



AN INVESTIGATION OF NARRATIVE DISCOURSE OF TARIQ REHMAN'S SHORT STORY *BINGO*

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Abstract

The research endeavours to explore the various aspects of structural narratology in the short story of Tariq Rehman. It also explores how the structures in a text contributes to achieve reality. Gerard Genette's Narrative Discourse Model provides theoretical framework in which textual references from the primary source of data have been analysed. The research has been conducted by qualitative method as it does not involve any numerical value. The researcher has chosen one short story "Bingo" by Tariq Rehman. This story depicts the political ideas of the separation of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) in 1971. The analysis has focused the narrative instance, narrative time, frequency and narrative levels. The present research concludes that narrator is depicting his message to the readers through the structure of short story.

Key words:

Digesis, Mimesis, Narratology, Narrative instance, Narrative Frequency, Structure, Time and Mood

Introduction

Since the beginning of civilization, the world of narrative is existed. Humans being are surrounded by various forms of text since their birth. There is no such society where narrative does not exist. Every social institution produces narration so that this generation should be existed in a number of forms and styles. Every narration has specific conversation, speech and discourse. "The adequacy of a language is itself a medium of communication" (Barry 2002).

It is the structure that controls the speech acts (Barthes 239) and structural narrative draws the meaning of a text. In the world, every culture and society has their stories and every society has a specific way of writing these stories. There exists no difference between high and low narrative styles. The narrative is recognized historically, culturally and internationally. Being a human, we have to deal with many perspective of the life and to transfer and share our knowledge which the human beings need as some type of narrative. It is the human instinct to share knowledge or the events with others and it is possible only via narrative. Narration is the interpretation of the human feelings and ideas which are present in the humans



consciously or unconsciously. As Ronald Barthes states that ‘narration is present in every form either it is a myth, fable, science, arts and conversation’. (Barthes, 1997)

To understand the structure of a narration, it is very important to understand the function of narrator. The Genette has fully described the dire need of narrative function. (Genette, 256). Narrative function means whether the narrator is present in text or not?

- Secondly the narrator directs the function that means whether the narrator adds his opinion in the text or not?
- Thirdly, the narrator has communicative function that means that the narrator is directly talking to readers or not?
- Fourthly the narrative has a testimonial function which means that narrator adds emotions to the story so that a reader may properly able to involve in it. Fifth the narrator has an ideological function which means that a narrator adds some comments in the story.

Objectives of study

The present studies focuses to explore the narrative strategies used in the text *Bingo* by Tariq Rehman.. The analysis of narrative strategies through the narrative theory of Gerard Genette would give a particular-focus on the contribution of specific narrative strategies and their relationship with text.

Research questions

- How does structural narratology develops the story for the readers?
- How do narrative structures work in developing the story?
 - The practice function of mimesis and diegesis, narrative instance, Time, duration and narrative frequency

Literature review

The wonderful fact of the story is that it engages its audience in it so that it may become more than real to the audience than the actual world in which they are reading or listening that story. This process is called the narrative engagement according to Slater and Rounger (2002). The narration is linked to the events and actions that are told by the narrator. “Every text discloses traces of narration which can be studied in order to understand exactly how narrative is organised” (Genette). The work of Genette is highly accepted by the other structuralists and it laid the foundation of discourse analysis.

A number of literary texts are present in every language, culture or genre but to again an understanding from these texts, once again the structure of the text is high crucial. Every literature of the world is divided into genres and every genre has different texts. So it is the structure that gives a reader full understanding of the idea that the writer wants to convey. Narrative exists all around whether it is folk tales, news, films, or any type of conversation. To understand the narrative style, it is valuable to understand the narratology as well.

“ Narratology is the study of the narration which also plays supportive role for a reader to understand as well as change the perception about the reality”(Mansouri and Omer 2010).

Narratology



Narratology is the study of narrative as “The study of narrative as a genre is called narratology”. (Fludernik). According to The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (2001) narratology is a term:

“...used since 1969 to denote the branch of literary study devoted to the analysis of narratives, and more specifically of forms of narration and varieties of narrator. Narratology as a modern theory is associated chiefly with European structuralism, although older studies of narrative forms and devices, as far back as Aristotle's Poetics can also be regarded as narratological works. Modern narratology may be dated from Vladimir Propp's Morphology of the Folktale (1928) with its theory of narrative functions” (Baldick, 2001, p. 166).

