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Narrative Techniques in Selected Short Stories

A Graduation Research Project

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Table of Contents.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Section One: Introduction	
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Significance of Study.....	1
1.3 The Aims of the paper.....	2
1.4 Statement of Problems.....	2
1.5 Limitations of the Study.....	3
1.6 Research Questions.....	3
1.7 Hypothesis.....	3
Section Two: Literature Review	
Review of Literature.....	5
Section Three: Methodology	
3.1 Theory and Method.....	7
Section Four: Discussion	
4.1 Narrative Techniques in Fiction.....	9
4.2 Plausibility in Fiction.....	12
4.3.1 Narrative Techniques in <i>The Bet</i>.....	13
4.3.2 Point of view in <i>The Bet</i>.....	15
4.3.3 Monologue in <i>The Bet</i>.....	18

4.4.1 Narrative Techniques in <i>Cat in the Rain</i>.....	20
4.4.2 Atmosphere in <i>Cat in the Rain</i>.....	22
4.4.3 Characterization in <i>Cat in the Rain</i>.....	23
4.5.1 Narrative Techniques in <i>A Good Man is Hard to Find</i>.....	26
4.5.2 Diction in <i>A Good Man is Hard to Find</i>.....	27
4.5.3 Beginnings in <i>A Good Man is Hard to Find</i>.....	30
4.6.1 Narrative Techniques <i>Thank You Ma`am</i>.....	31
4.6.2 Characterization in <i>Thank You Ma`am</i>.....	32
4.6.3 Dialogue in <i>Thank You Ma`am</i>.....	34
Section Four: Conclusion	
Conclusion.....	37
Reference List.....	40
Appendixes	
Appendix 1.....	43
Appendix 2.....	45
Appendix 3.....	48
Appendix 4.....	50

Abstract

Narrative techniques play a critical role in creating successful short stories, as they have the power to shape the tone, mood, and meaning of a literary work. This research paper explores the various narrative techniques employed *The Bet* by Anton Chekhov, *Cat in the Rain* by Ernest Hemingway, *A Good Man is Hard to Find* by Flannery O'Connor and *Thank You Ma'am* by Langston Hughes, providing a comprehensive understanding of their significance in the stories.

The present research project begins by defining narrative techniques and the roles those techniques play in shaping the effectiveness of a short story. It then examines different techniques, including point of view, dialogue, monologue, diction, setting, characterization, beginning, subject and atmosphere, with examples from the four selected short stories. The paper analyzes how each technique contributes to the narrative structure and meaning of the story, and how authors use them to create compelling literary works.

It is concluded that dialogue is a crucial narrative technique in the process of characterization as well as taking the plot forward, and atmosphere is one of the techniques that affect the readers the most through the use of diction and setting.

Keywords: narrative, narrative techniques, short stories.

Section One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The ways in which a story is told affect how readers experience it. The use of narrative techniques by an author can have an impact on the reader's emotional reaction to the narrative, comprehension of the characters and themes, and level of engagement with the literary text. This research paper attempts to examine the use of narrative devices in a number of short stories, looking at how writers use techniques to convey their message, effectively. This paper seeks to shed light on how stories are written and how readers comprehend and are positioned by examining the narrative techniques and devices employed by the authors of such short stories as *The Bet*, *Cat in the Rain*, *Thank You Ma'am* and *A Good Man is Hard to Find*. It also aims to emphasize the significance of narrative techniques and their influence on the reading experience by closely studying the above mentioned four short stories.

1.2 Significance of Study

The present research project is of significant importance because it attempts to provide a wider understanding of the used narrative techniques by Anton Chekov, Ernest Hemingway, Langston Hughes, and Flannery O'Conner in the process of writing their short stories and why certain narrative techniques are used by them.

Another significance of the present research project is that it can become a helpful source for the future studies in the analysis and criticizing process of the selected short stories or the writers of the short stories.

1.3 *The Aims of the Research:*

The present research project aims at:

- Identifying the prominent narrative techniques used in the short stories: *The Bet*, *Cat in the Rain*, *Thank You Ma`am* and *A Good Man is Hard to Find*.
- Examining the readers` perspective regarding the prominent narrative techniques used in the selected short stories.
- Demonstrating how plausibility is achieved in fiction using narrative techniques.

1.4 *Statement of Problems:*

This paper focuses on narrative techniques in four selected short stories and how they serve in the narration process of those stories. However, there were two main difficulties in the writing process of this research paper. First, lack of resources regarding narrative techniques in the stories, specifically *Cat in the Rain* and *Thank You Ma`am*. Second, designing a questionnaire that can cover all the matters mentioned in the research project.

1.5 *Limitations of the Study:*

As this paper is focusing on narrative techniques in only four selected short stories it would not be possible to apply the same results on all short stories or other stories written by the same writers. It is also not possible to generalize the results of the questionnaire as it may give different results if it included more than sixteen participants.

1.6 *Research Questions:*

The research project seeks to find answers to the following questions:

- 1- What is the most widely used point of view in the selected short stories?
- 2- What Narrative techniques are utilized for character development?
- 3- How narrative techniques are employed to evoke the general mood of the narration?
- 4- What narrative technique is used to provide more insight about the characters to the readers?

1.7 *Hypothesis*

- Third person point of view is the most widely used point of view in the selected short stories, because it helps to express the thoughts and opinions of more than one character.

- Dialogue is most widely utilized tool for character development in which the characters engage with other characters that change the character`s perspectives or attitudes.
- Atmosphere and setting are employed in order to establish and evoke the mood that the author wants the readers to feel and develop.
- Characterization functions as the technique that assists us to understand more about the characters` looks and attitudes.

Section Two: Literature Review

Review of Literature:

Narrative techniques in short stories have been a subject of study for literary scholars and enthusiasts for decades. The following literature review provides an overview of some of the key research and theories in this field.

One of the earliest and most influential works in the study of narrative techniques is Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1968). Propp identified recurring patterns in Russian folktales and argued that the structure of a narrative could be broken down into a series of functions. While this work is primarily focused on folktales, it has had a significant impact on the study of narrative structure in all forms of literature (Propp, 1968).

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the role of point of view in short stories. James Wood's *How Fiction Works* (2008) examines the different types of point of view and their effects on the reader's understanding of the narrative. Similarly, Emily James's *Point of View in Fiction*, published in (2017), explores the ways in which point of view can shape the reader's interpretation of a text, as how it can affect the use of diction in how different pronouns are used and how it changes the structure of sentences

The use of dialogue in short stories has also been the subject of much study. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (1983) observes the ways in which dialogue can reveal character traits and create tension in a narrative. Similarly, Elizabeth Bowen's essay "Notes on Writing a Novel" argues that dialogue can be used to convey both character and plot (Bowen, 1947).

The importance of setting in short stories has been explored in a number of works. In his essay "The Three Dimensions of a Short Story" (1961), Eudora Welty argues that setting can be used to create a sense of atmosphere and to reflect the emotional state of the characters. Similarly, Nadine Gordimer's work "The Essential Gesture" discusses that setting can be used to convey political and social issues (Gordimer, 1986).

Overall, the study of narrative techniques in short stories has been a vibrant and evolving field of research. The works discussed above represent only a small selection of the vast body of literature on this subject. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the importance of understanding narrative techniques in order to fully appreciate the complexities and nuances of short fiction.

Section Three: Methodology

3.1 *Theory and Method*

In this research paper, an analysis of four selected short stories is conducted, examining the narrative techniques that the authors use to shape their short stories. A variety of different short stories are chosen in order to cover all narrative techniques possible. It examines how authors use narrative techniques to create compelling and engaging narratives, looking at the ways in which these techniques are used to evoke emotional responses in readers. The analysis will also include the ways in which narrative techniques interact with other elements of the narrative, such as plot, setting, subject and themes or even the ending and message of the short story.

The research project uses mixed method, that is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies in designing the questionnaire which assesses the interpretations and responses of sixteen participants concerning the selected short stories.

The data collection process completely relies on the designed questionnaires which were individually filled by the participants via online google forms.

The analysis of the data is conducted through transforming the collected information into percentages in order to understand the ratio of respondents who interpret the short story in the same way or having unique interpretations of their

own. Moreover, this paper also relies on the critical sources collected by the researcher to further elaborate and validate the narrative techniques and their utilization in the selected short stories.

