NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE IN MODERN INDIAN-ENGLISH FICTION

NEGAR SEIFZADEH¹ & B. YADAVA RAJU²

¹Scholar, Department of English Literature, Osmania University, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India
²Professor, Department of English Literature, Osmania University, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

Indian-English Fiction has endeavored a lot to show a vivid picture of itself to the world of Literature. No doubt, by the time being it is supposed to be the offspring of Post colonial. Narrative technique generally is used in telling a story by a writer, asks you to explain the procedures and methods used in the telling of a story. Examples of the techniques we might use are point of view, theme, character and setting. A narrative technique may be used by works of literature in order to produce a specific effect on the reader. Indian English fiction writers cannot deny the same effect on their writings. R K Narayan draws upon the traditional narrative technique of the storyteller effectively reiterating his traditional, typically Hindu perception of life. His books and novels are supposed to happen in Malgudi, which is the town originally fictional and has been used by him as the setting of his novels. His stories manifest the real and genuine scenes that while reading them we can feel the true essence of real life in them. This was enchanting as much as it was universal in appeal. This research is done in a library method and novels I have taken up for analysis are “The Dark Room” and “The World of Nagaraj” by R. K. Narayan's. “The Dark Room” is about a dominant, excessively critical and self-centered husband, Ramani living with his wife Savitri and three children. But none of those problems are there in “The World of Nagaraj”, which is an unqualified classic. It could be because it was written in Narayan's later years, and the narrative has a fluency and depth that is quite amazing.

KEYWORDS: Narrative Techniques, Fiction, Point of View, Theme, Character, Setting

INTRODUCTION

Essay

Narrative technique distinguishes between story and discourse. Story is the sequence of events and discourse employs an order in presenting these events. In recent times so much research has been done in the field of narratology that it has become quite difficult to arrive at certain synthesis or basic points of agreement. A narrator, has different choices for describing events. He might focus his narrative on temporality and causality or through focalization he is able to do the above mentioned. Focalization shifts the course of narrative because the reader gets images of character through the clarification and imagination of the narrator. Focalization creates three dimensional strategies: the voice of one who narrates, one who sees and his comprehension of events, the double consciousness of the narrator. In the manifestation of narrative techniques an outward reader can easily notice Since 1990 the narrators in Indian English Fiction speak in the language profound in motherland highlights. There is a fundamental awareness of the possession to the circumference. Narrative technique, which is also considered as literary technique, is the way a writer applies tools and techniques necessary for creating a story, such as, point of view, theme, character and setting in their literary stuff to expand the story. To have a premier understanding each is explained below in brief

Point of View

Point of View, or POV, is the way a story is written. POV depends on who is telling the story. There are several
types of POV

- **First Person Point of View**
  
  This is very hard for a writer to show and apply this POV, because the author writes everything from the POV of the main character as if the character is speaking to the reader. Pronouns like "I" and "me" are mostly used in the novels by an author to demonstrate the character. It is proper to remember this fact that while using this type of point of view the author only writes from the viewpoint of the main and key character of the story - understanding and using this point of view is without doubt a difficult and burdensome job for both the reader and writer(s). Robert Parker's Spencer mystery series is a good example of using First person point of view. The Fist person is obviously drawing the Subjectivity image a novelist is trying to create. David Copperfield (1849-1850) by English novelist Charles Dickens is narrated by title character. This POV permits the writer to compose in the voice of the major character.

- **Second Person Point of View**
  
  This is hardly ever seen because it is difficult to write and hard to read. The author writes the story using the pronoun "you" to describe the main character. It is used as the narrative voice in the fictitious works. Speeches, letters, and other forms of nonfiction, containing many types of business writing and technical writing.

- **Third Person Point of View**
  
  The most familiar and obvious point of view which is seen in many novels is the Third person POV. The novelist or story teller uses the character's name or a pronoun like "he" or "she" to explain the character in a vivid perspective.

- **Omniscient Point of View**
  
  The POV might see the story from the perspective of only one character, or he may be omniscient and know everything.

**Theme**

Themes are ideas that commonly recur throughout the story. Writers often want to convey an overall message in literature, which is contained in the theme. The theme is conveyed through events in the story and symbols. A symbol is something that represents something else. For example, in the Bible, the apple represented sin.

**Characters**

Telling a story needs a delicate area of using various characters by the writer. Different roles will be played in a novel by different use of characters. Some or all types of characters in the following description are conspicuous in storytelling task.

- **Minor Characters** will be used as a complements to the key and major characters of the novel, they make the plot of the novel to continue in a proper format.

- **Major or Central** using right characters help the conflict in the novel proceed in a gorgeous way. In other words, characters attempt in creating a focused plot and resolution in a story.

- **Static** – A character who is stable in all parts of the novel, and whose personality does not change or get progress in the fiction.

- **Dynamic** – A character who changes most of the time in the novel, who improves and appears after a central
conflict in the novel. They undergo many shifts in the story.

- **Round** - A rounded character is a person who has a complex characteristic, it was firstly E.M. Forster who showed this as the vivid opposite to Flat character. A round character is completely realistic; a contradictory character who is the monitor of emotional and psychological issues.

- **Flat** - A flat character is the opposite of a round character and is a minor character.

