

T.C.
ANKARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
BATI DİLLERİ VE EDEBİYATI
(İNGİLİZ DİLİ EDEBİYATI)
ANABİLİM DALI

**JULIAN BARNES' USE OF NARRATORS IN *FLAUBERT'S
PARROT, TALKING IT OVER AND LOVE, ETC***

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TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ
ANKARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

Bu belge ile, bu tezdeki bütün bilgilerin akademik kurallara ve etik davranış ilkelerine uygun olarak toplanıp sunulduğunu beyan ederim. Bu kural ve ilkelerin gereği olarak, çalışmada bana ait olmayan tüm veri, düşünce ve sonuçları andığımı ve kaynağını gösterdiğimi ayrıca beyan ederim.(24/10/2007)

Tezi Hazırlayan Öğrencinin
Adı ve Soyadı

Şenol Bezci

PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to discuss Julian Barnes' use of narrators and narratees in his novels *Flaubert's Parrot*, *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.* Because Barnes writes within the framework of the English novel, his use of the tradition of the narrators and his contribution to the tradition have been assessed in detail. Though not limited to it, narratology has been used as the main theoretical background of this study. After diligent analysis and interpretation, it has been found out that Barnes has challenged the tradition of the narrator to a great extent.

This study has been a challenge for me, too. I feel deeply grateful to my advisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Nazan Tutaş, Professor Belgin Elbir and Assist. Prof. Dr. Gülbün Onur of Selçuk University, who have been of great help to me throughout this challenge. Similarly, I would love to thank all my instructors and professors who helped me like and understand literature and criticism during my graduate and undergraduate studies. Above all, I would like to thank my wife and son who warm my life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Chapter I: Discussions of the Narrator in a Historical Perspective	12
1.1. Introduction	12
1.2. The Founders	16
1.3. Contemporary Discussions of the Narrator	36
1.4. Conclusion	79
Chapter II: Narrator Prototypes in the English Novel	81
2.1. Realist Fiction	83
2.2. Victorian Age	94
2.3. Modernist Novel	103
2.4. The Postmodern Fiction	114
Chapter III: <i>Flaubert's Parrot</i>	118
3.1. Synopsis	119
3.2. The Structure of the Novel	120
3.2.1. Layers of Diegesis	120
3.2.2 Discourses in the Novel	122
3.2.2.1. Discourse as Genre	123
3.2.2.2. Discourse in Relation to Enunciation	126
3.3. <i>Flaubert's Parrot</i> and Poetics of Postmodernism	127
3.3.1 <i>Flaubert's Parrot</i> as Historiographic Metafiction	128
3.4. Braithwaite, the Hesitating Narrator	137
3.5. The Narratee	158
3.7. Conclusion	165

Chapter IV: <i>Talking It Over</i> and <i>Love, etc</i>	168
4.1. Narrative Technique	170
4.2. Implications of the Narrative Technique	178
4.2.1. Subjectivity of the Narrators	181
4.2.2. Conversational Style of Narrators	183
4.2.3. Unreliability of the Narrators and the Influence of the Narratee on the Narrative	194
4.2.4. Solipsism as the Determining Philosophy of the Novel	203
4.3. The Implied Author: The “Real” Picture under the Picture	207
4.4. Conclusion: What if ...?	216
Conclusion	218
Works Cited	231

INTRODUCTION

Twelve years after the publication of Julian Barnes' first novel *Metroland*, Mira Stout asked in an article published in *New York Times*: "Is Julian Barnes a potentially great novelist with a restless streak, or is he a middling talent masking his shortcomings with formal trickery?" (1992: 3). Two years later Malcolm Bradbury, the prominent English critic, saluted his fiction as "both highly readable and intensely clever, written by an author self-consciously seeking a style appropriate to his times" (1994: 438). Similarly Peter Lewis claimed Julian Barnes, alongside Ackroyd, is "the authentic voice..." of his generation (qtd. in Onega, 1999: 1). Barnes' friend and colleague Kingsley Amis described his work as "at a sophisticated remove from what everyone else is doing" (Stout, 1992: 5). Barnes, who is particularly known for his innovative narrative technique, now is associated with a group of mature and "gifted" English novelists such as Kingsley Amis, Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro and Salman Rushdie (Stout, 1992: 3).

