

A Kaplanian Analysis of Contrastive Rhetoric in Niven's *all the Bright Places*

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70670/sra.v4i1.2582>

Abstract

This study investigates the narrative structure of Niven's *All the Bright Places* within the framework of Robert B. Kaplan's theory of writing patterns. While the novel has been widely discussed in terms of mental health and adolescent relationships, its writing patterns and structural organization remain insufficiently explored, particularly through a cross-cultural rhetorical lens. The study employs a qualitative textual analysis, examining the arrangement of ideas and progression of the narrative to evaluate its alignment with linear-analytic or nonlinear formats as proposed by Kaplan. This research is significant as it extends the application of contrastive rhetoric to contemporary American young and enhances understanding of how cultural norms influence narrative construction. The study is expected to reveal that the novel demonstrates a blend of linear and nonlinear structures, reflecting both adherence to and deviation from traditional Anglo-American rhetorical patterns.

Keywords: Kaplan, Linear And Non-Linear Structure.

Introduction

Background of the Study

In the middle of the 1960s, Robert B. Kaplan presented contrastive rhetoric as one of the means of comprehending the way cultural background affects written discourse. Kaplan claimed that the organization of writing is culturally constructed and not universal, and postulated that there is a difference in languages and cultures in their favoured ways of organizing ideas in texts (Kaplan, 1966/1972). His schemata of rhetorical patterns generalized the linear and direct composition of the English language as compared to more circular and digressive structures found in other languages, and formed the basis of the study of the ways patterns of thinking in particular cultures were reflected in writing (Connor, 1996; Kaplan, 1966/1972).

Later researchers broadened and critiqued the initial framework offered by Kaplan in order to take into consideration the multicultural nature of writing. According to Connor and others, contrastive rhetoric could not be viewed as a prescriptive model only but as a question about the connection between culture and writing systems (Connor & Kaplan, 1987). Subsequent studies identified shortcomings to these early assertions by Kaplan, by noting that other individual factors, educational influences as well as disciplinary elements also play part in influencing writing and realize that the initial linear or nonlinear dichotomy is not the only one of rhetoric (Connor, 1996; Matsuda, 2001). Although it originated in the study of second language composition, the principles of contrastive rhetoric have been used more widely on various texts of various genres and contexts, and even on contemporary literature. Most of the literature is devoted to English as a second language writing, whereas the application of the ideas of Kaplan to American young adult fiction, where narrative

structure and organization of the ideas are based on the rhetorical conventions of writing in English, has a relative gap (Almuhailib, 2023; Connor, 1996).

The current study, hence, aims at identifying which rhetorical pattern (linear or nonlinear) *All the Bright Places* observes as explained in the framework of Kaplan or it presents nonlinear characteristics in narrative writing and adds to the field of knowledge in cultural impacts of writing.

Statement of Problem

The themes of mental health and relationships of adolescents are frequently researched in relation to the work of Jennifer Niven, *All the Bright Places*, the writing patterns are not examined enough. The cross-cultural theory developed by Kaplan was applied with the help of Greenham's (2018) model of close reading to the analysis of the way culture affects writing, yet it has been rarely applied to the present-day American young adult fiction. The present study explores the structure of the narrative by Niven and the arrangement of ideas, with the help of Kaplan's theory of contrastive rhetoric, to find out whether the novel has a linear-analytic format or nonlinear format and how this relates to the cultural rhetorical norms.

Research Objective

To examine Niven's selected text in relation to the linear-analytic narrative format outlined in Kaplan's theory of writing patterns.

Research Question

What does Niven's selected text reveal about the linear-analytic narrative format outlined in Kaplan's theory of writing patterns?

Significance

The research is important as it uses the cross-cultural theory proposed by Kaplan to discuss the narrative structure of modern young adult fiction written in America, a topic that has not attracted much attention. The study can answer the question of whether *All the Bright Places* is organized linearly-analytically or nonlinearly so that the organization of narratives can influence the meaning with a reader and be used to depict cultural rhetorical conventions. The results must have a contribution to the works of literature as they reveal the correlation between cultural writing conventions and the techniques of the narrative in the young adult literature.

Delimitation

The given work is confined to a discussion of the writing styles in the novel *All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven through the prism of the cross-cultural theory provided by Kaplan. It is concerned with the analysis of whether the narrative is linear-analytic or nonlinear and the ways in which this can be said to mirror the cultural rhetorical norms. The study is limited to the text only and it does not take into account author interviews, reader responses and adaptations. It focuses on the arrangement of the story and the flow of ideas.

Literature Review

The structure of ideas in writing was a significant issue in lingual and literary research. Scholars have said that the form of discourse is one of the key factors which determine how the reader perceives and interprets texts. Robert Kaplan is one of the eminent theorists in this field whose study dealing with the cross-cultural rhetoric proved that the writing patterns differ in different cultures. He also hypothesized that the academic discourse of the west has a linear structure in which ideas flow logically and sequentially and create a very clear

analytic structure through which readers follow the argument or the narrative (Kaplan, 1966).

The study by Kaplan brought the idea of culturally defined discourse patterns instead of universal ones into existence. His work underlined that the Western writing style is otherwise characterized by a linear flow of ideas, step by step up to a conclusion. Other rhetorical traditions, conversely, can use circular, digressive, or parallel structures, which focus on context and theme development, but not on linear progression (Kaplan, 1972). These observations offered a valuable guideline in the study of narrative structuring in scholarly and literary work. The notion of linear-analytic writing has taken center stage when it comes to the issue of narrative coherence. According to scholars, linear narratives tend to show events in a linear manner and clearly define causal relations between actions and outcomes. The structure enables the reader to track characters and themes without a mix-up as it is especially useful in storytelling in most Western literary traditions (Connor, 1996).

Subsequent studies broadened the views of Kaplan, putting the concept of cross-cultural rhetoric to the study of literature. Scholars have also proposed that novels, just as scholarly text, also represent sub-textual rhetoric. The narrative structure tends to reflect the discourse patterns to other writing forms such as linear, episodic or fragmented structures (Hyland, 2004). Rhetorical theory has therefore been more applicable in analysing the ways in which narratives unfold and how literature is interpreted by the readers. Literary theory has also worked on the idea of narrative structure.

