CHAPTER-II

THE CONCEPT OF NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE


**Introduction**

It is the era of specialization; in each branch of knowledge a lot of researches and in-depth studies are undertaken. So the resultant advancements and changes are perceived in all the fields. As time treads on everything changes because as D. H. Lawrence remarks: “there is nothing absolutely good, there is nothing absolutely right. All things flow and change and even change is not absolute” (290). Literature in general and fiction in particular is no exception to this. Hence, in the art of fiction also paradigm shifts and developments have taken place. The Indian novel in English has changed dramatically in its narrative technique, in its themes and in its ideologies. The narrative technique is an indivisible part of the novel. Henry James’ remark exemplifies this view: “novel is a living thing, all one and continuous, like any other organism, and in proportion as it lives will be found, that in each of the parts there is something of each of the other parts” (862). He further opines that “the story and the novel, the idea and the form, are the needle and thread, and I never heard of a guild of tailors who recommended the use of the thread without the needle, or the needle without the thread” (866). This emphasizes the coherence of each part of the novel. Therefore narrative technique is not secondary but a primary tool of novel. For better understanding and examination of narrative techniques employed by Amitav Ghosh, in his novels, to objectify his ideology and to achieve the thematic concerns, it is necessary to know what to narrative technique consists of. Since, narrative technique is the part of narratology, a brief note about narratology is provided here.
Narratology

Narratology has its roots in structuralism and it is the study of the ways in which narratives function. The study of ‘Narrative’ is called ‘Narratology’. The value of narratology lies in its application. Narrative theory is concerned not with the content of individual stories but with what stories have in common. The term ‘Narratology’ was used by Tzvetan Todorov in 1969 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” (O’Neill 12). Though, the term is used in a broad sense for all theoretical persuasions of narrative theory, “it refers specifically to the theories of narrative structure” (Prince 4). Gerald Prince defines it as “the study of form and functioning of narrative”. The term narratology may be new but not the discipline and “in the western tradition it goes back at least to Plato and Aristotle” (Barry 224). Quite a good number of theories pertaining to narrative have recently mushroomed. Among others there are Russian Formalist Theory of Narrative; Bakthian or dialogical theory; Chicago School, Hermeneutic and Phenomenological theories to name a few.

The Concept of Narrative

The term ‘Narrative’ has several and changing meanings. The word ‘Narrative’ is derived from the Latin terms ‘narrare’( to relate) and ‘gnarus’(knowing). The meaning of the word ‘gna’ in Sanskrit is ‘to know’. So ‘Narrative’ means to relate in order to know. A narrative relates a sequence of events. The word story may be used as a synonym of narrative. In semiotics and literary theory a narrative is a story or part of a story. Stories are told not only in literature but also in other practices-personal as well as cultural. We tell stories while making confessions, while sharing our
own biographical details, while singing folk songs and even while telling lies. It means narrative is everywhere, in all kinds of activities and in all walks of life. Barbara Hardy defines it as a “primary act of mind” and he observes that “we dream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative” (31). Thus, narrative encompasses most of the activities of human beings and its simple meaning is anything that tells a story. This ‘anything’ includes novel, short story, drama, film, painting, history book, comic strip, gossip, newspaper etc. Thus narrative can be found everywhere and its presence everywhere 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 narrative. Be it grandmother’s tales or fairy tales, they are but a form of narrative. Narrative can be verbal or non-verbal; it can be true or untrue; it can be realistic or unrealistic; it can be fictional or non-fictional; it can be literary or non-literary.

Since the study of narrative has been institutionalized, different theorists have attempted to theorize narrative in different ways. Gerarld Prince defines narrative as “the recounting (as product and process, object and act structure and structuration) of one or more fictitious events communicated by one, two or several narrators to one, two or several narrates” (Prince 4). Thus, narrative can either be by an individual or a group; or it can be for an individual or a group. Whatesoever 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. For instance Gerald Genette opines that it
needs only one event to constitute a narrative. Shlomith 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 narrative usually consists of more than one” (3). Gerald Prince opines that it requires three events connected with one another through: chronology, causality and closure. Michael J Toolan believes that events or change of events is the key and fundamental of narrative. He defines narrative as “a perceived sequence of non-randomly connected events” (7). In this definition the phrase ‘non-randomly connected events’ implies that narrative is not an amorphous amalgam of events but an organized set of events. Whatever may be the structure of narrative, as Ronald Barthes observes: “It is through narrative we make sense of our world” (Stuart Sim 275)

**Significance of Narrative technique**

Technique is a very important weapon for the writer to write his literary work or work of art successfully. Narrative technique is the means of producing a specific effect of a novel. With the employment of right technique only the writer would be able to convey his ideas to the readers. Technique acts as the middleman between life and art which helps the novelist in interpreting and transforming reality. This creation involves employment of several devices. It helps the readers to discover and travel among other selves, other identities and other variety of human adventures. It is the ‘how’ (technique) rather than the ‘what’ (subject) is instrumental in causing paradigm shifts, in founding literary schools and in originating major literary trends. Hence narrative technique is not just an ornament or super imposed element upon the content to give it additional value but the intrinsic quality of the subject matter itself.
Different scholars have remarked differently regarding the significance of the narrative technique. As Mark Schorer opines, “When we speak of technique, we speak of nearly everything. Because, technique is the tool or means by which the writer’s experience, which is his subject matter, compels him to attend to it; technique is the only means he has of discovering, exploring, developing his subject, of conveying its meaning and finally of evaluating it” (249-250). Narrative technique is so important that we can not find a writer who has no technique or who eschews technique. Mark Schorer remarks that if any writer does not give importance to technical refinements he/she will have to pay handsomely. Indeed the technique serves the novel’s purpose. He further says, “Narrative technique is actually the means by which he discovers, objectifies, explores, and evaluates his subject and his dexterity determines his success” (251). Schorer’s remarks connote that technique is the means by which the novelist chooses to tell his/her story. Indeed technique unfolds the vision and layers of meaning of a work of art.

