

NARRATIVE TEXTS

Lecture 3

1) Realism Revisited: The Logic of Authorial Narration

2) The Withdrawal of the Authorial Narrator: Realism into Modernism

- a) Speech and Thought in Narrative
- b) Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) and the Invention of Free Indirect Discourse
- c) Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and the Extension of Free Indirect Discourse

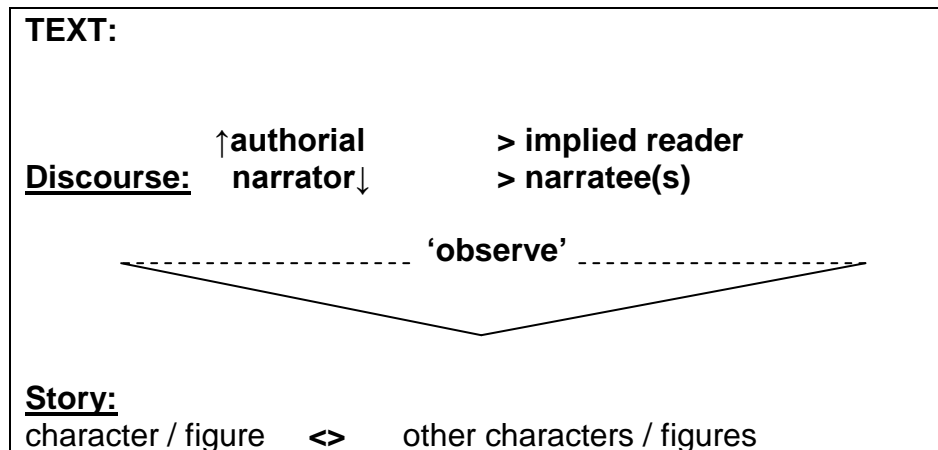
3) The Evolution of Modern Fiction

1) Realism Revisited: The Logic of Authorial Narration

Levels of Narrative Communication:

Empirical Author (Henry Fielding, W.M. Thackeray etc.)

▼ ('copying himself into the text')



▼▲
reader

The Dynamics of Authorial Narration:

- **heterodiegetic narrator**
- **zero (= flexible!) focalization:**
external focalization (narrator focalizer) frames passages of internal focalization (character focalizers)
- **story world** is observed from a 'transcendental' **discourse level**
→ omniscience, omnipresence
- **overt/explicit/personalized <> covert/withdrawn narrators**
 - a) overt narrators can cover the full range of narratorial functions (presentation, direct, generalizing or reflexive commentary)
e.g. *Tom Jones* (1749), *Vanity Fair* (1848)
The Satanic Verses (1988)
 - b) withdrawal of narrator reduces the possibilities for explicit commentary until only implicit forms (ironical tone etc.) are left
e.g. *Sense and Sensibility* (1811)
A Passage to India (1924)
The Porcupine (1992)

2) The Withdrawal of the Authorial Narrator: Realism into Modernism

a) Speech and Thought in Narrative

Basic possibilities:

1) narrative report of speech and thought acts

(> telling/diegetic discourse; summary)

- She spoke at length about her future prospects.
- She sat down and thought long and hard about the future.

2) quotation of characters' speech and thought

(> showing/mimetic discourse; scenic presentation)

- [She said,] "At present I'm making plans for my future. It seems to me that ..."
- [She thought,] "What will I do in the future? Oh my god, it is all so hopeless ..."

Additional possibility:

indirect modes of (re-)presentation

- [She said that] at that moment she was making plans for her future. It seemed to her that ...
- [She asked herself] what would she do in the future? Oh god, it was all so hopeless ...

Markers of indirect speech and thought:

- tense shift (present tense > past tense, present perfect > past perfect, future tense > conditional ...)
- subject shift (1st person > third person), shifting referential frame of place (here > there ...), time (now > then ...) and relation (this > that ...)

DIEGETIC DISCOURSE

<>

MIMETIC DISCOURSE

(telling)

(showing)

narrator's voice

'dual voice'

character's voice

Report – tagged i.d. – free i.d. – tagged d.d. – free d.d.

