CHAPTER – I

NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE: IT’S THEORY IN FICTION

The narrative constructs the identity of the character, what can be called his or her narrative identity, in constructing that of the story told. It is the identity of the story that makes the identity of the character (Paul Ricoeur 86).

The above quote reflects the thought that the personality of a character or narrator is identified and recognized as the best one by his way of narrating a story. The narrator’s personality, identity, and character are revealed through the story presented by him.

This chapter deals with the significance of narrative technique in fiction. The focus in this chapter is on theories of narrative techniques, narrative mode, point of view, elements of narrative, kinds of narrator, and types of narrative techniques. It reviews the techniques which are useful, related and also the base for the readers to study and understand Faulkner’s novels.

The art of telling a story is ‘narrative’ which came into existence long before it got its name. It comes to us so naturally that we start expressing our feelings through language. As we start expressing our experiences, thoughts, feelings and observations, a narrative automatically takes shape. It is the kind of art which helps the story teller to tell a story in a convincing and artistic manner to make a story more effective and more interesting for a listener/reader to understand properly.
Narrative is a technical word for a story or stories. All media products can be analyzed as texts with narrative aspects that include storyline, character, narration, point of view, etc. Its theory is concerned not with the content of individual stories but with what stories have in common. Narrative is a term which has several changing meanings. It is taken from Latin verb ‘narrare’ which means ‘to recount’ and is related to the adjective ‘gnarus’ means ‘knowing’ or ‘skilled.’ Ultimately it is derived from the proto Indo European root ‘gno’ means ‘to know.’ The word ‘story’ may be used as a synonym of ‘narrative’ and also it is used to refer to the sequence of events described in a narrative. Rimmon Kenan rightly says that, “a story is a construct created in a suitable format that describes a sequence of fictional or non fictional events in the form of written, spoken, poetry, prose, images, song, theatre or dance gossip, newspaper, ballet, painting etc” (Kenan 55-70).

A narrative is in the form of spoken, written or imagined, and whatever it is, it has more points of view to represent the participants or observers. The stories which are told verbally, having a person telling the story is called ‘a narrator’ whom the audience can see or hear. He adds layers of meaning to the text nonverbally. Narrative is itself a kind of technique which has characters, a setting, a time, a problem, and attempts at solving the problem and tries to get a solution to the problem. Bedtime stories are examples of short stories while novels are examples of long stories. The scripts written for movies and plays are further examples of narrative writing.

It is omnipresent and its presence can be attributed to its being the oldest form of communication. Even in our own life span, a child is introduced into the ‘order of language’ through its narrative. For example; Grandma’s tales or fairy tales have a
form of narrative. The presence of narrative is everywhere and in every corner of the world and is famously described by Roland Barthes:

The narratives of the world are numberless. Narrative is first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances – as though any material were fit to receive man’s stories. Able to be carried by articulated language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures, and the ordered mixture of all these substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting, stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news item, conversation. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor have been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives, enjoyment of which is very often shared by men with different, even opposing, cultural backgrounds. Caring nothing for the division between good and bad literature, narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself (Barthes 237-272).

Every religion and spread of religion is based upon the narrative mode of communication. Narratives help to spread the message of God and to teach ignorant masses how to live their lives in a way that is liked by God. Parables, fables, and fairytales are, perhaps, the earliest forms of narrative that every human being encounters. Since languages grew as the civilization grew, we can say that narratives
also grew with the growth of civilization. If we look at the history of literature, early
Greek narrative works such as Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are the works about the
exploits of great heroes. Since early days of English literature, narrative has been
extensively used by the poets. Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* and Spencer’s *The
Faerie Queene* are famous examples.

For the study of narratives, narrative texts, a theory has been formed by
Tzvetan Todorov in 1969 called ‘Narratology’ “to designate a systematic study of
narrative firmly anchored in the tradition of the Russian and Czech formalism of the
early twentieth century and French structuralism and semiotics of the sixties” (Patrick
174). Though the term can be used in a broad sense for all ‘theoretical persuasions’ of
narrative theory, it refers specifically to the theories of narrative structure. Gerald
Prince defines it as “the study of form and functioning of narrative” (Prince 184). He
further adds that the term narratology may be new but not the discipline.

“The term fiction is derived from the Latin word ‘fingere’ which means to
make or to form, to invent, to think up, to make up” (Lothe 174). In the above
definition, fiction has been called ‘a made up story,’ but a narratologist would look at
the other half of the definition also i.e. ‘by shaping.’ This means fictional narratives
are not merely made up stories but they are shaped as well. Thus, the study of the
form of narrative is the arrangement of events in time and space that becomes
important subject of discussion. Since the study of narrative has become
institutionalized, different theorists have attempted to theorize narrative in different
ways.

Gerald Prince defines narrative as “the recounting (as product and process,
object and act, structure and structuration) of one or more real or fictitious events
communicated by one, two or several narrators to one, two or several narrates” (Prince 186). According to this definition, narrative, being the process of recounting the events, intrinsically involves two subjects- speaker or teller and listener. It can be told to a single person or a group of persons; or it can be told by a single person or a group of persons. Thus, narrative can either be by an individual or a group; or it can be for an individual or a group.

Narrative can “exist for one person at a time’… it can also be for a community,” (Branigan 124) whatsoever the case may be, narrative is a set of events told by a narrator to a narratee. Theorists have often debated over what constitutes the narrative, whether it is a set of events that constitutes a narrative or a single event which is potent enough to constitute a narrative. Different theorists have expressed their individual and varied opinions on this matter. Gerard Genette, for example, needs only one event to constitute a narrative. Gerald Prince requires three events connected with one another through: chronology, causality and closure.

Rimmon-Kenan believes that there should be at least two events to make a narrative. He opines that narrative is “a succession of events in order to suggest that narratives usually consist of more than one” (Kenan 59). Michael J. Toolan also believes that, “events or change of events is the key and fundamental of narrative” (Toolan 175). Michael J. Toolan quotes Tzvetan Todorov to illustrate his views on the importance of “transformation or change of events” (ibid.).