According to T.S. Eliot technique is a “convention-any selection, structure, or distortion, any form, or rhythm imposed upon the world of action; by means of which- it should be added that- our apprehension of the world of action is enriched or renewed” (Quoted in Kumar 251). Eliot’s opinion echoes that technique leaves an impact on the readers and inspires them to ponder over it. Narrative technique is the base for writers, without which they can write nothing relevant.

Indeed it is the narrative technique that makes difference and it distinguishes the early writers from the present writers. Virginia Woolf’s remark supports this idea. She says: “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!”

Technique is the means by which the novelist tells his/her story effectively and it gains importance. Henry James observes: “Form is substance to the degree that there is absolutely no substance without it” (853). Therefore they insisted that the novelist should be allowed to pursue artistic experiments freely. The art of fiction is a subtle verbal performance; playful, witty and ironic. It is simply a plea for liberty. One of the great novelists Tolstoy supports this idea by saying that every great artist necessarily creates his own form.

The formalists also emphasized much on form, style and technique. They believed that the technique of art is to make objects unfamiliar, to make forms difficult, and to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. S.T.Coleridge shares this opinion by stating that the film of familiarity blinds us to the wonders of the world. Art exists in recovering for the readers a sensation of life which is diminished in the automatized routine of everyday experience. The Russian formalist Roman Jacobson declared that the object of literary science is not literature but literariness.

Narrative technique produces the distinctive effect of disrupting our habitual perception of the world, enabling us to see the things afresh. The modern novelist pays much attention to his/her medium. With the technical change analogous changes have taken place in substance, in point of view and in the whole conception of fiction. The final message of the modern, postmodern and postcolonial novels is that technique is not the secondary thing, some external mechanization, a mechanical affair, but a deep and
primary operation. The narrative technique contains not only intellectual and moral implications but also discovers them.

**Narrative Devices**

As life changes narrative devices also keep changing. There are various narrative devices employed by the novelists to explain, explore and objectify their themes or ideology. Acquainting with these narrative devices is prerequisite for the creation, examination as well as understanding of fiction. Depending upon the ideology, theme, writer and period the employment of the narrative devices varies. In fact the literariness of the novel unfolds through the apt and effective use of narrative devices. The devices which are commonly employed by the modern, postmodern and postcolonial writers are discussed below.

**Story and Plot**

Novelists have not generally bothered to explain about the difference between the two terms ‘story’ and ‘plot’. Indeed they often use them interchangeably. But the theorists have designated them differently and have explained them. In spite of subtle variation in meaning, their views help us to understand the difference and importance of them. The Russian formalism designates ‘story’ and ‘plot’ as ‘Fabula’ and ‘Sjuzet’ respectively, Tzvetan Todorove names them ‘histoire’ and ‘discours’, Gerard Genette calls them ‘histoire’ and ‘recit’, Seymour Chatman names them ‘story’ and ‘discourse’, and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan names ‘story’ and ‘text’. The explanation of them is given below.

E.M. Forster distinguishes the ‘story’ as a sequence of events unfolded in time. As for ‘plot’, a narrative of events, the emphasis falls on the causality. To make it clear Forster’s explanation is quoted here. “The king died and then the queen died” is a story. “The king died and then the queen
died of grief” is a plot. The difference is that while each contains two incidents, the second contains the reason for one of the incidents. Story is a sequence of events that lies somehow ‘behind’ the text, which can be abstracted or constructed from the text. Plot is the particular representation of the story in the narrative that supplies information about the causal relations between them.

The distinction between ‘Fabula’ and ‘Sjuzet’ is a landmark in the development of ideas on the nature of the novel. The Fabula is the pre-artistic basic story stuff or raw material of events in chronological order. The Sjuzet is representation or re-ordering of those events or the aesthetically motivated transformation of the Fabula into a narrative discourse of artistic design through devices. A reader encounters novel as Sjuzet and not as Fabula.

So also the difference between ‘story’ and ‘discourse’ is that ‘story’ is the actual chronology of events in a narrative; discourse is the manipulation of that story in the presentation of the narrative. Story is, in most cases, only to what has to be reconstructed from narrative; the chronological sequence of events as they actually occurred in the time-space (or diegetic). Discourse is the material an author adds to a story: similes, metaphors, images, etc…

The ‘plot’ is also known as ‘plotline’. It is the main aspect of any fictional story. It describes a series of events that happens to the characters in a described setting. Ideally, all events should follow logically from each other and be acceptable for the continuity of the story. In larger texts, there are often sub-plots running simultaneously with the main one. A ‘Plot’ is the term for the main plotline that binds all other ones, which doesn’t necessarily mean that it is the most important one. Subplot or side story is a plot line that supplements the main plot, and it contributes for the
understanding of various aspects of the characters’ personalities and the world created by the author.

Another way of distinguishing between story and plot, provided by the narrative grammatologists, is that ‘deep structures’ correspond to story and ‘surface structures’ correspond to plot. According to this the reader is not allowed the direct access to story, which can only be reconstructed from the plot, the narrative. The implication of this split is that story which is only ever available as a paraphrase is translatable from medium to medium, while plot appears to be text specific.