Section Four: Discussion

4.1 *Narrative Techniques in Fiction*

Fiction is a literary genre that involves the creation of imaginary or fictional stories that are not based on real events, people, or places. It includes works like short stories and novels that are primarily distinguished by their imaginative content. Fictional stories are frequently written with the purpose of amusing, instructing, or evoking thought and emotion in readers (Schlaeger, 1996)

Fictional narratives can take place in any era or location, and they can include any number of characters, each with their own motivations and personalities. The situations and events in fiction may be completely fictitious or may only be loosely based on actual occurrences. In fiction, character growth, relationships between characters, and characters conflicts are frequently the main plot points which are all presented to readers through the use of narrative techniques (Ribó, 2019).

Narrative techniques are the tools and methods that writers use to tell a story effectively. Characterization, setting, plot, point of view, and symbolism are a few of these techniques. A story can be made interesting, memorable, and engaging by using narrative techniques (Garrison, 2004)

Characterization as is one of the most significant narrative techniques, entails developing the characters in a narrative. Characters are the driving force behind a story, and their success largely depends on how well they are developed. Characters

that have been well-developed should be complicated, relatable, and have a distinct purpose in the plot. Readers become attached to the personalities and are interested in their fate (Rimmon-Kenan, 2005). Characterization involves giving the characters' physical attributes, their innermost emotions and thoughts, and dialogue. As a result, readers get a comprehensive image of the characters and can relate to them more deeply (Ibid)

Another essential narrative technique in literature is setting. It refers to the distinct location and period where the story is set. Setting can be used to create a story's tone, mood, and atmosphere (Rozelle, 2005). It can also be employed to communicate significant topics and concepts. For instance, a story set in a gloomy, foreboding forest can evoke a feeling of jeopardy and dread. A busy metropolis setting can evoke a feeling of chaos and noise. One can also use a well-designed setting to make a metaphor for more significant societal problems. For instance, a narrative set in a dystopian society could be used to make a political statement (Ibid).

Point of view is another important narrative technique that refers to the viewpoint taken when telling a story. When a narrative is told from the point of view of just one character using the 'I' pronoun, it is said to be told in the first person. This gives off a feeling of intimacy. The third-person point of view is when the story is told from a more objective perspective. This offers a more objective perspective on the narrative. Point of view can also be used to shed light on crucial details about

the narrator or the plot of the story. It can be an effective instrument for building suspense and tension (Hynes, 2014).

Monologue and dialogue are two important narrative techniques used in fiction to convey a story, move the plot forward and develop characters. A monologue is a long speech given by a single character. It is frequently used to present the character's motivations, thoughts, and emotions. Monologues can be used to set the mood and tone of a scene as well as to convey significant information about the character or the narrative. Contrarily, dialogue is the exchange of words between two or more characters. It is employed to provide details regarding the storyline, the characters, and their connections. Dialogue can be used to advance the plot, create conflict, or make key plot elements clear. Good dialogue should be used to develop characters and disclose their motivations. It should also sound natural and realistic (Nykänen & Koivisto, 2016).

Authors use atmosphere as a narrative technique to evoke a specific emotion or mood in the readers of their work. It involves the use of sensory details and descriptive words to generate a specific emotional or psychological tone.

An author can immerse the reader in the story's universe and give them the impression that they are directly experiencing the actions and feelings of the characters through the use of atmosphere (Empson, 1949).

Subject is a narrative technique used by authors to explore a particular theme or topic in their writing. It involves concentrating on a particular topic or concept and using it as the main theme throughout the entire story (Sharma, 2005). Because the subject can act as a universal idea that connects with the reader on a personal level, an author can use the subject to forge a deeper and more meaningful connection between the reader and the narrative.

Finally, *in medias res* is a literary device in which the story begins in the middle of the narrative right at the very beginning of the story or the character is in the midst of an action very early in the story. Writers sometimes start their stories in *medias res* and may skip the backstory or the story background using this technique to establish a feeling of immediacy and urgency in the story to capture the reader's interest right away (Peters, 2004).

4.2 Plausibility in Fiction

According to Robert T. Harris cited in (Welsh, 1953, p. 102) “Plausibility consists in the subsumption of fictional events in under the laws of nature” and that “the relevant laws of nature are mostly laws of human nature and laws of the formation of character”. He then also adds that good fiction offers unlimited possibilities of human emotions and social behaviors (Ibid).

Plausibility is the element that makes the reader feel that the setting of the narrative hangs together and that there is a rational plot in which one thing more or

less leads to another under the conceptions that are set by the writer to his fictional work (Maugham, 2017).

It is essential for writers to achieve plausibility, because in the process of writing fiction authors may face many challenges due to all the scientific conventions and law enforcements or even the rules and logic they create for a certain work of literary writing. For example, if we have a story about a policeman doing investigations about a serial killer for two years straight without getting any lead to who the serial killer is the story will be authentic in terms of being realistic, but that will result a quite slow paced and boring narrative, so in order to avoid such problem writers attempt to be plausible, as they use some narrative techniques and bend the conceptions enough to tell the story in a more enjoyable way (Hynes, 2014). In the story of the policeman, writers will start in the middle of narrative (in medias res) to create a sense of suspense to the reader or they just jump two years in time to the point where the policeman starts to make a progress in his investigations.

All in all, plausibility in fiction is a crucial element that can greatly enhance the believability and effectiveness of a story, by making it more relatable and realistic for the reader.

4.3 Narrative Techniques in The Bet

The Bet by Anton Chekov is a short story about a lawyer and a banker who are attending a party where the two main characters discussed topic was that

whether capital punishment is moral or life imprisonment. Some of the guests suggest that life imprisonment can be an alternative for capital punishment.

Therefore, a lawyer amongst the guests says that both capital punishment and life imprisonment are both equally immoral, but if he has to choose one, he will prefer life imprisonment. Then the banker loses his temper and bet the lawyer to stay in prison for five years. The lawyer elevates the bet for fifteen years in prison for two million rubles in exchange. At the end of the bet, the lawyer wins the bet, but he does not take the money as his thought almost about everything has changed. The lawyer left a letter for the banker that he survived, but at what cost.

Anton Chekov utilizes several narrative techniques in the narration of *The Bet* to convey the themes and messages intended. In this paper the main focus will be on point of view and monologue regarding *The Bet* as they are two of the most prominent narrative techniques. However, there are few other techniques in *The Bet* that are discussed. Some of those include:

1-Flashback: A scene from the past that interrupts the events of the present time. *The Bet* begins with flashbacks of fifteen years before the action of the story to reveal how the bet came to be and the events that occurred during the lawyer's confinement. The main purpose behind using flashbacks by Chekov is to let the reader understand the logical sequence of event in how the bet between the lawyer and the banker (Litell, 2003).

2- Characterization: It is the attempt of the writer to describe his/her characters in a literary work. Characterization is divided into two different types, direct and indirect characterization. Direct characterization can be defined as describing a character by the author to the reader in a direct way. Unlike direct characterization, indirect characterization focuses on showing the features and characteristics of a character by another source inside of the narrative rather than the author describing the character directly (Reams, 2015). Chekov`s characters in *The Bet* are described with both techniques of characterization as he shows their impressions about each other which falls under the umbrella of indirect characterization, and also their physical appearance through the narrator of the story which is direct characterization.

4.3.2 Point of View in The Bet

When authors write their narratives, they pay much attention on the techniques they use in order to set their ideas in the most proper way. One of those is the use of point of view, as it is essential considering the choice of style-vulgar, colloquial, diction, the length and characteristics of the sentences within the story (Gardner, 1984).

Chekhov in his short story *The Bet* utilized limited third person point of view because the character turns into the narrator in the story itself, but does have a

limit in the amount of information they have about other characters surrounding them, so that results them to offer less information to the reader (Bloom, 2009).

Using this variant of third point of view in fiction is usually because it is elevated formal language and everything that is related to traditional omniscient narrative is seen appropriate regarding the compatibility of the language used in the narration with the seriousness of the story (Gardner, 1984).

In *The Bet*, Chekhov presents the banker as the main narrator of his story in which we are being told about the events from his point of view. The reader is inside the head of the narrator, hearing his ideas and understanding his intentions, in fact, the only occasion the reader is exposed to the thoughts and emotions of another character is when the lawyer requests books, the note he wrote in the sixth year of his imprisonment and the letter he wrote informing the banker that he will leave the prison early (Bloom, 2009). Although the story is told by a narrator that focuses on the thoughts of the characters, Chekhov used the narrator in order to have his story be objective, as he believes in telling stories with narrative techniques that assert objectivity in order to make the narrative more affective (Ibid).

