

Myth and Reality in Rudiyant's Novel *Dead File 666*: A Study of Magical Realism

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Received 01/03/2025 ; accepted 13/04/2025 ; published 30/04/2025

ABSTRACT

This research discusses the representation of magical realism and the interconnection between myth and reality in Rudiyant's novel *Dead File 666*. The research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with the theory of five elements of magical realism from Wendy B. Faris as the basis of the analysis. Therefore, the research methods used in this study are hermeneutics and semiotics. The data collected in this study is in the form of text excerpts that show magical realism as well as myths and reality. The source of this research is the novel *Dead File 666* by Rudiyant. The data collection technique uses the Listen and take notes technique. The results of the study show that magical elements such as Irreducible Element, Phenomenal World, Unsettling Doubts, Merging of Realms, and Disruptions of Time, Space, and Identity appear significantly in the narrative structure of the novel. The number 666 which is associated with bad luck and death is represented as a digital myth that is believed by the characters, but in the development of the story it is also questioned and criticized. Thus, this novel not only presents a supernatural story, but also becomes a medium of reflection on how modern society interprets myths in contemporary reality. This study shows that *Dead File 666* blurs the line between rational and irrational, and raises a criticism of the dominance of logic in understanding human experience. An important implication of this research is that literature can contribute to interdisciplinary study discussions to understand magical realism, myths, and realities in socio-cultural life through narrative texts.

KEYWORDS

Magical Realism
Myth
Reality
Literature
Dead File 666
Contemporary
Literature

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1. Introduction

Magical realism is a literary genre that combines magical elements into a realistic setting, creating a narrative that combines reality with fantastic elements (Faris, 2004). In the context of literature, this approach is gaining more attention, along with the emergence of works that combine everyday reality with mythological and supernatural elements. Magical realism is a narrative strategy that incorporates fantastical or mythical elements into fiction that seems realistic, and is often associated with Latin American literature (Fajrin & Wibowo, 2019; Sánchez, 2011). Magical realism often appears in works that elevate myths, local beliefs, and elements of traditional culture. For example, in the novel *Srimenanti* by Joko Pinurbo, five characteristics of magical realism are found (Liani et al., 2024). Likewise, its application to the novel *Dead File 666* by Rudiyant brings a mystical story that contains magic or myth and reality, where there are five elements of magical elements that are stated (Faris, 2004).

Myths are traditional narratives that contain symbolic and sacred elements, serving to explain natural phenomena, world origins, and social and spiritual values in a society.

Myths not only serve as entertainment stories, but also as a means to understand and interpret the reality of life. In general, myths mean stories that develop in society and are believed to have a connection with spiritual forces from the past, and have a function as a guideline for life that regulates social values and norms (Firdaus & Ansori, 2024; Huzain et al., 2016; Sartini, 2009). In the context of Indonesian culture, myths are often closely related to religious practices and traditional ceremonies. For example, in Javanese Islamic society, myths cannot be separated from ceremonies that are periodic and function to renew and maintain the balance and nature of nature (Solikah et al., 2024). Likewise, it is related to the novel *Dead File 666* by Rudiyant which is driven by the problem of numbers, namely the number 666. The number 666 is often considered a symbol of darkness or evil forces. This view continues to develop and is inherent in popular culture as a symbol of supernatural and terrifying things (Yunita & Sugiarti, 2020). Related to the myth the researcher reveals that the number has nothing to do with bad luck or death, where an event that causes death if it is related to reality, it is more logical if the event that causes death is just a coincidence or an event with a complex cause. And it has nothing to do with the number 666 if it is connected to real life. Thus, the number 666 serves not only as a provocative title, but also as a cultural symbol that blurs the boundaries between the real world and the supernatural world in the novel.

Rudiyant's novel *Dead File 666* is one of the important works of Indonesian fiction to be studied through the approach of magical realism, because it presents a combination of local myths, spiritual experiences, and modern narratives in reality. The novel's main attraction lies in its ability to disguise the boundaries between reality and the unnaturalness that manifest naturally in its narrative structure. Supernatural events, such as the appearance of spirit beings, the character's experience that crosses the dimensions of time and space, to the character's acceptance of irrational things as something natural, show the typical way of working magical realism in which the supernatural and the real merge without the need for logical explanation (Faris, 2004; Zamora & Faris, 1995). In this context, myth is not only present as a cultural background, but as a narrative force that shapes the understanding of the characters and readers of reality. This is an important issue to examine, because without a critical understanding of magical realism in novels such as *Dead File 666*, readers tend to interpret it simply as entertainment fiction, without grasping the symbolic and spiritual dimensions contained in it (Justine et al., 2021; Mustika & Handani, 2023).