The construction of plot in fiction from the beginning to present day has undergone a sea change. The novelists of the eighteenth century tended to construct their plots around definite beginnings and endings. The temporal progression of their novels was a movement from a natural starting point to a definite ending. Early in the 19th century, the fashion began to change. The novelists began to subordinate the problem of constructing a logical sequence of events. Here both beginning and ending were arbitrary. The synthesis was achieved by establishing a single causal sequence in which each event is shown to be an effect of previous causes and the cause of subsequent effects. The endings were open ended or at least ambiguous in terms of justice. The problem of constructing plots of this sort is that of achieving the sense of causal or relational sequence which provides the organization of the events. The novelists solve the problem by placing a specific type of character in a specific set of conditions and then letting the logic of the situation to work itself out to its relational conclusion. In the 20th century the fashion in plot development began changing again. Novelists lost interest in constructing logical or rational sequences and turned to the third possibility, that of structuring the events of the novel so as to present a
coherent “world” or “vision of reality”. The temporal progression of plots of this kind can be described as movement from appearance to reality. What happens is that events and characters seen at one point in the novel from one perspective are seen at a later point from a different and often opposed perspective. The result of the reversal of perspective is often a reversal of valuation. The character of anti-hero fits perfectly the requirement of modern plots. The reader is not introduced to events in the story with cause and effect as in the 19th century, but he gets a gradual insight into these as they emerge from the welter of facts that constitutes the plot of the novel. The new methods of narration are employed to achieve this gradual emergence of significance. One such method is separation of the sequence of events in the story and the second one is the use of stream of consciousness technique. The intention is to break up the causal sequence of the story and allow the facts to emerge as the reader understands the reality. It is the job of the reader to actively contribute to the plot by seeking for the significant relations between the facts and by grasping the resulting patterns of reality as they emerge from the facts. On the basis of evidence, he must work out for himself the moral standards, the sources of happiness, suffering and the operative causes.

**Point of View**

Point of view is the angle of vision or perspective from which events in a narrative are represented. Genette prefers the term ‘focalization’ and emphasizes the critical importance of not confusing “who speaks” (voice) with “who sees” (perspective). The structure of the plot, the means of character delineation, the use of setting, the entire tone and tenor of the narrative are all dependent directly on the answer to the question, who shall tell the story. Point of view describes the narrator’s position in relation to the
story being told. A given train of incidents is differently seen and judged, according to the standpoint from which it is told. Definitely, a very different tone and tenor is given to the same event by each of the observers who recount it. It is therefore safer to acknowledge that the absolute truth of a story, whether actual or fictitious, can never be entirely told: that the same train of incidents looks different from different points of view. Therefore the various points of view from which any story may be looked upon should be studied carefully for the purpose of determining from which of them it is possible, in a given case, to approach most nearly a clear vision of the truth.

The points of view from which a story may be seen and told are many and various; they may all be grouped into two classes, the internal and the external. A story seen internally is narrated in the first person by one of its participants; a story seen externally is narrated in the third person by a mind aloof from the events depicted. Of course, there are many variations, both of the internal and the external point of view. In literature, Person is used to describe the viewpoint from which the narrative is presented. Narratives can be classified according to the kind of point of view they use. Although second-person perspectives are occasionally used, the most commonly employed are first and third person. These are examined for the purpose of determining the special advantages and disadvantages of each.

**First-Person-Point-of-View**

The first person point of view is also called ‘internal’ or ‘figural’ focalization. In a first-person narrative the story is presented by a narrator who is also a character within the story. It may be by a leading character (hero or heroine) or subsidiary/minor character or different characters narrating different sections of the story. The narrator reveals the plot by referring to this viewpoint character as ‘I’ (or, when plural, ‘we’). Usually,
the first-person narrative is used as a way to directly convey the deeply internal and unspoken thoughts of the narrator. Often, the narrator’s story revolves around him-/herself as the protagonist and allows this protagonist/narrator character’s inner thoughts to be conveyed openly to the audience, if not to any of the other characters. The narrator, in the stories that are narrated by ‘I’ perspective, is protagonist and the main subject. We become aware of the events and characters of story by his view to and his knowledge of the story. The first-person narrator is always a character within his/her story (if protagonist or not) and this viewpoint character takes actions, makes judgments and has opinions and biases, therefore, not always allowing the readers to be able to comprehend some of the other character’s thoughts, feelings, or understandings as much as this one character. In this case the narrator gives and withholds information based on his/her own viewing of events.

The narrator can be the protagonist, for example Gulliver in *Gulliver’s Travels*, some one very close to him who is privy to his thoughts and actions, for example Dr. Watson in *Sherlock Holmes* or an ancillary character who has little to do with the action of the story, for example Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby*. Narrators can report others’ narratives at one or more removes. These are called ‘frame narrators’: examples are Mr. Lockhood, the narrator in *Wuthering Heights* and the unnamed narrator in *Heart of Darkness*.

In autobiographical fiction, the first person narrator is the character of the author (with varying degrees of accuracy). The narrator is still distinct from the author and must behave like any other character and any other first person narrator. A rare form of first person is the first person omniscient, in which the narrator is a character in the story, but also knows the thoughts
and feelings of all other characters. It can seem like third person omniscient at times. For example *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold, where a young girl, after having been raped and murdered watches from heaven how her family struggles to cope with her disappearance.

**Second-Person-Point of View**

The rarest mode in literature is the ‘Second-Person Point of View’, in which the narrator refers to one of the characters as “you”, therefore making the audience member feel as if he or she is a character within the story. Another common place example to this is in television shows in which characters tell the audience to follow them, or ask the audience questions. Second-person narrative mode is often paired with the first-person narrative mode in which the narrator makes emotional comparisons between the thoughts, actions, and feelings of “you” versus “I”.