The main objective of narratology is to understand the different variables of the text which are linked to each other and how these variables provide the foundation for the narrative texts? Gerard Genette demonstrated that the structural narratology is the nature of the text and it also provides the ways to interpret the structure of any text. The following are the ways of interpreting a narrative structurally.

Mimesis or Digesis

Berry had a view that mimesis means dramatization or depiction while the diegesis means to analyse or to relate the story. In Plato's view, the mimesis had a little value as it does not reveal the secret while diegesis is important as it tells the specific events that happened in the story. Mimesis portrays the development of the story. It makes the story more meaningful as it also tells how was the story existed or how does it exist in present or future times? The narrator tells the story very slowly in the mimesis mood and the reader of the story creates the image of the characters and story in his/her mind. The concept of digesis was presented by the Socrates first in Republic at 392 B.C. The word digesis is derived from Greek word which means to guide thoroughly. It is a vehicle for narrating a story and it acts as a source to frame a bond between narrative form (style, technique and form) and the audience. The Gerald had a view that digesis is the way of telling the story while mimesis means to give the reader a notion that story is real.

Narrative Instance

It is defined as the actual moment and the context of the narration. It also refers to the setting that is temporal. This concept is highly crucial to understand the narrative. The Genette had a view that “ narrative does not tell the reality but a fictional act of language arising from the narrative instance.” (Genette) . The narrative instance plays the role of conjunction between narrative voice, time of narration and narrative perspectives (what others are perceiving about the text). So the basic motive of a narrative instance is to form a link between narrator and story.

Narrative time

In structure of a text, the way in which time is framed is also very important as it gives the way to understand the text thoroughly. If the narrator is third person, then there is no time of narration. Similarly, the very tense which is used by the author also depicts the time in the story or in any narrative. The time is also depicted by using the linguistic sign. The time can move forward or backward (flashback). The time in narrative exists in two forms either in subjective or objective form (Genette). The objective time is the real time of the story while subjective time is a specific time in the character's mind. Subjective time exists in transitional form as the time that is present in characters mind is different from the time which is depicted in reader's mind.



Narrative levels

These levels depict how the narration is linked to the acts that are being discussed in any narrative e.g. if the narration is a story within the story? The narrator also tells some events in the story which tell the readers more about the character.

Order:

The sequence of events in any story is called the order of the story. It tells whether a specific event occurred before the narration (flashback) or it didn't happen yet.

Duration:

The rhythms that are present in any narrative, forms the duration. As the text has expanded narration or it is summarized. In terms of duration, the narrative is divided into four types.

- Ellipsis (rapid way of telling)
- Summary (comparatively rapid)
- Scene (slow narration)
- Descriptive (no advancement in the story).

The duration also adds meaning to the text. More duration to the text helps the reader to clarify its meaning in an effective way. For example in the novel of Daniel Defoe the narrator has dedicated first of fifty pages to the tragedy of shipwreck in the first two years and later sixty pages were given to his twentieth year (Defoe 141). Similarly, in Jane Austen novel Northanger Abbey, the first twelve months of the story were given approximately one hundred and sixty pages while one page was devoted to the ending of the story. (Austen).

Narrative frequency

The way in which a specific event is repeated in any narrative is called the frequency of the narrative. The number of a specific narrative that is repeated in the text is called its frequency. There is also another possibility that major event is one and it is repeated again and again in the text. So it also has a frequency of the narrative (Genette). The frequency also refers when there are several scenes in a narrative and they are repeated several times.

Mood (Speech and thought)

According to the Genette, there are two categories in it.

- First is relationship of narrator to what is being narrated.
- Perspective or point of view.

From the perspective of Genette, the speech can be direct or indirect. The quotes of a person always appear in the commas as they are the part of direct speech while in indirect speech, phrases are attached to each other which means to give proper understanding to the audience.

There are two ways to the structural study of a narration. One is interpretive and the other is theoretical. But to study fiction and draw out the conclusion, the sutural narrative is primarily concerned with theoretical way that



gives the understanding of the text. It means that structural narrative is related to the meaning that is more logical and not a superficial one.