The simple relation of successive facts does not constitute a narrative: these facts must be organized, which is to say, ultimately, that they must have elements in common. But if all the elements are in common, there is no longer a narrative, for there is no longer anything to recount. Now, “transformation represents precisely a
synthesis of differences and resemblance, it links two facts without their being able to be identified” (Todorov 56). In a narrative, according to Todorov, the important factor is change of state which entails presence of more than one event. In his simple manner, he defines narrative as “a perceived sequence of non-randomly connected events” (Toolan 189). In this quote, the phrase ‘non-randomly connected events’ implies that narrative is not shapeless mixture of events but an organized set of events. “The current boom in narrative theories has by now reached something close to epidemic proportions” (Patrick 174). Quite a good number of theories pertaining to narrative have recently mushroomed such as Russian Formalist theory of Narrative, Bakhtian or dialogical theory, Chicago School, Hermeneutic, and Phenomenological theories.

Technique is one of the basic requisites of a literary writing. It is the bounded duty of a writer to use it in his work to make it meaningful and relevant. If there is no technique, there is no art, and hence no life. All the three are interrelated. So, technique is a kind of narrative in telling a story. It is the literary middleman between life and art. It helps the novelist in interpreting and transforming the reality. It helps the readers to discover and travel among other selves, other identities and other variety of human adventures. Techniques also long for an underlying structure, tension and drive in the words written. Virginia Woolf defines technique as:

With their simple tools and primitive materials, it might be said, Fielding did well and Jane Austen even better, but compare their opportunities with ours! (Woolf 23).
Technique is the means by which the novelist chooses to tell his/her story. The novel is like a living organism. It grows and leaves its impact on us and inspires the readers to think it and practice in his life. When a novelist imagines a story and works out its plot and characters, he starts the process of composing the subject matter. Experience, discovery, use of language all come together to bring forth the work of art. The writer has to write the story in a convincing manner. How should he/she begin? Who would be the narrator? How can language be used effectively? These and many such questions crop up while the story is moving in the author's mind. Sometimes after deliberation, and sometimes suddenly, the writer finds his /her path. A pattern takes shape, it acquires a rhythm with words and the story starts developing. In other words, technique is ‘craftsmanship.’

It is only through techniques that, the writer can translate his experiences, thoughts, and emotions into art. The art which a writer creates, is one of the important forms of communication through which a writer can communicate to the society in general and the readers in particular. Every writer has his own individuality in the use of techniques to throw light on the society by exploring, discovering, developing, and conveying the meaning of life. Every writer has his choice to choose a favorable form of writing. It is through which he can communicate well and can be understood well by the society.

Technique is one of the important tools of literary writing. Without it, the writers can write nothing relevant. The technique is not merely a decoration and superimposed upon the content to give it the additional value but the intrinsic quality of the subject matter itself. It is the primary element for the writer but not a supplementary one. It is the selection and arranging of material, and also the building
of plot within the plot to create suspense and climax. Technique is the means of showing or reporting character development, revelation of motives and relationships. Sometimes events are related from the point view of characters and arbitrary device for the heightening of dramatic interest through the narrowing or broadening of perspective upon the context.

When we speak of technique, we speak of nearly everything. Because, technique is the device or means by which the writer’s experience compels him to discover, explore, develop, expand his subject, and convey it’s meaning successfully and finally evaluate it. According to Mark Schorer, “the novel was still being read as though the subject and content were important by themselves, and technique, as capable of surface trimmings only, hardly affecting its essence. Technique was associated with poetry and its use in prose fiction was only to arrange events to create plot and point of view was thought as some nearly arbitrary device for the heightening of dramatic interest through the narrowing or broadening of perspective upon the material, rather than as a means of towards the positive definition of theme” (Schorer 387).

One of the most important aspects of technique is the use of language in a novel. The language that the writer uses is made to yield larger meanings through conscious manipulations. Even the selection and arrangement of words is also conscious and meaningful. So, language defines both the character and atmosphere. The spoken language is the mirror of the speaker and of the moment. The author’s reporting speech builds up the atmosphere through its linguistic features including its tone, just as a character’s speech is revelatory of personality by it's very style.
Narrative techniques specifically used by an author to write a story effectually. It involves how the writer describes the way the plot unfolds and descriptions of the characters look like both physically and spiritually. A narrative technique is a technique in which action and external events are conveyed indirectly through a fictional character's mental soliloquy of thoughts and associations. The procedure used by a writer of stories is narrative. It is a general term that asks us to discuss the procedures used in telling of a story. Examples of the techniques we might use are- point of view, manipulation of time, dialogue, interior monologue, multiplicity of point of view, Stream of Consciousness technique. Narrative techniques include ‘Author surrogate,’ a character who acts as the author's spokesman. Sometimes the character may intentionally or unintentionally be an idealized version of the author.

Novels, short stories, poems, blog posts, and essays are considered as the forms of narrative. The forms of narrative writing are largely creative. Even if the form of the writing changes, the function of telling a story remains the same. A narrative writer writes to entertain the reader. The theme of the narrative writing is introduced by the writer in the beginning of the story followed by the development of middle and memorable end.

Much of narrative writing can be done on a personal level that is; the stories written do not necessarily need to be shared with others. The value of such writing becomes evident as a catharsis. Authors of narrative writing may choose to write about a troubling situation to help them work through it or understand it better. A narrative can set the stage for a particular issue, and the story does not necessarily have to be about the author himself. For example, he can write an account of a friend
or acquaintance's experiences in a war-torn country without having lived through the experience.

Narratives can also be fictional events that follow a plot structure which includes introduction or exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution or end. This structure is sometimes known as the ‘plot pyramid’ or ‘story arc,’ and it ensures all relevant parts of the story get told. Characterization or developing a character into a believable and almost real person is important to a story.

