

THE NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE NOVELS OF TONI MORRIS

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Abstract: This paper discusses the narrative styles of the novels of Toni Morrison. The paper is devoted to her attempts at an original application of non-linear form, multiple narration, stream of consciousness, symbolism, myth, oral tradition. The paper uses the analysis of chosen novels and especially *Song of Solomon* and *The Bluest Eye* to show how Morrison uses narrative strategies to enhance thematic exploration of identity, trauma, memory, and racial experience. The study reveals that the narrative form in the works of Morrison is not merely a stylistic element but also a cultural and political device to rebuild the marginalized past.

Keywords: Narrative, point of view, stream of consciousness, fragmentation, myth and symbolism, identity, trauma, African American.

Article

Toni Morrison is considered to be one of the most powerful voices in the contemporary American literature. Her writings revolve around sophisticated issues like racism, identity formation, historical trauma and cultural memory. Nonetheless, what is equally important to Morrison is that her literary importance has not just been noticed through her thematic issues but also through her unique manners of narrating the stories.

Narrative technique means the structural and stylistic ways of telling a story. M. H. Abrams defines storytelling as the depiction of events in a sequence by a narrator (Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*). Morrison broadens this conventional interpretation through the interference of chronology and usage of various viewpoints.

A noticeable presentation in the fiction of Morrison is non-linear narrative. Rather than telling events in a straightforward beginning middle-ending format, she switches between the past and the present. This is the psychological fact of memory particularly traumatic memory. According to Morrison herself, in an interview, these are the words: Memory is how we keep on telling ourselves our stories - and telling other people a slightly different version of our stories. This is the main idea of her narrative approach. In *Song of Solomon*, Morrison incorporates myth and folklore into the story structure. The motif of flight represents freedom and transcendence. The protagonist Milkman Dead's quest of self-discovery is inextricably linked to family history. Literary critic Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan observes that narrative form can affect meaning by arranging time and viewpoint (*Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*). Morrison's

novel employs family history and myth as structural techniques to influence narrative development. Another key storytelling method is fragmentation and different narration, as seen in *The Bluest Eye*. The narrative is structured into seasonal portions, which represent natural cycles. However, the story depicts emotional ruin rather than growth. The disjointed tale reflects Pecola Breedlove's inner fragmentation. Narrative means the way a story is told. In literary theory, narrative includes plot, characters, time structure, and point of view. The writer chooses how events are presented and who tells the story. These choices affect how readers understand the text. Traditional narratives usually follow a chronological order, where events are presented from beginning to end. However, modern literature often breaks this structure. Writers move between past and present, use multiple narrators, and focus on internal thoughts.

One important narrative technique is point of view. The story can be told in the first person, third-person limited, or third-person omniscient. Morrison often shifts perspectives in her novels. By doing this, she allows readers to see events from different angles. This technique shows that truth is not simple or one-sided. Different characters experience reality differently.

Another important technique is stream of consciousness. This method presents a character's inner thoughts and feelings in a natural and sometimes unstructured way. Instead of focusing only on external action, Morrison explores psychological depth. Through internal monologue, she reveals trauma, fear, love, and confusion. This makes her characters more realistic and emotionally powerful.

Morrison also uses non-linear narrative structure. Events do not always follow chronological order. Past and present are connected. Memory plays a central role in her storytelling. This structure reflects the way human memory works. People often remember painful experiences repeatedly. By breaking time order, Morrison shows how trauma affects her characters. Multiple voices allow readers to observe events through diverse lenses, stressing the complexities of reality and experience. Morrison also uses stream of consciousness to explore his characters' internal moods. This psychological narrative explores trauma, insecurity, and identity crises. Rather writing describing suffering from an outside perspective, she allows readers to feel it through the characters' inner thoughts. This strategy increases emotional engagement and thematic impact. Symbolism is another important aspect of Morrison's narrative artwork. Objects, names, and recurrent imagery have deeper meanings. For example, blue eyes in *The Bluest Eye* represent internalized racial beauty ideals. Morrison uses symbolism to relate human pain to larger social institutions. Furthermore, Morrison's style incorporates aspects from oral storytelling traditions. Her rhythmic language and community voice connect written narratives to African American oral tradition. This blend of oral and written traditions adds to her distinct narrative style. Morrison's contribution to modern narrative art is significant. She reinvents the traditional novel

form by blending nonlinear structure, mythic elements, numerous views, and psychological depth. Her storytelling tactics serve not only as creative instruments, but also as cultural opposition. She reconstructs buried histories and empowers neglected communities.

Conclusion

The examination reveals the importance of narrative methods in Toni Morrison's literary achievement. Morrison uses nonlinear storytelling, fragmentation, symbolism, and myth to create complex narratives that represent psychological and historical truths. Her unique use of narrative structure reshapes modern fiction and enriches representations of African American identity and memory.

References

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