According to structuralists, stories are made up of interrelated components like plot, character and temporality. These aspects interrelate to create a meaning and navigate the reader through the narrative. The chronological order of any story or events defines the way the reader perceives cause and effect and can figure out the motivation of characters (Barry, 2009). The conventional storytelling tends to have a chronological flow where there is exposition that moves to the climax and resolution. This arrangement enables the readers to see how conflict and character change gradually evolve.

Chronological narration is based on the sequential nature of time and is common in novels where psychological or emotional development is upheld (Abrams and Harpham, 2012). Nonetheless, contemporary and modern fiction often plays around with form of narrative. To depict convoluted psychological realities, authors are turning to nonlinear forms, disjointed timelines, and more than one point of view. This kind of experimentation is an emblem of more general cultural and philosophical transformations in a way that undermines traditional modes of time, identity, and causality (McHale, 1987).

The literature of the young adults has become a major field in exploring experimentation of the narrative form. Contemporary authors always tend to employ imaginative narrative techniques in describing emotional and psychological realities that teens go through. Such compositions tend to combine more old-fashioned chronological narration with other elements of the narrative like flashbacks, personal commentary, entries in a diary, and change of point of view among characters. These tricks enable writers to share the complicated inner lives and keep the audience interested. Combining all these different narrative techniques, the modern young adult fiction can offer an active structure of identity exploration, self-development, and emotional difficulties of adolescence (Cart, 2016).

Rahman and Wali (2025), in their study “A Study of Suicidal Themes in Selected American Novels: A Durkheimian-Barbaglian Reading,” examine *All the Bright Places* alongside *Everything I Never Told You* and *I Was Here*, focusing on the sociological, cultural, and psychological dimensions of suicide. Their analysis highlights how loneliness, social pressures, and psychological factors shape the representation of suicidal experiences in the selected novels. Although the study provides valuable insight into the thematic and socio-cultural dimensions of *All the Bright Places*, it does not examine the novel from a linguistic or rhetorical perspective. In contrast, the present study extends the discussion by applying

Robert B. Kaplan's Contrastive Rhetoric theory to investigate how rhetorical patterns, organizational structures, and culturally influenced writing conventions are reflected in Niven's *All the Bright Places*. Thus, while Rahman and Wali contribute to understanding the novel's thematic and social dimensions, the present study addresses a relatively unexplored rhetorical dimension of the text.

The researchers note that novels that feature young adults often address some important societal issues, such as mental health problems, identity development, and interpersonal relationships. These themes are commonly suggested in the manner that appeals to the experiences of teenagers. The way the narrative is structured is significant to the way they are perceived and identified by the readers. In the text where the narrative pattern takes the linear form, the readers can trace the gradual character development and see clearly how their decisions result in a specific situation and thus understand better how characters develop and what are their implications (Trites, 2000).

The increasing scholarly attention to young adult literature underscores its significance in the modern cultural and literary research. According to researchers, these texts are significant to portray the experiences, feelings, and struggles of adolescents. Young adult novels, through their characters and themes, usually address social issues that could be occurring to youths and it gives us insight into their plights and their developmental processes. As a result, researchers pay more and more attention to the structural side of these narratives and understand that the structure of telling stories in young adult fiction is a significant research field that influences the way the readers perceive and interpret the text (Coats, 2011).

All the Bright Places is a novel by Jennifer Niven and it has received a lot of academic attention in the discipline of young adult literature. Some of the major issues that the novel tackles include mental illness, grief, and teenage relationships as seen through the lives of two of the main characters, Theodore Finch and Violet Markey. The story, in its own way, introduces the emotional issues that adolescents deal with when they have to deal with loss, mental issues, and identity quest. According to critics, these experiences are depicted in the novel in a sensitive and realistic manner and enable the readers to comprehend the complexity of adolescent emotions and mental health problems more effectively (Beach, 2015). The novel starts with the encounter of Finch and Violet on the school bell tower ledge where the emotional tension in the novel is created. Based on this first meeting, the story unfolds on the nature of an emerging relationship between them as they visit various places in Indiana as part of a school project. These trips help the characters to face their fear and trauma (Niven, 2015).

The theme of mental health has been pointed out by the critics in the novel. Finch is depressed and suicidal whereas Violet deals with the loss of her sister. The narrative shows how mental illness can cause isolation and misconception especially when people are not able to seek any help (Miller, 2023). This is also highlighted by scholars that the novel is against social stigmas associated with mental illness. The experiences that Finch undergoes demonstrate the ways in which society influences people into the belief that they must look normal, which makes them not recognize any psychological hardships. According to the story, stigma and unsupportive environment may increase emotional pain (Miller, 2023).

The description of bullying and social alienation in the novel is another point which is often discussed in the scholarship. Finch is also referred to as a freak by his colleagues and he finds himself being rejected by his community. Such social isolation adds into his loneliness and depressions. The family relationships also contribute to the influence of the adolescent identity in the novel. The poor relationship of Finch with his parents also leads towards his emotional instability and Violet is supported more by her parents. The two contrasting family relationships emphasize the significance of social support in trauma and loss coping (Julia, 2021).

The story form is used to emphasize the intricacy of relationships and emotional situations in adolescence and motivate readers to acknowledge the diversified manner in which young people interpret the difficulties and inner conflicts (Cart, 2016). The novel also uses physical travels as allegories of emotional and psychological discovery in addition to its unique narrative point of view. Visiting various places and sites in Indiana, Finch and Violet receive a chance to think over things, develop as people, and realize their emotions better. These voyages are not just physical journeys but also symbolize inside journeys of the characters as they face grief, fear and doubt. The story depicts their own discovery and search of their identities and places in the surrounding world through these experiences (Niven, 2015). Opponents believe that the novel is a successful attempt to show the difficulties of existence with a mental illness. The action of Finch is an indication of the unpredictability of bipolar disorder that may lead to the sudden changes of mood and energy. Those experiences shed light on the challenges that people experience when trying to cope with psychological conditions without proper support (Miller, 2023).