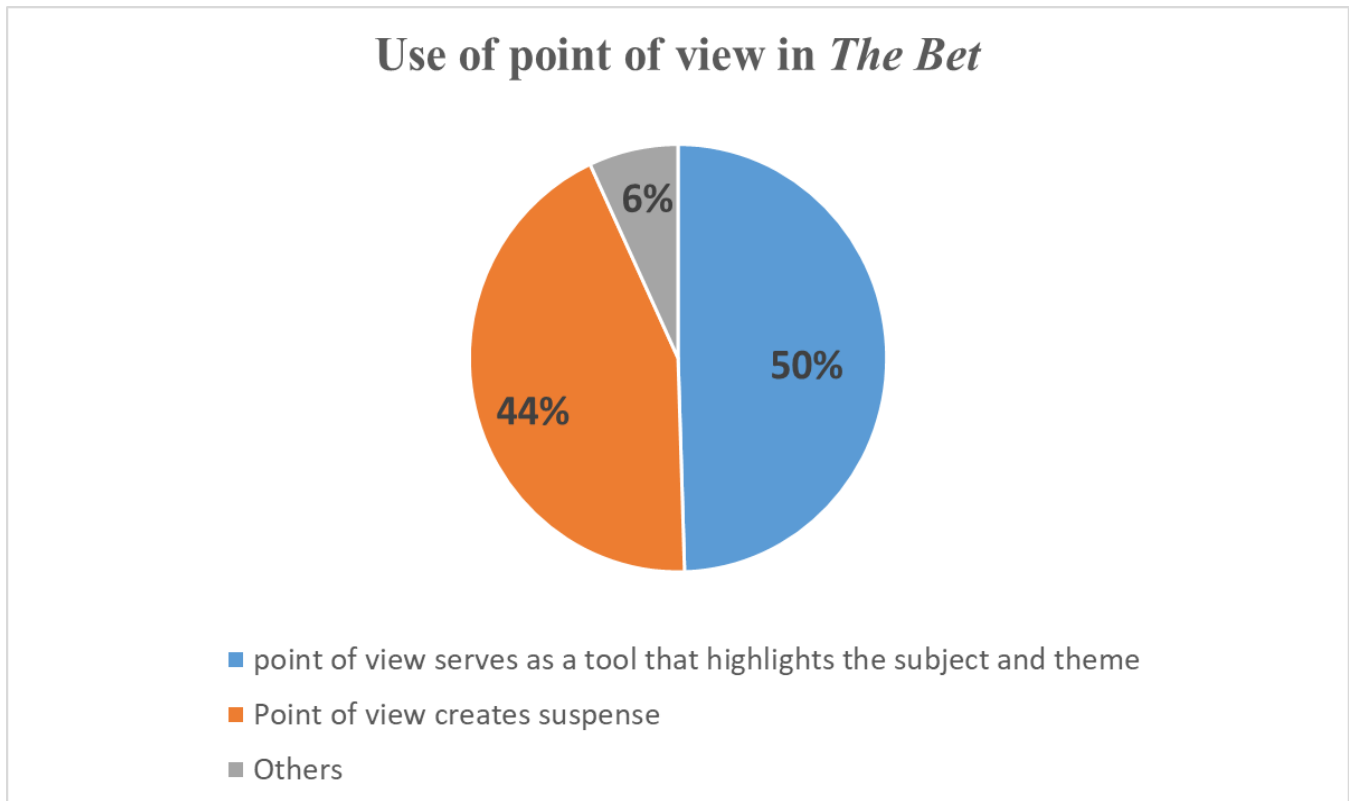


Figure 1: Point of View in *The Bet*

As the results of the questionnaire shows, there are many different interpretations for why the technique of point of view is used in *The Bet*. 44% of the participants see that point of view creates suspense in the story, and 50% of the respondents think that the use of point of view serves as a tool that highlights the subject and theme of the story, as shown in figure 1.

To sum up, point of view is one of the significant narrative techniques used in *The Bet*, as it provides readers with insights about the characters and assists to create suspense and tension in the narrative.

4.3.3 *Monologue in The Bet*

One of the narrative techniques that stands out in *The Bet* is the use of interior monologue. This technique involves giving insight into the thoughts, feelings and motivations of a character, as if they are speaking directly to the reader. In *The Bet*, Chekov makes use of this technique to create a powerful impact on the reader and to bring out the central themes of the story in a poignant manner.

Chekov's use of monologue in *The Bet* has three main purposes behind it. Firstly, Chekov was attempting to give insights of the characters' thoughts, emotions, and ideas to readers in order to arise more tension in the story which indirectly helps to present the story as to be plausible due to the struggles both the characters of the banker and the lawyer went through. This idea is agreed upon by sixty-three percent of the participants as they consider monologue as a tool that helps them to understand the inside of the characters more (Sosič, 2022).

Secondly, the themes of the story are revealed through the monologues, in which beside telling readers about the characters' ideas and thoughts, monologues also demonstrate the themes of isolation, loneliness and meaning of life which leads readers to experience the condition of each character (Gottlieb, 1982). This is the perspective of 75% of the participants of the questionnaire who agree with aforementioned purposes and the rest saying that the use of monologue only highlights the internal conflicts of the characters, as demonstrated in figure 2.

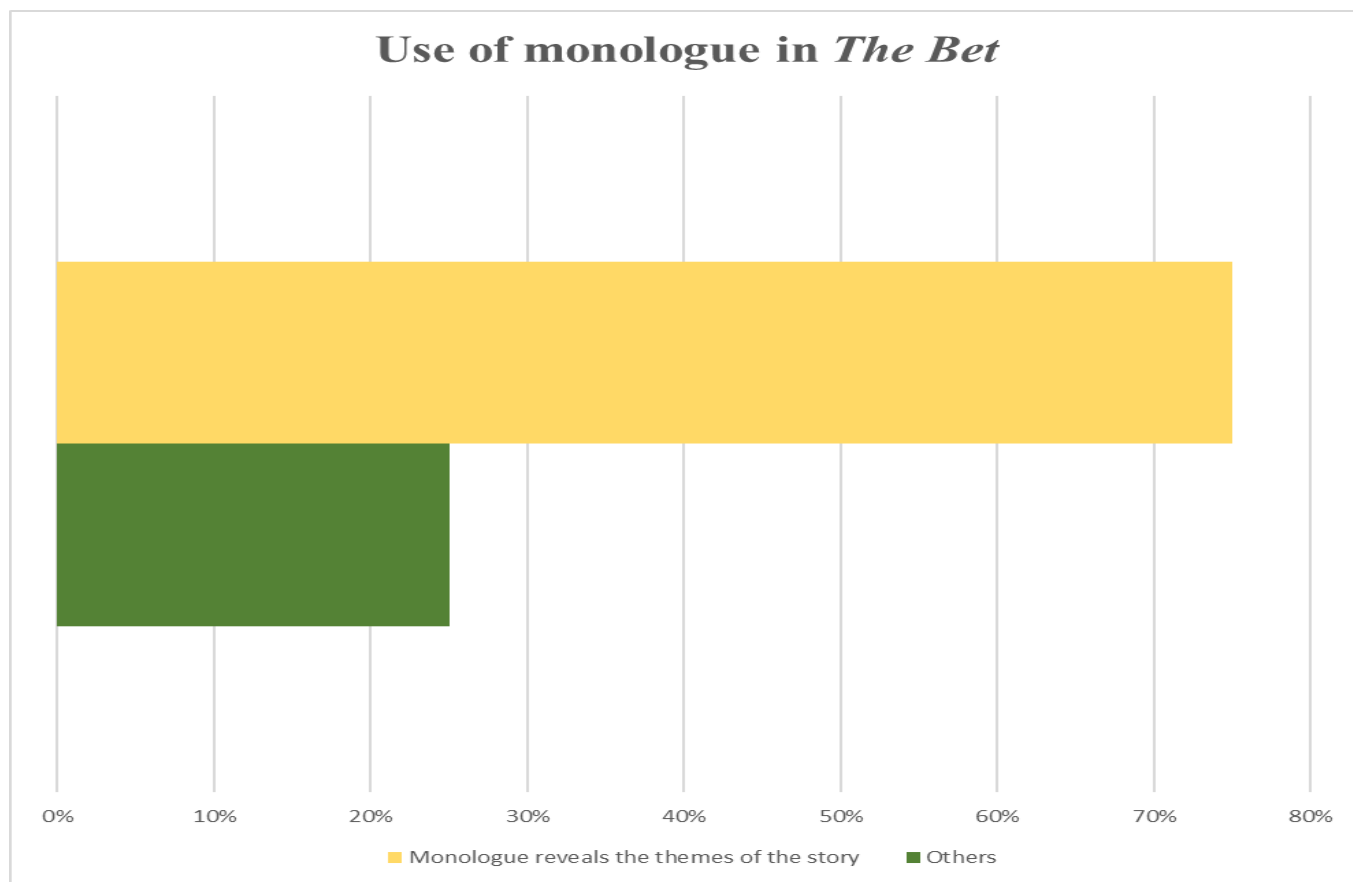


Figure 2: Monologue in *The Bet*

Finally, Monologue assists readers to comprehend the plot being taken forward as they will be prepared to see the banker's shift of ideas about winning the bet against the lawyer and life overall and the lawyer rejecting to take the money. Monologue functioning as a method to take the plot forward is reinforced by 63% of reader respondents of *The Bet* by Chekhov, but the rest of the respondents think that the use of monologue is to add tension and suspense to the plot.

