narrative forward.

In the realm of popular novels, Hale (1990) emphasizes the pivotal role of heroines and heroes as central figures within the narrative. They predominantly function as protagonists rather than antagonists or antiheroes and are often portrayed as idealized characters, possessing physical attributes perceived as flawless. Samsiah (2012) further elaborates on this notion, highlighting the expectations for heroines to exude beauty and perfection while heroes are expected to possess handsomeness and stylishness. In *Meniti Rindu*, Mahani embodies the archetype of a strikingly beautiful girl who garners attention wherever she goes. Despite the infatuation of numerous suitors, including Hakimi, Mahani maintains a detached demeanor, considering them mere acquaintances and reserving her heart for no one:

> Mahani adalah seorang gadis yang bersifat *free spirit*, atau berpendirian bebas dari apa-apa ikatan atau pergantungan kepada sesiapa. Dia melayan semua jejaka yang ingin berdamping dengannya sebagai kawan biasa. Bukan sahaja Hakimi yang tergila-gilakannya, malah berpuluh jejaka lain pun begitu. Namun Mahani hanya menganggap mereka sebagai kenalan biasa. Tiada sesiapa di antara mereka yang dijadikannya teman istimewa. Dan tiada siapa yang dapat menawan hatinya kini. (Affifudin, 2013, pg.2)
> [Mahani is a girl who is a free spirit or stands free from any bond or dependence on anyone. She treats all the guys who want to be with her as normal friends. Not only Hakimi is crazy about her, but dozens of other guys are also too. But Mahani only considered them as casual acquaintances. None of them were her special friends. And no one can capture her heart now.]

As for the hero, Hakimi, the author paints an idealized picture of his character, emphasizing his physical prowess developed through an active childhood. Standing at a height of five feet eleven inches with attractive facial features, Hakimi captivates the admiration of many schoolgirls, yet his affections remain solely directed towards Mahani:

> Budaya hidup yang aktif dari segi fizikal semenjak dari kecil ini membina tubuh Hakimi menjadi sasa dan tegap. Ketinggian badan yang mencapai lima kaki sebelas inci dan wajah muka yang menarik membuat banyak gadis-gadis sekolah menggilainya. Tetapi Hakimi tidak memberi respons. Dia hanya meminati Mahani sahaja. Tiada gadis lain, selain daripada Mahani yang menawan hatinya. (Affifudin Omar, 2013, pg.2)
> [The culture of being physically active since childhood has built Hakimi's body into a strong and fit body. His height of five feet eleven inches and attractive facial features made many schoolgirls fall in love with him. But Hakimi did not respond. He is only interested in Mahani. No other girl, apart from Mahani captured his heart.]

However, unlike conventional popular novels where the hero's love is typically reciprocated, Hakimi's unwavering love for Mahani is not entirely returned. To counterbalance this unconventional aspect, the author introduces supporting characters, such as Janet, who serve as companions to the central hero. Janet, an American girl befriended by Hakimi, plays a significant role in the narrative, as Hakimi guides her on a journey toward embracing Islam and becoming a devout Muslimah. This dynamic adds depth and complexity to the storyline, diverging from the conventional portrayal of love and relationships found in many popular novels.

In contrast to Hakimi's supporting character, Mahani's companion figure is Jake Barnes, a man she admires for his resemblance to Gregory Peck, the renowned Hollywood actor who captivates her interest. Mahani's fascination with Jake and their shared life together leads her down a path of apostasy, causing her to lose connections with friends from her Malaysian homeland due to her divergence from her native race and religion. Her disillusionment stems from the stark contrast between the idealized images of Gregory Peck depicted in Hollywood films and the harsh reality embodied by Jake Barnes. This stark disparity results in turmoil and torment within their relationship, ultimately leading to the unraveling and eventual collapse of their household, beyond salvaging.

It's evident, in *Meniti Rindu*, Affifudin employs a narrative approach that defies the conventional tropes commonly found in popular novels, particularly in the realm of romance. The atypical portrayal of the hero and heroine characters not destined to be together from the beginning or end challenges the established norms of romantic storytelling. Unlike the customary depiction where side characters typically create temporary conflicts or love triangles, their role in Affifudin's narrative transcends these conventional boundaries.

Moreover, while traditional popular novels often emphasize the eventual reunion and happiness of the hero and heroine, Affifudin presents a divergent narrative trajectory. The emotional entanglement and close bond between the central characters, despite physical separation, don't lead to the anticipated satisfying and optimistic conclusion usually prevalent in this genre. Instead, the author refrains from adhering to the expected pattern where side characters serve as mere catalysts for the protagonists' eventual union.