Male mental health has been explored in the novel as well, which has received scholarly interest. Critics also observe that literature tends to concentrate on female depression experiences whereas emotional vulnerability in men is not given much attention. The struggles of Finch in the novel add to the New Wave of debate on masculinity and mental health (Stack, 2015). Another significant feature of the novel is the presence of grief in it. The emotional experience that Violet undergoes is an illustration of the complicated coping mechanism of losing a loved one. The story, through her experiences, shows that people slowly learn to cope with loss and that they can manage to reconstruct their lives (Johnson County Library, 2022).

Researchers have also discussed how *All the Bright Places* can be used to create awareness of suicide prevention and mental health in adolescents. The novel brings a story of emotional battles of Theodore Finch whose untreated mental disorder ends in tragic outcomes (Beach, 2015). The novel has not gone without criticism in the literary circles and academicians, regardless of its popularity and favourable reception. Other critics claim that the novel may romanticise mental illness by putting the character of Finch in a light that might seem emotionally appealing or a tragedy in a simplistic way that distorts the realities of depression (Townsend, 2015).

The immense popularity of *All the Bright Places* is also indicative of bigger trends in young adult literature today, in which authors are increasingly likely to address mental health and emotional well-being concerns, as well as to address identity formation (Cart, 2016). Using the theoretical framework of Kaplan in the analysis of the narrative structure provides a useful insight into this novel. Through the analyses of how the events are organized and the flow of thoughts, scientists can identify the text as linear-analytic or apply nonlinear storytelling approaches (Kaplan, 1966). The chronological nature of the events in the novel and the obvious cause-effect relation of events show that *All the Bright Places* has the features of linear discourse, as described by Kaplan. The events take the chronological order and enable the reader to trace the evolution of the relationship between Finch and Violet and comprehend the outcomes of their actions and decisions. It presents a linear plot and storyline within which the reader can trace the character development, emotional obstacles and the development of the major plot. To give an example, his first experiences with anxiety and depression are slowly exposed by the communication with Violet, which helps Finch to learn more about his weaknesses and the tragic conclusion in the end. This method of structure makes it easier to understand and helps the readers to interpret the cause-and-effect relationships that define the story and according to the principles of linear-analytic discourse, which underlines chronological sequence and logical sequence (Connor, 1996). Simultaneously, the novel has alternating viewpoints and reflective passages, which bring some elements of narrative complexity. Introducing the story through the perspectives of

both Finch and Violet, the text asks the readers to think of various interpretations of the events which were common to them. Internal monologues, it is also tough to understand because the narrative is also developed through reflective passages and in the form of diary entries and internal or inner monologues (Hyland, 2004). These patterns of narrative can be examined with the help of the application of rhetorical theory and literary analysis. Combining the ideas of cross-cultural rhetoric and the narrative theory, researchers could study the role of structural and stylistic decisions in creating meaning and connecting with the reader (Barry, 2009).

The theory of writing patterns developed by Kaplan can be a useful resource to study organizational patterns in narratives; meanwhile, the analysis of *All the Bright Places* shows that the novel addresses the issues of mental health, identity, and emotionality. Although there has been a lot of literature on its thematic representations, there has not been much research on the rhetorical form of the novel. Such gap in literature highlights the need of additional research on how the narrative structure of the text fits or fails to fit Kaplan linear-analytic model.

Research Gap

Although there is an increasing literature on the topic of young adult literature and the *All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven, the majority of the literature available to date largely revolves around the narrative elements of the text, specifically its depiction of mental health, adolescent identity, grief, and suicide. Researchers have discussed how the story sensitizes the youth on the issue of depression and emotional weakness, and how it portrays the mental issues of the main characters. Although these studies are useful in giving insights into the social and emotional themes of the novel, they are not keen with the structural organization of the narrative itself.

Specifically, the novel has not received much research study concerning its interpretation through the prism of rhetorical or discourse patterns, which influence the development of ideas and events within the text. Moreover, the theory of patterns of writing presented by Kaplan despite the extensive practice of the theory in the linguistic and academic writing research, it has not been applied to literary works by young adults until now. The study that investigates the possibility of the narrative structure of *All the Bright Places* being in a linear-analytic pattern or a nonlinear format that leaves some changes in the interpretation of a reader is insufficient. Thus, the present study aims at filling this gap by implementing the theoretical framework of Kaplan to understand how the novel is organized in terms of narrative. Through the analysis of sequencing events, causation, and dual narrative views, the research will find out how the text organizes its narration and whether it fits in the linear-analytic discourse pattern as proposed by Kaplan.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design, specifically a textual analysis approach. The text is analysed with the help of Greenham's (2018) model of close reading. The qualitative paradigm is appropriate because the focus is on interpreting narrative structure, thematic development, and character psychology rather than measuring numerical data. The study aims to analyze how narrative events, character perspectives, and temporal sequencing function in line with Kaplan's linear-analytic framework.

Data Collection

The primary data source is the novel *All the Bright Places* (Niven, 2015). Key passages illustrating cause-and-effect relationships, chronological development, and narrative perspective will be selected. Secondary sources include scholarly articles, books, and essays

on Kaplan's theory of cross-cultural writing, narrative structure, and contemporary young adult literature, which will provide theoretical support and contextual grounding.