To sum up, Anton Chekhov's use of interior monologue as a narrative technique in *The Bet* is masterful, and serves to bring out the central themes of the story in a

powerful and expressive manner. Through this technique, Chekov is able to give readers insight into the thoughts and feelings of the two main characters, as well as heightening the dramatic tension of the story. The result is a powerful and thought-provoking work of fiction that continues to captivate readers to this day.

4.4 Narrative Techniques in *Cat in the Rain*

The short story *Cat in the Rain* by Ernest Hemingway is about an American couple traveling to Italy. The wife, who is dissatisfied with her life and longs for anything more. The story opens with the wife gazing out of the hotel room window; she notices a cat in the rain and longs to own it. The woman goes outside later to look for the cat but is does not find it. The wife and her husband have a brief talk about the cat, their relationship, and their life when she returns to the hotel room, where her husband is reading.

Hemingway wrote his story with many narrative techniques in order to expose the reader to the story he wants to tell, more effectively. Atmosphere and Characterization are two of the techniques that possess a great significance in this particular story, so they will both have an individual section. However, there are other techniques that enrich the literary value of the work, some of those include;

- 1- Titling: In *Cat in the Rain*, the character of the wife sees a cat and wants have it even though she does not know why. We as readers can create a relation between the cat and the subconscious of the wife as she subconsciously forms

an interpretation that it is a female cat. Then, inside her mind, she initiates to think how well she can treat the cat, symbolizing all the needs and desires she personally craves from protection, being looked after and love (*Cat in the rain*, 1). This is how the wife imagines that the female cat needs love and recognition that the wife herself is not obtaining by her husband George. This relation can be supported by the wife's words when she says that she wants a cat that purrs when she strokes her or by calling the cat "poor kitty" (Ibid), which is ironic, because the original title of the story was "The Poor Kitty" and Hemingway's intention in the first place was to portray the wife as the "poor kitty" (Benson, 1990).

Another element that makes the title of the story interesting is the fact that there is no article in the title (the title is not "The Cat in the Rain" or "A Cat in the Rain") which demonstrates Hemingway's ability in equating the weak side of the relationship (the wife) with a weak and powerless animal (the cat).

- 2- Symbolism: Ernest Hemingway in his short story *Cat in the Rain* presents several symbols to depict some abstract ideas he wants to transfer to his readers. The sentiment of the American wife through portraying the cat in being under the rain in a quite symbolic manner show Hemingway's concern about the modern life in America as well as his concern regarding female sensibility and psyche (Meshram, 2002).

3- Dialogue: Hemingway utilized dialogue in *Cat in the Rain* mostly for two main reasons: first, to show the emotional state and attitude of the character of the wife just like how she tells her husband:

“I want to pull my hair back tight and smooth and make a big knot at the back that I can feel,’ she said. ‘I want to have a kitty to sit on my lap and purr when I stroke her.’ ‘Yeah?’ George said from the bed. ‘And I want to eat at a table with my own silver and I want” (*Cat in the Rain*, p.2)

The other reason of using dialogue in the story by Hemingway is to show the conflict between the couple as the wife feels frustrated from her husband George (Olson, 1987).

4.4.2 Atmosphere in *Cat in the Rain*

Atmosphere usually refers to an emotional or aesthetic characteristic. In literature, a piece of writing can be referred to as atmospheric when it creates a sense of engagement to an ambient state inside of the readers’ mind and creating a link between the piece of writing and the reader (atmosphere and tone). Hemingway creates different types atmosphere throughout the story by his choice of diction and events. For example, the sense of isolation that exists between the wife and her husband as she is the one who always starts conversations between them and the husband not giving attention to her (Broer & Holland, 2002). Interestingly, this is confirmed by 50% of the readers of *Cat in the Rain* who participated in the questionnaire prepared for the present research project, but the other participants of

the questionnaire say that the characters' interactions serve to create a sense of unease and unpredictability in the atmosphere or to show lack of communication.

Repetition in the story is another method that gives a sense of the couple having barriers between each other and that they are not compatible and how their life is just a repetition of the same events as in how the expression “I want” is repeated 16 times and we are told that George keeps reading in five different times and ignores the unnamed American women. The setting of the story also plays a role in creating atmosphere in the story in which the rain, the hotel and the empty square in front of the hotel all contribute to a mood of isolation for the reader (Nischik, 2017).

Characters in the story contributed in creating atmosphere as well. In the story, the wife wanted the cat and was insisting on it which can be related to the sense of longing or motherhood as we can interpret the wife`s desire for the cat as if she wants a child or the Italian hotel keeper when he gets the American wife a cat which can be interpreted by readers as a father figure that represents fatherhood for her (Bayley, 1988).

4.4.3 Characterization in Cat in the Rain

One of the key elements of the story is the way Hemingway uses characterization to bring his characters to life. The story is primarily focused on the wife, who remains unnamed throughout the narrative. Through her actions, thoughts,

and dialogue, Hemingway makes use of indirect characterization to create a vivid portrayal of her inner life and her relationship with her husband (Weber, 1992). This is the interpretation of 37% of the readers, while the other respondents who are consisting 63% of respondents say that Hemingway used direct characterization through the utilization of dialogue, as illustrated in figure 3.

The use of characterization in <i>Cat in the Rain</i>	
Techniques	Percentages
Direct characterization	63%
Indirect characterization	37%

Figure 3: Characterization in *Cat in the Rain*

At the outset of the story, the wife is presented as a woman who is deeply dissatisfied with her life. She is described as staring out of the hotel window, yearning for something more. She sees a cat outside in the rain and decides to go out and rescue it. This action by the wife is significant because it shows that the wife is looking for a way to escape the monotony of her life and find meaning in something as simple as rescuing a cat.

When she returns to the hotel room with the cat, she tries to share her excitement with her husband, but he is dismissive of her actions. This moment is significant because it highlights the emotional distance between the couple. The wife desperately wants to connect with her husband, but he is unresponsive to her attempts at communication.

George is portrayed as emotionally distant and preoccupied with his own concerns. He is described as reading a book and ignoring his wife's attempts to engage with him. George's actions suggest that he is not interested in connecting with his wife emotionally and is instead focused on his own needs.

Another important aspect of the story's characterization is the use of dialogue. Hemingway's characters often speak in short, stilted sentences that reflect their emotional distance from each other. For example, when the wife asks George to fetch her a cat, he responds with a curt "I'll do it" (*Cat in the Rain*, p.1) that suggests he is annoyed by her request (Olson, 1987).

To conclude, Ernest Hemingway's *Cat in the Rain* is a powerful exploration of human desire and dissatisfaction. Through his careful use of characterization, Hemingway brings his characters to life and creates a vivid portrait of a couple struggling to connect emotionally. The story's brilliant descriptions and use of

dialogue help to create a vivid and compelling narrative that speaks to the universal human experience.

4.5 Narrative Techniques in A Good Man is Hard to Find

A Good Man is Hard to Find is a short story by Flannery O'Connor, published in 1953. The story follows a family on a road trip to Florida, led by the grandmother who is obsessed with her own social status and past experiences. Along the way, they encounter a dangerous criminal known as 'The Misfit, who has recently escaped from prison. The family's car crashes, and they are stranded on the side of the road. The Misfit and his gang come across them, and after some conversation, The Misfit orders his gang to kill the entire family. The grandmother, in her final moments, pleads with The Misfit to spare her life and claims that he is a good man. The Misfit responds that he isn't a good man and that there isn't any real goodness in the world.