Mira Stout calls Barnes "the chameleon of British letters" (1992:2). This is a very apt coinage because ever since his first book appeared in 1980, his fiction has taken a different turn with each piece published. Like most novelists he made his debut with a semi-autobiographical novel, *Metroland*, in which he recounts the development of the protagonist-narrator Chris and his somewhat anarchist friend Toni. Barnes focuses on three different periods of his characters: adolescence, adulthood and late adulthood. *Before She Met Me*, two years later, introduced his favourite subjects: obsessive love and jealousy, which would appear again and again

in almost all his novels. This time focusing on a middle-aged history professor, Barnes showed us where unbridled jealousy can lead to.

In 1984, at the age of forty, he wrote *Flaubert's Parrot*, the novel that “launched” him in his own words (in Mosseley, 1997: 6). It represents his first international success though it was not very welcome first in England. Being a multi-disciplinary and multi-generic book, *Flaubert's Parrot* was approached with some suspicion. Even if no one disliked the book, many critics found it difficult to qualify *Flaubert's Parrot* as a novel. Partly biography and partly autobiography, harvested with historiographic metafiction and literary criticism, the novel still continues to puzzle both the critics and the readers alike. However, it really launched Barnes: almost all who have written on postmodern fiction in the last twenty years have felt a need to refer to *Flaubert's Parrot*.

The next novel, *Staring At the Sun*, is less experimental compared to the previous. It covers the long life of the protagonist Jean Sergeant, including a good portion of her parents' and son's life. The novel gets mixed reactions: while some praises the philosophical questions the novel raises, some find it dull and lifeless. While Carlos Fuentes greeted it with the statement “Julian Barnes's brilliant new novel flashes between the extremes of enchantment and disenchantment, questioning where we might find our proper places as men and women in the coming century” (1987: 43), David Lodge called it a “honorable failure” since it is mostly a “mere mouthpiece for philosophical speculations” (in Guignery, 2006: 52).

A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters, dated 1989, is as speculative a novel as *Flaubert's Parrot*. As the title suggests, Barnes writes a short history of the world starting with a narrative of the Flood and Noah's Ark told by a woodworm and

extending to an apocalyptic future destroyed by ecological disasters. In the meantime Barnes writes about contemporary politics and art criticism as well. Many critics, just as they did with *Flaubert's Parrot*, did not qualify it as a novel; they tended to call it a collection of short stories connected to each with common themes and motifs. In return, in an interview with David Sexton, Barnes said that *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters* is “an extended piece of prose, largely fictional, which is planned and executed as whole piece” (in Moseley, 1997: 9) and, therefore, it is a novel. In the same year Barnes announced that he does not take criticism he gets for *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters* very seriously:

I don't take too much notice of the “but-does-he-write-proper-novels?” school of criticism, which I get a bit, especially in England... I feel closer to the continental idea- which used to be the English idea as well – that the novel is a very broad and generous enclosing form. I would argue for a greater inclusivity rather than any exclusivity. The novel always starts with life, always has to start with life rather than an intellectual grid which you then impose on things. But at the same time, formally and structurally, I don't see why it shouldn't be inventive and playful and break what supposed rules there are. (in Mosseley, 1997: 10)

This novel also plays an important role in the discussion of postmodern fiction particularly because of its tendency to fantasy, history, and fabulation.

Barnes' sixth novel, *Talking It Over*, appeared in 1991. Before its publication, in an interview Barnes had announced that this novel would not be as experimental as the others. However, it is only less experimental in his own terms. It has a rather traditional plot structure: a triangular love relationship written in a quite comic mode. However, it is narrated by the principal characters who are all unreliable narrators. Polyphony of voices, when combined with dubious narrators, forces the reader into a very active participation. Consequently, the novel was not received as a traditional

work. While many praised the narrative technique, many felt bothered by the solipsism and indeterminacy in the novel. Michael Levenson even accused Barnes of being a “floater... hovering above the worlds like some intelligent bubble, which occasionally descends for a time, assumes the shape of some desperate quester, and then drifts off to the next masquerade” (1991: 43). Negative criticism did not turn Barnes off; he published the sequel of *Talking It Over* nine years later, as some critics had predicted at the time of the first novel’s publication. The second novel titled *Love, etc* got similar reactions from the critics since Barnes continued to use the same narrative technique to depict a darker and more solipsistic world.

