Vincent

Instructor Name

Course Number

Date

Frankenstein and The Turn of the Screw: The narrative voice

The narrative structure is a plot and a story. It also includes content of the story and form of the story in which writer tends to present his work in front of the audience. The story refers to the chronological order of the events, and plot refers to the key conflicts and their resolution. This essay will explore the narrative techniques of Frankenstein by Mary Shelley and The Turn of the Screw by James Henry.

Frankenstein, a Gothic novel, had been written by Mary Shelley in 1818. This novel is the conception of a nightmare after reading ghost stories and conversing about occult ideas, Darwinism, science, and galvanism with some famous authors like her future husband, Percy Shelley, Dr.John Polidori, and Lord Byron.

The narrative structure of Frankenstein is very complex. The central story of the novel, which is a Creature's story, is presented to us by Victor Frankenstein's story, which itself is framed by Robert Walton's epistolary narrative. Epistolary is a literary genre used by writers that contain letters, journals, and diaries to deliver messages in series. Mary Shelley started Frankenstein in the form of letters. The first narrator is Robert Walton, who gives his point of view about Victor. He is describing Victor as a kind and well-read. He also appreciates Victor's persuasive communication. However, as the story progresses, we come to know that Victor is not a kind person. *“He is so gentle, yet so wise; his mind is so cultivated, and when he speaks, although his words are culled with the choicest art, yet they flow with rapidity and unparalleled eloquence (Editors)."* The second narrator is Victor, who gives his point of view about Walton. At last, Creature appears and disrupts Victor and readers.

The novel follows symmetrical structure of narration. The novel starts with the letters of Walton, then writer introduces Victor’s tale and Creature's narration, and again shifts to Victor and end with Walton’s records. The purpose of symmetric approach is that the reader can get different perspectives from different angles of the story. Mary Shelley's did not stick to only one approach or narrator. She created variations in narrative structure to create versatility in the novel. The author uses a hybrid of '*Chinese box,'* which is also known as framed or embedded narrative, point of view, and indirections.

The novel starts from the letter of Walton that he writes for his sister to inform her about his safe journey. He fails as a writer, so now he is in search of the North Pole. "*You will rejoice to hear that no disaster has accompanied the commencement of an enterprise which you have regarded with such evil forebodings* (L. D. Editors)." This part of the novel is epistolary since this section is carried on letters. At this stage, Walton's narrative frames Victor and Victor's narrative frames the Creature's narration. The purpose of establishing this narration is to create an effect on the narrators. The monster tries to persuade his creator Victor, ta take his responsibilities as a parent. Victor's narrative tries to convince Walton to end his journey and to destroy the monster (Sengupta). Through the shifting of narratives, the characters aligned together in the story.

The novel has only one story which tells the readers about the childhood of Frankenstein and his death in the Arctic, on the ship of Captain Walton. All the main actions arise from his childhood and creation of the monster and its results. All the subordinate stories are the part of the main story. The author uses first person narration in the full novel to explain the viewpoints of Frankenstein and Walton.

The reader is introduced to Walton, who is writing to his sister about his adventures, then Walton meets Victor, and he tells his story of how he reached the North Pole. The reader then learns about Victor's past, particularly the story of Frankenstein. At the beginning of the last chapter, Frankenstein continued to tell his story of how he wanted to take revenge on his creature, Daemon, who killed his family and friends. He pursued it no matter how hard his life was, and he told the story of capturing the monster himself. When Frankenstein finished his story, the book turned back to Walton's letters, where he stated that he witnessed the story of Frankenstein (Wolschak).

Frankenstein is a great novel and gives an excellent description of its characters. The novel has an odd narrative style and very complex as well. It is written in the first-person narration and describes multiple points of view of different characters.

"The Turn of the Screw" has been written by Henry James. The novel is about a ghost story, and it is a very interesting novel and convincing as well because of its narrative style. The story is so persuasive that sometimes readers start to believe in the story. The narrative style of "Turn of the Screw" is same as "Frankenstein." The writer uses frame narrative structure, flashback technique, and first-person narration just like the "Frankenstein."

This novel is unusual because there are only two narrators. One narrator only exists in prologue. The first narrator, who is nameless, describes the scene in an old house where guests are telling ghost stories to each other. The writer then introduces Douglas, who reads the story of the governess. The governess is considered as principal narrator of story as the story is told from her point of view. She is also the central character of the story. The writer shows the thoughts of the governess through her conversations with Mrs. Grose. Mrs. Grose serves as the person to whom the governess expresses her innermost feelings and fears. Mrs. Grose witnessed the whole situation and then says, *“What a dreadful turn, to be sure, miss! Where on Earth do you see anything? (Articles)”.*The language of the story creates obscurity, and linguistics principles of structuralism are used in the novel.

The novel is based on flashbacks. Flashback is writing which occurs outside the timeline of the current situation. This flashback technique is used to explain characteristics of characters, plot elements, context to a scene, or to give background. The Turn of the Screw is a story within the story. Douglas reads a personal account of his sister's governess, and this "horrible" story indicates the governess's background. While narrating the governess account, he said, *“If the child gives the effect another turn of the screw, what do you say to two children? (Novelguide, noverlguide.com (17) p.3)”.*The writer uses structurally embedded ambiguity from the narrator’s point of view to create mystery. Every incident points out the central situation without revealing the complete main event of the story.

The story revolves around the strange sightings in the house. The governess witnessed all the dead people, which somehow linked to the house in the past. She saw Peter Quint for the first time on the staircase, and then she saw Miss Jessel on the dining table sitting and staring at her. This was a very dreadful sight for a governess, but she overcomes her fear just for the children. The governess was very attached to the children, and that is why she loved her job. She said, "*How can I retrace today the strange steps of my obsession? (Novelguide (68) p. 68)”*. She knew that these evil apparitions would harm the children; Flora and Miles. So, she decided to stay at the house even though she was terrified and wanted to leave immediately. She asked Mrs. Grose and Flora if they have seen the apparition of Miss Jessel, the ghost, but they said that they did not see anyone.

James carefully used foreshadowing for the later event. He gave hints and clues in the early parts of the novel that something important is going to take place later. He foreshadowed many things that the end could be guessed by the readers. James keeps foreshadowing that sooner or later, the children will face the apparitions, and as the result of confronting with ghost of Peter Quint, Miles died. He used this technique to prepare his readers to accept the changes in the story. The next morning, Flora got ill, and Mrs. Grose supported governess on her point of the sightings of ghosts. She also told her that Flora has started to use evil language since her illness. The governess tried to safe Miles from the ghost of Peter Quint, but she failed to do so. At the end of the novel, Miles looked at the ghost, which killed him. The governess grabbed his body, but she was sad to know the fact that she was holding the dead body of Miles. On the death of Miles, she said: "*We were alone with the quiet day, and his little heart, dispossessed, had stopped (novelguide (120), p. 113)*”.

  James Fictional techniques are admirable in the novel "The Turn of the Screw' are highly emotional, melodramatic, and mysterious. Narrative structure plays a vital role in making the story effective to the readers.

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