In the magical realism of the novel *Dead File 666*, it is important to examine how magical realism operates in *Dead File 666* as a battlefield of conflict between myth and reality, as this work purely voices the dynamics of local culture that are often marginalized in mainstream literary discourse. This research is expected not only to expand the understanding of the aesthetics of magical realism in Indonesian literature, but also to add insight into how myth can be a tool for reinterpreting social realities that are fraught with ideological, spiritual, and historical tensions. However, *Dead File 666* is not only a work of fiction, but also a cultural artifact that represents the complexity of identity, values, and beliefs of today's Indonesian people. Through this analysis, the researcher tries to describe the relationship between reality and non-reality, as well as understand how irrational experiences are framed as part of the daily lives of the characters in the novel. Thus, this study highlights how magical realism is a means to reflect on the complexities of identity, time, and space in a local cultural context rich in mythological elements.

2. Methods

This research is a qualitative descriptive research, this literary research is qualitative descriptive because the object studied is in the form of texts, words, and meanings in literary works, not numbers or statistical data Ratna (2011:47). The research on myth and reality in the novel *Dead File 666* with a magical realism style is placed within the framework of a qualitative approach by combining hermeneutic and semiotic methods. In the study of magical realism, the hermeneutic approach plays an important role in

uncovering the cultural meanings, social criticism, and symbolism contained in magical elements (Ricoeur, 2021). According to Hasmiyatni et al (2024), hermeneutic reading is a rereading of the text from beginning to end with interpretation based on literary conventions. Hermeneutics is used by researchers to reveal hidden and unexpressed meanings in the narrative of Rudiyan's novel *Dead File 666*. Semiotics is the science that studies all forms of sign systems and how they are used to construct meaning in social and cultural contexts (Lantowa et al., 2017). Semiotics there are two elements, namely markers and markers, markers are things that indicate a concept and markers are concepts that are marked by markers. These two elements serve as aspects of the unity of an inseparable sign. Semiotics provides a way to decompose the structure of signs and symbols in the novel, where the researcher finds the symbol in the novel that is the reference for the problem, namely the number 666 itself.

Data and data sources in literary research are everything related to the literary text and relevant to the purpose of the research, both in the form of direct quotations, structural forms, and symbolic meanings contained in the work (Ratna, 2011:53). The data used in this research is in the form of descriptive text that needs to be paraphrased, so the method used is qualitative. The source of data in this study comes from the novel *Dead File 666* by Rudiyan. The text of the novel itself is the main focus of the research, because it contains exposure to magical elements, and reality that are integrated into the narrative structure (Faris, 2004).

The data collection technique is a literary research conducted by literature study, namely reading and observing the literary works being studied, then recording relevant data based on the focus of the problem and the theory used (Ratna, 2011:55). The data collection techniques used are reading techniques and recording techniques. Data analysis techniques are literary research that is carried out in a descriptive, analytical and interpretive manner, namely by describing the data obtained from the text and then analyzing based on theories used to find deeper meanings (Ratna, 2011:60). The researchers used interactive data analysis techniques in the opinion of Miles and Huberman. This model consists of three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. All three take place interactively and continuously until the data becomes dense, focused, and meaningful (Miles & Huberman, 2014:31-33).

3. Results and Discussion

Research on Rudiyan's novel *Dead File 666* was conducted to explore the presence of elements of magical realism in stories, especially through the combination of myth and reality. By analyzing aspects of the story that unite the real world and magical elements, this study shows how the author is able to present horror fiction that remains grounded in everyday reality, but is filled with supernatural events that are not explained logically. This state creates a very thin line between reality and magic, which is the hallmark of magical realism. The main focus of this study covers two important issues, namely: 1) The representation of magical realism in the novel *Dead File 666*; 2) The interconnection between myth, and reality forms the narrative structure in the novel *Dead File 666* by Rudiyan. This study aims to present the results of research based on the object, namely the novel *Dead File 666* by Rudiyan by containing elements of magical realism in five elements, namely: Irreducible Element, Phenomenal World, Unsettling Doubts, Merging of Realms, and Disruptions of Time, Space, and Identity in the study of magical realism (Faris, 2004). In addition, exposure in the form of narratives related to the relationship between myth and reality in Rudiyan's novel *Dead File 666* is also presented in this study.