**Third-Person Point of View**

Third-person narration provides the greatest flexibility to the author and thus is the most commonly used narrative mode in literature. In the third-person narrative mode, each and every character is referred to by the narrator as “he”, “she”, “it”, or “they”. In the third-person narrative, it is obvious that the narrator is merely an unspecified entity or uninvolved person that conveys the story, but not a character of any kind within the story being told. Third-person singular is overwhelmingly the most common type of third-person narrative. Even more common is to see singular and plural used together in one story, at different times, depending upon the number of people being referred to at a given moment in the plot. The third-person modes are usually categorized along two axes. The first is the subjectivity/objectivity axis, with “subjective” narration describing one or more character’s feelings and thoughts, while “objective” narration does not
describe the feelings or thoughts of any characters. The second axis is between “omniscient” and the “limited”, a distinction that refers to the knowledge available to the narrator. An omniscient narrator has omniscient knowledge of time, people, places and events; a limited narrator, in contrast, may know absolutely everything about a single character and every piece of knowledge in that character’s mind, but it is “limited” to that character—that is, it cannot describe things unknown to the focal character.

**Third-Person Subjective**

The ‘Third-Person Subjective’ is used when the narrator conveys the thoughts, feelings, opinions etc. of one or more characters. If it is just one character, it can be termed third person limited, in which the reader is limited to the thoughts of some particular character (often the protagonist). Certain third-person modes are also classifiable as “third person subjective” modes that switch between the thoughts and feelings, etc. of all the characters. Examples for this type of narration are Joyce’s *The Dead* and Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea*. Third-person subjective is sometimes called the “over the shoulder” perspective; where the narrator only describes events perceived and information known by a character. It is similar to the first-person, in that it allows in-depth revelation of the protagonist’s personality, but it uses third-person grammar. Some writers shift perspective from one viewpoint character to another.

**Third-Person Objective**

The ‘Third-Person Objective’ mode of narration employs a narrator who tells a story without describing a character’s thoughts, opinions or feelings; instead it gives an objective, unbiased point of view. Often the narrator is self dehumanized in order to make the narrative more neutral; this type narrative mode is often employed by newspaper articles, biographical
documents and scientific journals. This point of view can be called “camera lens” approach that can only record the observable actions but it does not interpret these actions or relay what thoughts are going through the minds of characters. Novels employ this mode; put more emphasis on characters acting out their feelings in an observable way. Example for this kind of narration is Ernest Hemingway’s *Hills Like White Elephants*. Third person objective is preferred in most pieces that are deliberately trying to take a neutral or unbiased view, like many newspaper articles.

**Third-Person Omniscent**

Historically, the ‘Third-Person Omniscent’ perspective has been the most commonly used; it is seen in countless classic novels, including works by Jane Austen, Leo Tolstoy, Charles Dickens and George Eliot. This is a common form of third person narration in which the teller of the tale, who often appears to speak with the voice of the author himself, assumes an omniscient (all knowing) perspective on the story being told: diving into private thoughts, narrating secret or hidden events, jumping between spaces and times. The story, in such a case, is told by a sort of god who sees into the minds and arts of all the characters at once and understands them better than they do themselves. Some of the advantages of the third person omniscient narration are; this point of view is the only one that permits upon a large scale the depiction of character through mental analysis. It is therefore used in the psychological novel. A spiritual experience which does not translate itself into concrete action can be viewed adequately only from the god-like point of view. It sometimes even takes a subjective approach. Omniscent narration enhances the sense of objective reliability (truthfulness) of the plot. This mode is eminently suited to telling huge, sweeping, epic stories and complicated stories involving numerous characters. The disadvantage of this
mode is that it can create more distance between the audience and the story and characterization is more limited, which can reduce the reader’s identification with the characters. This point of view is at once the easiest and the most difficult. Technically it is the easiest because the writer is absolutely free in the selection and the patterning of his narrative materials; but humanely difficult because it is hard for any man consistently to play the god, even toward his own fictitious creatures. Unless an author is gifted with the god-like wisdom of George Meridith, he is almost sure to break down in the effort to sustain the omniscient attitude consistently throughout a complicated novel.

**Alternating Point of View**

While the general practice is for novels to adopt a single point of view throughout, but there are exceptions. Many stories, especially in fiction, alternate between the first and third person. In this case, an author will move back and forth between omniscient third-person narrators to personal first-person narrator. *Harry Potter* series is told in third-person limited for much of the seven novels, but deviates to omniscient in that it switches the limited view to other characters from time to time, rather than only the protagonist. Omniscient point of view is also referred to as alternating point of view, because the story sometimes alternates between characters. Often, a narrator using the first person will try to be more objective by also employing the third person for important action scenes, especially those in which he/she is not directly involved or in scenes where he/she is not present to have viewed the events in first person.

**Flashback or Analepsis**

Flashback is a narrative technique that takes the narrative back in time from the point the story has reached. 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. Flashbacks are usually presented as characters’ memories and are used to explain their backgrounds and back stories. Gerard Genette, the theorist of narrative aesthetics designates this technique as ‘Analepsis’ (ana/after+lepse/to take on). He uses it to refer to the narration of an event after its occurrence. Genette has identified two types of analepsis: Internal Analepsis and external Analepsis. Internal Analepsis, its time falls within the starting point of the first narrative, for example, if the first narrative extends from 1980 to 1090, the narration in 1985 of an event which occurred in 1982 will be an instance of internal analepsis. External Analepsis, its time is prior to the starting point of the first narrative, for example, if the first narrative extends from 1980 to 1990, narration in 1985 of an event which occurred in 1975 will be an instance of external analepsis.