This departure from the norm in *Meniti Rindu* highlights Affifudin's deliberate effort to challenge and subvert the typical conventions of popular romantic storytelling. By steering away from the anticipated resolutions and character interactions found in conventional narratives, the author crafts a distinct and thought-provoking storyline that deviates from the established norms of popular novels, providing readers with an unconventional and unique reading experience.

CONFLICTS

Hale's breakdown of conflict in storytelling distinguishes between two primary types: internal conflict and external conflict. Internal conflict pertains to the emotional, psychological, or moral struggles within a character that contribute to the rupture of the love bond between the hero and the heroine. This type of conflict often arises from the temperament, beliefs, or inherent nature of the characters themselves, impacting the relationship dynamics and leading to its disruption or breakdown.

On the other hand, external conflict involves tangible, physical, or external factors that directly influence the relationship, leading to its demise. These external factors could range from societal pressures, family influences, geographical distances, or any other physical obstacles that impose strains on the hero and heroine's relationship. Unlike internal conflicts, which stem from within the characters, external conflicts manifest as external forces that act as barriers or impediments to the relationship, ultimately contributing to its dissolution or disruption.

Understanding the interplay between these two types of conflicts—internal and external—provides a comprehensive view of the complexities within the narrative structure, showcasing how both emotional turmoil within characters and external factors can play significant roles in shaping the trajectory and eventual outcome of the hero and heroine's relationship in a story (Murphy, 2018).

In *Meniti Rindu*, the conflict that undermines the love relationship between Hakimi and Mahani stems from Mahani's internal desires and expectations for an idealized romantic partner. Mahani's notion of an ideal husband, derived from her English literature studies at Saint Nicholas Convent, revolves around the concept of a "Prince Charming" riding a white horse—a romanticized image she has deeply internalized from her exposure to English

romance novels. This idealized fantasy significantly influences her romantic expectations, leading her to yearn for a love story akin to those portrayed in literature:

"Persetankan mereka. Aku tidak tertarik dengan seorang pun di antara mereka," bentak hati kecil Mahani sambil menambah, "Aku tunggu wiraku datang menunggang kuda putih menyambar diriku ini," pujuk hati kecil Mahani.Ungkapan wira menunggang kuda putih ini menjadi ungkapan kesukaannya, kerana selalu sahaja dibaca dalam novel-novel cinta sastera Inggeris. Di sekolah Saint Nicholas Convent, sebuah sekolah mubaligh Kristian pada masa itu, hanya sastera Inggeris sahaja diajar. Sastera Melayu tidak pernah diperkenalkan sehingga beberapa tahun sesudah merdeka.
(Affifudin Omar, 2013, pg.26)
["Damn them. I'm not interested in any of them," snapped Mahani's little heart while adding, "I'm waiting for my hero to come riding a white horse to grab me," Mahani's little heart persuaded. The expression of the hero riding a white horse became her favourite expression, because it was always read in English romance novels. At the Saint Nicholas Convent school, a Christian missionary school at the time, only English literature was taught. Malay literature was never introduced until a few years after independence.]

Hakimi, although handsome and academically proficient, does not fit Mahani's envisioned ideal. Despite Hakimi's valiant act in rescuing Mahani from harassment, which briefly sparks a fleeting affection within her, Mahani's temporary affection is superseded when she meets Jake Barnes, an Englishman resembling her Hollywood actor idol. Encountering someone who embodies her romanticized ideal triggers a profound infatuation within Mahani, leading her to devote herself to Jake Barnes, whom she genuinely believes is her true love.

This internal conflict within Mahani, driven by her deeply ingrained romantic fantasies and aspirations derived from English literature, creates a divergence in her affections, causing the rupture in her relationship with Hakimi. Her yearning for an idealized romantic narrative, juxtaposed against the reality of her feelings, sets the stage for the internal conflict that undermines her bond with Hakimi and propels her towards Jake Barnes, whom she perceives as the embodiment of her ideal romantic fantasy.

The external conflict in *Meniti Rindu* becomes apparent as Mahani's feelings for Hakimi change, leading to a noticeable shift in her behavior towards him. Mahani's initial disinterest in Hakimi eventually manifests in her withdrawal and altered demeanor. She becomes increasingly distant, shedding her usual cheerful and carefree disposition. Their interactions diminish, reduced to mere greetings lacking the warmth and passion that characterized their earlier rapport.