3.1. Magical Realism in Novel *Dead File 666*

Rudiyan's novel *Dead File 666* represents the reality of teenage life formed in a mystical context and supernatural terror. The story centers on Ryan, a teenager whose life changes after buying a starter card with a number ending in 6667 numbers that in popular

mythology are associated with demonic symbols and evil forces. In this context, the number 666 appears as a modern digital myth, which is not only symbolic but has a real impact on the lives of the characters (Barthes, 1972). As the story progresses, Ryan is dragged into a supernatural game called Telescream, which is the beginning of the entry of supernatural powers. Death after death occurs systematically, showing how magical elements are integrated into the daily life of the characters without being explained rationally, which is a characteristic of magical realism (Zamora & Faris, 1995).

The supernatural element is not considered foreign by the characters, but is present and accepted as part of the reality they are living. In the framework of magical realism, this shows how the boundaries between the real and the irrational become blurred, creating an effect of alienation as well as a connection to the reader's reality (Faris, 2004). The story of Ryan and his friends trapped in a supernatural game called Telescream depicts magical phenomena that are inseparable from everyday technology, such as cell phones and SMS. This corresponds to the concept of digital magical realism, where magical elements are accepted as a natural part of everyday reality. Within this framework, the novel displays supernatural powers (the curse of the number 666 and the death game) that are embraced and believed by the characters without ever being scientifically explained following the characteristics of magical realism that have been studied in modern literary studies. Overall, *Dead File 666* shows that myths don't disappear in the digital age, but rather are transformed into real, terrifying technological myths. Reality and myth are explored effectively through a magical realism approach that becomes one.

3.1.1. Irreducible Elements

This element refers to the presence of magical events or entities that cannot be explained by the laws of rational logic or modern science. The Irreducible Element is present as an integral part of the narrative world, and is taken for granted by the characters in the supernatural elements and the everyday of technology in a harmonious and meaningful narrative. Thus, the data in this study are presented sequentially in five aspects of the story without critical questions (Faris, 2004:7). In the novel *Dead File 666*, magical elements appear through mysterious files that bring supernatural influences to reality. For example, the appearance of a supernatural figure from the "666" file that causes events that make no sense but are not questioned by the characters. This element is closely related to local myths and beliefs about the spirit world that still live in the community (Faris, 2004; Zamora & Faris, 1995). The findings of the Irreducible Element in this novel are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Irreducible Element in Rudiyant's Novel *Dead File 666*.

No	Quotation	Information	Data and Page Codes
1	"That's the devil's number, you better not use it..." suggested Gina as she stepped into the room. He lowered two glasses of red cold drinks onto the study table near his brother.	In the context of magical realism, the number becomes an Irreducible Element because its meaning cannot be explained logically, only through people's belief in the "devil's number".	DF666/D1/10
2	"Whatever you say, it's still a demonic number. An unfortunate number for its users. It's not a matter of the GSM operator or the front number, but the last four numbers,"	This statement reinforces the existence of the number 666 as a symbol of the devil or negative forces. The Irreducible Element arises because society no longer questions the logical origin of the number, but rather accepts it as destiny or belief.	DF666/D2/10
3	"Three numbers six in a row, everyone knows that. 666 is the devil's number! A sacred number that has a mystical aura and has a supernatural mystery that is difficult	The number 666 is explained purely as a sacred and dangerous number. In magical realism, this number becomes a metaphysical symbol that is present in the life of the	DF666/D3/11

	to translate. Then 67, if you add up to 13...! I guess you understand what that number means? 666 and 13...!"	character and cannot be explained rationally. It reflects magical beliefs that have been passed down from generation to generation.	
4	Lukie's blood was rustling when he heard it, he just realized the content of the number his brother was referring to. 666 is the devil's number and 13 is the unlucky number. Satan and pesky are two scary words in life.	This quote shows the symbolic meaning of certain numbers that are considered to bring bad luck. The presence of this number as a carrier of bad luck includes the Irreducible Element because it contains a symbolic meaning that transcends reality.	DF666/D4/11
5	Although there is no written law about that number, but the two numbers, 666 or 13 are still sacred numbers," Budi Han Jun still insisted.	Although there is no written law, the number is still believed to be a mystical number. This shows the Irreducible Element because the number has a "power" based on beliefs that are difficult for common sense to explain.	DF666/D5/29
6	"Noise means the sound of an uncontrolled helicopter or the sound of that devastating explosion!" Lukie tried to explain the meaning of the second SMS of Isdiyanto's incident. "The fool who approaches means Isdiyanto. His terrible spin could mean a propeller that exploded with the explosion, and because Isdiyanto was approaching, he was the victim!"	The mysterious sound associated with death indicates the presence of supernatural elements. <i>The Irreducible Element</i> appears when the character believes that a certain sound is a harbinger of doom. This reflects magical thinking in contemporary culture.	DF666/D6/131
7	"Something that is confined to loneliness and long silence...!" sighed Anisah. "Lonely thing, what is it?"	Objects that are considered sacred or have mysterious powers become Irreducible elements because their existence is believed to exceed the function of ordinary objects. This belief lives in a narrative without the need for logical explanation.	DF666/D7/134
8	"Yes, the demonic number is alive and has a supernatural hand that can harm all of us who are involved with it. That's why you stay away from him as much as possible!"	The character believes that supernatural beings coexist with humans. It shows a dual reality between the real world and the magical world, a hallmark of the Irreducible Element in magical realism.	DF666/D8/295