**Flash-Forward or Prolepsis**

Flash-forward is the opposite of a flashback. It takes the narrative forward in time from the point the story has reached. It accounts the events that will take place in future. It is used less often than its counterpart and mostly in science fiction to underline their futuristic structure. Gerard Genette’s term for this technique is ‘Prolepsis’. Here also there are two types: internal and external. The time internal prolepsis falls within the end point of the first narrative. The time of external prolepsis lies beyond the end point of the first narrative.

**Narration Time**

Time taken for narrating the events in a novel also conveys the writers’ vision of life and their concerns. Hence depending upon the theme time taken for narrating the events varies. According to Genette “an isochronous narrative or narrative of uniform speed does not exist”, (quoted
in Ashok 20). Duration designates the speed of narration of time and is calculated in terms of the amount of text (number of sentences, paragraphs, or pages) devoted to the narration of a stretch of story time. A novel may narrate twenty years of story time in two pages (acceleration) and later narrate two days of story time in two hundred pages (deceleration). The speed of actual time is constant but the speed of narrative fluctuates.

**Characterization**

Characterization is the process of creating characters in fiction. Characterization is character development which helps to establish themes. The characters are distinctive personalities involved in the events described by the story. While differentiating characterization and character Richard states: “characterization is technique or method and character the product” (127). Characters determine the incidents or plot of a novel and incidents are the illustration of characters. A writer can assume the point of view of a child, an old person, a member of the opposite gender, someone of another race or culture, or anyone who is not like them in personality. Thorough characterization makes characters rounded and complex even though the writer may not be like the character or share his/her attitudes and beliefs. This allows for a sense of realism. For example, according to F.R. Leavis, Leo Tolstoy was the creator of some of the most complex and psychologically believable characters in fiction.

Characterization involves developing a variety of aspects of a character, such as appearance, age, gender, educational level, vocation or occupation, financial status, material status, social status, hobbies, religious beliefs, ambitions, motivations etc. The psychological make up of a fully developed character involves fears, emotions, back-story, issues, beliefs, practices, desires and intentions. Often these can be shown through the
actions and language of the character, rather than by telling the reader directly.

Characterization can be presented either directly or indirectly. Direct characterization takes place when the author literally tells the audience what a character is like. In indirect characterization the audience must deduce for themselves what the character is like through the character’s thoughts, actions, speech, looks and interaction with other characters. Usually characterization is achieved through telling and showing. The novelists incorporate various devices to show the identities of a character, they are how characters speak, think, appear, dress and their social standing, the names of characters, company of characters, what characters do and many more aspects.

One of the things that make characters different from each other is the range and richness of their lives some characters are lightly sketched, while others are very detailed. How the character is created controls our response. One of the ways of distinguishing the characters is to employ pairs of words. For instance, simple characters can be called ‘closed’ and complex one ‘open’. A closed one does not change where as open one is open to change. E.M.Forster in ‘Aspects of the Novel’, distinguished between what he called ‘flat’ characters and ‘round’ characters. A flat character has few characteristics while a round one has several. Some other terms used to distinguish the characters are: major and minor, primary and secondary, caricature (a simple, stylized) and portraiture (a carefully drawn, complex figure), two dimensional and three dimensional, inflexible or flexible, surface and depth, one sided or multifaceted.

Characterization is of crucial importance for all major characters, since they must possess a memorable and complex personality to appear
interesting and appealing (or repulsive, if it is an antagonist). However, since it is impossible to describe all aspects of a character’s personality in a story without sacrificing too much of its other components, the authors usually have to follow the Iceberg theory proclaimed by Hamingway.

**Setting**

Setting is the background against which the action of a narrative occurs, referring to the time and place of 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 the author is free to choose any place depending on his selection of theme. According to Nancy Kress “the setting of a novel is the background on which the writer builds the plot and characters. It involves the entire environment: time, place, experience, and mood. Setting can be revealed through narration, dialogue and illustrated by the characters’ actions, thoughts, and speech patterns” (32).

The word setting is used to cover the places characters appear in, social context of characters such as their families, friends, and class, the customs, beliefs, rules of behavior, location of events, the atmosphere, and mood and feel that all these elements create. Although defined as the background, it can have great significance in the story. It not only gives the reader the impression of verisimilitude, but may also function as ‘objective correlative’ of the internal life of the character. It affects characters and plot of the story by creating certain atmosphere or mood and helps in developing the theme either through suggestion or direct symbolism. “Settings are not just enjoyable in themselves; they often have a striking appropriateness to other elements of a novel” (Richard 149). Does the setting reveal anything about the author’s views? Yes, there are some novelists who create setting
for the purpose of giving their views about the world. Such a novelist creates landscapes, town spaces, interiors of houses and weather in order to convey his/her particular feelings and views about life. Graham Greene is an example, in many of his novels through setting reveals how he views the world. For him, the world is a corrupt seedy and oppressive place, hence his novels are full of rotting houses, dirty towns, stifling hot weather, dry, lifeless landscapes and grimy interiors. So setting is not just a background but an inevitable part of it. The setting embodies what the author wants to say, so it is worked with considerable care and thought.

**Style**

Of all the novelist’s instruments, language itself exerts the most pervasive control. Style is the selection, arrangement and appropriation of words, phrases, sentences, figures of speeches, images and symbols to present one’s ideas. Hazlitt defines it as “the adaptation of expressions to idea that clenches a writer’s meaning” (28). Style is any specific way of using language which is characteristic of an author, period or genre. A particular style may be defined by its diction, tone, syntax, imagery, rhythm and use of figures of speech or by any other linguistic feature. Style is not just throwing together of words in combination but it is finding and using of suitable words, phrases and sentences to express one’s thoughts on a subject. The intensity or force of words does not lie in words themselves but in their application. So, style requires precision and purity of expression. Speaking or writing with propriety and simplicity is not an easy task but it is easy to write a gaudy style without ideas. Style, like clothes get old fashioned, so there have been changes and developments in the style.