Flannery O'Connor's *A Good Man is Hard to Find* is a masterfully crafted short story that uses a variety of narrative techniques to convey its themes and create a lasting impression on the reader. This section mostly focuses on diction and in medias res. However, few other techniques are utilized by O'Connor to serve different functions in her story.

One of the prominent techniques used in the story is foreshadowing. O'Connor employs subtle hints and clues throughout the story to build tension and create a sense of impending doom. For example, the grandmother's comments about the

Misfit's recent escape from prison foreshadow the family's fateful encounter with him. The foreshadowing also extends to the family's journey itself. The weather, the winding roads, and the abandoned homes they pass create a foreboding atmosphere that signals the story's tragic ending (James, 2011).

Finally, O'Connor's use of dialogue is also noteworthy. The conversations between the characters reveal their personalities, motivations, and conflicts, and help to drive the plot forward. The grandmother's incessant chatter, for example, is both comical and grating, and serves to highlight her own self-centeredness (Alberts, 2010).

In conclusion, *A Good Man is Hard to Find* is a powerful and haunting work of fiction that employs a variety of narrative techniques to convey its message. O'Connor's use of foreshadowing, diction, in medias res and dialogue all work together to create a story that is both gripping and thought-provoking. Through her skillful use of these techniques, O'Connor has crafted a masterpiece of American literature that continues to captivate and inspire readers today.

4.5.2 Diction in A Good Man is Hard to Find

Diction is a powerful narrative technique used by authors to convey specific meanings and emotions in their writing. Flannery O'Connor, in her short story

A Good Man is Hard to Find effectively employs diction to develop the characters and themes of the story. Throughout the story, O'Connor uses a variety of diction choices to create a distinct voice for each character. The Grandmother, for example, is characterized by her use of formal language and her frequent use of the word "gentleman." This word becomes a motif throughout the story and is used by the Grandmother to describe both the Misfit and Red Sammy, the owner of the restaurant where the family stops. This use of diction reinforces the Grandmother's outdated and classic values, as she views anyone with a semblance of wealth or status as a "gentleman" (Roof, 2020). As the results of the survey reveal, 50% of the respondents of the survey believe Grandmother's words are formal and denote her class and she sees others in terms of wealth or class status. While 38% of readers see the use of diction is to show personalities of the characters or to help establishing the themes of the story, the other 12% say diction is used to show themes and messages of the story, as figure 4 shows.

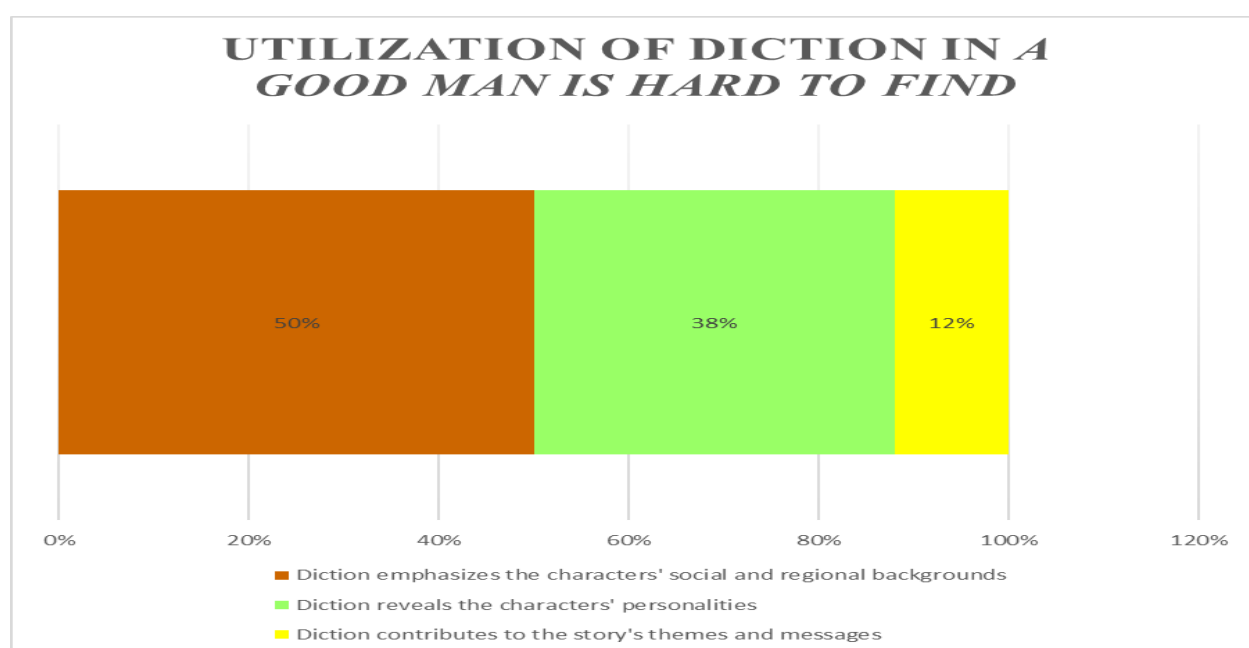


Figure 4: Diction in *A Good Man is Hard to Find*

In contrast, the Misfit's language is characterized by its roughness and lack of refinement. He speaks with a regional dialect and frequently uses vulgar language as he mispronounces words like 'ask' to "ast" (*A Good Man is Hard to Find*, p.10), which indicates the geographic setting of the story as well as the background of the characters in which it conveys his disregard for social conventions and his willingness to transgress boundaries which by all readers is considered to be the reason why the story is more realistic, as the way diction used is very natural and authentic. Moreover, his use of language serves to underscore the violence and danger that he represents, as he speaks in short, clipped sentences that suggest a lack of empathy and a readiness to act on his impulses. For example, when he responds to the grandmother by saying "Yes`m" (*Ibid*, p.12) or when he asks his partners in crime to give him a shirt he used "thow" instead of the word 'throw' (*Ibid*, p.11).

Through the diction of the characters, O'Connor also explores the themes of good and evil, morality, and the search for meaning in life. The Grandmother's belief in the importance of being a "good person" is evident through her language and her repeated use of the term "good." However, this notion of goodness is called into question by the Misfit's perspective, which asserts that there is no inherent value in life and that everything is ultimately meaningless. His use of language is crucial in conveying this worldview (Kirszner & Mandell, 1994).

In conclusion, diction is a significant narrative technique in Flannery O'Connor's *A Good Man is Hard to Find*. The language and word choices used by the characters convey their personalities, attitudes, and values, as well as the themes of the story. By carefully selecting language that reflects each character's perspective and beliefs, O'Connor creates a richly textured and emotionally resonant narrative that explores the complexities of human nature and the search for meaning in a world that often seems devoid of it.

4.5.3 *Beginning in A Good Man is Hard to Find*

As opposed to starting a story with descriptions, backstory or story background at the beginning, *A Good Man is Hard to Find* starts with in medias res which means beginning a story in the midst of the action. It is a potent tool that makes it possible for the reader to become engrossed in the narrative right away and instills a sense of intrigue and urgency (Alley, 1986). This technique is effectively used by Flannery O'Connor in her short story *A Good Man is Hard to Find*, which paves the way for the rest of the story to occur and increases suspense throughout the story (Alley, 2018). The figures of the survey indicate that 75% or three quarters of the reader participants of the survey regard this to be the case for why and how effectively is in medias res used by O'Connor.

A family is traveling to Florida by car when the tale opens, but their journey is cut short when they have an accident and are met by a gang of criminals. O'Connor

chooses to begin the story in the midst of a dispute between the grandmother and her son Bailey rather than at the beginning of the road trip. The reader is thrust into the family dynamic and given a feeling of the conflict between the characters right away.

4.6 Narrative Techniques in Thank You Ma'am

Thank You Ma'am is a short story by Langston Hughes that explores themes of compassion, empathy, and forgiveness. Set in Harlem during the 1950s, the story follows a young boy named Roger who attempts to steal the purse of a woman named Mrs. Jones. However, instead of turning him into the police, Mrs. Jones takes Roger to her apartment and teaches him a lesson about trust and respect. Some of the narrative techniques used in *Thank You Ma'am* will be discussed with more emphasis on characterization and dialogue as they are two of the most significant techniques in the narration of the story.

There are some other important narrative techniques beside characterization and dialogue used by the author, one of them being setting. The story takes place in Harlem during the 1950s, a time and place marked by poverty, segregation, and racial tensions. The setting serves as a backdrop for the story's themes and contributes to the characters' experiences and motivations (Holt, 2001). For example, Roger's attempts to steal Mrs. Jones' purse can be seen as a result of his poverty and desperation, while Mrs. Jones' compassion can be seen as a response to the injustices she has experienced as a black woman living in a segregated society.