Novels and short stories are the most popular forms of the narratives. These two genres generally follow story arcs, and in novels, several characters and settings will be developed. A short story usually contains fewer characters and settings. Such stories are designed to be easily digestible pieces of writing that can be read relatively quick. Novels are significantly longer and offer the writer ample opportunities to deal with complex themes, characters, and interactions. Poems can also be narrative, though the writer is generally afforded even less space to tell a story than a short story. Longer narrative poems, however, may run on for several pages. Some are even novel-length.

There are three main kinds of narrative writings such as: Personal, Imaginative and Narrative Essay. In the personal narrative writing, the writer writes about himself or about his own experiences. Here, the writer’s life story itself is the plot for him to narrate the experiences in such a way that it will capture the interest of the readers. A personal narrative writer has to pay attention to the flow of the story, the dialogue and the description. After reading, the reader should experience the same feeling that the writer already had experienced as the real experience in his life.
William Faulkner, as a personal narrative writer writes about his own experiences of his native land i.e. American South which he observed and felt after the Civil War. The earlier novel *The Sound and the Fury* is a criticism and condemnation of the aristocracy of the South and *As I Lay Dying*, is a criticism and condemnation of the back wood people who go through their ignorance, denied any value of life. In both the novels Faulkner has narrated his own experiences through the characters.

The imaginative narrative writer who writes fiction or any other form of literature through his imagination is called Creative writing. There is no limit or boundary for him. He can go beyond this physical world or beyond the world of reality. With his power of imagination he can touch the sky and go beyond it. He can create unusual situations and events that could never have happened in real life. Hence, the writer has to create a plot and make it sound and convincing to the reader.

Among the three kinds of narrative writing, the narrative essay has its own unique features. The defining of the particular point of view of the author is the main object of narrative essay. It has a central theme and points to support and elaborate the same. It includes verbs and their modifiers. It is very precise in the description of the characters. Dialogues are very rare in narrative essay. It uses conflicts and sequences like any story.

Telling a story is itself an art. The person or character who tells a story is ‘narrator.’ “The narrator is the one who evaluates, who is sensitively aware, who observes” (Stanzel 99). The person whose point of view is used to relate the story is regarded as the ‘narrator.’ He is a character developed by the author for the specific purpose of conveying the story. He is the one who has an opportunity to monitor the
responses of the audience to the story. He can modify the manner of telling to clarify the content of the story and he can enhance the listener’s interest also. The story depends on the narrator how he or she narrates. It is the narrator who can modify or change the structure of the story depending on the listener’s interest and level. We find this narrative technique in any of the forms of literature or any work of art. Whatever the form, the content of the story may concern the real world people and events. From the viewpoint of F.K. Stanzel, a narratologist this is termed as “personal experience narrative,” (Stanzel 99) when the content is fictional, different conventions apply.

“The text or the story which can be narrated, deals with the real world but the narrator is ontologically distant who belongs to an invented or imaginary world. The narrator may be one of the characters in the story. Roland Barthes describes such characters as paper beings” (Barthes 245). When their thoughts are included, this is termed as ‘Internal focalization’ i.e. when each character’s mind focuses on a particular event, the text reflects his or her reactions. In written forms of the text, the reader is very intelligent who can hear the narrator’s voice both through the voice of the content and style and through the clues that reveal the narrator’s beliefs, values, and ideological stance as well as author’s attitude towards people.

Of the two types of the narrators, ‘homodiegetic’ is a first person narrator and he describes his or her personal and subjective experiences as a character in the story. The homodiegetic narrator does not know anything more about what goes on in the mind of any other characters than is revealed through their actions. He is personal and subjective. In the novel The Sound and the Fury, Benjy, Quentin, and Jason Compson are the first person narrators presenting their personal problems and attitudes.
“Benjy’s first person narrative takes us out of normal sympathies and fictional empathies, preoccupations upon which the effect of a first person narrative normally depends, which it cultivates, by which it seduces. It subjects us to an entirely new mode of perception” (Reed 78). Quentin Compson’s is a theme dominated and self indulgent first person narrative which calls up all our conventional responses to the confession. Jason is a more complex first person narrator and his narrative seems to appeal to the same sort of stock response demanded by Quentin and granted to him by us. His observations come down squarely in the present and he is never confused about what is past and what is present. His narrative is heard and emphasized by the way we hear ‘Once a bitch always a bitch,’ (Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury 109) by his ritual storyteller’s repetition of ‘I says.’

In As I Lay Dying, all the Bundrens and non Bundrens are the first person narrators who think and express their own attitudes towards their life. Among fifteen narrators of this novel, major part of the novel is narrated by Darl Bundren. Out of fifty nine sections of the novel, nineteen are narrated by Darl in first person narration. For example, Jewel, I say, do you know that Addie Bundren is going to die? Addie Bundren is going to die? (Faulkner, As I Lay Dying 39).

Another type of narrator is named as ‘heterodiegetic’ narrator. He is identified as ‘third person narrator’ and it is he who describes the experiences of the characters that do appear in the story. Third person narrator is impersonal and objective. In The Sound and the Fury, the fourth section of the novel is narrated by the third person narrator. Faulkner himself is the third person narrator who narrates the last section. It is through Dilsey, the African American maid of the Compson family, Faulkner has tried to complete the narration of the remaining part of the novel.
Tzvetan Todaorov (1969) coined the term ‘narratology’ for “the structural analysis of any given narrative into its constituent parts to determine their functions and relationships” (Todorov 58). For these purposes, the story is what is narrated usually in chronological sequence of themes, motives and plot lines. Hence, the plot represents the logical and casual structure of a story, explaining why the events occur. In this connection, the term ‘discourse’ is used to describe the stylistic choices that determine how the narrative text or performance finally appears to the audience.

The mode of narration of a story is called point of view or narrative mode. It is the attribute of a literary, theatrical, cinematic or musical piece which describes the method used by the authors to convey their story to the audience. It covers several overlapping areas of concern most importantly narrative point of view. It determines the person through whose eyes the story is viewed, and it is the narrative voice which determines how it is to be expressed to the audience.

