



**The Category Of Time In The Narrative Structure Of Faulkner's
Novel "The Light In August"**

Revista Publicando, 4 No 13. (1). 2017, 802-811. ISSN 1390-9304

**The Category Of Time In The Narrative Structure Of Faulkner's Novel "The
Light In August"**

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ABSTRACT

The article given is aimed at demonstrating innovative techniques applied by William Faulkner in the novel "Light in August". Significance of the research is caused by great interest to Faulkner's works which have had a great effect on the development of fiction. The content side of his novels has been examined by plenty of critics from various perspectives. Our paper is devoted to the mechanism of the narrative itself. The complexity of the problems mentioned in the novel affected the complex composition of the novel in which a few independent stories go together. Faulkner makes incredible experiments with the chronology of the narrative, uses the technique of "stream of consciousness". The innovative approach of William Faulkner to the mechanism of the narrative remained unchanged. To study the subject the following methods were used: theoretical literature study, a descriptive method, analysis of characters' timelines. The results achieved were as follows: determining the line of the primary narrative, understanding the temporal organization of the elements of the narrative.

Keywords: narrative, Light in August, Faulkner, novel, innovative approach, chronology, the category of time, perception of time, textual analysis.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The name of the Nobel Prize winner in Literature, the outstanding American writer William Faulkner, takes one of the first places in the history of US literature of the 20th century. The author of novels, poetry, essays, screenplays, stories and short stories, Faulkner made a serious contribution to the development of American literature. He is primarily known for his novels and short stories set.

The object of the study is the novel by William Faulkner "Light in August" which was written and published in 1932.

The relevance of the study is proved by the fact that both Western and national criticism paid attention mainly to the content side of the novel, leaving out of account the innovative approach of William Faulkner to the mechanism of the narrative itself.

In Soviet criticism Faulkner due to the complexity of his style, interest in the nooks of the human psyche, consciousness and subconsciousness was reckoned among modernists (Bart,2000). In fact, in his aesthetic conception there are tragic pessimistic traits that make him related to the modernist view of history. But Faulkner is a writer with a difference. His works bear certain similarity to cultural phenomena of various epochs, from antiquity to postmodernism.

The article is aimed at highlighting the celebrated writer's novel approach to the narration. Faulkner brilliantly makes experiments with the chronology of the narrative, with different points of view, uses the technique of "stream of consciousness", but this does not make him a modernist writer. Faulkner's literary experiments can be explained by the fact that the realism of the twentieth century is being updated, new themes and problems require new forms for their solution (Ionkis,2015). Faulkner's cold realism, faithfulness to the truth of reality reflect in his great southern novels covering a few generations and cultures.

2. МЕТОДЫ (METHODS)

We examined one of these novels - "The Light in August" - in detail. The complexity of the problems mentioned in it affected the complex composition of the novel, in which several stories, almost independent plots go along. Holman in his essay "The Unity of Light in August" writes that the novel itself can be clearly divided into three themes:



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- the protestant religion is the story of Gail Hightower,
- sex is Lina Grove, her relationship with Lucas Birch and Byron Bunch,
- the theme of a black man in a southern society is the story of Joe Christmass. Each topic contains, in one way or another, two others (Holman,1972). The stories seem to be related almost by accident, only at the will of the author. But at the end of the novel the reader realizes that only the interaction of these seemingly independent stories gives meaning to the entire narrative, reveals and formulates the writer's idea, the ideas he wanted to express.

According to Genet, even the most complex narrative is the rhetorical amplification of one verb form, that is, the expanding of the verb. So, "Odyssey" is a rhetorical development of the saying "Odyssey returns to Ithaca". This causes the use of such grammatical terms as time, modality, a voice for the textual analysis. This approach allows us to describe the narrative more carefully and to present the most complete view of the theory of narration.

Analyzing the narrative structure of the novel, we paid special attention to the category of time. As mentioned above, Gerard Genett took the grammar of the verb as the basis of his system, and the modality and the voice have no meaning out of the category of time.

3. RESULTS

One of the tasks was to determine the line of the primary narrative.

The novel begins with a story about Lina Grove. The participle I and Present Indefinite are used, the heroine herself uses Present Perfect, which points to regard this line of the story as the primary narrative and to reveal all the anachronies about it: "Sitting beside the road, watching the wagon mount the hill towards her, Lina thinks," I have come from Alabama: a fur piece" (Faulkner,1959).