It is assumed there are as many styles as writers. Style has mainly three components: i) Diction ii) Sentence Structure, iii) Sound Patterns. Yet
no agreement has been reached as to the method of measuring style objectively. There are two views regarding style. According to one view, expressed by George Saintsbury, "style is the choice and arrangement of language with only a subordinate regard to the meaning to be conveyed." (Richard 115) Another popular view is represented by John Middleton Murrey. According to him "Style is a quality of language which communicates precisely emotion or thoughts or a system of emotion or thoughts peculiar to the author" (Richard 115). Moreover, style offers its own pleasure and instruction. On the whole style should express and be befitting to the vision and ideas of the author.

Due to poststructuralists’ influence there has been a change in the tendency of writers and in the technique of novel writing also. Therefore, the narrative devices like magic realism, intertextuality, metafiction, hybridity, mixed genre, interdisciplinary pursuit, and chutnification have become common phenomena of novels after 1980. These terms overlap one another, yet difference is there between them. These devices are not completely new, with different names they were being used earlier. But after 1980, with some additions and changes, they have come to more focus. So, a brief discussion of them is undertaken below.

**Magic Realism**

‘Magic Realism’ is one of the most important and subversive anti-realist postmodern and postcolonial narrative devices. It is the introduction of fantastic or impossible elements into a narrative that is otherwise normal. Magical realism denotes a mode of narrative presentation and vision that mixes the real and the fantastic in such a way that the real turns magical (non-realistic) and the improbable seems real. Magical realism is a striking feature of the postmodern and postcolonial imagination that blurs the
distinction between the real and the fantastic. One example of magic realism is when a character in the story continues to be alive beyond the normal length of life and this is subtly depicted by the character being present throughout many generations. On the surface the story has no clear magical attributes and everything is conveyed in a real setting but such a character breaks the rules of our real world. Many critics argue that magical realism has its roots in the work of Jorge Luis Borges and Gabriel Garcia Marquez, two South American writers and some have classified it as a Latin American style. While the term ‘magical realism’ in its modern sense first appeared in 1955, but it is agreed upon that the German art critic Franz Roh first used the phrase in 1925, to refer to painterly style. It is defined as:

a kind of modern fiction in which fabulous and fantastical events are included in a narrative that otherwise maintains the reliable tone of objective realistic report, designating a tendency of the modern novel to reach beyond the confines of realism and draw upon the energies of fable, folktale, and myth while maintaining a strong contemporary social relevance. The fantastic attributes given to characters in such novels—leviation, flight, telepathy, telekinesis—are among the means that magic realism adopts in order to encompass the often phantasmagorical political realities of the 20th century (Baldick 194).

Mathew Strecher defines magic realism as “what happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe” (Wikipedia).

At the initial stage the term arose from an effort to account for the narrative that could simply be considered fantastic. In addition, there was a wide spread assumption that the language alone is inadequate to represent reality and the language alone brings about too static and exclusive vision of
reality owing to which Magic Realism was made use of. In other words, the purpose of Magic Realism is to render a new perspective on life and to extend the scope to perceive reality. Simpkins summarizes the Marquez’s contention in these terms: “that Magic text is more realistic than a realistic text”.

After the advent of Gabriel Marquez’s _one Hundred years of solitude_ a host of writers have begun to practice Magic Realism, the chief among them being Milan Kundera, Italo Cavino, Angela Carter, graham Swift, Peter Carey Salman Rushdie and Amitav Ghosh.

Some of the salient features of magic realist texts are: the presence of fantastical elements; Plentitude, which is a departure from structures or rules; hybridity, inharmonious arenas of such opposites as urban and rural and Western and indigenous; metafiction, which is discussed under that heading; authorial reticence, it is the deliberate withholding of information and explanations about the disconcerting fictitious world; sense of mystery, here the reader must let go of pre-existing ties to conventional exposition, plot advancement, linear time, structure, scientific reason etc., to strive for a state of heightened awareness of life’s connectedness or hidden meanings; collective consciousness, without thinking of the concept of magical realism, each writer gives expression to a reality he observes in the people; political critique, magic realism contains an implicit criticism of society, particularly the elite, magic realist texts under this logic, are subversive texts, revolutionary against socially dominant forces. Alternatively, the socially dominant may implement magical realism to disassociate themselves from their power discourse. It is also aimed to subvert the received notion of actual reality. This subversion should not be viewed as a suggestion of destruction of realism but rather as a reaction to the blind alley of
photographic realism because Magic Realism helps to expand the vistas of realism. It also undermines a text as an end in itself. Magic realism has the connection with postmodernism. Magical realism and postmodernism share the themes of postcolonial discourse, in which jumps in time and focus cannot really be explained with scientific but rather with magical reasoning.

Magic realism is different from other genres such as realism, surrealism, fantastic literature and science fiction. The subtle difference is provided here. ‘Realism’ is an attempt to create a depiction of actual life. ‘Magic realism’ relies upon the presentation of real, imagined or magical elements as if they were real.

‘Surrealism’ is often confused with magical realism as hey both explore illogical or non-realist aspects of humanity and existence. Both exhibit marvelous reality. Marvelous reality is a kind of heightened reality where elements of the miraculous can appear while seeming natural and unforced. But there are differences. Surrealism is not associated with material reality but with the imagination and the mind and in particular it attempts to express to express the ‘inner life’ and psychology of humans through art. It seeks to express the subconscious, unconscious, the repressed and inexpressible. Magical realism on the other hand, rarely presents the extraordinary in the form of a dream or a psychological experience. It presents the magic of recognizable material reality and places it into the little understood world of the imagination. The ordinariness of magical realism’s magic relies on its accepted and unquestioned position in tangible and material reality.