In conclusion, Langston Hughes uses a variety of narrative techniques in *Thank You Ma'am* to create a strong and moving story about compassion, empathy, and forgiveness. Through his use of characterization, dialogue and setting Hughes is able to create vivid and memorable characters and a compelling story that resonates with readers of all ages (Anwar et al., 2019). Ultimately, the story teaches us that even in the midst of poverty, injustice, and despair, there is always room for compassion and understanding.

4.6.2 Characterization in *Thank You Ma'am*

In *Thank You Ma'am* by Langston Hughes, characterization is a powerful narrative technique used to bring the two main characters, Roger and Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, to life and to explore the themes of the story. Through characterization, Hughes is able to create complex and relatable characters who capture the reader's attention and evoke empathy.

One of the most effective ways that Hughes uses characterization is through physical description which also can be referred to as direct characterization. For example, the description of Mrs. Jones as a "large woman" serves to convey her formidable presence and her commanding personality (*Thank You Ma'am*, p.1), something sixty-three percent of readers agree on. On the other hand, Roger is described as a desperate boy, emphasizing his youthful vulnerability and the gravity of his situation.

Another powerful aspect of Hughes's narrative is the use of characterization. The conversation between Roger and Mrs. Jones reveals their personalities and motivations. Roger's nervousness and stammering highlight his youth and fear, while Mrs. Jones's stern yet compassionate tone conveys her strength and understanding. As it can be seen in figure 5, precisely 56% of the participants of the survey believe in is the effective use of indirect characterization through dialogue, while 33% say Hughes used direct characterization.

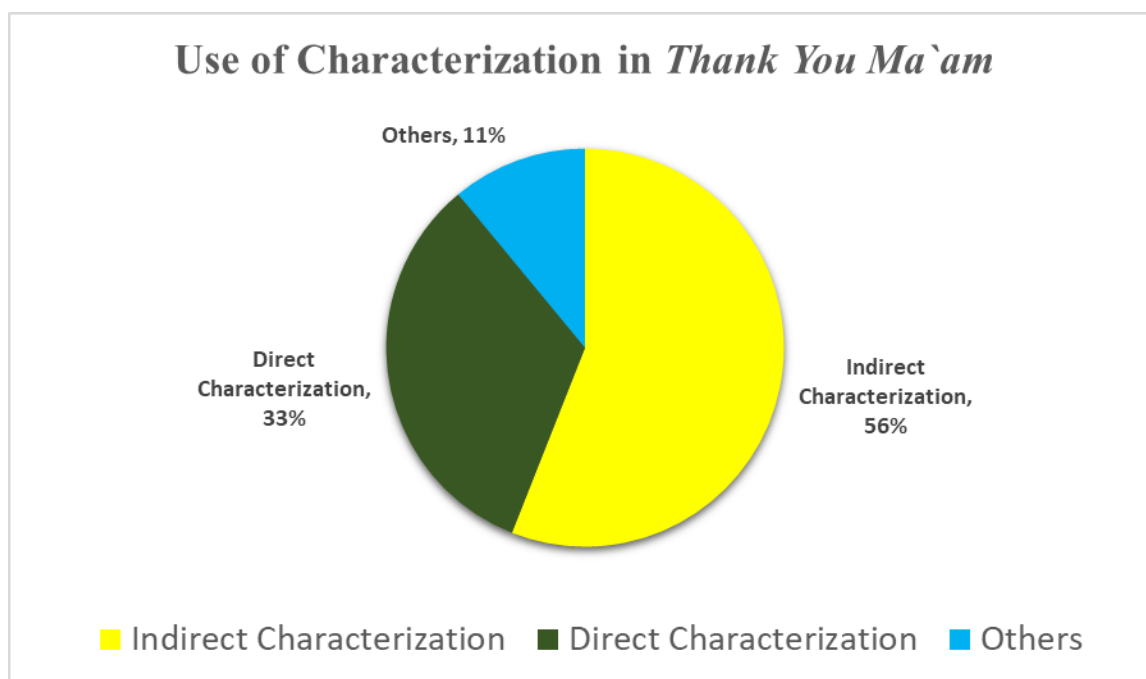


Figure 5: Characterization in *Thank You Ma`am*

“Well, you didn't have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes,” said Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones. “You could have asked me” (*Thank You Ma`am*, p.2).

The above speech of Mrs. Jones indirectly demonstrates to the reader how she is a good hearted woman that really cares about her surrounding and wants good for them.

In addition to physical description and dialogue, Hughes uses other methods of indirect characterization such as action and thought to further develop the characters in *Thank You Ma'am*. For example, Mrs. Jones's decision to take Roger home with her and teach him a lesson shows her compassion and her willingness to help those in need, while Roger's realization of the consequences of his actions reveals his newfound maturity and understanding (Anwar, et al., 2019).

In summary, characterization is a vital narrative technique used in "Thank You, Ma'am" by Langston Hughes to bring the characters of Roger and Mrs. Jones to life and to explore the themes of the story. Through physical description, dialogue, action, and thought, Hughes creates complex and relatable characters who capture the reader's attention and evoke empathy.

4.6.3 *Dialogue in Thank You Ma'am*

Thank You Ma'am by Langston Hughes is a story that heavily relies on dialogue as a narrative technique to convey the personalities and motivations of the two main characters and to advance the plot, as 50% of respondents see. The dialogue in the story is used to create a sense of realism and to provide insight into the thoughts and emotions of the characters (Holt et al., 1991).

Hughes uses dialogues compellingly to present the characters' motivations, mental and emotional state in order to create a more realistic sense to the story and how one can correlate Paul Grice's maxims principles of cooperation in speech to dialogues in *Thank You Ma'am*.

There are several dialogues exchanged between Roger and Mrs. Jones that can be linked to Gricean Maxims. Some of them as cited from (*Thank You Ma'am*, p.1):

A: "What did you want to do it for?" Lady

B: "I did not aim to" boy.

The above dialogue of Mrs. Jones asking Roger why he did attempt to steal her purse and him not responding with telling the truth violates the maxim of quality which demonstrates Roger's state of fear after he was caught. Another example is from (*Thank You Ma'am*, 2):

A: "You gonna take me to the jail?" Boy

B: "Not with that face, I would not take you nowhere"

If we pay close attention to this dialogue, we will be able to notice flouting of maxims of quality and relevance. Mrs. Jones does not respond to Roger with her exact true intentions and answers with an irrelevant response to change the topic of speech, or maybe to make a sarcastic remark on Roger. Even though Roger is a

character inside of the story he does not comprehend Mrs. Jones`s response because of its irrelevance to his question, but we as readers are the opposite, as we analyze Mrs. Jones`s character to be having good intentions in the first place and not taking the boy to jail as well as her fun personality.

To conclude, *Thank You Ma`am* is a story that relies on the strength of its dialogues quite intensively to give direct/indirect information and different interpretation about the feelings, mentality and motivation of the characters to the reader which can be correlated to the cooperative principles of Grice (Mehdi, et al., 2021).

Section Four: Conclusion

Conclusion

This research paper has explored the various narrative techniques used in short stories and how they are utilized to create different effects and enhance the story's overall impact and plausibility, as well as how readers interpret the use of different narrative techniques in the selected short stories.

The following conclusions have been drawn based on the analysis of the results of the designed questionnaires and previous research on the selected short stories:

Narrative techniques are an integral part of the storytelling process, serving as the building blocks for creating compelling and memorable short stories. Through the use of various narrative devices, writers can effectively capture the attention of readers, create emotional connections, and convey their intended messages.

The analysis of different short stories has indicated that point of view, dialogue, monologue, characterization, and other narrative devices can affect the reader's interpretation of the story. The use of Third-person point of view in *The Bet* by Anton Chekhov can provide a broader perspective, allowing the reader to observe multiple characters and their actions from a distance and helps readers to understand

the themes and subject of the story. This result was confirmed by 50% of respondents of the present research.

As the results demonstrate, the manipulation of plot structure by using in medias res can by Flannery O'Connor in *A Good Man is Hard to Find* builds tension and suspense, making the story more engaging, which is agreed upon by 75% of the participants who responded to the questionnaire.

Characterization is a crucial narrative technique in Ernest Hemingway's *Cat in the Rain*, allowing the reader to connect with the characters and become invested in their journey. The use of dynamic characters, who experience significant changes throughout the story, can add depth and complexity to the narrative, making it more memorable and thought-provoking. This is emphasized by 100% of respondents according the survey results.