The structure of the novel sporadically seems extremely complicated, it is easy to confuse the primary and secondary narrative. The reason is constant references to the past and an unexpected return to the present. The narrative about the life of the main character can be divided into seventeen main episodes, within this fragment the formula of the relationship of the sequence has the following form: A14 - B2 - C3 - D4 - E5 - F6 - G1 - H7 - I8 - J9 - K10 - L11 - M12 - N13 - O15 - P16 - Q17. So, only episode 14 and episode 1 are anachronistic, although it seems to the reader that the time structure is much more



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complicated. The dihegic lines are mixed: the action of episode 1 occurs in the recollection of Joe, episode 14-internal prolepsis (internal means belongs to the same line of history, proleptic-flashback in other words), which fills the gap in history. It would seem that it is easier to perceive events, which are described in the chronological order, but psychological links are more obvious if you organize the narrative in a natural way, weaving memories and various comments. There is another reason for the complication of the time structure. A significant part of the story about Christmas is a retrospective. The initial narrative begins when Miss Berden's house is already on fire, the story of Bobby and the diet nurse is even more remote from the primary narrative. Three of these stories clarify and complete the story of Christmas. In the line of the primary narration, the reader can see only the crimes of the character, the pursuit of him and murder. Here, the author's conviction is that the past determines the present.

Telling the story of his main character Faulkner makes the time and space segments interchangeable: "thinking fled for twenty-five years back down the street, past all the imperceptible corners of bitter defeats and more bitter victories, and five miles even beyond a corner, he used to wait in the terrible early time of love, for someone whose name he had forgot" (Faulkner,1959). The character exists simultaneously in three time intervals: now, tasting the food he recalls himself twenty-five years ago - the time when he was at an early stage of being in love. Such a device does not simply introduce diversity into the narrative; the uncertainty of time emphasizes the alienation of Christmas, his lack of strong ties with the world of the present.

Faulkner's time is cyclical. The idea is also emphasized by the fact that Mrs. Hines takes Lina's child for little Joe. In her mind there are two periods of confusion: "You can see to Milly now. I'll take care of Joey" (Faulkner,1959). Genet calls this the law of the iterative (Genett,1998).

In a small turn - the description of Miss Berden - the conventionality of age (time) perception is presented: "By the light of the candle she did not look much more than thirty, <...>When he saw her by daylight he knew that she was better than thirty-five. Later she told him that she was forty. 'Which means either forty-one or forty-nine, from the way she said it,' he thought '.



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The author balances the perception of time "scattering" by referring to real events. For example, Faulkner writes that the senior Hightower participated in the invasion of Van Dorn: "... his master's death in Van Dorn's cavalry raid", which actually happened in December 1862.

It is interesting that each character has his own chronology, in which there is a point of reference and another point that breaks the usual course of time.

Character	Point of reference	Point of "violation"
Joe Christmas	Case with the diet nurse, 1905	Murder of Johanna
Lina Grove	The beginning of the journey, July 1932	--
Byron Bunch	Entry to the sawmill, 1925	Appearance of Lina
Gail Hightower	Day of the Murder of the Grandfather, 1862	Attempt to rescue Christmass
Joanna Berden	Murder of Calvin Berden I and II, 1874	Connection with the Christ

The chronology of the main character, Christmass, has the least intersection with the line of the primary narrative (Faulkner,1985). The meeting with Byron Bunch can be designated as a "point of violation" of Lina's chronology only conditionally, because this event does not change anything in her life. The absence of such a point is also a method. Faulkner's characters are obsessed with the past, but in the end those are happy who got disburdened and got responsible for the future.

4. DISCUSSION

The aspect studied in the article has not been considered before, since literary critics in their works discussed the content side of the novel "The Light in August". The innovative approach of William Faulkner to the mechanism of the narrative remained unchanged. Faulkner's work is considered as the objective correlative of the structure unconsciously embodied by the author. Narratology deals with studying the process of realizing the deep structure of a work (in the course of the dialogical interaction of the author and the reader). Despite the diversity of theories (Chatman,1980), a few researchers have systematized the knowledge accumulated in the theory of narrative.



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Gerard Genette, one of the founders of modern narratology, synthesized all the ideas most successfully. As the structure of the novel is complicated enough, the primary and secondary narrative can be confused due to references to the past and sudden return to the present.

The chronology of the events of the primary narrative is presented in Appendix 3. It is common that at first some event is mentioned, then a retrospection follows, possibly revealing a chain of episodes that led to this event, and then the event is recounted, more or less the less (Pauley, 2011). For example, the story of Gail Hightower: first it is said that there is such a person in the city, and the society avoids him; then an analepsis is presented, narrating the scandalous story of his wife. Towards the end of the novel, we are presented with a repeated, more extensive analepsis, only now the motifs of Hightower are obvious.

Genette suggests using a formula to denote the order of relations: the Latin capital letters A, B, C, ... denote the order in which the elements appear in the narrative; Arabic numerals indicate the chronological order of elements in history. It is understood that the "starting point" of the narrative takes an independent position; all the retrospective elements are distinguished already in relation to it.