Data Analysis

For this study, data collection focuses on gathering textual evidence from Jennifer Niven's *All the Bright Places* (2015) to examine whether the narrative follows a linear-analytic structure based on Kaplan's theory. The primary source, the novel itself, is read thoroughly and systematically, with special attention to passages that reveal temporal sequencing, causal relationships between events, and the dual narrative perspectives of Finch and Violet. Key incidents, such as Finch's risky behaviors, Violet's emotional responses, and their shared problem-solving sequences, are closely analyzed to determine whether the text demonstrates clear cause-and-effect reasoning, a hallmark of linear-analytic narrative organization (Kaplan, 1966, p. 45). Temporal shifts, including flashbacks and foreshadowing, are noted to assess any potential disruptions in narrative linearity. During the reading process, all relevant passages are carefully annotated. Each excerpt is documented with page numbers, context, and observations regarding narrative structure, including the influence of emotional or symbolic elements on the sequencing of events. The coding system enables systematic identification of patterns, linking specific narrative features to Kaplan's framework for linear-analytic discourse, such as chronological progression, problem-solving sequences, and logical connections between events (Kaplan, 1966, p. 48). Special attention is given to passages where Finch or Violet reflect on past experiences or reinterpret events, as these provide insight into the interaction between emotional-symbolic content and logical narrative flow. Secondary sources are also collected to provide theoretical and contextual support for interpreting the primary text. Scholarly articles, books, and critical essays on Kaplan's cross-cultural writing theory, young adult literature, and narrative structure are consulted. These sources serve to confirm the criteria for linear-analytic structures and guide the interpretation of complex narrative sections, ensuring that conclusions drawn from the text are theoretically informed and reliable (Niven, 2015; Kaplan, 1966).

Finally, all data are organized under thematic categories aligned with Kaplan's dimensions, such as temporal sequencing, causal reasoning, perspective, and emotional-symbolic content. This organization facilitates a systematic analysis, enabling the identification of patterns, consistencies, and deviations in the narrative structure. By combining careful annotation, theoretical guidance, and systematic organization, this data collection process ensures that the study is both textually grounded and academically rigorous, providing a solid foundation for subsequent analysis and discussion.

Theoretical Framework

Kaplan's theoretical framework is primarily concerned with understanding how cultural and linguistic backgrounds influence writing patterns and discourse organization. He distinguishes between different ways in which writers structure ideas, emphasizing that the arrangement of thoughts in writing is not universal but deeply shaped by cultural norms. The linear-analytic structure, which is closely associated with Western educational and writing traditions, emphasizes logical sequencing, clear cause-and-effect reasoning, and explicit connections between ideas. In this structure, the narrative or argument progresses in a step-by-step manner, often starting with a clear introduction, followed by supporting details, and concluding with a coherent summary or resolution. Each idea is directly linked to the next, ensuring that the reader can follow the development of thoughts without ambiguity. Writers adhering to this style prioritize clarity, organization, and explicit reasoning, allowing the narrative to unfold in a predictable and systematic manner.

In contrast, Kaplan also identifies alternative discourse patterns that are more common in non-Western or culturally diverse contexts. These patterns, which can be cumulative, digressive, or parallel, focus less on explicit logical sequencing and more on thematic association, repetition, or contextual embedding. In such structures, ideas may appear loosely connected or non-linear from a Western perspective, but they reflect a coherent cultural logic that emphasizes holistic understanding, context, and the interplay of multiple thematic elements. These alternative structures often allow for more expressive or associative storytelling, where meaning is conveyed through the relationships between concepts rather than through linear progression.

Kaplan's framework provides a useful lens for analyzing narrative texts, especially novels that employ complex structures such as shifting perspectives, temporal jumps, or multiple storylines. By applying this framework, researchers can examine whether a text follows a linear-analytic structure, with its clear cause-and-effect and chronological sequencing, or whether it reflects a non-linear, associative approach to storytelling. This examination is particularly relevant in contemporary young adult literature, where authors often use innovative narrative strategies to depict psychological and emotional complexity. It enables a deeper understanding of how the organization of the narrative contributes to reader comprehension, engagement, and interpretation of the text's themes.

Furthermore, Kaplan's framework highlights the relationship between writer intention, cultural norms, and reader experience. A text's narrative structure not only communicates its events or arguments but also shapes the way readers perceive and emotionally engage with the story. Linear-analytic structures tend to facilitate straightforward understanding, guiding readers through a clear progression of ideas, while non-linear structures encourage reflective reading, interpretation, and attention to thematic or emotional connections. By examining these structural choices, researchers can explore how cultural and cognitive factors influence storytelling and the reception of literary works.

Applying Kaplan's theoretical perspective to a specific novel allows for a systematic assessment of the text's organization, including the sequencing of events, the interplay between past and present, and the narrative techniques used to convey characters' experiences and emotions. This framework enables researchers to discern patterns in the text, evaluate the effectiveness of narrative strategies, and understand how the structure supports or complicates thematic development. In analyzing a novel's narrative organization, Kaplan's framework provides a clear method for identifying whether the text adheres to linear-analytic conventions or employs non-linear, culturally influenced patterns, offering insight into both the technical and expressive dimensions of writing.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Data Analysis and Discussion

Writing pattern model by Kaplan (1966) creates a contrast between non-linear/digressive and linear analytic organization. The ideas and events are presented in the linear analytic structure in a logical, hierarchical order: the ideas and events develop out of one another, connections are explicit, and cause and effect are well defined.

Kaplan (1966) maintains that western academic discourse inclines itself toward this style which preannounces elapsed time, direct logic, and clear connection between cause and effect. In judging the novel, then, the researcher considers the events revealed in a similarly organized way - at least, plotted in a straight line, rational in reason, and linked in an explicit way; whether the narrative, the voice, the progression of the themes do not follow this pattern.

All the Bright Places by Jennifer Niven (2015) is mostly narrated in the first person as the researcher observes Theodore Finch and Violet Markey. This sectional decision already makes the anticipation of a linear progression difficult since the model made by Kaplan

supports coherent, singular voiced exposition over divided viewpoints. As a case in point, the initial reflection by Finch creates an invigorating, even non-linear mood.

“I do not know whether you would say it had been a good day, or a bad day. I only know that among all days I have ever lived, this one could be the most important one” (Niven, 2015, p. 3).