There is a research by Inge M. brokshof (2019) and title of this research was “Fictional Narratives and Identity Change”. According to this investigative research, there are three ways by which any story affects the dialogical self. The first pathway is personal pathway second is cultural pathway and third one is reflective pathway. The basic need of this investigation is the impact of structural narrative of any text on the self-according to dialogical self-theory.

Another study that has been done to understand the structural narrative is by Wimmer, Friend S.currie, and Ferguson H (2021) and it is named as “Reading fictional narrative to improve social and moral cognition”. The basic purpose of this study is how structural narrative affects the views of its reader? This research investigates how the structural narrative affects the perception of the reader and how reader develops the meaning out of its text? The structure of narrative also has crucial role in changing the moral and cognition of its reader as the reader’s cognition is affected by the way from which narration is being told.

The study has also been done by Livystska (2020) that bears a title “Psycholinguistic Model of Adductive Reasoning in Fictional Narrative Discourse”. The study advocates that the interpretation of a text is highly dependent upon its structure. This means structure of any writing is directly related to the readers’ interpretation. The words, phrases and sentences which have been involved in the text become the source to interpret the story of any writing.

DR.Asif iqbal states that the word choices, structure and sequence of text makes the text more interpretive and thoughtful and choice of words and sequence in structure also makes the text more expression able. The structure has a great potential and by using this potential, the narrator occupies the mind and heart of the people. It is only the structure, selection of words, sequence of words and phrases which becomes the fabric of the writer to express his thoughts and ideas. When the words are dissolved in any narrative style, they become the source of a narrative. This becomes the reason for affiliation with the narrative.

Similarly, the characters in narrative also build the narrative structure. The characters build the narrative structure as they are the only mean to build emotions in the readers. This process is called identification where in structure, characters are portrayed in such a way that they arouse emotions of the reader which means the conscious identification of the structure by using the character identification (Cohen, 2006). In the structure of the text, is critical because it builds the faith and impression of the audience.

Characters in structure are also very important as they build the meaning of a text. According to Aristotelian poetics approach, the importance of characters is secondary. Aristotle had a view that there can be stories without character but there exist no characters without stories. And the structure of the characters portrays the psyche of the characters. (Vossius). Structural narratology also depicts the motive of character intention. It constitutes the necessary plan of the description outside as the common place actions. (Barthes 257). As Claude Bremond had a view that each character can be the agent of action sequence that are properly his own. (Seduction). The structure does not judge the way through which they are bit analysed by their actions.

Similarly, in some narrations the narrator develops the structure in such a way that they use the tactics to show themselves in the story e.g. there is a fiction by Khawaja Ahmed Abbas where he depicts that there was a dictator who had killed fifty people. (Abbas 1988)



One vital aspect of the structural narratology of any text is the chronological order. Even if the story starts from the middle of the text, it must have related events and it must not be mismatched so the reader may be able to achieve full impression of the text. All the statements in the narrative must be linked. They must not be shattered. According to the Fredrick James, when he talks about structural narratology “ Narrative is not as much literary form as it is a scholarly activity or the structure. The reality of life reaches us in this way as we know the world only through narration. It is impossible to think that any concept of the world is possible without narrative. (Jamson and Narang 1993).

The structure sometimes also depicts the cultural impact of the writing of any story. This also helps to understand the basic purpose of the story which is being conveyed to a reader of the text. Similarly, one important aspect of the structural narratology is that it creates relation between the events and narrative in the formation of the meaning of the text. Any event has specific value whether it is external or internal but it is the structure of the narratology that adds meaning to it. Meaning can grow out of the narrative only when events are described in a perfect way. The narration of an event also creates diversity of interpretations.

Introduction

Bingo is the short story by Tariq Rahman which is focused on the partition of Pakistan and Bangladesh. The title “Bingo” attributes to a game but here in the story the Bingo refers to the people of Bangladesh. The character has no relevance to the bingo game but the narrator has taken his own meaning or interpretation towards the title “Bingo”. Pakistan has seen a large number of language based ethnical movements (Rahman 1996) and one of them was Bengali Movement 1948-1952 and this movements of East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) eventually led to the separation of Pakistan into two halves as East and West Pakistan. Language is the coin and what it can buy in the market is power. The language is strongly associated with ideology and power in Pakistan (Tariq 9)