‘Fantasy’ some of the fantasy writers have said magic realism is only another name for fantasy fiction. However, Amaryll Beatrice Chandy distinguishes magic realist text from fantasy literature based on differences
between three shared dimensions: the use of antinomy, the inclusion of events that can’t be integrated into a logical framework, and the use of authorial reticence. In fantasy, the presence of the supernatural code is perceived as problematic; something that draws special attention—where in magical realism, the presence of the supernatural code is perceived is accepted. In fantasy, authorial reticence creates a disturbing effect on the reader; it works to integrate the supernatural into the natural framework in magical realism. This integration is made possible in magical realism as the author presents the supernatural as being equally valid to the natural. There is no hierarchy between the two codes. The ghost of Melquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* or the baby ghost in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* who visit or haunt the inhabitants of their previous residence are both presented by the narrator as ordinary occurrences, the reader, therefore, accepts the marvelous as normal and common. In Leal’s view, in fantastic literature the writer creates new worlds, perhaps new planets. By contrast, writers like Garcia Marquez, who use magical realism, don’t create new worlds, but suggest the magical in our world.

While ‘Science fiction’ and magical realism both bend the notion of what is real, toy with human imagination, and are forms of fiction, they differ greatly. Huxley’s *Brave New World* as a novel exemplifies the science fiction’s requirement of a rational, physical explanation for any unusual occurrences. The science fiction narrative’s distinct difference from magical realism is that it is set in a world different from any known reality and its realism resides in the fact that we can recognize it as a possibility for our future. Unlike magical realism, it doesn’t have a realistic setting that is recognizable in relation to any past or present reality.
**Intertextuality**

The concept of intertextuality is not altogether new. Intertextuality is the shaping of text’s meaning by other texts. It can include an author’s borrowing and transformation of a prior text or to a reader’s referencing of one text in reading another. The term “intertextuality” has itself been borrowed and transformed many times since it was coined by poststructuralist Julia Kristeva in 1966. Kristeva’s coinage of “intertextuality” represents an attempt to synthesize Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotics with Bakhtin’s dialogism. It is argued that an individual text is read in a manner determined by its relations with other texts with any content of other texts in the individual texts. This is with reference to reading a text, thus reading of the *Mahabharat* keeping *Iliad* as a model in mind amounts to intertextuality. According to Linda Hutcheon:

Intertextuality replaces the challenged author-text relationship with one between reader and text, one that situates the locus of textual meaning within the history of discourse itself. A literary work can actually no longer be considered original; if it were, it could have no meaning for its reader. It is only as part of prior discourses that any text derives meaning and significance (126-130).

A text of intertextuality is the text in which other texts reside or echo their presence. Intertextuality indicates a more diffuse penetration of the individual text memories, echoes, and transformations of other texts. Hutcheon uses another term for intertextuality and explains it further as; “in many cases, intertextuality may well be too limited term to describe this process; interdiscursivity would perhaps be a more accurate term for the collective modes of discourse from which the postmodern periodically
draws: literature, the visual arts, history, biography, theory, philosophy, psychoanalysis, sociology and the list could go on” (126-130).

In the postcolonial and post-modernist context, intertextuality is not the sign of the influence of other texts but it is the conscious attempt of the author to oppose the notion of the novel as a single text. The device of intertextuality has, in other words, to be seen as a form of parody and travesty. Jeremy Hawthorn observes the relationship between intertextuality and subversion like this, “The intertextuality strategy is a phrase which has been used to describe the process of rewriting classic or CANONICAL texts so as (normally) to subvert or APPROPRIATE their ideological force”(70).

Some critics have complained that the ubiquity of the term intertextuality has crowded out related terms and important nuances. Irwin laments that intertextuality has eclipsed allusion as an object of literary study while lacking the latter term’s clear definition. There have attempts at more closely defining different types of intertextuality: horizontal, vertical, manifest, and constitutive intertextuality. Horizontal intertextuality denotes references that are on the same level i.e. when books make references to other books, where as vertical intertextuality is found when, a book makes a reference to film or song or vice versa. Manifest intertetzxuality signifies intertextual elements such as presupposition, negation, parody, irony, etc. The constitutive intertextuality signifies the interrelationship of discursive features in a text, such as structure, form, or genre. The constitutive intertextuality is also referred to interdiscursivity, though, generally interdiscursivity refers to relations between larger formations of texts.

**Multidisciplinary Pursuit**

This refers to the device of incorporating the disciplines other than literature into the novel such as anthropology, history, economics, sociology,
medicine and others. Though every work of literature embodies the elements of other subjects, the distinction between the post-modernist literature and the rest is that while the incorporation of other discourses in literature is deliberate on the part of the author for he considers that the novel is not an art but a discourse and wants to distort the established notion of the novel in the former, the same is spontaneous in the latter.

**Mixed Genre**

It is needless to say that literature is classified broadly into three forms such as poetry, prose and drama. They are called genres of literature. What determines a genre is its medium. Generally it is agreed that the medium of poetry is verse with certain norms to the effect of musicality, the medium of prose is a plain language with the diverse sentence patterns and the medium of drama is physical acting. It is true that there are works which can be called prose poem, poetic prose, poetic drama and dramatic poem etc. it indicates that that mixture of literary forms has been prevailing since long-time and is quite common in literary outputs to break the norms of form. But postcolonialists and post modernists mix these genres with the sole intention of dismissing the notion of pure poetry or novel or drama. They insist that a form collapses at every moment of writing. This state of writing is called ‘border blur’ because border among the genres becomes blurred and vanishes in the processing of writing. No genre is exclusively made up of its own components. Robert Wilson describes the fluid state of form in an effective manner a “literary forms, ideas movements, inspirations, even very humble techniques cross frontiers with immense ease” (13). While the modern literature closed the boundaries, the postmodern literature reacts against it by breaking these boundaries. Post modernists celebrate the new from in which genres overlap. Hence post-modernist text exhibits its
disregard not only for conventional forms of writing but also conventional expectations of readers.

