

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the research which covers the background of the study, research questions, the aims of the study, the scope of the study, the research methodology, the clarification of terms, and the organization of the paper.

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Narrative involves an action or an event to be told. People in general often associate narrative with literary types, like novels, short stories, fairy tales, sagas or folk tales. As a widespread activity which is closely related to the acts of telling and re-telling, narrative can have numerous variety of structures that produce different kinds of effects and responses. In specific, narrative can be found in a text, such as literary text. In relation to this, Thwaites, Davis, and Mules (1994:114), state that narrative structure complements texts in three ways: it depicts the sequences of events or ideas in a story by foregrounding their movement through the passing of time, emphasizes a network of social meanings by transforming events into actions performed by characters, and offers the kinds of pleasure and enjoyment to the readers.

The study of narrative is commonly called narratology. According to Barry (2002: 145), narratology is not the reading and interpretation of individual stories, but rather the attempt to study the structure of narration or the way stories are told. Of many different narratology theories, Barry believes that Genette's theory of narratology (1980) is considered as one of the most valuable theories, because the work has as its focus, not the story itself, but rather the process of telling the story itself (Barry, 2002: 151). Concerning Genette's theory, Barry provides six basic questions which possibly cover the main areas discussed by Genette. First, how is the story 'packaged'? Second, how is time handled in the

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story? Third, who is telling the story? Fourth, how is the narrative focalised? Fifth, how are speech and thought represented? And sixth, is the basic narrative mode ‘mimetic’ or ‘diegetic’?

Research on the use of narratology includes Barry’s analysis of Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Oval Portrait* (2002) which outlines four fundamental areas in narrative theory, which are plot/story distinction, Aristotle’s theory of functional relation between character and action, Propp’s theory of narrative functions, and Genette’s theory. Fludernik (2006) analyzes the development of the character who is also the first person narrator, Philip Pirrip (Pip) in both Charles Dickens’ novel *Great Expectations* (1861) and Llyod Jones’s novel *Mister Pip* (2006)—a rewriting of Dickens’ text. Fludernik (2006: 104-108) states that some narratologists have made significant contributions to narrative terminology for example Ansgar Nünning (2001) who succeeds in giving some useful typologies of historical novels, the functions of narrator, and various kinds of metanarrativity, Mieke Bal (1997) who reconstitutes Genette’s types of focalization, and Seymour Chatman (1990) who offers a narratology of film.

Other research on narratology, for example, Henrik Skov Nielsen in *Postclassical Narratology* (2010: 20) discusses what is called as hybrid narrative texts. Nielsen looks at two types of texts which cannot easily be classified as either fiction or non-fiction. He uses the term “underdetermined texts” to refer to a text which is presented as neither fiction nor non-fiction, and the term “overdetermined texts” to describe a text which is presented as both fiction and non-fiction. Marcus (2006) analyzes Albert Camus’ novel *The Fall* and focuses on the triangular relation, narrator-narratee-reader. Marcus believes that there is a significant change of focus in the interrelations between “unreliable narrator” and “reliable reader”. Mildorf’s analysis (2006) merges narratological approaches and social sciences. Her analysis shows that the use of narratological terms, such as

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“focalization” and “double deixes” can be helpful for a more systematic investigation of particular narratives features of oral stories.

This present research aims to investigate how narrative makes meaning of a story. The subject of this research is Sue Monk Kidd’s novel *The Secret Life of Bees*. Since its publication in 2002, *The Secret Life of Bees* has sold more than six million copies and spent over one hundred weeks on the New York Times bestseller list (Amazon.com). The first person mode used in the novel *The Secret Life of Bees* became one of its interesting aspects. Thus, by applying Barry’s version of Genette’s narratology theory, this research attempts to analyze the narrative technique of the story to know how the narrative is presented to the reader in the form of first person mode.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This research is geared toward answering the following questions:

1. How is the story narrated as evidenced in the novel?
2. How does the narrative construct the main character?

## **1.3 Aims of the Study**

Based on the research, this research is aimed:

1. To identify how the story is narrated in the novel
2. To identify how the narrative constructs the main character

## **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This research is limited only to analyze the way the story is narrated in the novel and the way the narrative constructs the main character.

## **1.5 Research Methodology**

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method in nature. Fraenkel and Norman (2006) explain that the descriptive qualitative method aims to

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identify and provide a picture of an event, condition, or situation by using data in the form of words rather than numbers. Therefore, this method is appropriate for describing the current research which deals with the analysis of narrative technique in Sue Monk Kidd's novel *The Secret Life of Bees* (2002).

### **1.5.1 Data Collection**

The data of the research are critically selected from the novel *The Secret Life of Bees* (2002). The data were taken by reading the novel thoroughly, then selecting the parts which serve as textual evidence.

### **1.5.2 Data Analysis**

The collected data are then categorized into narrative categories and methods of characterization. The data are then analyzed using the framework of Barry's version of Genette's narratology theory. In conducting the research, the following steps have been taken:

1. Reading the novel thoroughly,
2. Classifying the textual evidence,
3. Analyzing the data by applying relevant theories,
4. Interpreting the data,
5. Making conclusion based on the findings.

## **1.6 Clarification of Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding, the following is the clarification of the terms used:

1. Characterization: The figures in a literary text can either be characterized as types or individuals (Klarer, 1998: 133).
2. Diegesis vs. mimemisis: Traditionally, this oppositional pair is used to characterize the difference between telling and showing, particularly in

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the discussion of the representation of speech and thought (Fludernik, 2006: 151).

3. First person narration: Point of view in which one of the characters who is part of the plot tells the story, referring to her- or himself in the first-person singular (Klarer, 1998: 137).
4. Focalization: The position or quality of consciousness through which we 'see' events in the narrative (Abbott, 2008: 233).
5. Mode: According to Genette, the way in which focalization is treated, defined in the category of voice as 'Who sees?'(mode) vs. 'Who speaks?' (voice) (Fludernik, 2006: 156).
6. Narrative: Narrative is a way of organizing and depicting any kind of events or ideas in a story by foregrounding the movement of time (Thwaites, 1994: 112).
7. Narrative Events: The basic units of a story, a dynamic part of the story which changes a situation. Events then combine into sequences to build up the story (Thwaites, 1994: 123).
8. Narratology: Narratology is a branch of literary structuralism. It is not only focuses on the structure of narration but also on the way stories are told. The main goal of narratology itself then be conceived as an attempt to discover the general model of narration, so that we know some possible ways in which the stories can be told (Bertens, 2001: 71).
9. Narrator: In stories that are written down, in other words in written texts, the term narrator refers to both first-person narrator and third-person narrator (Fludernik, 2006: 158).
10. Voice: The sensibility through which we hear the narrative, even when we are reading silently. Voice is very closely associated with focalization, the sensibility through which we see the characters and

events in the story, and sometimes hard to distinguish from it (Abbott, 2008: 243).

## **1.7 The Organization of the Paper**

This research consists of five chapters. It is organized as follows:

### **Chapter I: Introduction**

This chapter presents the background of the study, research questions, the aims of the study, the scope of the study, the research methodology, the clarification of terms, and the organization of the paper.

### **Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation**

This chapter consists of the theoretical frameworks and the literature reviews as the foundation of the research.

### **Chapter III: Research Methodology**

This chapter discusses the research methodology describing the techniques and procedures of the data collection and data analysis.

### **Chapter IV: Finding and Discussion**

This chapter presents the elaboration of findings and discussion of the research.

### **Chapter V: Conclusion and Suggestions**

This chapter consists of conclusion and suggestions of the research.

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