Point of view signifies the way a story gets told. A novelist may use 'I' to narrate his story, which is called ‘first person point of view,’ or he/she may use ‘third person point of view,’ as if someone else is telling the story of another person. In other words, it is the perspective through which the novelist presents his characters, events, episodes, actions and setting. Narrative mode or narrative voice is adopted by the writer. To some critics, this is the fundamental device to convey his story. According to Percy Lubbock, the point of view is:

The whole intricate question of method, in the craft of fiction, I take to be governed by the question of the point of view-the question of the relation in which the narrator stands to the story and his book. The novelist can either describe the characters from outside, as an impartial
or partial onlooker, or he can assume omniscience and describe them from within or he can place himself in the position of one of them. The question of point of view is directly related to the power of the writer-the creator (Lubbock 12-16).

It is really significant to know how the concept, ‘point of view’ developed through the years. Many dictionaries and handbooks on literary terms have given a variety of meanings and definitions of point of view; but the terms ‘point of view’ and ‘view point’ are used synonymously in these dictionaries and handbooks. John. T. Shipley defines, ‘view point’ as ‘the relation in which the narrator stands to the story, considered by many critics to govern the method and the characters of the work.’ Carl Beckson and Arthur Ganz define ‘point of view’ as “the point from which a story is seen or told” (Beckson Karl & Arthur Ganz 162). Karl Barnet, Berman and Burto, have an elaborate definition; “A piece of literature (i.e. poem, short story, and novel) is told or recorded by someone and this narrator has a particular identity” (ibid.). The story is rarely told by the artist speaking in his own words and usually it is told through an assumed ‘point of view,’ an assumed eye and mind. Harry Shaw’s definition is again an elaborate one, wherein he talks about the several meanings ‘Point of view’ has in literature. The two general meanings of the term he provides are; “a specified position or method of consideration and appraisal and an attitude judgment or opinion” (Shaw, E. Harry. 299-312).

The special meaning that point of view has in literature is: physical point of view has to do with the position in time and space from which a writer approaches, views and describes his material. Mental point of view has to do with the position from which someone or something is observed. Personal point of view concerns the
relations through which a writer narrates or discusses a subject whether in the first, second or third person.

Seymour Chatman, a literary theorist, said that ‘point of view’ and ‘voice’ are distinct from each other. Point of view in the words of Chatman is one of the most troublesome of critical terms, “its pluri-signification must give pause to anyone who wishes to use it in precise discussion” (Seymour 151). He further differentiates between ‘point of view’ and ‘narrative voice.’ Point of view is the physical place or ideological situation or practical life orientation to which narrative events stand in relation where as ‘voice’ refers to the speech or other overt means through which events are communicated to the audience. He clarifies that point of view does not mean expression but only the perceptive in terms of which the expression is made, and that the perceptive and expression need not be lodged in the same person. Many combinations are possible within this and to illustrate this, Chatman considers only the perceptual point of view and gives examples of various combinations that can be made within this. The narrator may perceive and narrate in his own first person: as a protagonist; ‘I felt myself fall down the hill’; as a witness ‘I saw Jack fall down the hill.’ The point of view may be assigned to a character, who is not the narrator: The narrating voice may make itself heard ‘Mary, poor dear, saw jack fall down the hill.’ The event may be presented so that it is not clear who perceived it, if any one perceived it at all, or perception is not an issue at all ‘Jack fell down the hill.’ Chatman said that perception, conception and interest point of view are quite independent of the manner in which they are expressed.

We move from point of view to the province of narrative voice when we speak of ‘expression’. This is a movement from a perceptive or stance to the medium
(voice) through which perception, conception and everything else is communicated. Based on the above analysis, Chatman says that point of view is in the story, (when it is the character’s), but voice is always outside, in the discourse. Chatman gives examples from James Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Youngman*, “A few moments later he found himself on the stage amid the garish gas and the dim scenery” (Joyce. 1916). Here, the perceptual point of view is Stephen’s, but the voice is the narrator’s. We can also see here that the character’s perceptions need not be articulated. Another example is Joseph Conrad’s *Lord Jim* “he shivered a little, and I be held him rise slowly as if steady hand from above had been pulling him out of the chair by the hair,” (Conrad.1900) both the voice and the perceptual point of view is of the narrator Marlow’s and not of the character Jim’s.

Chatman tried to clarify the difference between perception and conception. We find perception reported in the two examples like *The Portrait of the Artist as a Youngman* and Joseph Conrad’s *Lord Jim*. The narrator is seeing here with an independent point of view.

“The narrator,” according to Chatman, “has peered into the character’s mind and reports the contents from his own point of view” (Seymour 155). He says that the character literally perceives something within the world of the work from his point of view and is almost always outside the story, even if it is in retrospect. Even, when the narrator is reporting in retrospect, he is looking back at his own earlier perception as a character. This looking back, according to Chatman, is a conception and is no longer a perception. He further clarifies that a pure view is presented completely by an ‘external’ narrator, because he is never in the story and discourse time cannot be taken as a later extension of story time. On the basis of the above discussion, Chatman
opines that, “the use of terms like ‘view’ and ‘see’ may be dangerously metaphorical” (Seymour 156).

Wayne C. Booth after the publication of his *The Rhetoric of Fiction* in 1961 considers many narrative devices in fiction and feels that the traditional classification of point of view in different categories, which differ only with regard to person and degrees of omniscience, is inadequate.

Wayne C. Booth talks about distance which is the most vital aspect that determines different narratorial perspectives, when he says that irrespective of whether the narrators and third person reflectors are involved in the action, agents or as sufferers, they “differ markedly according to that degree and kind of distance that separates them from the author, the reader and other characters of the story” (Booth 230).