Layanan hambar Mahani terhadap Hakimi terserlah apabila Mahani meminggir diri, tidak lagi ceria dan riang seperti biasa. Sehari demi sehari Mahani menjauhi dirinya daripada Hakimi. Perbualan mereka terbatas kepada sapa menyapa sahaja, tidak mesra ataupun ghairah seperti dahulu. (Affifudin Omar, 2013, pg.74)
[Mahani's bland treatment of Hakimi is evident when Mahani withdraws, no longer cheerful and carefree as usual. Day by day Mahani distanced herself from Hakimi. Their conversation is limited to just saying hello, not as friendly or passionate as before.]

Hakimi, confronted with the escalating conflict in their relationship, grapples with the emotional turmoil resulting from Mahani's inexplicable distancing. Despite facing this emotional upheaval and abandonment, he perseveres in his academic pursuits and successfully graduates with outstanding results. His ability to channel his worldly love for Mahani into spiritual devotion to Allah SWT enables him to overcome the distress of their failed relationship. This newfound spiritual resilience paves the way for Hakimi's opportunity to pursue further studies in the United States, symbolizing his transcendence from worldly attachments.

Similarly, Mahani, driven by her academic ambitions and desires to fulfill her dreams, excels in her studies. Her success allows her to pursue higher education in England, where she anticipates meeting Jake Barnes, the embodiment of her idealized romantic aspirations.

The external conflict surfaces in the discord between Hakimi and Mahani's evolving feelings, leading to their emotional disconnection and eventual separation. Their divergent paths following the culmination of their studies underscore the tangible external conflicts embedded within their relationship, showcasing the influence of personal ambitions, shifting priorities, and unfulfilled romantic aspirations in shaping their individual trajectories.

The conflicts in *Meniti Rindu* extend beyond the initial internal and external struggles involving the hero and heroine, encompassing intricate dynamics between these characters and their companions, leading to multifaceted emotional and moral dilemmas:

1. Hakimi's Conflict with Ezeikel Oke: This conflict arises due to Ezeikel's romantic interest in Janet, Hakimi's companion. The clash occurs

as Ezeikel competes for Janet's affections, creating tension between the characters.

2. Mahani's Inner Turmoil and Apostasy: Mahani grapples with a soul conflict, compelled to conceal her apostasy to avoid alienation from her Malaysian friends and the potential revocation of her MARA scholarship, highlighting the conflict between her personal beliefs and societal expectations.
3. Mahani's Struggles with Jake Barnes: Mahani faces internal and physical conflict after being sexually assaulted by her husband, Jake Barnes, leading to their divorce and emotional turmoil within Mahani.
4. Mahani's Inner Conflict with Cultural Differences: Mahani's distress arises when she discovers Kak Timah, a cook, adds lard (forbidden in Islam) into food ordered by Malaysians in Hull, causing an internal conflict.
5. Hakimi's Emotional Conflict: Despite his marriage to Janet, Hakimi harbors lingering feelings for Mahani, causing emotional turmoil as he grapples with his unresolved emotions.
6. Hakimi's Inner Turmoil Over Marriage: Hakimi faces soul conflict when Janet permits him to marry Mahani, who has reverted to Islam after separating from Jake Barnes, leading to inner turmoil and moral dilemmas.
7. Mahani's Struggle Over Her Children's Actions: Mahani confronts an inner conflict regarding her children's behavior, realizing they engage in actions forbidden by Islam due to the influence of a hedonistic culture in Paris, posing a moral dilemma for her.

Indeed, *Meniti Rindu* intricately weaves various internal and external conflicts into the narrative fabric, effectively adhering to Hale's (1999) recommendations. These conflicts serve as pivotal elements that propel the storyline forward, ensuring a dynamic and engaging reading experience for the audience. Affifudin adeptly utilizes a continuous stream of conflicts throughout the narrative, preventing monotony and keeping the reader engrossed and intrigued by the unfolding events.

By skillfully interlacing conflicts involving the characters, their relationships, moral dilemmas, and societal clashes, the story remains vibrant and compelling. The seamless integration of these conflicts aligns with Hale's counsel, emphasizing the importance of authorial skill in captivating readers' attention through a diverse array of conflicts. This technique not only sustains the reader's interest but also adds depth and complexity to the storyline, making the narrative more immersive and engaging.