'tagged' = including introductory verb/clause
free = without introductory verb/clause
i.d. = indirect discourse
d.d. = direct discourse

b) Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) and the Invention of Free Indirect Discourse

Jane Austen

Sense and Sensibility

Volume I

Chapter I

The family of Dashwood had been long settled in Sussex. Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre of their property, where, for many generations, they had lived in so respectable a manner, as to engage the general good opinion of their surrounding acquaintance. The late owner of this estate was a single man, who lived to a very advanced age, and who for many years of his life, had a constant companion and housekeeper in his sister. But her death, which happened ten years before his own, produced a great alteration in his home; for to supply her loss, he invited and received into his house the family of his nephew Mr. Henry Dashwood, the legal inheritor of the Norland estate, and the person to whom he intended to bequeath it. In the society of his nephew and niece, and their children, the old Gentleman's days were comfortably spent. His attachment to them all increased. The constant attention of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dashwood to his wishes, which proceeded not merely from interest, but from goodness of heart, gave him every degree of solid comfort which his age could receive; and the cheerfulness of the children added a relish to his existence.

By a former marriage, Mr. Henry Dashwood had one son: by his present lady, three daughters. The son, a steady respectable young man, was amply provided for by the fortune of his mother, which had been large, and half of which devolved on him on his coming of age. By his own marriage, likewise, which happened soon afterwards, he added to his wealth. **To him therefore the succession to the Norland estate was not so really important as to his sisters; for their fortune, independent of what might arise to them from their father's inheriting that property, could be but small.** Their mother had nothing, and their father only seven thousand pounds in his own disposal; for the remaining moiety of his first wife's fortune was also secured to her child, and he had only a life interest in it.

The old Gentleman died; his will was read, and **like almost every other will**, gave as much disappointment as pleasure. He was neither so unjust, nor so ungrateful, as to leave his estate from his nephew; - but he left it to him on such terms as destroyed half the value of the bequest. Mr. Dashwood had wished for it more for the sake of his wife and daughters than for himself or his son: - but to his son, and his son's son, a child of four years old, it was secured, in such a way, as to leave to himself no power of providing for those who were most dear to him, and who most needed a provision, by any charge on the estate, or by any sale of its valuable woods. **The**

whole was tied up for the benefit of this child, who, in occasional visits with his father and mother at Norland, had so far gained on the affections of his uncle, by such attractions as are by no means unusual in children of two or three years old; an imperfect articulation, an earnest desire of having his own way, many cunning tricks, and a great deal of noise, as to outweigh all the value of all the attention which, for years, he had received from his niece and her daughters. He meant not to be unkind however, and, as a mark of his affection for the three girls, he left them a thousand pounds a- piece.

Mr. Dashwood's disappointment was, at first, severe; but his temper was cheerful and sanguine, and he might reasonably hope to live many years, and by living economically, lay by a considerable sum from the produce of an estate already large, and capable of almost immediate improvement. But the fortune, which had been so tardy in coming, was his only one twelvemonth. He survived his uncle no longer; and ten thousand pounds, including the late legacies, was all that remained for his widow and daughters.

His son was sent for, as soon as his danger was known, and to him Mr. Dashwood recommended, with all the strength and urgency which illness could command, the interest of his mother-in-law and sisters.

Mr. John Dashwood had not the strong feelings of the rest of the family; but he was affected by a recommendation of such a nature at such a time, and he promised to do every thing in his power to make them comfortable. His father was rendered easy by such an assurance, and Mr. John Dashwood had then leisure to consider how much there might prudently be in his power to do for them.

He was not an ill-disposed young man, unless to be rather cold hearted, and rather selfish, is to be ill- disposed: but he was, in general, well respected; for he conducted himself with propriety in the discharge of his ordinary duties. Had he married a more amiable woman, he might have been made still more respectable than he was: - he might even have been made amiable himself; for he was very young when he married, and very fond of his wife. But Mrs. John Dashwood was a strong caricature of himself; - more narrow-minded and selfish.

When he gave his promise to his father, he meditated within himself to increase the fortunes of his sisters by the present of a thousand pounds a- piece. He then really thought himself equal to it. The prospect of four thousand a-year, in addition to his present income, besides the remaining half of his own mother's fortune, warmed his heart and made him feel capable of generosity. - **»Yes, he would give them three thousand pounds: it would be liberal and handsome! It would be enough to make them completely easy. Three thousand pounds! he could spare so considerable a sum with little inconvenience.«** - He thought of it all day long, and for many days successively, and he did not repent.