In between the stated novels Barnes wrote his political novels *The Porcupine* (1992) and *England, England* (1998). *The Porcupine*, as traditional as *Staring at the Sun* in terms of narrative technique, is set in the late twentieth-century Bulgaria and relays the last days of a dictator. *England, England* can be seen as a criticism of the state run only by economics. Sir Jack Pitman, the owner of a huge media industry builds a gigantic theme park on an English island and locates the replicas of all the tourist attractions of Great Britain. Soon the island declares its independence and turns out to be a state run solely with economic rules. With his last novel to date, *Arthur and George* (2005), Barnes went back to history again. Employing two historical personages, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the well-known detective-fiction author and an obscure country lawyer, George Edalji, Barnes once again sails into the ambiguous waters of history. The novel has already attracted great amount of interest as a historiographical metafiction.

When one looks at Barnes’ novels critically, he will see that Mira Stout is very right to call him a chameleon of letters. Each novel employs a different

narrative, discourse and genre. An analytical look at his novels shows us that he has written two political novels, a bildungsroman, two love novels, two historiographic metafiction and a mainstream novel, not to mention his two collection of short-stories (*Cross Channel* and *The Lemon Table*), edition and translation of *In the Land of Pain* by Alphonse Daudet, three collection of journalistic essays (*Letters from London 1990-95*, *The Pedant in the Kitchen*, and *Something to Declare: French Essays*), the translation of a cartoon album by German cartoonist Volker Krieger and four detective novels he has written under the pseudo-name Dan Kavanagh (*Duffy*, *Fiddle City*, *Putting the Boot In*, *Going to the Dogs*).

When one's works display such complexity, it is rather difficult to make generalizations about his works. Yet, three characteristics have continually been attributed to him: his love for France and French culture, variety of his themes, and his penchant for technical experimentalism.

Born into a family of French language teachers, Barnes has had the chance to learn about the French culture at a very early age. His family used to spend their holidays driving through different regions of France. His brother Jonathan Barnes, who is a professor of philosophy at the University of La Sorbonne, seems to share Barnes' love for France. Barnes himself studied first philosophy and then modern languages (French and Russian) at the university (Guignery, 2006: 2). Consequently, most Barnes characters cross the channel to live in France for a while or just for vacation. His characters, consequently, enjoy using French phrases in the novels. His admiration for French culture is most manifest in his journalistic essays: both *The Pedant in the Kitchen*, and *Something to Declare: French Essays* are about French

culture and cuisine. As for fiction, *Cross Channel* and *Flaubert's Parrot* mark him as a Francophile.

Variety in the genres of his novels indicates both the variety in his subjects and his hunger for technical innovation. Mira Stout states

Barnes's novels range from the epic to the miniature, and continually experiment with novelistic form. His prose style adapts moodily to the character so that no two novels are alike. His subjects? Better yet, what's not a subject? Obsessional love, dislocation, death, voyage, endurance, art, religion, Eastern Europe, the manifold of reality – and sandwiches. (1992: 2)

Stout calls Barnes “a challenge addict” as well (1992:4) since Barnes tells her that “... [i]n order to write, you have to convince yourself that it's a new departure not only for you but for the entire history of the novel” (1992:3). He is even said to start each novel asking himself what has not been tried before, what new technique he can try now. In a number of interviews he has said that once he finishes a novel, he forgets all about it so that he can start a new one. During an interview with Patrick McGrath, Barnes says that he admires Gustave Flaubert most of all because he is “a great example of a genius who never wrote the same book twice” (in Mosseley, 1997: 1). It is obvious that experimentalism is a conscious choice for Barnes.

Consequently, his relatively short history of fiction is full of innovation and conscious technical experimentalism, which distinguishes him from many other novelists of his generation. He never repeats himself as Jay McInerney acknowledges:

A lot of novelists set up a kind of franchise, and turn out a familiar product. I mean one can speak of a Jean Rhys novel, or an Evelyn Waugh, but what I like about Jules's work is that he's like an entrepreneur who starts up a new company every time out. He doesn't cultivate a recognizable voice whose

sentences are instantly a signature; Julian submerges his personality in the work. But he's always kind of hidden there in the underbrush. He reinvents the wheel... (in Stout, 1992:5)