This opening puts the story not in a real chronological sequence but rather of contemplation on meaning, making it possible that thematic resonance can be more important than logical linearity. Modulation is used, with Finch blurring past, present and emotional anticipation, which demonstrates a premature departure of the strict linear analytic expectations. In a linear analytic structure, explicit fundamental connectors are normally engaged (e.g., because, therefore, as a result), and in *All the Bright Places*, emotional states and events often are linked by imagery and reflection on the character, instead of logically. Speaking about his need to be high, Finch says:

“The high place is a promise. It states that something good will occur - something inevitable, something spectacular... and I would like inevitable and spectacular (Niven, 2015, p. 15).

In this case, the reasoning of Finch is not analytically designed but on a personal and emotional level. His psychological state is the reason behind the cause, which is “I want inevitable and spectacular”, not explicitly expressed logic. The model proposed by Kaplan would assume a specific order like; “I would like X due to Y”. Rather, Niven has been dependent on metaphor and internal reasoning, which is more of a narrative experimental format than linear analytical sequence. However, some episodes in the novel show Kaplanian aspects. Take as an example, the school project, which brings Finch and Violet together, and can be traced as a series of events, whose logical interconnections look logically.

- i. Violet and Finch are put together on a school assignment (cause).
- ii. They go out together to different significant locations in Indiana (effect of matching).
- iii. Their inner conflicts (effect of shared experience) are revealed at each place.
- iv. They learn to know one another (effect of reflection on the common experiences).

This development is similar to a mini linear analytic arc since it is evident that there is a clear chain of action - consequence - reflection - transformation. The logical of the narrative in this case is connected to the experiential learning that is more attuned to the idea of logical elaboration through sequence than thematic digression proposed by Kaplan. But the novel as well often turns to internal monologue and emotional comment and this Kaplan would describe as digressive or non-linear. As an example, the contemplation of grief and normalcy by Violet is not carried out by causation but by emotion.

“I believe I had always been aware of something being amiss in my life, but it is only my loss of someone that made me understand that normalcy is actually not a quality” (Niven, 2015, p. 76).

The insight is not based on a set of statements that are well-defined; rather, it is a product of internal experience and metaphor. The linear analytic model of Kaplan would assume some logical flow between premises and conclusion (e.g., because I lost someone, I see that normal is constructed), whereas Niven has narration the most about personal insight, rather than about explicit causal logic. The other important scene that makes the pure linearity more complicated is the choice making of life and death that Finch makes. In the novel, his ideas are put forward in a form of fragmentation and yet emotionally sensible sequence of meditations.

“Maybe I want the helicopter. Maybe I want the danger. Perhaps I would desire a purpose to live... Perhaps, it is the fact that I am really a Maybe guy” (Niven, 2015, p. 128).

The arguments given here are self-interrogatory, not external to logicity. The inner organism is retrospective and associative. This sort of reflective recursion is not readily

compatible with the model introduced by Kaplan that is made to work with expository prose and is not propelled by the existence of explicit connectors, but rather by the inner emotional logic. Besides the thematic argument which does not allow a rigid structuring into the analytical method, there are the alternating chapters of Niven, which form temporal oscillations.

Finch can perceive the past actions but Violet pages tend to refer to the current activities or the future desire, which forms the rhythm of the narrative that is episodic unlike chronological. Such narration technique implies that Niven consciously merges time, upholding mentalist and emotional sensitivity, rather than chronological order. However, it would be a mistake to refer to the novel as totally non-linear. Even in the key lines of plot development, their meeting, deepening friendship, mutual adventures, and tragic conclusion Niven can still maintain a logical flow of the story. The action develops in a way that a majority of the readers can follow through to the end without the need to rearrange and solve time loops. In this regard, the text combines linearity and thematic digression: there are arranged events within a larger narrative structure of interwoven internal thoughts, and emotional attachment as well as personal significance.

Finch's Psychological Arc and Kaplanian Analysis

According to Kaplan, the linear-analytic narrative does not only have a reason-effect relationship and logical flow of ideas. The psychological journey of Finch in the novel gives a chance to examine the question that his story follows this structure. Finch also has a bipolar disorder and suicidal thoughts, and they are the ones that influence his thoughts and behaviour in the novel. As an instance, Finch writes, "I do not know whether today I am alive or dead. I just know I'm here" (Niven, 2015, p. 21). The tension between inner and outer events is depicted in this line as the narration is informed by his emotional state. Although Kaplan would give more importance to the explicit causal markers, the novel by Niven incorporates emotional reasoning of Finch to form implicit cause-effect chains.

His feelings regarding the events in his life like the absence of his mother or his engagement with Violet serve to act as cues to further actions. By doing so, the story may be interpreted as a linear in nature, but it is mediated by the internal emotional logic as opposed to strictly external events. Thematic causality can also be seen in the efforts of Finch to live normally. Enhanced by the structure of the school project he takes part in together with Violet, the structure of the project triggers both of them to share their experiences. "We have to go to these places because that is the assignment and once we are there we learn something about ourselves" (Niven, 2015, p. 92). The order in this case is based on Kaplanian concepts since the assignment is the cause, and exploration of meaningful locations is the effect. But the thoughts of Finch and his emotional involvement change the experience and internal logic plays a bigger part in narration sequence. The model proposed by Kaplan can be sequenced cognitively, and the emotional and psychological development, in the case of Finch, is a system of parallel logic, which connects the events with the internal changes.

Violet and her Perspective and Emotional Sequencing

The narrative of Violet is a complement to that of Finch and gives a different example of the linear-analytic structure of Kaplan as followed and adjusted. Violet tends to have reflective commentary on her entries, relating what has happened in the past to what she knows now. As an example, she says, perhaps it was not the norm ever, it was just the concept created to feel good (Niven, 2015, p. 76). Although it is not a causal reflection, it relates various events and reactions to her changing perception of herself and Finch. Kaplan lays stress on direct connection, but the thoughts of Violet prove associative thinking as emotional and thinking insights keep the flow coherent even in the absence of causal indicators. The story combines both external and internal thoughts and creates a chronologically linear, but thematically strata-like style of structure.