So Bingo reflects the true story of the separation of East and West Pakistan as how the one country was divided into two halves on the basis of language. The story has two main characters Safeer and Tajassur. Both are part of military. Tajassur belongs to East Pakistan and no serious attitude while safer in the story Bingo is shown through these two characters. Everybody makes fun if the Tajassur due to his habits. He was also called bingo but he didn't get offended by anyone's words but his training sessions were quite bad. At that time, the east and west conflict was at peak. As all other persons called him traitor but he did not pay attention to these harsh words. All the students were passed out. Later on they were called for the duty and they felt lucky to be part of the military. Everybody was in haste on station and Tajassur was rebuked by the Captain Maqsood as he was not there in time. Tajassur had a notion that bravery is not good if used for exploiting. Then a conference was held and scenario on the border of East Pakistan was told but Tajassur was silent. The conditions become more intense as the bingos (east Pakistanis) were being killed. One day Safeer was given the task to clear the village Muktees”. A huge destruction was done and later on Safeer was imprisoned by the bingos. Next day Safeer had to be killed and that day come when hanging had to be done when Safeer heard the voice of Tajassur. Safeer was helped by Tajassur and he was greatly thankful to Tajassur for being kind. The war ended and Pakistani soldiers had surrendered and East Pakistan became Bangladesh. Safeer remained in Tajassur's house before returning to Pakistan. One day as Safeer was sitting with Tajassur's family (mother and sister) the soldiers came in Tajassur's home, raped his sister Amina and killed Tajassur. Safeer could not see his mother in such a misery. He shot her mother. Everybody was died the mother, sister and Tajassur himself. Pakistan surrendered and Bangladesh appeared on the map of the world at the expense of so many innocent lives .



Mimesis or Diegesis in short story Bingo

The mimesis tells what specific traits are present in the character as meaning always develops from the text. Likewise in the story, it is portrayed what type of personality Tajassur had.

“I was good in drill and P.T. and Tajassur was lousy at both. Yet he managed to pass. In the map reading, the platoon mates often did his work. They enlarged the map for him and even found the grid reference of his own position.. (Rahman 1988)”

This line shows about the character of the Tajassur that he was sluggish kind of person and did not bother about the serious things around him. Similarly, he was passive kind of person who did not bother about his surroundings. The impression which a narrator makes about the character gives reader a chance to analyse the character properly “He passed out twentieth in the course. And I bet, it was all because of his wonderful oral expression in English and wit” (Rahman 1988).

Similarly, digesis tells about the events or to relate the events in the story. There are some events in the story as they are related but these events also depict contradiction. As in the story Safer says “I think it is a land of slaves” and later on the Major belonging to the Bengal says to Safer that you are behaving with us like we Bingos are your slaves. “You are a colonist like French in Algeria and Belgians in Congo”(Rahman 1988).

Here in the story digesis depicts the changing attitude of the narrator as well. As Safer says that “ I hated these Bengali bastards.I hated them all” and later on Safer says “ I put my arms around his neck and almost stifled him and I kissed him on the cheek” (Rahman 1988). These lines show that writer’s opinion was also changing along with changing events. As in the story Tajassur saved Safer from the death. So early depiction was showing that he had polite nature and did not want to harm anyone.

“Yet Tajassur had soft baby looks and large black eyes. If one talked to him, he smiled and spoke nicely. The seniors called him a sissy and said that he was fit to be a heroine in Filipino movie” (Rahman 1988).

Similarly, events are related in the story to show that Tajassur although did not bother about anyone yet had kind heart and later in the story he also proves it. “Look, Safer. They are not reasoned out. I just do what makes me happy and what makes people happy. And ‘Bingo’ has nothing to do with it.” (Rahman 1988).

Later on when Tajassur helped Safer, it shows his kindness. “Lieutenant Safer of the 15th Punjab,” he said in English, “I am Major Saif-ur-Rehman of Bangladesh Army” he replied getting up to shake my hand. I was stunned. There was no bloody Bangladesh and no damned Bangladesh Army. I was about to burst out. But then I remembered where I was and kept my mouth shut. (Rahman)”

The narrator has also used flashbacks in the story to add more meaning to it. The flashback helps the reader to recall the past events in their mind. “I remembered the evenings of PMA when we sat on the terrace of the cafeteria and looked at the green valley and Tajassur often treated me”. (Rahman)

Narrative level

The narrative level in Bingo is that events reveal the characters more in the story as Safer went to fight for his own country. But the motive that was given by Major of West Pakistan also revealed what was going in the mind of Bingos for getting a separate country?