As it has been indicated before, not everyone considers his experimentalism as positively as McInerney does. Levenson simply regards him as someone “restless”:

Barnes has seen it all, the tub-thumping novelistic traditionalism, the barrel-jumping experimentalism, the cool academism; seen it, seen through it. No convention can warm him, no mission can stir him. Where he sees an enthusiasm, he suspects a folly... He has refused to repeat himself, pressing on to innovation, straining to find new ideas for novels. But that's just the problem, his problem and ours: the chronic restlessness, the itchy need to wear a new look, to speak a new rhythm, to buy new software to adorn the new software. (1991: 42)

While Barnes does all these, according to Levenson, “he himself remains unpossessed, dispassionate, sane, lucid, and free” (1991: 43). Dale Peck, too, believes Barnes’ experimentalism is without conviction. He argues that the experimental authors of the previous generations “from Stein to Pynchon felt that his or her work addressed something of historical consequence. These writers considered their endeavours philosophical rather than merely aesthetic, whereas Barnes, whose musings bear a surface resemblance to certain postmodern conventions, seems motivated by nothing more than boredom, decadence, or hubris” (2001: 33).

It is evident from the negative and positive criticism he has faced that Barnes has never been short of critical attention. However, the discussion of his novelistic practice has mostly been limited to book reviews and academic articles. Books devoted to his fiction are inadequate in quantity and quality. There are only four books in English, three in French and one in German. Two of the English books are

generally found quite simple, barely going beyond summarising some of his novels. The most recent book by Vanessa Guigner, which is cited as a substantial study, cites two PhD dissertations in addition to three other cited in the author's official website. Considering the size of Barnes' international readership – his books have been translated into thirty languages - and the seventeen, mostly international awards he has received, we can state that the number of lengthy studies should have been greater.

Barnes' fiction mostly has been cited in postmodern fiction discussions. Postmodernism is said to have started around the nineteen sixties, when the world became a much complicated place to live and find meaning in. Though the philosophers have not yet reached a unity in the definition of the postmodern thought, the most embracing definition of postmodernism seems to be the ideology that considers all the institutions of the civilization man-made and, consequently, problematic. What characterizes postmodernism, according to Lyotard is the striking loss of faith in master-narratives and meta-narratives (in Hutcheon 1993: 246-247). Master and meta-narratives are the institutions of the Western civilization such as art, myths, culture, science and religion. The loss of faith results in an ontological doubt for the twentieth-century man.

The reflection of ontological doubt and death of meta-narratives on literature can be summarised as the problematization of traditional literature, i.e. conventions of realism and modernism. Consequently, Linda Hutcheon, in almost all her works on postmodern fiction, defines the postmodern novelist at a critical distance from the canon of fiction. He does not completely reject the convention but both uses and abuses it. While he uses the conventions of genre literature in a certain part of the

novel, he infuses the characteristics of other genres, even disciplines in another section. The purpose in this venture, as Hutcheon states in *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, is not to emulate the novel of the past but to accentuate the difference between the fiction of the past and the present (1990: 4). To be precise, the postmodernist fiction writer questions the validity of the realist and modernist novel through some common postmodern strategies such as metafiction, effacement of genres, parody, pastiche and intertextuality.

Being the works of one of the leading postmodern novelists, Barnes' novels have been discussed as illustrations to postmodern poetics by authors such as Linda Hutcheon, Richard Todd and Alison Lee. While all these critics have focused on how Barnes benefits from realistic conventions and abuses them particularly in *Flaubert's Parrot* and *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters*, many others have discussed the difficulty of classifying his novels which boils down to the effacement of genres. Trying to understand Barnes' fiction in postmodern terms has been an apt thing to do since most of the elements of postmodern poetics can be explained through the innovative contributions Barnes has made to the theory of fiction. However, that Barnes has been identified as a forerunner of postmodern fiction, unfortunately has restricted his conception by the academics. His works and his narrative technique can actually be discussed in a broader scope including narratology.

Barnes' innovative narrative technique relies heavily on his use of narrators. Consequently, his narrators deserve a special interest. Through his narrators, Barnes challenges the traditions of the British fiction. Though he uses some conventions that have come down to him from Defoe and Defoe's grand-grand children, he opens up new fields for the study of narrators. He has even created a new type of narrator that

he calls a “hesitating” narrator. Some critics later re-dubbed this term “reluctant” narrator. This is a term that has so far only been used to refer to *Flaubert’s Parrot*. Another innovative characteristic of Barnes’ narrative technique sticks out as the facility in the use of multiple unreliable narrators in the absence of a mediating third person narrator. Finally, he has paid a special interest to the concept of narratee which has not received much attention either from the novelists or the critics.