Affifudin's narrative approach mirrors Hale's recommendation by ensuring that conflicts are introduced and developed continuously, contributing to the story's momentum without allowing the reader's interest to wane. This strategy creates a dynamic narrative flow, heightening anticipation and maintaining reader enthusiasm throughout the novel.

A HOOK

The concept of "a hook" in literature, as elucidated by Hale (1999), embodies the reader's emotional or intellectual attachment to the text they're engaging with. It's this attachment that compels the reader to continue delving deeper into the narrative, eager to uncover the entirety of the story presented within the text. The "hook" essentially acts as a captivating element that grabs the reader's attention, generating a compelling desire to persistently engage with the story until its conclusion.

This sense of attachment serves a crucial role in fostering a reader's commitment to the text, igniting curiosity and the need to discover what unfolds within the story. It entices readers by creating an emotional or intellectual investment in the characters, plot, or themes, urging them to persistently pursue the narrative's progression to satisfy their curiosity or emotional connection (Maheboob, 2018). Hence, establishing a strong and engaging "hook" within the text is essential for authors, as it not only captivates the reader initially but also sustains their interest and curiosity, encouraging them to remain invested in the story until its resolution.

The novel *Meniti Rindu* skillfully employs various narrative techniques to create a sense of intrigue and captivation in the readers, ensuring their emotional investment in the storyline. Affifudin's adeptness in weaving together intricate tales, presenting relatable characters, employing simple yet engaging sentences and dialogues, and orchestrating continuous conflicts intensifies the reader's attachment to the story, prompting a desire to unravel the narrative until its completion. Among the reader's fascination with this work is knowing the following things:

1. What is the end of Hakimi's romance with Mahani?
2. After Mahani divorced Jake Barnes and after Hakimi was allowed by Janet to marry Mahani, was Hakimi willing to do so?
3. Will Janet who has breast cancer die and Hakimi and Mahani be reunited?
4. What will happen to Kak Timah who always persecutes Muslims in Hull who order food with her?
5. What is Kak Timah's fate after three-quarters of her body was burned due to a skinhead attack?
6. What will be the fate of Khadijah and Agus Salim who are influenced by the culture of hedonism in the city of Paris? Can their father, that is Hakimi, save the two children?

The reader's fascination is augmented by the deliberate creation of unanswered questions within the storyline, compelling them to seek resolution and closure. These unanswered questions, strategically placed throughout the novel, act as narrative hooks that entice readers to stay engaged and follow the characters' journeys until their destinies are revealed. The six questions presented regarding Hakimi, Mahani, Janet, Kak Timah, and Khadijah and Agus Salim exemplify this strategy, serving as narrative devices to captivate readers' curiosity and maintain their interest throughout the 464-page narrative.

Affifudin's storytelling technique of leaving certain character storylines unfinished at the end of chapters further contributes to the reader's emotional investment. This deliberate technique heightens suspense and anticipation, compelling readers to continue reading to uncover the fate of these characters in subsequent chapters. This strategy effectively sustains the reader's attachment to the novel, fostering a sense of urgency to uncover the interconnected stories and resolutions, thereby ensuring the reader's continued engagement until the conclusion of the narrative.

The excerpt from *Meniti Rindu* reveals Affifudin's adeptness in incorporating pivotal values and moral dilemmas into the narrative, fostering a deep emotional connection between the readers and the characters. Through the character of Kak Timah, the story delves into sensitive themes such as religious tolerance, manipulation, and ethical conflicts, prompting readers to experience a range of emotions while engaging with the narrative:

"Nani! Kita berdua telah menjadi penganut agama Kristian. Daging Khinzir dan lain-lain produk khinzir, tidak lagi haram bagi kita. Justeru, kakak selalu menggunakan lemaknya untuk memasak makanan," jelas Kak Timah. "Tetapi budak-budak itu beragama Islam. Islam yang melarang keras pengikut-pengikutnya dari memakan babi mahupun produk-produk dari babi. Kita patut menghormati pegangan mereka!" ujar Mahani.
"Nani! Misi kakak ialah menarik budak-budak ini menganut agama Jesus Christ ini. Satu strateginya ialah supaya mereka mendekati kakak. Hanya melalui perutlah kakak menarik mereka ke pangkuan kakak…" (Affifudin Omar, 2013, pg.187)
["Nani! We have both become Christians. Pork and other pork products are no longer haram for us. Therefore, I always use the fat to cook food," explained Kak Timah.
"But those kids are Muslims. Islam strictly forbids its followers from eating pigs or products from pigs. We should respect their beliefs!" said Mahani.
"Nani! My mission is to attract them to the religion of Jesus Christ. One of my strategies is to get them to approach me. Only through their stomach I able to pull them into my lap…"]