**Kinds of Narrative Points of View**

- **First Person Point of view**
- **Second Person Point of view**
- **Third Person Point of view**
- **Omniscient Point of view**
  - **Third person Subjective mode**
  - **Third person Objective mode**
  - **Third person Omniscient mode**
  - **Third person Limited**

![Diagram](Fig-1)
It is first person narrative point of view which is expressed through the narrator referring to the central character as ‘I’ if singular and ‘we’ if plural. The story is told from a main character’s point of view. This point of narrative sacrifices omniscience and omnipresence for a greater intimacy with one character in particular, the narrator himself/herself. Second person narrative point of view is the rarest one where the narrator refers to central character as ‘you’ therefore making the audience feel as if they are characters within the story. A relatively prominent example is Jay McKiernan’s ‘Bright Lights’, ‘Big City.’ The most commonly used narrative mode is third person narration which provides freedom and flexibility to the author. The third person narrator can see into the minds of all characters. He is just like God who can enter the minds of characters and know everything that he is going on in the past, present and future. He may be the narrator outside the text also.

We have two categories of third person narration; first one is the subjectivity/objectivity axis with subjective ‘narration’ describing one or more character’s feelings and thoughts. Objective narration does not describe the feelings or thoughts of any characters. The second axis is between omniscient and limited, a distinction that refers to the knowledge available to the narrator. It is omniscient narrator, who has omniscient knowledge of time, place, people and events, but a limited narrator may know absolutely everything about a single character and every piece of knowledge in that particular character’s mind, but it is limited to that character that is, it cannot describe things unknown to the focal character. In third person limited narrative point of view, the narrator can see into one character’s mind.
According to Seymour Chatman, the dualistic Formalist-Structuralist theory of narrative can be represented by the following diagram of story and discourse pattern. Story is already depicted and discourse is how it is depicted.

![Diagram of story and discourse pattern](image)

**Fig-2**

Narrative structure is about two things: the content of a story and the form used to tell the story. Two common ways to describe these two parts of narrative structure are story and plot. Story refers to the raw materials of dramatic action as they might be described in chronological order. Plot refers to how the story is told, the form of storytelling, or the structure, that the story follows. If we want to analyze narrative structure, we can use ‘who’ ‘what’, and ‘where’ questions to look at the
story or content of a movie. ‘How’ and ‘when’ questions are used to examine plot structure. Conventionally, both story and plot are described in terms of how a character’s life is disrupted by an event or change in his/her situation; this causes a series of conflicts that the characters must face including the major conflict that is eventually resolved at the end of the novel/film. Conflict in this model can take many forms like emotional, interpersonal, or even between the character and his/her physical environment.

Narrative is a total body of the novel where as elements are its organs. For writing any narrative or complete story of the novel, the writer has to face the challenges if he doesn’t know the basic elements of a story. A novel is a prose narrative piece of writing which can be long enough to be printed as an entire book. The novel is usually divided into smaller portions, called chapters. A short story, in contrast, is a piece of writing which is short enough to be read in one sitting, and is usually published in a magazine or an anthology. Novels and short stories share some common narrative elements. The elements of narrative are considered as the organs of a story or a novel. The elements which can make the novel or story complete and successful work of art are – setting, character, theme, style, point of view, plot, story, and language/diction etc.

Setting is the background against which the action of a narrative occurs, referring both to the time and place of the events in a story including the specific time or period, geographic location, cultural environment as well as social and political realities. The setting depends on the theme and choice of the places like a house, jungle, palace, or workplace. The writer can choose different places according to the sequence and events of the plot. Setting is often established by description, but it may
also be shown through character’s action, dialogue or thinking. Although defined as the background, it has great significance in the story. It not only gives the reader the impression of true facts, but also functions as ‘objective correlative’ of the internal life of the character. The setting can also affect characters or plot by creating a certain atmosphere or mood, and help to develop the theme either through suggestion or more direct symbolism.

The setting can be used for contrast, something taking place in an unexpected place. Also, the more unfamiliar the reader is with the setting, the more interesting the setting is. Time is important to every story. The year in which the story takes place is not the only temporal aspect of setting to consider. The time of the year might change the physical setting—winter, fall, spring. In general, the winter is a more gloomy time than other seasons of the year, but not always.

Place includes the bigger picture (city, county, state, country) and the smaller picture (local businesses, places of residence and work, streets and avenues, and other local details). The place in which the story takes place may be real or fictitious. For example; Faulkner’s Yoknapatawpha County is the fictitious setting which is seen through a character’s experience. “Different characters may perceive the same surroundings in very different ways based on their familiarity with the setting. A man from a small town in the Mississippi Delta who is visiting Brooklyn for the first time might describe it differently than a man who has lived there all his life” (Kress.2008) The mood or atmosphere of a story is the impression that it creates emotions in readers. Writers create appropriate moods through their choices of specific details like images, and chosen words and phrases.
Neutral, Spiritual, and Dynamic - are the three kinds of settings used for contrast. Neutral setting is the place where the action takes place. Spiritual setting depends on the values embodied in the physical setting; there is no easy relationship between physical setting and moral values. Finally, Dynamic setting may take on the role of a character.

Plot has its significance as one of the important organs of the novel. It is the total structure of the story of the novel. It carries the other elements of the story. The plot must be believable, plausible, flexible and interesting. A plot is the sequence of events that make up a story. Aristotle stated in his book *The Poetics* that plot structure had a beginning, middle and an end. It is a sequence of events connected in a cause-and-effect manner. Generally the plot consists of a series of increasingly more intense conflicts, situations, a climax and a final resolution. The plot must be advanced as the story unfolds. Usually, closer to the end of the story, the climax is placed better. Long works like novels can have many subplots and secondary climaxes and resolutions. In plot, flashbacks have been overused. A story is stronger when it runs chronologically.