Consequently, the purpose of this study is to discuss Barnes’ use of narrators in *Flaubert’s Parrot*, *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.* It will be shown that Barnes has a very original sense of narrative technique and this sense is heavily based on the idiosyncratic use of narrators and narratees. Barnes uses the convention of the first-person narration in these novels. As Sarah Harrison Smith states “Barnes’ greatest strength has been his facility in the first person voice” (2001: 29). However, his use of first-person voice is not traditional at all in these novels: he either uses multiple voices, i.e. multiple narrators, or benefits from multiple discourses even if there is only one narrator. Besides, in all the novels under question, the narratee takes over an incredible role: he directs the route of the narrative, helps the reader get to the secret workings of the novels, and functions almost as an intruding Victorian narrator who puts the reader’s judgement in a correct order. The last function of the narratee is particularly important since Barnes does not employ a third-person omniscient narrator that can guide the reader through the complicated and problematic narration of the narrators.

The discussion of Barnes’ use of narrators and narratees will take place in three steps. First, the literary discussions evolving around the narrator from the articles and prefaces of Henry James to the present time will be outlined in the first

chapter. The chapter will cover modern discussions that take place in the very late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Finally, the debates in the second half of the twentieth century will be delineated particularly resorting to the works of narratologists such as Gerald Genette, and F. K. Stanzel. Partial help will be obtained from stylistics, not in terms of linguistic analysis, but in terms of discourse analysis since each narrator constructs his own discourse in a novel.

The aim of the second chapter is to look at the issue from the novelists' point of view and to find out the prototypes of narrators employed in the history of English novel. This will enable us to see how Barnes uses and challenges the conventions of fiction. Because discussing three hundred years of the novel, even from a limited point of view, is beyond the scope of any study, only major novels will be used as examples.

The third and the fourth chapters will discuss *Flaubert's Parrot* and *Talking It Over* and its sequel *Love, etc* respectively. As it has been stated before, the characteristics of Barnes' narrators and narratees in these novels will be discussed in detail. The main thread to follow will be analyzing the narrative technique and identifying how the narrative technique is influenced by Barnes' choice of narrators. The conclusion concerns an evaluation of Barnes' narrative technique in the stated novels and how he confronts the traditions of the narrators.

CHAPTER I

DISCUSSIONS OF THE NARRATOR IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

1.1. Introduction

The study of narrator is a new phenomenon compared to the history of novel. Such a study, like all studies related to literature, should go back to Ancient Greece and early philosophers like Aristotle and Plato. When one does so, he can see that the seeds of the modern discussions of narrator were then planted in land that would prove to be fertile. Considerably enough, the literary discussions in the Ancient Greece were limited to poetry and drama. Nevertheless, some fundamental distinctions and theoretical bases were laid in the era.

In the ancient Greek all the literary discussion was around epic and drama and though these genres include narrators not much was said concerning the specifics of the narrator. Ancient Greek's contribution to the idea of narrative is quite indirect because “. . . [t]he classical discipline of rhetoric was not primarily concerned with narrative. Nevertheless, it provided many insights into the mechanism of style and composition which were gradually incorporated into the analysis of narrative” (Onega and Landa, 1996: 14). Some of these elements of rhetorical analysis are “the possible kinds of discourse, the way it divides into sections, the steps we must follow in order to compose a discourse” (1996: 14).

The first relevant contribution to the study of the narrator comes from Plato. In discussion of epic poetry, Plato distinguishes between two modes of narration: diegesis that is “simple narration” and mimesis that is “imitation”. The latter one refers to the poet who speaks in the person of another adopting the style, voice and

gesture of him. Therefore, the poet conceals himself behind the person he imitates. If he does not do this and appears everywhere, the poetry is “simple narration” (Friedman, 1961: 115-116). Onega and Landa state that “from a narratological viewpoint this is the first theoretical approach to the problem of narrative *voice*, preceding a paradigmatic approach to the text as utterances” (1996: 13).