Information:

DF666: Novel *Dead File 666*

D1-D8: Data Findings 1-8

Table 1 shows the existence of the Irreducible Element in the form of mystical number symbols such as 666 and 13 which are consistently associated with supernatural things, curses, or bad luck. These figures not only appear as narrative elements, but are also believed to have powers beyond human reason, causing deep fear, anxiety, and insecurity in the characters. This element falls into the category of Irreducible Element because its meaning cannot be explained rationally by common logic, but can only be understood through certain beliefs, myths, or cultural symbolism. The above quotes show that figures that he considers mystical and events that contain the supernatural have been collectively implanted as evil entities that bring bad luck. In the context of popular culture and urban beliefs, the number 666 is also synonymous with the symbol of demons or the presence of supernatural beings, and this is reinforced by various repetitions in the

narrative that assert that the number has dangerous magical powers (Goshu, 2024; Nelson, 2025).

Furthermore, the Irreducible Element appears when the numbers are thought to be able to influence reality supernaturally. As explained in the narration, the mysterious voice of the sender of the demon number leads to the character's death indirectly. This is an example of *magical causality*, which is when a supernatural or mystical event is considered to be the direct cause of a real tragedy. Numbers, sounds, or ordinary objects that are given magical meaning in the story show how the Irreducible Element works: it exists as part of a narrative reality that cannot be proven, but believed. As expressed by Faris (2004), the Irreducible Element in magical realism is a form of representation of an alternative reality that lives in the collective beliefs of society. So, even though the number 666 is factually just a number, in the framework of magical realism it becomes a symbol that has power, because it is believed and deeply felt by the characters and society in the story.

3.1.2. Phenomenal World

This term suggests that the familiar real world remains intact and coherent in the narrative of magical realism. Magical events do not erase or disrupt the existence of the everyday world, they both coexist in one continuity (Faris, 2004). In *Dead File 666*, the everyday world of urban teenagers with school, family, and digital technologies such as mobile phones and the internet is normal, but is slowly interrupted by the presence of magical elements in the form of mysterious files that trigger supernatural events. This strangeness does not separate the characters from reality, but rather blends into their routines. The balance between rational reality and local myths, such as belief in the curse number 666, forms a typical Phenomenal World in magical realism (Setiawan, 2022). The magical world is not an alternate world, but rather an integral part of the character's daily experience. The findings of Phenomenal World in this novel are described in Table 2.

Table 2. Phenomenal World in Rudiyant's Novel *Dead File 666*.

No	Quotation	Information	Data and Page Codes
1	"The darkness of the night does not bode well. Don't ignore it, because grace or disaster could come from there."	This quote describes the character's perception of the surrounding world phenomenally, namely the night as a natural space that is still associated with the possibility of disasters or miracles.	DF666/D1/47
2	"What is experienced now is a disaster from the sky"	The sky, as part of the real world, is given meaning as a source of destruction. This shows how Phenomenal World works: the world remains logical (disasters can come from the sky like storms), but in this narrative the meaning of disaster is shifted to something mystical and symbolic.	DF666/D2/131
3	"The noise only makes the ears of fools in the afternoon. Don't get close if you don't want to see the terrible spins. Because all the pleasure, happiness and all the pain that	Natural phenomena such as noise or propellers in the afternoon are part of the real world. However, this experience is framed as a supernatural omen that holds danger. The physical world is still recognized by the reader, but its meaning is interpreted symbolically and spiritually by the characters. This is the essence of the Phenomenal	DF666/D3/131

exists will go away there. Above all that unfolds...!"	World in magical realism: the magic is inconspicuous, but it is latent and accepted as part of everyday life.
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Information:

DF666: Novel *Dead File 666*

D1-D3: Findings Data number 1-3

Table 2 shows the elements of Phenomenal World in magical realism refers to a fictional world built with realistic logic where the laws of cause and effect, social structure, and the psychological and physical conditions of the characters still refer to everyday reality. However, magic or magical elements are present in the world naturally and are not questioned by the characters. This world seems natural to both the reader and the characters, but in it there are various events or symbols that cannot be explained scientifically (Faris, 2004). In Rudiyant's novel *Dead File 666*, the Phenomenal World is realized through daily realities that are close to the lives of urban and digital people such as the use of mobile phones, belief in certain numbers, and natural disasters. Although this world seems logical and rational, the presence of supernatural elements such as mysterious sounds, sacred numbers, or omens from the sky is accepted by the characters of the story as something natural and real. This reality forms a fictional world that does not reject magic, but also does not make it an extraordinary thing that is the main characteristic of Phenomenal World (Fitria, 2024).

The existence of this element is important because it shows how magical realism does not build a fantasy world completely separate from the real world, but instead places magic within a realistic and familiar space. Thus, the Phenomenal World creates an effect of ambiguity between reality and magic, and reinforces the impression that the world may contain things that cannot be explained, but still be accepted as part of life (Faris, 2004). The characters in *Dead File 666* do not show excessive shock at the strange events they experience, because in their narrative consciousness, the world is indeed filled with invisible elements that are naturally present.

3.1.3. Unsettling Doubts

Magical realism often creates doubt or uncertainty in the reader about what is truly real. Magical events in stories can be interpreted as real or metaphorical, thus creating narrative ambiguity (Faris, 2004:17). In *Dead File 666*, the appearance of mysterious messages from the starter card numbered "666" and the series of supernatural events that befall Ryan create a tension between objective reality and possible illusions. The reader is positioned to continue to doubt: did the event really happen or was it just a projection of adolescent trauma and anxiety constructed through urban myths? This ambiguity is in line with the concept of Unsettling Doubts where the boundary between real and unreal becomes blurred (Wijaya & Lestari, 2024). The doubt reinforces the magical nuances while reflecting the complexity of social and psychological realities in the narrative. The findings of Unsettling Doubts in this novel are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. Unsettling Doubts in Rudiyant's Novel *Dead File 666*

No	Quotation	Information	Data and Page Codes
1	"I think your misfortune is because the final number is 13 on the cellphone number. Everyone knows the meaning of that number, a number that many people avoid, whether it's in business or in life," said Lukie again without turning away from the fireplace.	This statement shows a belief in numbers as a source of bad luck. However, behind that belief lies a doubt: is it true that numbers can influence fate? This is where Unsettling Doubt arises when a character defends beliefs that actually have no logical basis.	DF666/D1/26

2	"But this time he was wrong!" said Ryan. "I doubt the truth that comes from the mouth of a snatched child...!"	Ryan questions the authority and truth that people around him usually take for granted. He shows an incredulous attitude towards mystical information, which indicates the emergence of doubts about the "reality" that has been considered true. This is a form of Unsettling Doubt that creates a narrative tension between logic and belief.	DF666/D2/26
3	Several other voices of support were also heard in response. Only Miranti is different. "Don't listen to Yan, it's just a superstitious myth. Where is there any misfortune or hardship in life linked to numbers?"	This quote shows a collective situation where some people show support for an opinion, but the context of doubt remains felt because there is no consensus. This reinforces an atmosphere of uncertainty, where usually solid beliefs begin to be shaken by collective doubt.	DF666/D3/27
4	If there is no wind and no rain, why can the big billboard fall all of a sudden?" Joanita, who was standing next to Budi, also looked up.	The characters question the strangeness that occurs, as if looking for a logical explanation for the mysterious event. This question illustrates doubts towards established knowledge, triggering a search for meaning beyond common logic. This is called <i>Unsettling Doubts</i> , where the character feels that something is wrong with reality.	DF666/D4/37
5	The tax sticker number is 854-3388/0106- 667. Pay attention to the last number, 66671 Isdiyanto shook his head in disbelief when he saw the last number lined up with the advertising tax number. "No way...?" he hissed.	The character shows surprise when he realizes that a number that is considered unlucky appears in real life. When the character cannot accept it as a coincidence, doubts arise about the coincidence itself. This emphasizes the role of Unsettling Doubts in affirming the ambiguity of reality.	DF666/D5/39
6	Could this just be a coincidence?" asked Ryan to himself. "Why can the last four numbers on the sticker be the same as the numbers we talked about recently? The number is also the same as the Telescream number, is this just a coincidence? yes, maybe it's just a coincidence...!"	This quote is an example of <i>Unsettling Doubt</i> , when the character cannot tell the difference between chance and omen. This sentence reflects the feeling of discomfort when logic begins to fail to explain what is going on, creating a gap for magic to subtly enter the narrative.	DF666/D6/40
7	" <i>tumben</i> , usually you don't believe all kinds of premonitions about the trinkets," joked Qisthi. In my opinion, it might be a good idea to follow what Benjamin said. Because whatever happens, everything is already a divine destiny."	This quote shows the internal conflicts and changes in the character's beliefs due to strange events. Doubt arises as the boundary between myth and reality becomes blurred.	DF666/D7/47
8	Ryan shook his head in disbelief. "I mean, Grandma, telescream is like an intangible devil who always asks for a victim when the sixth month comes. And the dead victims are always related to the demonic number. How can you know all these things?"	Ryan's character does not take for granted the mystical statement that his parents (grandmother) believes. He questions the hidden meaning behind the myth, pointing out doubts that mark a pivotal point in the structure of magical realism. The figure does not deny, but also does not fully believe that is the essence of Unsettling Doubt.	DF666/D8/297