Kak Timah's actions, driven by her misguided mission to convert Muslim students to Christianity through deceitful means, evoke a sense of anger, betrayal, and moral outrage in both the characters within the story and the readers outside it. Mahani's righteous objection to Kak Timah's unethical use of pork fat to prepare food for Muslim students underscores the clash of values and beliefs, resonating with readers who share similar ethical convictions. This ethical dilemma creates a powerful emotional response in the readers, eliciting feelings of empathy towards the Muslim students who are unknowingly subjected to manipulation.

Affifudin skillfully integrates these moral conflicts into the storyline, inviting readers to empathize with the characters' struggles and feel emotionally invested in the outcome of the narrative. By portraying characters facing ethical challenges and moral dilemmas, the story engages readers on a deeper level, prompting them to experience a spectrum of emotions—anger, disappointment, empathy, and a sense of justice—alongside the characters. This emotional involvement creates a powerful connection between the readers and the story, compelling them to stay engaged and emotionally invested until the story's resolution.

PLOT

The narrative structure and plot development in *Meniti Rindu* exemplify a conventional yet intricately woven storyline, aligning with Hale's (1999) emphasis on the sequential development from the story's beginning to its climax and resolution. The plot revolves around Hakimi and Mahani,

starting from their school days and culminating in their attempts to reunite their children, Mahazir and Khadijah, in marriage.

While the overall plot appears simple, the narrative introduces numerous plot breaks facilitated by a technique akin to somersault storytelling. This approach involves characters—especially Mahani—reminiscing about past events, delving into various facets of their lives, including her past romance with ADO Azham, her family dynamics, school experiences with Hakimi, and the flaws in her relationship with Jake Barnes, ultimately leading to her apostasy.

The novel's structure, comprising 73 short chapters, results in a "zig-zag" or non-linear narrative progression. This narrative technique may seem fragmented as it jumps across characters' reminiscences and life journeys. However, this approach aligns with Hale's observations about its appeal to readers of popular novels. The short chapters allow readers to pause at the end of a chapter and resume reading at their convenience, contributing to a sense of control and flexibility in consuming the story. Additionally, the swift pace and fresh presentation due to the quick chapter turnover prevent the storyline from becoming monotonous, keeping readers engaged and invested in the narrative.

The utilization of this fragmented yet engaging storytelling technique in *Meniti Rindu* showcases Affifudin's ability to maintain reader interest and involvement by offering glimpses into characters' pasts while advancing the central storyline. Despite the zig-zag nature of the plot, this technique enhances reader engagement and ensures a dynamic and captivating reading experience.

ROMANTIC

Affifudin masterfully incorporates romantic elements in *Meniti Rindu*, portraying intense emotional connections and moments between characters that resonate deeply with readers, as discussed by Hale (1999) and Palmer (2020). The depiction of romantic instances, particularly between Hakimi and Mahani, serves as a focal point throughout the narrative, captivating readers' attention and evoking a sense of longing for such experiences.

The scene where Hakimi valiantly saves Mahani from harassment at the hands of Saint Michael's School students embodies a poignant romantic moment. Affifudin intricately describes Mahani's tender care for Hakimi, wiping the blood from his injuries, and her closeness, which fosters an intimate atmosphere:

> Mahani menarik muka Hakimi mendekati dadanya. Dia terus mengesat darah yang masih meleleh keluar dari mulut Hakimi. Apabila ini selesai, Mahani mendemah pipi dan mata Hakimi yang mula menunjukkan benjol-benjol yang sedang membesar dan membengkak. Bau pheromone dan minyak wangi yang dipakai Mahani terus menyerak ke dalam hidungnya. Hakimi berasa senang andai kata Mahani terus menerus mendemah mukanya. Itu bermakna "bau syurga" ini akan berpanjangan selama lebih kurang setengah jam iaitu tempoh perjalanan dari Alor Star ke Jitra. (Affifudin Omar, 2013, pg.31-32)
> [Mahani pulled Hakimi's face close to her chest. Her continued to wipe the blood that was still flowing out of Hakimi's mouth. When this is done, Mahani rubs Hakimi's cheeks and eyes which are starting to show lumps that are growing and swelling. The smell of pheromone and perfume that Mahani was wearing continued to waft into his nose. Hakimi felt happy if Mahani's words continued to raise his face. That means this "smell of heaven" will last for about half an hour which is the duration of the journey from Alor Star to Jitra.]