Aristotle also touches upon the issue briefly in *Poetics*. He considers all forms of literature of his times as modes of imitation but he differentiates between them in three ways. According to him they differ in their means, objects or the manner of imitation. After briefly discussing the first two, he focuses on means of imitation: “Given both the same means and the same kind of object for imitation one may either (1) speak at one moment in narrative and at another in an assumed character. . . or (2) one may remain the same throughout, without any such change; or (3) the imitators may represent the whole story dramatically, as though they were actually doing the things described” (1985: 150). Later these terms have been simplified and postulated as epic, lyric and dramatic modes of expression.

In addition to establishing these three different modes of narration, Aristotle comments on the merits of these modes. To him dramatic mode is the most noteworthy and that is why Homer deserves special respect for his choice of dramatic mode:

Homer, admirable as he is in every other respect, is especially so in this, that he alone among epic poets is not unaware of the part to be played by the poet himself in the poem. The poet should say very little *in propria persona*, as he is no imitator when doing that. Whereas the other poets are perpetually coming forward in person, and say but little, and that only here and there, as imitators, Homer after a brief preface brings in forthwith a man, or a woman, or some other Character- no one of them are characterless, but each with distinctive characteristics.” (1985: 170)

Plato and Aristotle's notion of narrative modes is in some ways prophetic of the discussions that would take place in the twentieth century. For example, authorial intrusion as hinted by Aristotle with the words "poet coming forward in person" would take a huge place in the agenda of the author and the critic. Even the modern schools of criticism such as narratology and stylistics have felt the need to refer back to this issue. Almost all critics have had to challenge or support the notions of mimesis and diegesis.

There is almost an anonymous agreement between the literary historians and critics that serious study of the novel including the idea of the narrator starts with Henry James and that is the reason why he is taken as the starting point in this chapter. He can be considered to be the first member of a generation of critics whom he deeply influenced. Such critics as Percy Lubbock, Stewart Beach and Norman Friedman are the forerunners of a group of critics who tried to understand the importance of the narrator in a novel. There are similar traits and findings in the work of these critics but the number of similarities does not enable us to associate them with a certain approach to the study of literature. It is difficult to label them with a certain school or movement of criticism such as structuralism, post-structuralism, textualism or formalism. For this reason "mainstream critics" seems a proper coinage to refer to the first generation of novel critics. Because or, perhaps, although they are the first modern generation of critics, their body of work is of great importance for the study of the narrator.

Obviously enough, the means and scope of literary criticism have got more and more complex since the mainstream critics put their pens on paper; many idiosyncratic methods have been devised and many innovative techniques have been

formulated. Different movements of criticism have approached the narrator to find out its significance and complexity. Among these, narratology and partially stylistics seems particularly handy for the study of the narrator.

In Mieke Bal's words "*narratology* is the theory of narratives, narrative texts, images, spectacles, events; cultural artifacts that 'tell a story'. Such a theory helps to understand, analyse, and evaluate narratives" (1997: 3). According to Onega and Landa, the editors of *Narratology*, "narratology is... the science of narrative" (1996: 1). Since a story or in better words a narrative text necessitates someone telling it, namely a narrator, discussion of the narrator is central to narratologists. Being a structuralistic approach in essence, narratology tries to analyse the structure of a narrative. In terms of narrator, narrator's relationship to the text, identification of the narrator, the manner in which the identity of the narrator is demonstrated in the text and further implications of the choices related to the narrator make the main field of narratological study. Being a new school of criticism, narratology certainly includes some ambiguities in its application; no critic seems to suggest a certain method that applies to all texts. Besides, the narratologist terminology has not settled yet. Just to cite one example a first-person narrator who tells his own story is called homodiegetic narrator, autodiegetic narrator, character-bound narrator, I-narrator and teller-character by different narratologists.

Stylistics, on the other hand, deals basically with the style of a text or an author. Style is normally defined by the choices an author makes and similarly linguistic stylistics is formed by the deviant use of language by the author. The concept of narrator finds place in both scopes: choice of narrator is made out of a finite set of narrators and narrators use language to express their identities.

Consequently, stylistics has much to offer in any attempt to understand the study of narrator. However, the purpose of this study does not entail the linguistic characteristics of the narrators since even two functionally identical narrators have different linguistic styles. Consequently, stylistics will be employed only in terms of narrator types, the possibilities of different narrators and above all discourse analysis.