The growth of Violet also depends on narrative anchors, school events, family interactions, and traveling experiences. These anchors give the story a linear skeleton: she starts with her trauma of her sister dying, then she moves on to interact with Finch and each chapter moves forward in time. Even though the emotional derailment is present, the sequence of events is preserved, which represents the hybrid style according to which Kaplanian sequencing is used and does not prohibit the emotional and thematic richness.

Connection between Linear Narration and Emotional Response

The change of narration and emphasis on emotional growth forms a two-layered story. Kaplanian sequencing comes before chronological progression and external events, on the surface. On the inside, there is an openness of character emotions and reflections that bring an implicit analytic structure, whose cause-effect relationships are facilitated by psychological reasoning. The behaviour of Finch and Violet act impulsively and the thoughts they have are interrelated in that they continue the narration despite the lack of causal terms. It is also possible to interpret the story as a Kaplanian structure reconfigured into a contemporary young adult fiction, with its time sequence mixed with emotional causation. The dual-layered structure enables Niven to keep the readers interested in the narrative as it addresses sensitive issues, including mental illness, grief, and identity creation. The reasoning is emotional, which helps the reader to comprehend the work, as it offers a sense of coherence in the lack of logically displayed connectives. As an illustration, Finch thinks, as he got deeper and deeper into the world, the more he realized not only about the world, but also about himself (Niven, 2015, p. 95), relating the outside to the inside. This indicates the blend of the linear-analytic story in which Kaplanian sequencing is parallel to the associative reasoning based on emotions.

Time Progression and Time Stops

Kaplan stresses the fact that linear-analytic narratives are based on the logical sequence of events in time and chronology as a means to provide coherence. In *All the Bright Places*, Niven creates a chronological structure of the story, starting with the meeting of Finch and Violet on the school bell tower (Niven, 2015, p. 6). This scene serves as the first point of reference, the setting of the outside world, the driving forces of the characters and the emotional investment. The chapters that follow them develop in time, passing through school assignments, trips to various places in Indiana, and personal reflections. Whereas the model by Kaplan lays emphasis on causal connectors, Niven employs temporal sequencing with emotional reactions in order to ensure coherent story telling.

To illustrate this, Finch tells the story of how he and his family went to the tower and he understood it was not only he who was afraid of heights, he was also afraid of being lost (Niven, 2015, p. 58). In this instance, the chronological visit to the tower results in inner emotional realization, showing that extrinsic events trigger psychological awareness and, as a result, establish a cause-effect correlation, which is appropriate according to Kaplanian theory.

Impulsivity and Emotional Causality of Finch

Finch's story is interspersed with hasty choices, which frequently play as the primary moving factor as well as the emotional pointers. The Kaplanian analysis would seek out explicit cause-effect statements, but in the case of Finch, the causal chain is often moderated by the fragility of emotions. An example is when Finch thinks that he does not even want to leave the bed after having a depressive mood but he does just because he knows that someone may need him (Niven, 2015, p. 31).

His responsibility and emotional connection to other people drives him to leave the bed, and it is a combination of external and internal thinking. This dynamic represents the analytic model developed by Kaplan to fit the requirements of contemporary narrative where the cause can be emotional and not necessarily logical and the effect can be seen in the behaviour or the choice. The instability of Finch is the catalyst of many of his actions and impacts

himself and Violet, which only proves that the story is linear and underlines the ambiguous nature of the causes of emotions.

Violet's Perspective and Reflective Sequencing

The narration given by Violet is a bit of a counterpart to the impulsive viewpoint of Finch since it offers thoughtful, analytic commentary. Kaplanian theory proposes that the support of linear-analytic structures can be done by the explicit reasoning and explanatory commentary.

Violet considers, "We do this because we pursue things that we believe we need, and sometimes the pursuit tells us more about ourselves than our pursuit (Niven, 2015, p. 102). This self-reflexive logic serves as an inner analytic system, which connects one event to another in thematic development. Although Finch narration can tend to be direct when it comes to the causes and effects of emotions, Violet offers interpretative linkages, demonstrating how a cause and effect relationship are perceived by looking inward. The switching of the narration provides continuity in the time but with Kaplanian analytic thinking by combining external and internal sequencing of the story to form a two-layered narrative integrity.

The Book of Spaces as Narrative Generator

The episodic nature of the novel in its voyages to the local landmarks, such as water towers, dilapidated buildings, and historical places serve the Kaplanian purpose of anchoring the narration. Every place acts as a booster of character reflection, choice or emotional confrontation.

"Finch explains the story as follows: the more we move around the more I can feel the past clinging to the present, as a kind of shadow I cannot get rid of..." (Niven, 2015, p. 118).

The travel is chronological and spatial, but at every point, Finch and Violet are encouraged to deal with psychological and social problems. Kaplanian analysis views these journeys as chains in which events (spatial visits) are caused by effects (emotional insights) and keeps the analysis analytically intact but allows it to be a character-driven, emotionally rich story.

Memory, Trauma, Nonlinear Elements

The story is mostly linear in the continuity, but in certain cases, it has brief nonlinear flashbacks and memories sequences that explain the present actions of characters. The model suggested by Kaplan provides the possibility of analytic coherence in the situation when the narrative order is slightly changed without making the causal relations in a de-comprehensible. Finch recalls that the first time when his dad shouted at him, it was like the floor had fallen out from under his feet (Niven, 2015, p. 45). The flashback is the reason why Finch is hypervigilant and mood unstable. Tying the past to the present, Niven maintains a Kaplanian form of analytic logic in a narrative where time is open to change and thus shows that cause and effect reasoning can be applied through the time to include memory and trauma.

The Narrative Perspective and Analytic Coherence

Kaplan (1966) claims that linear-analytic narratives are based on a coherent chronology and logical organization: events proceed in obvious series and causality is definite. Niven in *All the Bright Places* takes two feminine points of view as he switches between Theodore Finch and Violet Markey. This alternation maintains the chronological order whilst offering complementary analytic meanings of events. As an example, Finch is a narrator: "I do not want to be the one that goes away. I would like to be the person that stays" (Niven, 2015, p. 12). The chronological development is simple, the need of Finch is caused by his immediate emotional condition, yet Kaplanian analysis focuses on the fact that this need provokes the further decisions, including insisting on going to places in Indiana. The causality in the narrative is therefore the internal thought of Finch that leads to external thoughts and occurrence.