The author skillfully intertwines sensory details like scents and physical sensations, heightening the emotional intensity of the scene. This portrayal of Hakimi and Mahani's connection triggers an emotional response in readers, enabling them to immerse themselves in the romantic ambiance and yearn for similar deep connections in their lives.

Moreover, the novel features romantic moments involving Mahani with ADO Azham and Jake Barnes, and Hakimi with Janet. However, the readers' desires and attention are primarily drawn towards the romantic interactions between the main characters, Hakimi and Mahani. The readers' emotional investment and hope for a romantic union between Hakimi and Mahani are amplified throughout the narrative, creating a longing for their relationship to flourish despite the complexities surrounding their love story.

By presenting various romantic scenarios and emphasizing the depth of emotions shared between Hakimi and Mahani, Affifudin effectively engages readers, stirring their emotions and desires for profound romantic connections akin to those depicted in the novel. This deliberate focus on the central characters' romantic relationship fuels readers' anticipation and attachment to the storyline, evoking a sense of yearning for fulfilling and passionate love experiences.

THE BLACK MOMENT

Affifudin's approach in *Meniti Rindu* towards the depiction and resolution of dark moments, as

outlined by Hale (1999), diverges from traditional conventions found in many popular novels. These dark moments, which represent pivotal instances of emotional turmoil and seeming hopelessness for the main characters, are skillfully woven into the narrative to provoke introspection and character growth, albeit with unconventional resolutions.

Throughout the story, Affifudin introduces several instances that align with the concept of the "black moment." For instance, Mahani's decision to leave Hakimi for Jake Barnes and later her harrowing experience of being raped by her husband constitute dark and distressing periods in the narrative. These events represent critical junctures where the characters' lives take a bleak turn, leaving readers in a state of emotional emptiness.

According to Hale's perspective, these moments should ideally provide an opportunity for the heroes and heroines to reflect on their shortcomings, seek self-improvement, and eventually find a way to reunite and rekindle their love. However, in *Meniti Rindu*, the resolution of these dark times deviates from the typical trajectory found in popular novels. Instead of reuniting Hakimi and Mahani after these harrowing experiences, Affifudin introduces other characters, like Janet and Haji Ikhsan, as potential partners for the main characters. These secondary characters serve as saviors or sources of solace for Hakimi and Mahani, pulling them out of their dark moments and leading them towards new relationships.

This unconventional approach to resolving the dark moments challenges the conventional expectations of a hero and heroine coming together after facing adversity. Affifudin diverges from this norm by presenting alternative resolutions, where the main characters find solace and new beginnings through different partners rather than reconciling with each other. This departure from the typical romantic novel trope adds complexity and unpredictability to the narrative, presenting a different perspective on love, resilience, and redemption.

HAPPY ENDING

In *Meniti Rindu*, Affifudin meticulously crafts a resolution that aligns with the concept of a happy ending as defined by Hale (1999). The narrative culminates in a conclusion that not only resolves the obstacles faced by the main characters but also offers a sense of contentment and fulfillment to the readers.

Hakimi's journey towards a happy life is portrayed as a testament to his unwavering commitment to his faith and devotion to his country. Affifudin skillfully illustrates Hakimi's success in safeguarding the faith of his children, Agus Salim and Khadijah, guiding them towards righteousness. Additionally, Hakimi's wife, Janet, who battled cancer, triumphs by completing her doctoral studies and contributing to the International Islamic University Malaysia, signifying a restoration of health and accomplishment in her life.

On the other hand, Mahani's character undergoes a transformation, guided back to a righteous path under the tutelage of Haji Ikhsan, a virtuous individual. Through Mahani's guidance, her son Mahazir grows into a devout individual. The novel's title, *Meniti Rindu* (Longing), echoes the enduring yearning between Hakimi and Mahani. However, the author chooses to fulfill this longing in a different manner, symbolically marrying Khadijah and Mahazir. This creative resolution allows Hakimi and Mahani to find solace in their children's union, channeling their longing towards devotion to Allah SWT, completing their lives in a spiritual sense.