**Setting**

For Narrative works (mostly novels), Historical event is always the most obvious setting and geographic location in which a story occurs, and makes the fiction to be formed in a disciplined framework. The world of a story, its background, and the place which the story occurs. Setting contains elements as: culture, historical period, geography, and hour. Plot is shaped with the help of a proper setting. Sometimes a plot plays the role of a character, therefore setting is where and when a story takes place. The term "setting" is often used to refer to the social milieu in which the events of a novel occur. Novels which I have taken up for analysis are “The Dark Room” and “The World of Nagaraj” by R.K. Narayan’s. Like the Panchatantra, Narayan's stories and novels are not “conclusive.” The conclusion of one could well be the beginning of another. The themes, characters and locale of one work flow into the next until all his works taken together create the effect of a whirlpool. All of Narayan’s works sight the tragic peak, but climb down to normal existence. The “big” events of life are not really big. There is no need to get exercised over the series of little events that life is composed of. “The Dark Room” is about a dominant, excessively critical and self-centered husband, Ramani living with his wife Savitri and three children. The first scene sees him criticizing everything that his wife serves him on the table. He curses the cook and freely taunts his wife. At work, he takes more than a little fancy to a junior called Shanta Bai. She is pretty and recently separated from her husband. Ramani is taken in by her charms and goes out of his way to help her out, including vacating a spare room in the office and even making his wife give away some of their furniture to make Shanta comfortable. On the way from his golf club, he regularly starts spending time at her room, and sits entranced listening to her. When Savitri hears of it she is unable to bear the humiliation. She confronts her husband who dismisses her objections. Desolate at being taken so entirely for granted she raises her voice and then is determined to leave the house. She wants to take the kids along, but Ramani stops her harshly. “Don't touch them or talk to them. Go yourself, if you want. They are my children,” he shouts. The blatant disregard shown by her callous husband causes such depression in her heart that she wanders alone in the street and even plunges herself in the river. But overcome by fear, she shouts out for help. A blacksmith by day and burglar by night saves her. He brings along his wife, Ponni who tries to befriend Savitri. She offers her shelter and food. But such madness seizes Savitri that she refuses to eat anything not earned by herself. She is disgusted at being at the mercy of the men in her life – father, brother, husband. She gets so obstinate about not taking any more charity from anyone that she starts working at a temple as a cleaner for a cantankerous priest. But in a day she realizes the impracticality of her choice and returns home, though a part of her is dead now. Ramani is relieved to find her back, less for her sake, and more to keep up social pretenses. In The Dark Room, Narayan quite clearly feels a deep anguish at the wife being treated shabbily and leaves no opportunity to portray the ugliness and selfishness of the husband's character. The book is less of a novel and more of a novella. Narayan is effective in his portrayal of Ramani, a vain, sarcastic, self-serving man. Also, the part where Savitri leaves and encounters a different world is poignant, but the book as a whole has a few weaknesses. It is not as lush in its narrative, the story runs rather quickly, and doesn't delve too much into the complexities. Ramani's fling with his junior is awkwardly handled, perhaps because Narayan was writing about an episode he may not have experienced or seen firsthand. The 'other' woman's character also remains shadowy.
None of those problems are there in The World of Nagaraj, which is an unqualified classic. It could be because it was written in Narayan's later years, and the narrative has a fluency and depth that is quite amazing. Since I read both books back-to-back, I felt an instant difference reading ...Nagaraj. One's reading pace is automatically slowed, as you try to absorb the atmospherics and the dense description of the leading character. The book is about a simple-minded, pleasant man, living with his wife, Sita and mother in a rather grand ancestral house called Kabir Street. He loves day-dreaming and talks a great deal to himself. His life's ambition is to be a thesis on sage Narada. Humble and affable, Nagaraj has no worries until his nephew Krishnaji, referred to as 'Tim' comes to stay with him. Narayan - through a series of flashbacks gives a vivid picture of the family characters. Gopi, the elder brother is aggressive and dominating. Until their father is alive and they all stayed together, Gopi took the best room, where he and his wife would stay locked in. The wife would cook savories in limited portions and take them directly to their room. When the will is read out, Gopi asks for the farm house and lands in the village. This suits Nagaraj who prefers having the house in Malgudi. Sharp-tongued and abrasive, Gopi looks at his younger brother as a bit of a fool, and openly insults him for his dull replies. Nagaraj being supremely unassertive takes many of his brother's put-downs as a joke, trying to maintain a semblance of cheerful normalcy. The entire book brings out the predicament of a man who cannot stand up for himself and confront situations. There is a scene in the novel where Tim and his wife have come to permanently stay in Nagaraj's house. This is the time when the latter has finally decided to get serious about his theses on Narada but Tim's wife is in the habit of playing the harmonium in the mornings and this is a source of intense irritation to Nagaraj. His impulse once prompts him to bang against her door and ask her to shut up. But he weakly smiles and walks away when she actually opens the door. Narayan's point seems to be that it is human nature to take for a ride, and be insensitive to the needs of those who don't stand up for themselves. A complete lack of ego or pride is viewed as a grave weakness by others and the obvious response is to take the person for granted. Nagaraj's nervous reactions are both amusing and frustrating to watch. You want him to give up his meekness and take on his supercilious brother for once. The ending is poignant, and perhaps even sadder than The Dark Room. But both novels leave you with a feeling of exultation as they give a wonderful psychological insight into human character and throb with a natural goodness so unique to R K Narayan's works.

CONCLUSIONS

There are different forms of narrative analysis. Some may focus on content of stories; others on meaning. Narayan’s writing had its flaws, and within his own oeuvre some were more successfully executed than the others. The Dark Room (1938) and The World of Nagaraj (1990) are an example of that. Both have plots that draw you in, but each vastly differs in the manner in which they are narrated. The Dark Room has a poignant theme, but Narayan struggles with the writing and is unable to etch out the deeper nuances inherent in the story.

REFERENCES