The story revolves around the plot. A plot contains incidents composed of many parts. The sequence begins with an exposition, blooms in the conflict, climax and resolution. Plato’s concept of plot is based on place, time and manner. Plot is a term to indicate how the events are arranged to affect the reader. It is an artificial rather than a natural ordering of events. It is composed of two basic aspects of narration: a) Sequence is in which a story is told in chronological order, or with a lot of flash back, or in psychic order. b) Development in the traditional linear pattern in the modernist way.
Plot is the sequence of events in a story as the author chooses to arrange them. It is a chain of events and each event is the result of some prior events and the cause of some subsequent events. Its purpose is to get readers involved by creating tension so that they feel a need to know what happens next. The hero and the villain each keep upsetting the other, forcing each to improvise under pressure. This continues until finally one gains the upper hand. “If the plot is organized around a single central problem, it usually ends when that problem is resolved. If the plot deals with a series of problems, it ends when the last problem is dealt with” (Kress.2008).

Story, Structure, title, beginning, middle, and end are the key elements of plot. Unlike plot, story is the sequence of events in a work of fiction in the order they actually occur. Story and plot may differ because writers use devices like flashbacks, recollections, introspections, and flash forwards so that the plot does not always proceed in a chronological order. A story persists as long as there are problems to be resolved.

Structure is the framework of a novel. It is the way; the plot is arranged in both a logical and a dramatic manner to create maximum suspense. In all cases it consists of a title, a beginning, middle, and an end. In addition, some novels have prologues, fewer have epilogues, and even fewer have both. The title cannot be too short, since many titles consist only of a single word.

Every beginning makes a promise to readers. A romance novel promises to entertain and excite them, a mystery novel makes a promise to intellectually challenge them, a thriller novel makes a promise to excite and keep them wondering what is going to happen next, and horror novel promises to scare them. Usually readers are brought into the story at the moment the status is threatened. Ideally, readers should
find characters in difficulty in the first chapter, the first page, or even better in the first paragraph.

The middle increases conflict, further develops the main characters, and introduces other characters. It is composed of complications in which things progressively get worse for the hero and a crisis in which he must make a decision that can lead to either success or failure in achieving his ultimate goal. “With complications, every attempt by the hero to solve a problem usually makes the problem worse or creates a new, more tenacious problem. Even if his situation improves, the forces arrayed against him grow comparably in magnitude. By the end of the middle, all the various forces that will collide at the story’s climax should have been put in place” (Kress.2008).

The story narrows down as the end approaches. So, the ending can take place clearly and decisively. Any subplots and side issues should have been disposed of. If the novel has parallel plots, they should have already converged into a single plot line. All the subordinate characters should be ‘offstage,’ their work done, to leave the main characters alone in the ‘spotlight’ to do the final battle.

The end consists of a climax and a resolution. The climax, also known as the showdown, is the decisive event that resolves the conflict. Although a type of novel has a number of high points of tension and action, the climax is the highest point. It is the logical coming together of the facts and events that took place earlier in the novel. It can be thought of as the ultimate surprise, revealing the answer to the central mystery. It is the moment that relieves all the tension that has built up through the beginning and middle of the story.
Once the climax is over, the falling action leads quickly toward the story’s resolution, which refers to the final outcome of a plot. It is the final explanation of events. Its function is to unwrap up the story. Resolution is also known as the denouement, which literally means ‘unknotting’.

The plot is a synopsis of the storyline in chronological order. The plot usually arises out of the conflict in the story, which eventually builds to a climactic moment. The basic plot is comprised of the following:

- **Introduction**- refers to the beginning of the story where the characters and setting are presented.

- **Problem/Conflict**- is where the events in the story become complicated and the problem in the story is revealed.

- **Climax**- is the turning point in the story in which the reader wonders what will happen next (i.e., will the problem get solved or not?)

- **Solution/Conclusion**- is the point in the story in which the problem is solved.

The story revolves around the plot. A plot contains incidents composed of many parts. The sequence begins with an exposition (background), blooms in the conflict (rising actions, between two forces, protagonist or antagonist), climax (peak of the story in the middle) and resolution (victory, defeat, sad ending or happy ending). Plato’s concept of plot is based on place, time and manner.

Every story has a main character. But does every story have a plot? The answer is not every story… but all the good ones have them. If a story does not have a
plot, one can conclude that it’s a bad story, not publishable at all, because there’s nothing happening within it.

Action is not plot. Plot is something different. Whether we want to write a detailed plot outline or just start our story, we must take care of the plot. Without characters there is no story even if we have plot, and vice versa. Without plot there is no story even if we have the best characters in the world. Both are necessary. Omission of any one can seriously hinder our story.

The plot can be anything in the world. It can be happy, sad, serious, funny, realistic and fantastical. It’s only function is to draw the reader in. If the writer includes subplots in a story, he can increase interest in the novel. A subplot is a secondary plot strand, which is a supporting side story, for any story or the main plot. Subplots may connect to main plots, in either time or place or in thematic significance. Subplots often involve supporting characters, those besides the protagonist or the antagonist.

Conflict is very important aspect of the novel introduced between the main character and his surroundings. It is necessary to make the novel spicy. Conflict between the protagonist (hero) and antagonist (villain), conflict between the protagonist and the side characters, and so on. Without conflict there is no excitement in a story. People hate to see everyone agreeing with each other.

A theme is the understanding that the author seeks to communicate through his work. It is the central and unifying idea about which the story is structured. It is the meaning or concept we are left with after reading a piece of fiction. Sometimes, the theme may be more than one. The main theme supports the subject and the moral of the narrative, which the reader indirectly comes across in a play. Love, revenge,
historic, political, and picturesque and allegory are some of the themes used in romantic poem in Robert Burns' poem - *My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose* - has love as a theme. The theme of a story is often abstract and not addressed directly in the narrative. It is imparted to the story by the concrete events occurring in the story.

Theme directs a writer's decisions about which path to take, which choice is right for the story, and which choice is wrong for it. With theme, the writer actually structures his writing on a concept that guides him from the beginning to the end. A theme that best suits the story the writer wants to tell helps him express his central idea more clearly.