Information:

DF666: Novel *Dead File 666*

D1-D8: Data Findings 1-8

In the magical realism in table 3, Unsettling Doubts refers to the moment when the characters experience doubts about what they perceive to be reality or common belief. This element works as a bridge between the rational world and the magical world, where belief in logic is shaken by events that seem beyond reason. This doubt is not only personal, but also widespread, because it touches on fundamental things such as fate, luck, or mystical omens (Faris, 2004). In the novel *Dead File 666*, doubts arise from the characters' incredulity in the relationship between certain numbers and bad events. The characters begin to question whether it is true that the myth or symbol of the number can bring misfortune, or whether it is all just a coincidence.

This doubt is further strengthened by the quotations that have been presented, which show that the characters are at a crossroads between believing in myths or sticking to logic. It reflects how magical realism does not present a completely rational or magical world, but places the character and the reader in constant ambiguity. Through the element of Unsettling Doubts, readers are invited to join in doubting the boundaries between reality and miracles, between chance and fate, and between facts and myths. These doubts actually reinforce the magical atmosphere in the story because it makes the magic feel possible in a familiar real world (Faris, 2004; Zamora & Faris, 1995).

3.1.4. Merging of Realms

The real world and the supernatural world are not clearly separated in magical realism. Instead of being separated, the two blend and overlap each other to create a narrative experience that unites material and spiritual realities (Faris, 2004:21). In *Dead File 666*, the boundaries between the real world marked by urban youth activities such as attending school and using digital technology are mixed with the supernatural realm that emerges through the curse of the number 666, supernatural voices, and the appearance of invisible entities. Magical events infiltrate everyday life without logical transitions, creating a narrative space in which local myths and modern realities blend organically (Hermansya et al., 2024). The findings of Merging of Realms in this novel are described in Table 4.

Table 4. Merging of Realms in Rudiyant's Novel *Dead File 666*.

No	Quotation	Information	Data and Page Codes
1	"In this realm, there is something that the common sense cannot digest but in fact it exists. The devil's number, although some people do not believe in it, actually exists. She lives in this realm, interferes in human life!" The grandmother's voice sounded soft but clear.	This quote shows that the supernatural world is not outside the reality of the character, but rather melts directly into everyday life. The term "he lives in this realm" marks the union between the physical and metaphysical worlds. In the context of magical realism, this is a form of <i>Merging of Realms</i> , in which the supernatural elements (living and affecting demonic figures) are perceived as real by the characters without creating excessive strangeness.	DF666/D18/295

Information:

DF666: Novel *Dead File 666*

D18: Finding Data number 18

The Merging of Realms element in table 4 in magical realism refers to the union between the real world and the magical world, two different realities but shown to fuse naturally in the narrative. In such a world, the boundaries between rationality and the supernatural become blurred, and its characters treat miracles as part of everyday life (Faris, 2004; Zamora & Faris, 1995). Supernatural figures or forces such as "demonic numbers" are depicted coexisting with humans in the same reality. The sentence "he lives

in this realm" is proof that magical reality does not come from parallel or illusory worlds, but rather merges into everyday life and influences human actions. This is the essence of the Merging of Realms world that seems ordinary to harbor an active but not surprising supernatural dimension for its characters (Meylani et al., 2025). This reflects the typical structure of magical realism that rejects the dichotomy between reality and fantasy, and portrays the world as a space full of ambiguity (Tahir & Qadriani, 2024).

