

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Tom Clancy is one of the great contemporary American novelists. He was “one of only two authors to have sold two million copies on a first printing in the 1990s. His 1989 novel *Clear and Present Danger*, sold 1,625,544 hardcover copies, making it the #1 bestselling novel of the 1980s” (“Tom Clancy”). One of his novels, *The Hunt for Red October* was sold millions of copies on a first printing in the 1984. The book was a huge success because it introduced the techno-thriller genre, which the rest of his following fictional works are all about.

Techno-thriller is a fiction genre that is made up of a story that has characteristics of, and places on, real-world or plausible near-future technology, often pertaining to a world war or cyber terrorism. There is strong detail in all of the subject matter of techno-thriller genre akin to hard science fiction, but meshed up with other genres, such as, but not limited to: apocalyptic, science fiction, espionage, political, spy, thriller, and action. (“Techno-thriller”)

Clancy combined military action/adventure, science fiction and espionage fiction with social issues and hardships of everyday life to make his fictional works seem real.

One of Tom Clancy's novels is *Op-Center: Line of Control*, which I am going to analyze in this thesis. The story tells about an American task force, Striker team of Op-Center, sent to act as a nuclear deterrent. The mission is to prevent a potential nuclear war between India and Pakistan. The story is of course a work of fiction, but the scenes in the novel are realistically portrayed, making the fiction seem plausible to happen in the real world.

In this novel, I notice that plot is the most important literary element. "The plot usually refers to the sequence of events and happenings that make up a story" ("Plot"). Therefore, it would be appropriate for me to analyze the three elements of plot of Tom Clancy's *Op Center: Line of Control*, namely suspense, surprise and artistic unity. "Suspense refers to the anticipation of readers (or of an audience) concerning the outcome of events in a novel, story, or play." (Shaw 365); surprise "occurs when the events in the story violate the expectations the reader has formed." ("Surprise"); and artistic unity is

a condition of a successful literary work whereby all its element work together for the achievement of its central purpose. In an artistically unified work nothing is included that is irrelevant to the central purpose, nothing is omitted that is essential to it, and the parts are arranged in the most effective order for the achievement of that purpose. ("Artistic Unity")

Statement of the Problem

The problems that are going to be analyzed in this thesis are :

1. Which parts of the story acts as the suspense in the novel?
2. Which parts of the story acts as the surprise in the novel?
3. How is the artistic unity in the novel?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the statements of the problem, the purposes of the study are :

1. To show what suspense is revealed in the novel.
2. To show what surprises is revealed in the novel.
3. To show how the artistic unity is presented in the novel.

Method of Research

I use library research in writing my thesis. First, I read Tom Clancy's *Op-Center: Line of Control* as the primary text. Then, I take some data from the Internet sites and references to support my analysis of the elements of plot in the novel. In the end, I draw some conclusion.

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into three chapters, which are preceded by the Table of Contents and the Abstract. Chapter One contains the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research, and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two contains the analysis of suspense, surprise and artistic unity in Tom Clancy's *Op-Center: Line of Control*. Chapter Three is the Conclusion.

The thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendixes, which consist of the Synopsis of the Novel and the Biography of the Author.