Emotional Frailty Causal Mechanism

Kaplan's concentration on the logical causality shows how emotional vulnerability is a parallel causal process. The number of decisions and mood swings that Finch goes through has an effect on his choices as well as the responses of Violet. In one instance, as Violet impulsively wants to jump with Finch on the top of the bell tower, he says to her:

"Some days I feel like I am standing on the brink of everything I am afraid of... and I wish someone to leap with me" (Niven, 2015, p. 18).

His vulnerability in feelings impacts directly on the trust and security of Violet and this shows how the emotional inside has outward effects- a key tenet of Kaplanian analysis. The story reveals that even thoughtless or even irrational choices are guided by a logic inside, relating emotion to action.

Spatial Sequencing or Event Anchoring

Kaplan's structures are reinforced by regular spatial and time markers. Niven relies on Indiana landmarks to place series of events and emotional growth. Finch tells us: "The uninhabited water tower is a challenge to us, and it challenges me to overcome, it challenges me to survive" (Niven, 2015, p. 58). The scene at the tower is not just a plot gimmick; it serves an analytical role of connecting fear, courage and impulsive action. According to the theory proposed by Kaplan, narrative coherence is contingent on the existence of such event and consequence connections. Every physical adventure Finch goes on causes him to reflect, emotionally escalate, and interact with other people, and it maintains a linear-analytic story even in the heat of his emotional crises.

Switching of Perspectives and Causal Interpretation

The narration by Violet is a complement to that of Finch since it gives analytic interpretation of events.

She notes: He spins himself to the limit, and I am looking, conscious that the danger he is getting into is dangerous and exposing (Niven, 2015, p. 67).

Kaplan's reasoning is eminent here since Violet takes the external behaviour of Finch (regardless actions) as a result of internal behaviour (psychological frailty). This two-sided view gives the narrative the flexibility to exist both in time and be analytically coherent. Although Finch acts in a momentary manner, Violet commentary makes them interpretable in the form of causes and effect, and it keeps a Kaplanian organization at the various angles.

Memory and Nonlinear Reflection

Niven uses selective nonlinear elements, although he is mostly linear with the use of flashbacks, to enhance character motivation.

Finch recollects: I can recollect the first time when my father yell at me and it was so frightening that I remained afraid days later (Niven, 2015, p. 45).

Such memory sequences can be considered in case of causal relationships that are evident. In this case, it is possible to attribute his anxiety and his impulsive behaviour to Finch in the past, and save the logic of analysis, which remains intact despite the time. Niven is able to apply the nonlinear reflection into a predominantly linear-analytic paradigm by pinning flashbacks on the current implications, showing that the Kaplanian causality may admit of memory-driven emotional reasoning.

Symbolism as Analytic Strengthening

Kaplan's causality is also supported by symbols in the narrative by Niven. Objects, e.g., the bell tower or the deserted schoolhouse, serve as triggers of the psychological revelation.

With Finch adding: The bell tower is not merely a place, it is a reflection of my fear, desire, my need of being, it is a mirror (Niven, 2015, p. 19).

Symbolic interpretation connects the environment, emotion and behaviour which strengthen the cause and effect relationship. The theory by Kaplan allows such symbolic causation provided that the sequence of reasoning between the stimulus and response is understandable.

Linear-Analytic Integrity In the Emotional Complexity

Nonetheless, the linear-analytic narration still exists as it may be observed in spite of the strongly emotional focus and nonlinear reflections within the novel. The chronological order of events, temporal consistency of emotional causality and reflection commentary give coherence to interpretation. The framework provided by Kaplan can therefore be applied and adaptation to the contemporary narratives should focus on internal emotional reasoning as a valid causal force. This is shown in the novel as even a narrative with an emotionalist disposition can fit within the principles of linear-analytic thought as every action is associated with identifiable reasons and effects.

Emotional Triggers and Causal Chains

The story of Niven focuses on timing of emotions that prompt people to do what they do and this can be examined in the linear-analytic model offered by Kaplan. The symptoms of the depression, the mood swings and the obsessive tendencies that Finch is experiencing always have some external consequences, and this creates a cause and effect relationship. Indicatively, Finch tells him that some days he cannot leave the bed. It appears that the world is moving at an unimaginable pace that he cannot keep up with it (Niven, 2015, p. 31). This is an internal condition that is why he has a hard time keeping relationships and leading normal lives. The model of Kaplan makes it possible to discuss inner psychological states as valid reasons of the manifested effects as an indication of the fact that even complex emotional reasoning might serve as a supporter of a linear-analytic interpretation. The impulses of Finch are caused by the fear or anxiety and consequently cause the next events, including his dangerous escapades with Violet.

The Reflective Perspective of Violet

The narrative sections of Violet offer a critical interpretation of the events, which supports the linear-analytic form. Her comments tend to justify the actions of Finch.

As an example, she observed, he manages to push it to the limit, and I am watching him, understanding that there is a danger, which is not only irresponsible but also discloses much about him (Niven, 2015, p. 67).

In this case, Violet relates the actions of Finch with inner reasons explaining the series of occurrences and their consequences. This refractive eye makes the analytical integrity of the story, which is an important part of the theory of Kaplan, more powerful since every act is associated with some psychological or emotional stimulus. Although Finch is unpredictable in his actions, the observations of Violet can help the reader to rebuild the line of causation logically.

Temporal Anchoring With School Assignments

Kaplan focuses on chronological consistency in linear-analytic texts and Niven employs school assignments, road trips, and milestone events to place time sequences. Finch cogitates when the list of places in Indiana is recorded by the two of them, as part of their geography project, that Finch is exploring every single part of this state. The map is alive, and they are its part is what it seems (Niven, 2015, p. 58). The assignment events are linked and cause sequential continuity in time, and causal connections between experiences and character growth. These lines act as a support, as the even emotionally charged story follows a linear process.