No sooner was his father's funeral over, than Mrs. John Dashwood, without sending any notice of her intention to her mother-in-law, arrived with her child and their attendants. No one could dispute her right to come; the house was her husband's from the moment of his father's decease; but the indelicacy of her conduct was so much the greater, and to a woman in Mrs. Dashwood's situation, with only common feelings, **must have been** highly displeasing; - but in her mind there was a sense of honour so keen, a generosity so romantic, that any offence of the kind, by whomsoever given or received, was to her a source of immovable disgust. Mrs. John Dashwood had never been a favourite with any of her husband's family; but she had had no opportunity, till the present, of shewing them with how little attention to the comfort of other people she could act when [...]

Chapter II

Mrs. John Dashwood now installed herself mistress of Norland; and her mother and sisters-in-law were degraded to the condition of visitors. As such, however, they were treated by her with quiet civility; and by her husband with as much kindness as he could feel towards any body beyond himself, his wife, and their child. He really pressed them, with some earnestness, to consider Norland as their home; and, as no plan appeared so eligible to Mrs. Dashwood as remaining there till she could accommodate herself with a house in the neighbourhood, his invitation was accepted.

A continuance in a place where every thing reminded her of former delight, was exactly what suited her mind. In seasons of cheerfulness, no temper could be more cheerful than hers, or possess, in a greater degree, that sanguine expectation of happiness which is happiness itself. But in sorrow she must be equally carried away by her fancy, and as far beyond consolation as in pleasure she was beyond alloy.

Mrs. John Dashwood did not at all approve of what her husband intended to do for his sisters. To take three thousand pounds from the fortune of their dear little boy, would be impoverishing him to the most dreadful degree. **She begged him to think again on the subject. How could he answer it to himself to rob his child, and his only child too, of so large a sum? And what possible claim could the Miss Dashwoods, who were related to him only by half blood, which she considered as no relationship at all, have on his generosity to so large an amount. It was very well known that no affection was ever supposed to exist between the children of any man by different marriages; and why was he to ruin himself, and their poor little Harry, by giving away all his money to his half sisters?**

»It was my father's last request to me,« replied her husband, »that I should assist his widow and daughters.«

»He did not know what he was talking of, I dare say; ten to one but he was light-headed at the time. Had he been in his right senses, he could not have thought of such a thing as begging you to give away half your fortune from your own child.«

»He did not stipulate for any particular sum, my dear Fanny; he only requested me, in general terms, to assist them, and make their situation more comfortable than it was in his power to do. Perhaps it would have been as well if he had left it wholly to myself. He could hardly suppose I should neglect them. But as he required the promise, I could not do less than [...]

c) Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and the Extension of Free Indirect Discourse

Virginia Woolf

Mrs Dalloway

Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.

For Lucy had her work cut out for her. The doors would be taken off their hinges; Rumpelmayer's men were coming. And then, thought Clarissa Dalloway, what a morning—fresh as if issued to children on a beach.

What a lark! What a plunge! For so it had always seemed to her, when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which she could hear now, she had burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as she then was) solemn, feeling as she did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen; looking at the flowers, at the trees with the smoke winding off them and the rooks rising, falling; standing and looking until Peter Walsh said, "Musing among the vegetables?"—was that it?—"I prefer men to cauliflowers"—was that it? He must have said it at breakfast one morning when she had gone out on to the terrace—Peter Walsh. He would be back from India one of these days, June or July, she forgot which, for his letters were awfully dull; it was his sayings one remembered; his eyes, his pocket-knife, his smile, his grumpiness and, when millions of things had utterly vanished—how strange it was!—a few sayings like this about cabbages.

She stiffened a little on the kerb, waiting for Durtnall's van to pass. A charming woman, Scrope Purvis thought her (knowing her as one does know people who live next door to one in Westminster); a touch of the bird about her, of the jay, blue-green, light, vivacious, though she was over fifty, and grown very white since her illness. There she perched, never seeing him, waiting to cross, very upright.