In some works, the theme is a prominent element and unmistakable; in other works the theme is more elusive. A major theme is an idea that the author returns to time and again. It becomes one of the most important ideas in the story. “Minor themes are ideas that may appear from time to time, but are less important. All that said, because the major aim of genre novels is to entertain, not to express a point of view, not every genre novel has a theme” (Bickham.1999).

Theme is the central or the dominating idea in a literary work, and the soul of the story. In nonfiction prose it may be thought of as the general topic of discussion, the subject of the discourse. In poetry, fiction, and drama it is the abstract concept which is made concrete through its representation in person, action, and image in the work. The theme of a work may be pronounced explicitly, but more often it emerges indirectly through the recurrence of motifs. Common themes of literature are about human nature and the most important human experiences which are universal, covering the primary emotions and relations in human life.
Characterization is the creation of imaginary people (characters) who appear to be real and believable to readers. In most stories, characters and their interactions drive the plot and create the suspense and tension. Readers rely on the characters to draw them into the story. Characterization is about how a character is revealed or developed.

The nature of characters can be brought out through minimal description and the actions, thoughts, and dialogue of the characters. The writer should allow the reader to make judgments about the characters; the writer should avoid making the judgments for the reader. The feelings of the character should be demonstrated rather than told by the narrator. Characters are usually human, but can be animals, aliens, robots, or anything for that matter. Characters have names, physical appearances, and personalities. They often wear certain kinds of clothes, speak using slang or jargon, and sometimes have accents. They communicate with each other verbally and nonverbally.

Characters should be introduced early in the story. The more often a character is mentioned or appears the more significance the reader will attach to the character. Also, the main character should be introduced before setting, so that the setting can be introduced from the point of view of the character. Yet, there are some very good stories in which much of the narration is about a character's feelings and thoughts or in which the narration goes into great detail and analysis of a character's feelings and thoughts at some point. “Characters are classified as either major or minor, depending on the magnitudes of their roles in the story. Some characters may be either major or minor, also depending on their roles in the story ” (Seger. 2010).
There are three fundamental methods of characterization:

- the explicit presentation by the author of the character through direct exposition, either in an introductory block or more often piecemeal throughout the work, illustrated by action;

- the presentation in action, with little or no explicit comment by the author, in the expectation that the reader will be able to deduce the attributes of the actor from the actions; and

- the representation from within a character, without comment on the character by the author, of the impact of actions and emotions upon the character's inner self, with the expectation that the reader will come to a clear understanding of the attributes of the character.

But regardless of the methods by which a character is presented, the author may concentrate on a dominant trait to the exclusion of the other aspects of the character's personality, or the author may attempt to present a fully rounded personality. If the presentation of a single dominant trait is carried to an extreme, not a believable character but a caricature will result. If this method is handled with skill, it can produce two dimensional characters that are striking and interesting but lack depth.

Furthermore, a character may be either static or dynamic. A static character is one who changes little if at all in the progress of the narrative. A dynamic character is one who changes as a result of reaction to the happenings. And maximum number of great dramas and novels have dynamic characters as protagonists. Short stories are
more likely to reveal static characters through action than to show changes in characters resulting from actions.

Style is a specific way of using language and one of the characteristics of the author. It is the way the writer uses language. It may be defined by the use of diction, tone, syntax, imagery, rhythm, and figures of speech, or by any other linguistic feature. The most effective writing uses the active voice. Shorter, concrete words tend to be stronger. Long words tend to be abstract. The choice of words can help set the tone of the story. Style is a combination of two elements: a) the idea to be expressed and b) the individuality of the author. Style includes the features like imagery, symbolism, structure, language, diction, and atmosphere.

There are different types of narrative techniques which are popular: Chekhov’s gun, Dream sequence, Ellipsis (narrative mode), Flashback, Flash-forward, Historical present, In Media’s res, In cluing, Red herring (narrative) Retroactive Continuity and Stream of Consciousness. These are the literary or narrative techniques which have been employed by different writers in their works of art according to their taste and talent.

Chekhov’s gun is one of the literary techniques used early in the story. The name ‘Chekhov’s gun’ comes from Anton Chekhov himself who stated that any object introduced in a story must be used later on; otherwise it ought not to feature in the first place. The earliest form of Chekhov’s gun was ‘repetitive designation’. This foreshadowing technique dates back to the ‘One thousand One Nights’ (Arabian Nights) which contains repeated references to some character or object which appears insignificant when first mentioned but which reappears later to intrude suddenly in the
narrative. We find a notable example in the tale of *The Three Apples*, a murder mystery narrated in the *Arabian Nights*.

Dream Sequence is also one of the narrative techniques used in storytelling, particularly in television and film. It is used to set apart a brief interlude from the main story. The interlude may consist of a flashback, a flash forward, a fantasy, a vision, a dream, or some other elements. Many writers and critics look down on dream sequences as a cheap way to explain a character’s motives without actually integrating them into the plot. The films which have used dream sequences are; *Twelve Monkeys, American Beauty, Dark Passage, The Secret Garden*, etc.

Ellipsis or Narrative Device is the type of narrative device which is used to condense time of the length of a story. As a stylistic method it allows the reader to fill in the missing portions of the narrative with their imagination. This narrative device omits a portion of the sequence of events and allows the reader to fill in the narrative gaps and also it leaves out a portion of the story. For example, we find this narrative device between the first and second parts of the novel in *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf.

Flashback is the most important narrative device used in history, film, television, and other media as an interjected scene to take the narrative back in time from the current point of time. It is used to recount the events that happened prior to the story’s primary sequence of events or to fill in crucial back-story. Flashback and Flash-forward are the two faces of the same token. ‘Flashback’ reveals the events and incidents which took place in the story or the development of a character where as ‘flash-forward’ reveals the events which will take place in the future. In literature we have two kinds of flashbacks- Internal flashback and external flashback. First one is a
flashback to an earlier point in the narrative where as second one is to, before the narrative started. An early example of flashback is in the ‘Mahabharata’ where the main story is narrated through a frame story set at a later time. In literature, the earliest use of this device is in a murder mystery of *The Three Apples*.