The ending crafted by Affifudin offers a resolution that may deviate from traditional romantic conclusions found in popular novels. Instead, it emphasizes spiritual fulfillment and the resolution of characters' journeys towards righteousness and guidance, providing a unique and thought-provoking closure that aligns with the novel's underlying themes of faith, longing, and spiritual contentment.

CONCLUSION

The novel *Meniti Rindu* by Affifudin seems to align with Hale's concept of the seven essential ingredients required for a successful popular novel. The fact that this novel was published in 2013 and has already reached its tenth printing indicates a positive reception and sustained demand in the market. This achievement strongly suggests that Affifudin effectively incorporated Hale's suggested elements into the narrative, contributing to its popularity and commercial success.Affifudin's thoughtful consideration and application of Hale's principles appear to have significantly contributed to the novel's reception and continued sales. The positive response from readers, reflected in its multiple printings, suggests that the novel resonates with audiences, meeting their expectations for a compelling and engaging story. This success not

only validates Hale's perspectives on what makes a popular novel but also underscores Affifudin's adeptness in crafting a story that captivates and retains reader interest, potentially by effectively integrating Hale's recommended ingredients into the narrative framework of *Meniti Rindu*.

Certainly, a successful popular novel extends beyond merely fulfilling the criteria set forth by Hale. In the case of *Meniti Rindu*, authored by Affifudin, the narrative's merit lies not only in meeting Hale's recommended ingredients but also in its diverse content, grammatical precision, presentation style, sensitivity, and the author's creative prowess. The novel is laudable for its rich and engrossing content, delving into various facets of history, education, and cultural dynamics, particularly in Kedah, the United States, and Britain. Moreover, it sheds light on often overlooked or lesser-known topics such as apostasy among Muslim students abroad, issues of identity and imperialism, and the cultivation of national values. These thematic elements, significantly broader and more profound than the romantic relationships portrayed, add depth and relevance to the narrative. Affifudin demonstrates a keen observational skill, drawing from personal experiences in Kubang Lembu, Jitra, Kedah, and his professional tenure as a Member of Parliament, notably as the Deputy Minister of Finance in Malaysia.

This depth of experience and insight contributes to the novel's authenticity and richness, emphasizing sensitive issues and diplomatic relations with finesse. The author's creativity shines through in skillfully intertwining heavy and weighty topics within the narrative, proving that a novel encompassing profound themes can still fulfill the requirements of a popular novel. This accomplishment serves as a testament to Affifudin's ability to navigate intricate subjects while ensuring the story remains engaging and accessible to a broad audience. Ultimately, fans of popular novels should appreciate how *Meniti Rindu* transcends conventional boundaries by tackling weighty issues, demonstrating that the incorporation of essential ingredients for a successful novel can coexist with profound and thought-provoking content. Affifudin's ability to blend mandatory storytelling elements with substantial thematic depth is a testament to the potential of a novel to be both commercially appealing and intellectually stimulating.

Indeed, while *Meniti Rindu* showcases a commendable narrative and storytelling techniques, there remains a significant drawback in the editing quality due to numerous spelling errors. The prevalence of these mistakes, albeit in a well-crafted story, detracts from the overall reading experience. It is crucial to emphasize that spelling and editing precision are pivotal components in publishing, especially for authors managing their own publications. The presence of spelling errors can distract readers and impede their engagement with the content. In essence, despite the novel's compelling content and storytelling, these errors may negatively impact the reader's perception of the work's professionalism and quality. By prioritizing meticulous editing, authors can fortify the integrity of their work and ensure that the main ingredients required for a successful novel, as identified by Hale, are not compromised. A well-edited manuscript enhances the credibility of the publisher, elevates the overall reading experience, and underscores the value of the novel, making it a more worthwhile investment for readers. Conclusively, while the novel exhibits notable strengths in storytelling and content, meticulous attention to editing and spelling accuracy is essential. Upholding high editing standards is imperative to ensure that the narrative's excellence is not overshadowed by avoidable errors, ultimately augmenting the book's commercial viability and enhancing its overall appeal to readers.

REFERENCES

Affifudin Omar. (2013). *Meniti Rindu*. Afif Books. Sdn. Bhd.

Carney J & Robertson C. (2022). Five studies evaluating the impact on mental health and mood of recalling, reading, and discussing fiction. *PLoS ONE* 17(4), 1-20, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266323

Creswell, J.W & Clarks, V.P. (2018). *Designing and conductiong mixed methods research*. SAGE Publications Inc.