Memory and Flashback Marriage and Symbolism as Effect and Cause

Despite the fact that Niven sometimes employs flashbacks to disclose the motivation of characters, Kaplanian analysis permits them provided that they elucidate the cause-and-effect relationships. "Finch remembers, and it was the first time his father shouted at him, the fear remained in him days later" (Niven, 2015, p. 45). This recollection is the reason why he makes anxiety-driven choices and risky decisions later. Flashbacks are explanatory tools, which incorporate the events of the past in the present outcomes. As such, although the story

does have short digressions in the order of the events, the elements in question facilitate the analysis of the story, as opposed to its interruption of the chronological logic.

Kaplanian linearity is also supported by symbolic elements. This is achieved through places such as the bell tower, water tower and the abandoned schoolhouse which are places of action and contemplation. According to Finch, “it is not a place; it is a reflection of my fear, my longing, my need to live” (Niven, 2015, p. 19). In this case, the bell tower symbol provokes certain actions and relations, and thus, it provides a causal continuation between the psychological situation and observable behaviour. Symbolism therefore enhances the analytic nature of the narrative in the same sense that Kaplan propounds in his principle of cause and effect to show that the cause and effect are not limited to physical occurrences but extend to psychological and symbolic causes.

Linear-Analytic Integrity Multiple Viewpoints

Niven ensures a chronological sequence as well as analytical meaning by alternating Finch and Violet. The cause and the effect are invariably linked to each other because each chapter in the book develops on the basis of the previous events and psychological motivation.

Suicidal ideation in Finch even has a logical sequence: emotional instability, traumatic experiences, acting recklessly, and ultimately practicing self-harm, each of which is attributed to the previous internal and external stimuli (Niven, 2015, p. 321).

The ruminations that Violet makes allow the reader to recreate those chains and thus make sure that the analytic clarity is not lost in the emotional nature of the narrative.

Kaplanian Theory and Emotional Complexity Integration

The novel by Niven is a testament to the fact that a text may be emotionally charged and psychologically layered and still has a linear-analytic structure. Kaplanian theory allows both external occurrences and internal reasoning about emotions to be part of the coherent series. All the Bright Places adheres to the chronological order, causation, and contemplation, although it is interrupted by flashbacks or symbolic interpretation. The two-story narrative offers a full picture of the cause and effect in accordance with the focus of logical coherence by Kaplan, and the emotional lives of the characters are also multi-faceted. Conclusion Considering the theory of Kaplan, *All the Bright Places* could be defined as a linear-analytic narrative. The text has a strong temporal flow with milestones like school projects, road trips, and milestones reflections holding the text. The internal factors are emotional vulnerability and mental complexity in both characters, especially Finch, which are what leads to the external outcomes to maintain the analytical integrity. The flashbacks and symbolic elements, although momentarily being nonlinear, are placed in such a manner that explains the cause and effect relationships, and this is in line with what Kaplan sees as the model. Finch and Violet dual view also promotes the analytic interpretation as the reader can track the cause and the effect in a logical manner. Thus, even though the novel explores the internal emotional terrain, it follows a Kaplanian linear-analytic model, which proves that the contemporary young adult fiction can be both emotionally rich and narratively coherent.

Conclusions

Findings

1. *All the Bright Places* predominantly follows a linear-analytic narrative structure, as events are presented chronologically and causally linked, allowing readers to trace the development of Finch and Violet’s experiences and decisions over time. Flashbacks and symbolic elements serve to clarify motivations rather than disrupt the temporal sequence.
2. The dual narrative perspective reinforces the linear-analytic framework, as Finch’s actions and emotional struggles are interpreted and contextualized through Violet’s

reflective narration, providing a coherent cause-and-effect understanding of character development and plot progression.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, it is evident that *All the Bright Places* largely follows a linear-analytic narrative structure in the Kaplanian sense. The novel presents events in a largely chronological order, anchored by temporal markers such as school assignments, road trips, and milestones in Finch and Violet's lives. Each action is causally linked to preceding events, whether triggered by external circumstances or internal psychological states. Finch's emotional fragility, for instance, consistently explains his risk-taking, impulsive behavior, and eventual tragic outcome, while Violet's reflective perspective provides analytic clarity, allowing readers to trace these cause-effect relationships logically. Even when flashbacks or symbolic elements occur, they serve to clarify motivations or consequences rather than disrupt temporal or causal coherence, maintaining the integrity of a linear-analytic structure. Furthermore, the dual narrative perspective enhances the linear-analytic quality of the text by providing complementary interpretations of events. Finch's experiences and internal struggles are often illuminated through Violet's observations, which articulate causes and consequences in a coherent manner. Emotional complexity and symbolic motifs, rather than creating nonlinearity, reinforce Kaplanian principles by linking psychological states to tangible actions and outcomes. Overall, despite its focus on intense emotional experiences and psychological depth, *All the Bright Places* demonstrates that modern young adult fiction can retain a linear-analytic framework, integrating emotional reasoning with clear sequences of cause and effect, thereby aligning with the research question regarding the text's narrative structure.

Recommendations

- i. Future research could explore the narrative structure of *All the Bright Places* across different media adaptations, such as film or stage, to examine whether linear-analytic patterns are preserved or transformed in visual storytelling.
- ii. Comparative studies with other contemporary young adult novels could investigate whether Kaplanian linear-analytic principles are common in the genre or if non-linear structures are increasingly used to depict complex emotional and psychological experiences.
- iii. Scholars may examine the impact of dual or multiple perspectives on narrative comprehension, particularly how they contribute to linearity or analytic reasoning in emotionally complex stories.
- iv. Further studies could integrate reader-response analysis to understand how the linear-analytic structure affects audience interpretation of character motivations, causality, and emotional engagement.
- v. Research could also apply cross-cultural approaches to see if the linear-analytic narrative is consistent across translations and culturally adapted editions, and how narrative logic interacts with different reading traditions.

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