In linguistics and rhetoric, the historical present refers to the employment of the present tense while narrating past events. Besides, it’s use in writing about history, especially in historical chronicles. It is used in fiction, for 'hot news’ and in everyday conversation. In conversation, it is particularly common with 'verbs of communication' such as *tell*, *write*, and *say*. It is the opinion of literary critics and grammarians that the historical present has the effect of making past events more vivid. For example, Charles Dickens’s *David Copperfield*.

In Medias res or Medias in res (into the middle of things) is a Latin phrase denoting the literary and artistic narrative technique. It is a literary and artistic technique where the narrative starts in the middle of the story instead of from its beginning. The characters, settings and conflicts are often introduced through a series of flashbacks or through characters relating past events to each other. It probably originated from an oral tradition. It is a convention of epic poetry. One of the earliest and most prominent examples in western literature is Homer’s *Odyssey* and *Iliad*. Other epics beginning ‘In Medias res’ include the Indian *Mahabharata*, The Portuguese *The Lusiads* and several *Arabian Nights* tales such as *Sinbad the Sailor* and *The Three Apples*. All these examples employ this technique. This narrative technique has proven very popular throughout the ages, including frequent use of Modernist literature. It can also be seen in cinema and television. The Roman lyric
poet and satirist Horace (65–8 BC) first used the term in medias res in his *Art Poetica* to describe the epic poet.

In cluing is a technique of word building, in which the reader is gradually exposed to background information about the world in which a story is set. The idea of this technique is to give clue to the readers to move into the world the author is building. This in opposition to info dumping, where a concentrated amount of background material is given together in the story, often in the form of a conversation between two characters, both should know the material under discussion.

In literature, Red herring is a narrative element intended to distract the reader from a more important event in the plot, usually a twist ending. This idiom originates from a technique of training young dogs involving ‘red herring’. In literature it is most commonly used in mystery fiction. In film the red herring element is usually conveyed visually. An excellent example of this occurs in the 1947 suspense film *The Spiral Staircase*.

Stream of Consciousness is a literary technique, first used in the late nineteenth century, to make clear subjective as well as objective reality. It reveals the character’s feelings, thoughts, and actions. It is an association of thoughts rather than a logical sequence, without commentary by the author.

*The stream of our thought is like a river. On the whole easy simple flowing predominates...But at intervals and obstruction, a set-back, a log-jam occurs, stops the current, creates an eddy, and makes things move the other way* (James 233-234).
The phrase ‘Stream of Consciousness’ was first used by William James in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890) to denote the chaotic flow of impressions and sensations through the human consciousness. This particular technique is used in the novels of subjectivity or psychological novels because it deals with individual’s psychological process or thought process. According to William James’ *Theory of Mind* (1890), our conscious mental life flows continuously like a stream in which “the transition between the thought of one object and the thought of another is no more a break in the thought than a joint in a bamboo or a break in the wood” (Joyce.1916). For this reason, he adopted the metaphor of ‘the Stream of Consciousness.’

It is widely used in narrative fiction. The technique was perhaps brought to its highest point of development in *Ulysses* (1922) and *Finnegan’s Wake* (1939) by the Irish novelist and poet James Joyce. Other exponents of the form were American novelist William Faulkner and British novelist Virginia Woolf. The British writer Dorothy Richardson is considered, by some, actually to be the pioneer in the use of the device. Her novel *Pilgrimage* (1915), -a 12-Volume sequence, is an intense analysis of the development of a sensitive young woman and her responses to the world around her.

In literary criticism, Stream of Consciousness is a narrative mode that seeks to portray an individual’s point of view, by giving the written equivalent of the character’s thought processes, either in loose interior monologue, or in connection to his or her actions. The introduction of the term to describe literature, transformed from psychology, is attributed to May Sinclair and is mostly a dead metaphor. According to Literary Dictionary, “Stream of Consciousness is the continuous flow of sense, perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and memories in the human mind; or a literary
method of representing such a blending of mental processes in fictional characters usually in an unpunctuated or disjointed form of interior monologue” (Shaw.1996). “Stream of Consciousness is a narrative technique in non dramatic fiction intended to render the flow of myriad impressions, visual auditory, tactile associative and subliminal that impinges on an individual consciousness”(Britannica Concise Dictionary).

There are four basic techniques used in presenting Stream of Consciousness. They are- Direct Interior Monologue, Indirect Interior Monologue, Omniscient Description. Soliloquy and the elements it does discuss-point of view, voice, character, plot, and progression are also by no means exhaustive. But it does the job of laying the foundation for Faulkner’s narrative style and his way of weilding the story and plot to bring out before discerning readers the various narrative techniques.

**Forms of Stream of Consciousness Techniques**

![Diagram of Forms of Stream of Consciousness Techniques]

Fig -3

Through the recurrent use of several modernistic narrative techniques such as Stream of Consciousness, Multiplicity of narrative voices, Interior Monologues, and
disordered time sequences, Faulkner makes his reader participate both in the process of the story and in the unraveling of the truth. Faulkner abandons the conventional narration from the point of view of an omniscient narrator; he places several characters as the narrators of the same tale, who convey the plot to the reader in light of their own experience without the intrusion of an intermediary. Faulkner gives a new exposition to the conventional definition of narrative by involving in multiple voice structure and peeping into the interior workings of characters’ psyche.

At the conclusion of this chapter, we can state that narrative techniques serve as the basis of creative writing. It is through narrative techniques, a writer tries to convey the true essence of his writing. Keeping this view as his motto, he wishes to bring before the readers the content of his writing clearly and convincingly and more effectively. He can do justice to his narration by employing the variety of narrative techniques.

The art of narration is the work of the artist; it is the artist or the author who makes it successful. He should be an experienced campaigner to make it better and best. These skills were successfully experimented by the great twentieth century writer, William Faulkner. He handled with ease and produced great work of fiction.
Works Cited