Fry, P.H. (2012). *Theory of Literature*. Yale University Press.

Gelder, K. (2004). *Popular Fiction. The Logics and Practices of a Literary Field*. Routledge.

Glover, D. (2015). *The Cambridge Companion to Popular Fiction*. Cambridge University Press.

Hale, D. (1999). *Ingredients of a Commercial Romance Novel*. Prince Press.

Halimah Mohamed Ali. (2015). Searching Paradigmes of Malay Women: What Can We Learn Form Literature. *Malay Literature*, Volume 28 (1), 107-125.

Henry, L. (2005). *The Fiction Dictionary*. Penguin Publishing Group.

Kamariah Kamarudin. (2014). *Novel Melayu dalam Pelbagai Perspektif*. Penerbit Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Kroll, J. & Harper, G. (2013). *Research methods in creative writing*. Bloomsbury Publishing PLC. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-27254-6

Maheboob, M.T. (2018). Popular Fiction: Some Theoretical Perspectives. *Epitome: International Journal of Multidisciplinary Researh*, Vol 4, Issues 7, 1-12.

Mayerson, M.S. (2010). Popular fiction studies: The Advantages of a New Field. *Studies in Popular Culture*, 33, 21-40.

Misran Rokimen (Ed). (2021). *Sastera Popular Antara Komersialisme dengan Intelektualisme*. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Mohamed Nazreen Shahul Hamid, Nadiatul Shakinah Abdul Rahman, Rohaya Md. Ali & Jacquelina Karimon. (2022). Malay women's challenges in balancing careers and households: A Textual analysis study of selected short stories by Zurinah Hassan. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 10:1, DOI: 10.1080/23311983.2023.2259663

Mohamed Nazreen Shahul Hamid. (2018). Proses Kreatif dan Kesannya Terhadap Cengkaman Kompleksiti Cinderella dalam Penulisan Novel Popular. In Muhammad Nur Saiful Ghazali & Sohaimi Abd Aziz (Eds.), *Proses Kreatif Keterlibatan dan Pemasaran Digital*. (pp. 89-100). ITBM.

Murphy, B.M. (2018). *Key Concepts in Contemporary Popular Fiction*. Edinburgh University Press.

Nurul Hilwany Che Shaffine, Mohd. Zariat Abdul Rani, Norazlina Mohd. Kiram & Muhd Zulkifli Ismail. (2020). Konflik percintaan dalam novel *Adam dan Hawa* karya Aisya Sofea. *MANU*, Bil. 31 (2), 1-17.

Palmer, J. (2020). *Potboilers: Methods, Concepts and Case Studies in Popular Fiction*. Routledge.

Prince, P. (2018). *Popular Novel and The Writer*. Wolf Book.

Rahimah A. Hamid. (2015, July). *Meniti Rindu* sebagai novel popular. [Paper presentation]. Seminar Pemikiran Affifudin Omar, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Pulau Pinang.

Rout, B.D. (2017). Five Popular Genre in Fiction, https://yourstory.com/mystory/5031a01c53-five-popular-genres-in-fiction.

S. Othman Kelantan. (2005). Karya Picisan dan Karya Popular, *Dewan Sastera*, Bil.3, pg.12.

Samsiah Mohd Nor. (2012). *Ekspresi Bahasa Wanita dalam Novel-Novel Popular*. [Ph.D Thesis, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia].

Smellie, W. (2018). *Encylopedia Britannica*. Palala Press.

Talib Samat. (2013). Perbandingan Novel Popular dengan Novel Sains. *Jurnal Antarabangsa Persuratan Melayu*, 1, 214-218.

Zhang, C., & Wu, B. (2023). Characterizing gender stereotypes in popular fiction: A machine learning approach. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, 13(4), 1-26, https://doi.org/10.30935/ojcmt/13644

Mohamed Nazreen Shahul Hamid (Corresponding author)
Senior Lecturer
School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy (SLCP)
Universiti Utara Malaysia, 06010, UUM Sintok, Kedah
Email: nazreen@uum.edu.my

Phat Awang Deng
Senior Lecturer
School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy (SLCP)
Universiti Utara Malaysia, 06010, UUM Sintok, Kedah
Email: phat@uum.edu.my

Rohaya Md Ali
Senior Lecturer
School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy (SLCP)
Universiti Utara Malaysia, 06010, UUM Sintok, Kedah
Email: aya@uum.edu.my