Atmosphere as a narrative technique in *Cat in the Rain* by Ernest Hemingway serves as a method to immerse the reader in the story by intriguing the feelings and emotions of them. Half of the respondents of the questionnaire believes that using atmosphere as a narrative technique is one of the reasons of how they feel when reading a short story.

Dialogue in *Thank You Ma'am* by Langston Hughes is one of the narrative techniques that plays a huge role in any narrative, because it is one of the main

tools writers use in the process of taking the plot forward, as 50% of respondents believe.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1:

The Bet (POV)

1. How does the narrator's point of view shape the reader's understanding of the story?

A. The narrator's point of view can limit the reader's understanding of the story. It only provides one perspective.

B. The narrator's point of view creates suspense in the story.

C. The narrator's point of view can affect the reader's emotional connection to the story.

D. Other

.....

2. How does the narrator's point of view affect the reader's perception of the protagonist and antagonist?

A. It highlights their motivations and emotions.

B. It creates uncertainty or ambiguity about the protagonist and antagonist, leaving room for interpretation.

C. It can influence the reader's emotional connection to the protagonist and antagonist.

D. Other

.....

3. Does the narrator's point of view change at any point in the story? If so, how does this affect the reader's understanding of the story?

A. Yes, the narrator's point of view changes, offering a different perspective on the events and characters in the story.

B. No, the narrator's point of view remains consistent throughout the story.

C. The narrator's point of view changes, adding complexity to the story.

D. Other

.....

4. How does the narrator's point of view contribute to the theme of the story?

- A. The narrator's point of view can reflect the themes of the story.
- B. The narrator's point of view can add depth and complexity to the theme.
- C. The narrator's point of view can influence the reader's understanding of the theme.
- D. Other

.....

5. What is the significance of the narrator's point of view in "The Bet" and how does it contribute to the narrativity of the story?

- A. It provides insight into the motivations and thoughts of the characters.
- B. The narrator's point of view creates a sense of tension and uncertainty.
- C. The narrator's point of view connects the reader emotionally to the characters and events.
- D. Other

.....

The Bet (Monologue)

1. How does the use of monologue contribute to the development of the characters in "The Bet"?

- A. It allows the characters to express their thoughts and motivations directly to the reader.
- B. The use of monologue highlights the internal conflicts of the characters.
- C. The use of monologue allows the characters to reflect on their actions and experiences.
- D. Other

.....

2. How do the monologues help to advance the plot?

- A. The monologues reveal key information about the characters and events.
- B. The monologues add tension and suspense to the plot, as the characters reveal their intentions.

C. The monologues help to create a more immersive and engaging experience for the reader.

D. Other

.....

3. How do the monologues contribute to the overall theme of the story?

A. It explores the characters' values, beliefs, and experiences, highlighting their relevance to the main theme.

B. The monologues add complexity and nuance to the theme by revealing different perspectives and experiences.

C. The monologues serve as a tool for character development.

D. Other

.....

4. What is the significance of monologue in "The Bet" and how does it contribute to the narrativity of the story?

A. It provides direct access to the characters' thoughts and experiences.

B. It contributes to the narrativity of the story by building tension, suspense, and conflict, adding momentum and drive to the plot.

C. It creates a more immersive and engaging experience for the reader.

D. Other

.....

Appendix 2:

Cat in the Rain (Atmosphere)

1. How does the atmosphere change throughout the story?

A. The atmosphere changes from peaceful to tense as the wife becomes more dissatisfied with her life.

B. The atmosphere in the story starts off as calm and serene, but as the rain starts to pour, it becomes melancholic.

C. The atmosphere changes from relaxed to suffocating and oppressive as the wife becomes trapped in her own thoughts and desires.

D. Other

.....

2. In what ways the weather plays a role in adding to the atmosphere of the story?

- A. It could be said that the weather plays a crucial role in the atmosphere as the rain symbolizes the wife's feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction with her life.
- B. The weather adds to the overall sense of boredom and stagnation in the story.
- C. The weather helps to create a dream-like quality in the atmosphere of the story, as the rain adds a sense of mysticism and unpredictability to the otherwise mundane setting.
- D. Other

3. How do the characters' interactions contribute to the atmosphere of the story?

- A. The woman's conflicts with her husband and the hotel staff reinforces her feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction.
- B. The characters' interactions serve to create a sense of unease and unpredictability in the atmosphere.
- C. Lack of communication and connection reflect the lack of excitement and mutuality between George and the unnamed American women.
- D. Other

4. How does the author use sensory description to create atmosphere in "*Cat in the Rain*"?

- A. The author uses vivid sensory description to create a sense of dreariness and helplessness in the atmosphere.
- B. The author uses sensory language to evoke the protagonist's feelings of restlessness and dissatisfaction.
- C. The author uses sensory description to add to the overall sense of oppression and tension in the story.
- D. Other

5. What emotions does the atmosphere evoke in you as a reader?

- A. As a reader, the atmosphere in "*Cat in the Rain*" evokes feelings of restlessness and dissatisfaction.
- B. The atmosphere of the story evokes feelings of unhappiness and boredom.
- C. The atmosphere of the story elicits feelings of oppression and tension, evoking a sense of unease.
- D. Other

***Cat in the Rain* (Characterization)**

- 1. How does the author present the character's thoughts and feelings?**
 - a. The author presents the character's thoughts and feelings through her actions and interactions with others.
 - b. The author uses the character's inner monologues and introspective moments to reveal her thoughts and feelings.
 - c. The author reveals the character's thoughts and feelings through her dialogue, allowing the reader to see her desires.
 - d. Other.....
- 2. How does the main character's relationship with the other characters affect character development?**
 - a. The protagonist's relationship with her husband has a significant impact on her character development, as their conflicts and disagreements reveal her restlessness and shows that she is incapable and helpless to change her situation.
 - b. The protagonist's interactions with the hotel staff, particularly the maid, contribute to her character development.
 - c. The protagonist's relationships with other characters in the story, including those she only briefly encounters, provide insight into her personality and motivations.
 - d. Other.....
- 3. What role does the hotel keeper play in the story?**
 - A. The hotel keeper has a minor role in the story, serving mainly as a background character who briefly interacts with the protagonist.
 - B. The hotel keeper plays a key role in the protagonist's development, serving as a foil to her husband and highlighting her feelings of dissatisfaction and longing for independence.
 - C. The hotel keeper serves as a catalyst for the protagonist's change, inspiring her to take action and pursue her desires through his own actions.
 - D. Other.....
- 4. How does the wife's behavior and personality contribute to the story's theme?**
 - A. The wife's behavior and personality contribute to the theme of restlessness and dissatisfaction.
 - B. The wife's behavior and personality add to the theme of independence and self-discovery.
 - C. The wife's behavior and personality highlight the theme of relationships and communication.
 - D. Other.....

5. How does the author use dialogue to reveal character traits?

- A. The author uses dialogue to reveal character traits by showing how the characters speak, react, and interact with each other.
- B. The author uses dialogue to reveal character traits by having characters say things that reflect their beliefs, values, and experiences.
- C. The author uses dialogue to reveal character traits by creating contrast between characters.
- D. Other.....

6. In your opinion, what is the significance of characterization in "*Cat in the Rain*"?

- A. Characterization plays a significant role in "*Cat in the Rain*" by providing insight into the motivations, desires, and conflicts of the two main characters, making them relatable and engaging for the reader.
- B. Characterization is significant in "*Cat in the Rain*" because it contributes to the development of the story's themes.
- C. Characterization is significant in "*Cat in the Rain*" because it highlights the universal experiences and emotions that are common to all people.
- D. Other.....

Appendix 3:

A Good Man is Hard to Find (Beginning)

1. What is the effect of starting "A Good Man is Hard to Find" in the middle of the action (In medias res)?

- A. Creates tension and suspense: Starting the story in the middle of the action immediately draws the reader into the story's dramatic conflict.
- B. Highlights the suddenness of violence: By beginning the story with the family already on the road, the reader is immediately aware that something unexpected and violent is about to happen.
- C. Disrupts traditional narrative structure: The use of in medias res challenges traditional storytelling structures by starting the story in the middle of the action, rather than at the beginning.
- D. Other.....

2. How does the use of in medias res in "A Good Man is Hard to Find" affect the reader's understanding of the story's timeline and events?