Meta fiction

Metafiction assimilates intertextuality, hybridity, magic realism and all the perspectives of criticism into fictional process itself, because metafiction is what Hawthorn calls “literally a fiction about fiction” (205). The characteristics of metafiction include renunciation of context, tendency towards formalism, lack of suppositions about human nature and preference of method to metaphysics. In a way, it amounts to no interpretive criticism which is also known as metacommentary because the novel of metafiction does the function of criticism without actually interpreting any particular text.

Metafiction suspends the illusion/innocence of mimesis through a host of strategies which unveil the identity of narrative and undermine the isomorphic fallacy that life and narrative are identical. Metafiction is an anti-illusionist mode of narrative self-consciousness (i.e, the condition of artifice and the process of invention of the novel are laid bare) that reveals the identity of narrative as an order of discourse and not a mirror of life.

The principal apparatus of metafiction for expanding the horizon is irony which is different from normal denotation of irony. This irony is a replica of the irony of Soren Kierkeggard who sees irony as an escape, as a means of achieving subjective freedom. This irony permits a speaker to separate a phenomenon from its essence-that is to tell an untruth without betraying his subjective authenticity. It helps an individual to profitably put on many guises as long as he avoids living completely hypothetically and subjectively. This stature is synonymous to that of a fabulator.
Irony of metafiction is realized in the deployment of as many narrators because the omniscient narrator is regarded as an obvious impossibility. Hence, to avoid monotony and egocentricity, one or more unreliable narrators are used, each still capable of conveying the subjective aspect of the truth of their creator. Irony permits individual to negate the actual, to put himself above it, to distance himself and to reflect upon himself as if he were a third person. This written irony should do the same for the reader. Kierkegaard calls this ‘self distancing’-subjectivity of subjectivity. But Nietzsche holds a different view of the irony of metafiction. According to him, the irony of metafiction lies in distancing oneself from oneself as against the traditional concept of self-distancing. According to Nietzsche, a narrator is manifold in his being subject and object, poet, actor and audience.

Metafiction is proliferating with archetypes, stereotypes, Freudian symbols and the forms of fiction, in turn, serves as the material upon which further forms are imposed. At the same time, metafiction encourages the individual to cut himself off from the popular culture which surrounds him, from the folk tales and motifs which have been handed down through the centuries from the myths and archetypes which supposedly reside in the collective consciousness. It amounts to saying that every man is unique and alone.

Metafiction involves games. In these games levels of narrative reality are confused. It includes the readers’ perception of narrative reality. While doing so, the traditional realist conventions governing the separation of mimetic and diegetic elements are flouted and thwarted. Metafiction’s kinship with post-modernism is identified by Hawthorn who says that, “The
term (metafiction) is generally used with reference to relatively recent post-
modernist writing” (205).

**Hybridity**

The concept of Hybridity has got currency at the advent of post-
colonialism. Hybridity is born of the union of two or more opposed factors. Momik Fludernick uses syncretism as synonymous with hybridity. It refers to person, nation, language, literature, culture and anything that has a mixed identity. Hawthorn describes a hybrid text precisely as “one formed by cutting two other texts together— in either a planned or a random manner. A term hybrid text can also be used to describe a text in which two separate and often opposed, elements can be detected, on a thematic or an IDEOLOGICAL level”(205). In this sense it is akin to intertextuality. Hybridity is classified into various types depending upon the source of the background. Thus there are biological hybridity, cultural hybridity, and linguistic hybridity.

**Chutnification**

It refers to the process of making the diction suitable to present the narrative which is an amalgamation of several cultural, social, and regional factors appropriately. The formation of a new brand of Indian English is similar to the process of ‘chutney’ making. As various ingredients, spices, grains-and flavours etc are ground into powder or paste for final dish called ‘chutney’, various national and regional languages, registers, speech acts, rumours, jokes etc are dissolved into the narrative medium called diction. It is a mixture of several linguistic categories like the mixture of several flavors in chutney making. Chutnification is originated in India to refer to the Indian English into which have entered new vocabulary of Indian words, the rhythms and sound patterns of Indian English. This is a result of the
conviction of the new generation of novelists about which Radha Ramaswamy writers appropriately: “the use of Indian English provides a release from the artificial structures of a language which cannot embrace their entire Indian experience. Every writer has evolved his/her own method of handling Indian English in his/her novels. The brand of Indian English he/she is using is again subject to the peculiarities of the local Indian language in which it is rooted” (241). Therefore chutnification is typical of Indian English exclusively.

It refers to the language and linguistic styles of recent Indian novelists in English. Though this process is traceable in the novels of Rao, Anand and R.K. Narayan, it became popular only after the publication of Rushdie’s *Midnight’s children*. Though Rushdie is the first to introduce the term chutnification with reference to his diction in *Midnight’s children*, he has acknowledged the influence of Desani’s diction in his novels. Therefore it sounds just to ascribe chutnification to Desani’s *All about H. Hatter*. All the novels in the present study are impregnated with chutnification which is an explicit sign of postcolonial literature and Indian post-modernism going native because chutnification is a major tool of subversion of the notion English as a meta-language.
Works Cited