“Have you ever tried to get out of your propaganda and use your mind and eyes. They hide them because they love them. Because they are their own people. Because they hate you. That’s why they kill you when you stray out of your little fortresses. But one day all your fortresses will vanish and we will be free—then you will be pushed out into the Bay of Bengal and the lotus will be out of your reach. You are colonists, like the French in Algeria and the Belgians in the Congo. Had you been as sensible as the British you would have withdrawn gracefully”. (Rahman 1988)

The Narrative instance

The narrative reference refers to the setting of the story and clarifies the mind of the reader about the specific events. As here in the story “Bingo” Tariq Rahman gives the reader a clear notion about the story in the start.

“It was miserable in the first term at the Pakistan Military Academy” (Rahman). Similarly, the narrator is also depicting the scene when the army of Pakistan entered into the West Pakistan (now Bangladesh). “One day we were ordered to clear the area of Muktees” (Rahman 1988).

Narrative time

The narrative time depicts the time of specific events or actions so that story may not be vague for the readers and the reader can get clear understanding of the context. In Gerald Genette view the story time is different from narrative time as story time shows the order of events while narrative time is the “pseudo temporal order” of the story. As in Bingo the narrative time is depicted as it happens in other stories as well. “In March I did so well that I got recommended for the commander in chief commendation letter.” (Rahman 1988). So, this depicts the narrative time of Saffeer’s promotion and when did he get the promotion. There is another specific time of the events happening in the story as there is a line in the story “ Since January Sheikh Mujeeb had become even more absurdly adamant for the six points” (Rahman)” So the reader gets a proper overview what was the time when the scenario of East and West Pakistan became more intense. The narrative time also represented the intense conditions prevailing at that time.

Narrative duration

The duration is the form of scene in the bingo. As narrator is clearly depicting the scenes with complete description. According to Genette, the narrative duration is the link between sequence of events and pseudo duration. The pseudo duration involves the length of text. In Bingo, the narrator is providing the complete scenes with description so that reader gets the full image of that scene. As it is a, short story so narration is not so long in terms of length. But the scenes are much clearer as they provide full imagery. . “

“He was a Bingo, you see. He belonged to Dacca itself and East Pakistan had begun kicking up one hell of row to get separated from West Pakistan. We called him a ‘Bingo’ and a ‘traitor’ and Sheikh Mujibur Rehman’s ADC. I went a step further and called him the ‘Marshaland minion””(Rahman 1988)

So here full description is given about the nature of Tajasur why he was given the title bingo to the people who were living during In East Pakistan and what was the notion of West Pakistanis about the people of west Pakistan?

Narrative frequency



The number of times a specific event is narrated in the story is the frequency of the narrative. As the event of war between East Pakistan and West Pakistan is repeated again and again in short story.

“When we reached the unit, there was an atmosphere of tension and hurry”. (Rahman). After that another event of war is also depicted. “Yes sir, the battle account is inspiring,” said Major Dost Muhammad, the Second-in-Command.” (Rahman 1988).

One event that is repeated again and again in the story is the description of Tajasur and the conflict that was present in others. Tajasur was kind hearted and did not harm anyone but still all other people called him Bingo.. “If one talked to him, he smiled and spoke nicely” (Rahman 1988). Similarly, at another place, he was given same title that depicted his personality. “The seniors came into our room just to enjoy themselves by punishing him or talking to him—he was witty. “Hey you heroine, one would say, “have you got firl-friends?” (Rahman 1988).) So the basic motive of frequency is to emphasize the events that are more important in the text and develops the meaning of the story in reader’s mind.

Conclusion:

Narrative is incomplete without structure and it is magnificent when it’s all ingredients (structure, instances, mood etc.) are mixed up in amicability Structural narratology is highly important for depicting the themes and building the plot of the story. It is the structure of any text that builds the mental and emotional attachments of readers to the text. So in this short story the narrator has beautifully portrayed the partition of East and west Pakistan by its two characters. The structure of narrative was beautifully designed that makes the readers captivate.



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