5. SUMMARY

All the variety of techniques is not just experiments with technology, each one is used to more deeply and fully reveal a single meaningful idea. It is naturalness and integrity that can be called the main features of Faulkner's narrative style. He devised a county, drew his map and populated it with fictional characters, but the events taking place in Yoknapatofa are perceived by the reader as real. The open final of the novel "The Light in August", the main character's remarks about the continuity of Time, the feeling of pleasant expectation are the methods of Faulkner-humanist, who repeatedly said he refuses to believe in the end of man.

Article materials can be useful both for ordinary readers interested in William Faulkner's novels and for literary critics involved in exploring the celebrated writer's novels, particularly "Light in August".



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6. CONCLUSIONS

The personal timelines of the characters intersect, the notion of "collective chronology" is revealed, the events of real history are attracted, the novel takes on a scope due to the fact that the time of the Earth itself is noted in it. The key to understanding the temporal organization of the elements of the narrative can be found in the text itself, in the following fragments: "memory believes before knowing remembers." "Believes longer than recollects, longer than known even wonders. Knows remembers believes". Memory is not organized as a strict system of compartments, which we can "open" and "close" at our will. It is a free stream, a constant underwater current. In his thoughts, people rarely exist in the present moment - it is almost impossible. We "focus" on reality, but as soon as this focus weakens, we are again immersed in memories. Faulkner's time is a duration in which there are no gaps between the past and the present (Virgintino,2003). Thus, the category of time also serves as one of the main tools for creating an impression of unity, which Holman wrote in his essay "The Unity of Light in August".

Appendix 1

Chapter	Day	Main events
1		The house is on fire; Lina comes to Jefferson; talk with Mrs. Armstrat
2		Work Christmass and Brown in the sawmill; Byron realizes that Brown is Birch
3		Life of Hightower in Jefferson
4	Sunday	Byron tells Hightauer about Lina and about the murder of Joanna Berden
5		The Crisis of Christmass and Brown
6		Case with diet
7		Christmass "became a man"
8		Christmass is going to a dance with Bobby
9		Machiherne chases Joe, Kristmasa is beaten in the house of Max and Maim
10		Christmas and Joanna Berden



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11		The Berden family history
12		"Phases" of the relationship between Christmas and Johanna
	Sat morning	Murder of Joanna Berden
13		The investigation begins
14	Tue-Fri	Christmass in the Negro Church and the story of this
	Sat	Christmass grabbed in Mottestown
15		Hineses learn about the capture of Christmass
16	Sun	Mrs. Hines asks Hightower to provide an alibi to Christmass
17	Mon	Lina's baby is born
18		Byron leads Brown to Lina, a fight
19	Mon	Stevens tells about the murder of Christmass
20	Mon	Escape of Christmass, Percy Grimm kills him
		Hightower remembers youth
21	3 weeks later	The Journey of Lina and Byron in Tennessee

Appendix 2

Chronology of the main events of the secondary narrative:

1. 1861-1865: The Civil War
2. 1862: Hightower's grandfather was killed
3. 60s - 70s: Miss Berden's parents came from the North
4. 1882: Gail Hightower was born
5. 1888: Joanna Berden was born
6. 1900 (approximately): Christmass was born
7. 1905: Hightower arrives in Jefferson
8. 1905: Christmass is punished by diet nurse; he is adopted by Machyerna
9. 1907: Hightower widowed
10. 1911-12: Lina was born
11. 1914: Christmas beats a black woman in a barn
12. 1917: The relationship between Kristmas and Bobby



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13. 1924: Lena's parents died
14. 1925: Byron arrives in Jefferson Bunch
15. 1928: Christmass meets Joanna
16. March 1928-March 1929: "the first phase"
17. Summer 1929: Christmass came to the sawmill
18. September 1929-1931: "the second phase"
19. February-August 1932: "the third phase"

Appendix 3

Chronology of the main events of the primary narrative:

Saturday:

20. Early in the morning Christmass kills Joanna Burden;
21. Lina arrives in Jefferson;
22. at noon Lina meets Byron Bunch;

Sunday:

23. In the evening Byron tells Hightauer about Lina

Monday:

24. In the evening Christmass breaks into the Negro church;

Wednesday:

25. Negro tells about the incident in the church
26. The Chase for Christmass begins

Thursday-Friday:

27. The pursuit of Christmass

Saturday:

28. Christmass appears in Mottestown, arrested; Percy Grimm forms the Legion;

Sunday:

29. Hynes visit Hightower;

Monday:

30. Lina gave birth to a child;
31. Byron leads Lucas to her;
32. Christmass manages to escape, Percy Grimm pursues and kills him.
33. Gavin Stevens tells the story of Christmass to a Harvard comrade;



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34. at the same time Hightower thinks of the past.

Three weeks later:

35. Lina and Byron leave for Tennessee.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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