For having lived in Westminster—how many years now? over twenty,— one feels even in the midst of the traffic, or waking at night, Clarissa was positive, a particular hush, or solemnity; an indescribable pause; a suspense (but that might be her heart, affected, they said, by influenza) before Big Ben strikes. There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical; then the hour, irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. Such fools we are, she thought, crossing Victoria Street. For Heaven only knows why one loves it so, how one sees it so, making it up, building it round one, tumbling it, creating it every moment afresh; but the veriest frumps, the most dejected of miseries sitting on doorsteps (drink their downfall) do the same; can't be dealt with, she felt positive, by Acts of Parliament for that very reason: they love life. In people's eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June.

For it was the middle of June. The War was over, except for some one like Mrs. Foxcroft at the Embassy last night eating her heart out because that nice boy was killed and now the old Manor House must go to a cousin; or Lady Bexborough who opened a bazaar, they said, with the telegram in her hand, John, her favourite, killed; but it was over; thank Heaven—over. It was June. The King and Queen were at the Palace. [...]

Virginia Woolf, “Modern Fiction” (1919)

So much of the enormous labour of proving the solidity, the likeness to life, of the [realistic] story is not only labour thrown away but labour misplaced [...] The writer seems constrained, not by his own free will but by some powerful and unscrupulous tyrant who has him in thrall, to provide a plot, to provide comedy, tragedy, love interest, and an air of probability [...] But sometimes, more and more often as time goes by, we suspect a momentary doubt, a spasm of rebellion, as the pages fill themselves in the customary way. Is life like this? Must novels be like this?

Look within and life, it seems, is very far from being ‘like this’. Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions [...] From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from of old. [...] We are not merely pleading for courage and sincerity; we are suggesting that the proper stuff of fiction is a little other than custom would have us believe it.

[...] Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness.

- **‘Neutralized’ Authorial Narration** (Stanzel: Figural Narrative Situation)
 - covert/withdrawn heterodiegetic narrator (voice only)
 - dominance of internal focalization through character-focalizers (Stanzel: reflector figures)
 - omniscience/omnipresence still prerequisite, but narratorial functions limited to presentation of story world through the eyes, perceptions etc. of characters in the story
 - no narratorial commentary
 - extended free indirect discourse (“dual voice”)

3) The Evolution of Modern Fiction

Franz K. Stanzel, *Theorie des Erzählens* (1979)

1st person vs. 3rd person
 internal perspective vs. external perspective
 teller vs. reflector

1st person narr. sit.	authorial narr. sit.	
narrating I	overt narrator	
▼	▼	
<u>experiencing I</u>	<u>covert narrator</u>	<u>telling</u>
▼▼	▼▼	▼▲
interior monologue	figural narr. sit.	showing
↪stream of consciousness-techniques↩		

Gerard Genette, *Die Erzählung* [1972/1983]. Trans. Andreas Knop.

München: Fink, 1994.

<u>narration</u>	<u>focalization</u>
heterodiegetic	zero
	internal
	external
homodiegetic	zero (-)
	internal
	external (?)

The Development of Modern Fiction in terms of telling vs. showing

(diegesis vs. mimesis)

18th/19th Century:	m ↔ d	realism
early 20th Century:	m (d)	modernism
late 20th Century:	(m) d	postmodernism

Cf. David Lodge, "Mimesis and Diegesis in Modern Fiction." In: David Lodge, *After Bakhtin. Essays on Fiction and Criticism*. London: Routledge, 1990: 25-44.

[Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses* (1988), chapter 1]

The Novelist at the Crossroads (Lodge):

	↪	fabulation
realism	→	"a modest affirmation of faith"
	↩	non-fictional narrative

+ integrative element: metafiction

1. esp. U.S., post-colonial writing
2. esp. GB
3. esp. US (doc.), later GB (travel)

David Lodge, "The Novelist at the Crossroads" [1969]. In: Malcolm Bradbury, ed., *The Novel Today: Contemporary Writers on Modern Fiction*. Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 21978: 84-110/

"The Novelist Today: Still at the Crossroads." In: Malcolm Bradbury, Judy Cooke, eds., *New Writing*. London: Minerva, 1992: 203-215.