- A. Creates a fragmented narrative structure: The use of **in medias res** disrupts the linear flow of the story's timeline, creating a more complex and fragmented narrative structure.
- B. Highlights the significance of the ending: The use of in medias res can make the story's ending feel more significant and impactful.

- C. Makes the story's themes more resonant: The use of in medias res deepens the reader's understanding of the story's themes and messages by showing how the characters' actions in the present are influenced by events that have already taken place.

D. Other

.....

A Good Man is Hard to Find (Diction)

1. How does the author's use of diction contribute to the characterization of the different characters?

A. Reveals the characters' personalities: The author's use of diction reveals the characters' personalities and attitudes.

B. Emphasizes the characters' social and regional backgrounds: The use of diction can also emphasize the characters' social and regional backgrounds.

C. Contributes to the story's themes and messages: The author's use of diction also contributes to the story's central themes and messages.

D. Other.....

2. What effect does the author's use of colloquial and regional language in "A Good Man is Hard to Find" have on the reader's experience of the story?

A. Creates a sense of realism and authenticity: The characters' language reflects the cultural and linguistic context in which the story is set.

B. Provides insight into the characters' backgrounds: The use of colloquial and regional language can provide insight into the characters' backgrounds.

C. Creates a sense of place and atmosphere: The use of colloquial and regional language can create a sense of place and atmosphere.

D. Other.....

3. How does the author's choice of words and phrases in "A Good Man is Hard to Find" contribute to the story?

A. Emphasizes the contrast between good and evil: The author's choice of words and phrases can emphasize the contrast between good and evil.

B. Heightens the sense of irony and satire: The author's use of ironic and satirical language heightens the story's sense of irony and satire.

C. Creates a sense of inevitability and foreboding: The author's use of ominous and foreshadowing language creates a sense of inevitability and foreboding.

D. Other

.....

4. In what ways does the author's use of informal language and metaphor in "A Good Man is Hard to Find" contribute to the overall impact of the story on the reader?

- A. The use of informal language and metaphor in "A Good Man is Hard to Find" helps to create a sense of realism and authenticity, as the characters speak in a way that feels natural and relatable to the reader.
- B. The use of informal language and metaphor also contributes to the story's dark humor and satire, as the characters' speech often reveals their flaws and weaknesses in a humorous way.
- C. Furthermore, the use of informal language and metaphor underscores the story's underlying themes of morality and spirituality, as the characters grapple with issues of good and evil in their everyday lives.
- D. Other

5. What can the author's use of diction in "A Good Man is Hard to Find" tell us about the historical and cultural context of the story?

- A. Reflects the vernacular speech of the: The author's use of diction, including colloquialisms and regional expressions, reflects the vernacular speech of the Southern America, where the story is set.
- B. Highlights racial and class divisions: The author's use of diction highlights the racial and class divisions that were prevalent in the Southern America at the time the story was written.
- C. Reflects the author's own background and experiences: The author's use of diction reflects her own background and experiences, and can tell us about the literary and cultural influences that shaped her writing.
- D. Other

Appendix 4:

Thank You Ma'am (characterization)

1. What techniques are used to achieve characterization in "Thank You Ma'am"?

- A. Direct characterization: The author, Langston Hughes, uses direct statements to describe the characters in the story.
- B. Indirect characterization: Rather than directly stating a character's traits, the author uses actions, thoughts of characters, dialogue, and other details to show the character's personality.

C. Dialogue: The dialogue between Mrs. Jones and Roger provides insights into their personalities and motivations.

D. Other.....

2. What can you infer about the main character based on their actions in the story?

A. The main character, Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, is compassionate.

B. The main character is a strong and confident person: When Roger tries to escape from her grasp, Mrs. Jones is able to hold him tightly and prevent him from getting away.

C. The main character is forgiving: Despite being a victim of theft, Mrs. Jones forgives Roger.

D. Other.....

3. What is the effect of dialogue in character development?

A. Dialogue reveals a character's personality: The way a character speaks, including their choice of words, tone, and style of speech, can reveal their personality and traits.

B. Dialogue establishes relationships: Dialogue can be used to establish relationships between characters, which is also found helpful in developing their characters.

C. Dialogue advances the plot: Dialogue is used to advance the plot of a story, which in turn enhances character development.

D. Other.....

4. How does the author use the [setting] and environment to indirectly characterize the main character?

A. The urban setting reveals the main character's toughness and resilience.

B. The contrast between the dingy street and Mrs. Jones' home highlights her generosity and kindness.

C. The lack of a father figure in the story suggests that Mrs. Jones is a strong maternal figure.

D. Other.....

5. How does the author use physical description to directly characterize the main character?

- A. The author describes the main character's appearance in detail: Langston Hughes provides a detailed physical description of Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, including her size, her dress, and her stockings.
- B. The main character's appearance is used to emphasize her strength: Mrs. Jones is described as a "large woman" with "large hands," which emphasizes her physical strength.
- C. The main character's dress and stockings are used to emphasize her pride: Mrs. Jones is described as wearing a "blue suede coat" and "dressy shoes" with "stockings that were white."
- D. Other.....

Thank You Ma'am (Dialogue)

- 1. **How does the dialogue in "Thank You Ma'am" advance the plot of the story?**
 - A. The dialogue between Mrs. Jones and Roger reveals their conflicting desires: Mrs. Jones wants to help Roger and teach him a lesson, while Roger is desperate to escape from her and avoid getting into trouble.
 - B. The dialogue between Mrs. Jones and Roger reveals important details about their backgrounds: Through their conversation, the reader learns that Mrs. Jones has been in trouble before and that Roger is a poor and neglected child.
 - C. The dialogue between Mrs. Jones and Roger reveals the change in their relationship: At the beginning of the story, Roger attempts to steal Mrs. Jones' purse, but by the end of the story, they have developed a bond.
 - D. Other.....

2. How does the dialogue in the story affect to the characterization of the main character?

- A. The dialogue mainly helps to reveal the main character's personality traits: Mrs. Jones' direct and confident speech, her use of slang, and her no-nonsense attitude are all revealed through her dialogue.
- B. The dialogue mostly helps to reveal the main character's values and beliefs: Through her words, Mrs. Jones reveals her belief in the importance of doing the right thing and of helping others.
- C. The dialogue only helps to reveal the main character's backstory: Mrs. Jones' dialogue reveals that she has experienced hardship in her life and has had to learn from her mistakes.
- D. Other.....

3. What is the most significant instance of conflict in the story that are revealed through dialogue?

- A. The conflict between Roger and Mrs. Jones: This conflict is revealed through their dialogue, as Roger tries to escape from Mrs. Jones and she tries to keep him from leaving.
- B. The conflict between Mrs. Jones and her past: This conflict is revealed through Mrs. Jones' dialogue, as she refers to her own experiences with trouble and hardship.
- C. The conflict between Mrs. Jones' desire to help Roger and her need to protect herself: This conflict is revealed through Mrs. Jones' dialogue, as she tries to balance her desire to teach Roger a lesson with her need to protect herself and her property.
- D. Other.....

4. How does the dialogue in the story reflect the social and cultural context of the time?

- A. The use of African American Vernacular English (AAVE): The characters in the story speak in a way that reflects the AAVE dialect, which was common among African Americans in the early to mid-20th century.
- B. The use of slang: The characters in the story use slang words and phrases that were popular in the 1950s, when the story was written.
- C. The use of respectful and formal language: Mrs. Jones always refers to Roger as "sir" or "young man," even when he is trying to steal from her.
- D. Other.....

5. What role does dialogue play in the development of the relationship between

the main character and Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones?

- A. Dialogue reveals the initial tension between the characters.
- B. Dialogue reveals Mrs. Jones' compassion and kindness: Through her dialogue, Mrs. Jones reveals her kindness and compassion towards Roger.
- C. Dialogue reveals the transformation in Roger's attitude towards Mrs. Jones: At first, Roger is fearful and defensive around Mrs. Jones, but as they spend more time together, his attitude towards her begins to change.
- D. Other.....

6.How does the dialogue in "Thank You Ma'am" contribute to the overall theme of the story?

- A. Dialogue highlights the importance of empathy and compassion: The dialogue in the story emphasizes the importance of treating others with empathy and compassion.
- B. Dialogue emphasizes the power of forgiveness: The dialogue between Roger and Mrs. Jones highlights the power of forgiveness in the face of wrongdoing.
- C. Dialogue reinforces the idea that actions speak louder than words: The dialogue in the story often serves to reinforce the idea that actions speak louder than words. Mrs. Jones' actions towards Roger, rather than her words, are what ultimately make a difference in his life.

Other
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