3.1.5. Disruptions of Time, Space, and Identity

Magical realism often shakes the perception of time, space, and individual identity. Narratives may involve travel across time, illogical space, or fluid and fickle character identities (Faris, 2004:25). In *Dead File 666*, disruption to the dimensions of space and time appears through supernatural events that appear for no apparent chronological reason such as the appearance of supernatural beings in Ryan's personal space, or drastic changes in mood and location in just a matter of seconds. Ryan's own identity becomes blurred, between being an ordinary teenager or a chosen figure who is "connected" to another dimension through a cursed starter card. This phenomenon represents the dissolution of the boundaries of identity and reality, in line with the characteristics of magical realism that presents reality as something volatile and not absolute (Susilo, 2024).

Table 5. Disruptions of Time, Space, and Identity in Rudiyant's Novel *Dead File 666*.

No	Quotation	Information	Data and Page Codes
1	"Night darkness can mean dark skies. Disaster is coming from there, meaning something wretched is coming from the sky...!"	This quote shows a disturbance to space. The "sky" here is not just a physical place, but a metaphysical dimension associated with the coming of disasters. The space of the sky is no longer neutral, but rather a source of catastrophe. This is in accordance with the concept of space in magical realism.	DF666/D1/47
2	"The darkness of the night comes from above the sky, in other words the meaning of this SMS is that the coming disaster comes from there..."	This quote blurs the line between modern communication (SMS) and supernatural prophecy. Time in the text becomes interrupted because the present (message received) is directly associated with the future (impending disaster). This shows that the past, present, and future time disturbances merge into one that is the main feature of time disturbances.	DF666/D2/131
3	"The noise only makes the ears of fools in the afternoon. Don't get close if you don't want to see the terrible spins. Because all the pleasure, happiness and all the pain that exists will go away there. Above all that unfolds...!"	The space in this quote becomes menacing and loses stability. The "terrible spin" is not definitively described, making the space unfamiliar and distracting the reader's perception. This is an example of spatial disruption, where ordinary places (afternoons, general atmosphere) turn into deadly magical terrains.	DF666/D3/131
4	"I am sure that telescream is alive and always sticks out its fangs when it enters June, the sixth month of the International calendar. Starting from the first to the thirteenth, so every year. I don't know how many people have been victims of telescream, it's obvious that every year he has to swallow	The time in this quote is in the form of a fixed cycle, which is the sixth month of each year. Not following the progressive logic of time, the events in the story repeat constantly. It is temporal that indicates time disruption. Past and future events merge and become the long-awaited inevitability.	DF666/D4/296

	thirteen people...!"		
5	The grandmother nodded, "I heard the term game this time. In the events of years ago, everything just happened. Without any notice or puzzle. What is clear is that every victim who dies is always related to the number 666 or the unlucky number 13. Starting every day of the sixth month, that's when the first telescream tumbal falls!"	The characters no longer have control over their living identities, which are already defined by supernatural symbols. This reflects identity disruption, where the character loses agency.	DF666/D5/297
6	"It has entered the twelfth day, the day of your death. Get ready to welcome him, because today the angel of death will come to visit, knocking on the door of your sad soul...!" joked Ryan as he stood up.	The time in this quote becomes symbolic. Ordinary days (the twelfth) are interpreted as spiritual times that mark death. Human identity can no longer be separated from the metaphysical fate that merges with time. It is a form of time and identity disruption.	DF666/D6/378

Information:

DF666: Novel *Dead File 666*

D1-D8: Data Findings 1-8

In table 5 in magical realism, the element of Disruptions of Time, Space, and Identity appears when time does not run linearly in a linear fashion, space becomes ambiguous, and the identity of the character is fluid or disturbed. The reality in the story becomes unstable and confusing for the reader, but is accepted reasonably by the characters (Faris, 2004). In *Dead File 666*, the disruption to the dimensions of time and space is seen in the association of the numbers "666" and "13" with the mysteriously repeating cycle of death. Its characters experience time disorientation and accept death as part of a terrible destiny, as if it has been determined from space and time beyond human logic. The space becomes unstable as shown in the above quotes about a mysterious sound that appears in the afternoon and has supernatural powers. Physical space (such as forests, houses, even the sky) is transformed into a transcendent field that carries a threat or spiritual meaning. This is in accordance with the understanding that in magical realism, space is not just a physical setting, but also has a psychic and spiritual dimension (Puspitoningrum, 2024).

3.2. Myth and Reality in the Novel *Dead File 666*

In literary studies, myth, and reality are concepts that are often interrelated, especially in the genre of magical realism. Both form a structure of meaning that enriches the reading experience and expands the boundaries of reality in literary texts (Andriana et al., 2024). Myth in mythology, myth is not an ancient story, but as a communication system. Myth is a form of speech that is communicated or disguised as something "natural". Modern myths disguise cultural constructs as objective reality (Barthes, 1972). Myths in modern literary works are often adapted to reflect the dynamics of contemporary culture, creating a bridge between the past and the present (Nursilah et al., 2024). Reality in literature is a representation of the real world, but often in magical realism, this reality is expanded to encompass spiritual, emotional, and imaginary experiences. Realits in literature are not only material, but also accommodate other dimensions of human existence (FeriYansyah & Supartiningsih, 2024). Thus, reality in magical realism is a multi-layered reality, including what can be felt and what is invisible (Kurniawan, 2021).

In RudiYant's novel *Dead File 666*, the narrative is built on a dialectical foundation between myth and reality. The belief in the number 666 as a symbol of bad luck and death

becomes the main starting point of the storyline, which shows how myths that are inherited and constructed collectively can infiltrate everyday reality. However, the number 666 in the text is not presented as absolute truth, but rather is positioned as a cultural construct that is then questioned in the context of social reality. The number 666 has long been associated with the "devil's number", mainly through popular cultural influences.

However, in *Dead File 666*, the number is not just a static symbol, but rather an open field of interpretation: the characters in it believe in the magical power of the number, but at the same time also show doubt and alternative readings of it. Statements from figures like Miranti, who said "Don't listen to Yan, it's just a superstitious myth. Where is there any misfortune or hardship in life linked to numbers?" (DF666/D3/27), is a denial of the myth. This sentence not only dismantles unfounded beliefs, but also represents the logic of rational reality, which rejects myth as the determinant of human destiny. This is reinforced by another quote from Ryan, "Could this just be a coincidence?... yes, maybe it's just a coincidence...!" (DF666/D6/40), which shows the relationship between logic and irrational beliefs that have been attached. Myths often persist not because of their truth, but because they provide an interpretive framework for events that are difficult to explain (Rosmita, 2025).

In the context of this novel, the myth of the number 666 becomes a "pseudo-cause" for a series of tragic events, whereas in reality, the cause of the death of the character in the story is more logically understood as a coincidence or the result of the horror narrative structure, not because of the supernatural power of the number. In magical realism, myths are not treated as absolute facts, but rather as a narrative device that can be questioned and reconstructed (Mustika & Handani, 2023). Thus, *Dead File 666* does not justify myths, but uses them to highlight how society passively accepts myths. This novel encourages readers to be critical of mystical symbols such as 666 that have become "digital myths" in modern popular culture (Burnett & Williams, 2024; Mckinley, 2024). Thus, *Dead File 666* displays the interconnection between myth and reality through the representation of the number 666 as a symbol: on the one hand it is believed to be a trigger for catastrophe, but on the other hand it is dismantled as an arbitrary cultural discourse. The author uses the structure of magical realism to show that the boundary between the real and the unreal is a negotiable construct. In the narrative, myths are present to be in the spotlight, and to be criticized. In magical realism, myths serve to show how flexible social reality is and how easy it is for people to believe something that is not proven just because it is inherited from generation to generation (Wijayanti, 2024).

4. Conclusion

This research shows that Rudiyan's novel *Dead File 666* represents magical realism through the union between supernatural elements and the real world. According to Faris, the five elements of magical realism are consistently present, especially through the symbol of the number 666 which triggers horror narratives in the modern context. The myth of the number 666 as a symbol of bad luck and death clashes with the logic of reality in the story, which shows that the belief is not absolute, but rather the result of cultural construction. The characters in the novel show the ambiguity between believing and doubting myths, thus creating a narrative space that brings together the irrationality of myth with the rationality of reality. Thus, *Dead File 666* not only offers a horror story, but also becomes a cultural critique of the way society treats myths as truth without proof. Through an approach to magical realism, this novel succeeds in dismantling the boundaries between myth and reality, while reflecting on the way modern society deals with things that are logically inexplicable.

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