Discussions of the narrator certainly revolve around certain concepts like the type of narrators, the presence of the narrator in the text or the focalization of the narrator. Therefore, it looks, at first glance, reasonable to adopt an analytical approach and organize the discussions topic by topic. However, because most relevant concepts are related to other side issues, it is difficult to follow a topical order. For example, while Stanzel discusses the concept of the narrator's relation to the story, he also discusses the narrator's motivation to narrate. In talking of focalization, Genette touches upon the functions of ellipsis and analepsis. Therefore, following a topical order forces one to sever the extensions of an argument. Consequently, a historical order seems more reasonable. This order enables one to see a critic's approach to the narrator fully and the complexity the discussion of the narrator reaches with each new contribution to it. For these reasons, while at times some critics' approaches have been compared with or related to others', a chronological order has been followed in this chapter.

1.2. The Founders

The modern discussions of the narrator can be analysed in three steps. Firstly, there is a group of authors and critics who established the foundations of the concept of the narrator and the narrative modes. These mainstream authors and critics such as

Henry James, Percy Lubbock, E. M. Forster, Norman Friedman and Wayne Booth can be called the founders for the sake of convenience. They cover the period ranging from the late 19th century to 1970's. Later, two schools of contemporary criticism, narratology and stylistics developed and fine-tuned the concept of the narrator.

Henry James, the first author to discuss the theory of fiction in detail, is a very prolific and industrious author who tried his hand successfully in different forms of theoretical and creative writing. He wrote novels, to which he owes his fame mostly, short stories, plays, travel essays and articles on the theory of fiction. His serious contribution to the development of literary criticism can be seen in his individual articles on the theory and the practice of fiction and his famous prefaces he wrote to his own novels. In these two sources James touches upon many aspects of the genre and paves substantial ways both for his contemporaries and the coming generation of novelists and critics. He is the first author to emphasize the technique over the content or the moral values of the work. According to Ünal Aytür his main principle in writing fiction is to convey the vast complexities of life directly to the audience without distorting them. Technique is the major tool of an author in this attempt. Being a forerunner of the technique of fiction, he was not always received well by his contemporaries. His arguments with H. G. Wells is a good indicator of this. Wells considers James' insistent remarks on the importance of technique futile and claims that for James fiction is like painting; yet for him it is like architecture which has a function. He even states that he would rather be called a journalist than an artist (Aytür, 1977: 14).

In “The Art of Fiction” James demands that fiction be taken seriously. Saying that “art is essentially selection” (1986: 177) he emphasizes the necessity of technique and form for creating the right impression on the audience. This simple statement can summarise his poetics. When we focus on narration in particular, we can see that his major contribution to the theory is the emphasis on the difference between “telling” and “showing” and point of view. James believes that novelists, unlike the Victorian authors, should not tell the complete story themselves but make the audience see it through the eyes of the characters involved in the story. Such an approach is more realistic compared to the Victorian attitude since there is not an author that intervenes and records or relates his own ideas and comments on the action or the characters. Thus, it also enables the author to grant a more substantial psychological depth to his characters since the development of a character or the changes a character goes through as related from the viewpoint of the character becomes the major theme of the novel. In a number of prefaces or articles, he emphasized that what he was interested in was not what happened in the actual outer world but the impression of these events left on the mind of the character. In other words, what counts is not the events but what the character feels about these events. For example in the preface to *Roderick Hudson* he states that the “centre of interest throughout ‘Roderick’ is in Rowland Mallet’s consciousness, and the drama is the very drama of that consciousness. . . (1986: 268). Similarly, in the preface to *The Portrait of a Lady* he asserts that the story is only meaningful when related from the viewpoint of the heroine: “Without her sense of ... [the events], her sense *for* them, as one may say, they are next to nothing at all: but isn’t the beauty and the difficulty

just in showing their mystic conversion by that sense, conversion into the stuff of drama or, even more delightful word still, of ‘story’” (1986: 297).

In the preface to *The Princess Casamassima* he goes back to the same idea this time pinpointing that confining the novel into the consciousness of a character gives it a stronger sense of realism. There he asserts that only the people involved in an action can correctly and effectively relate the events and only they are the people we can trust when it comes to an honest expression of events:

This means, exactly, that the person capable of feeling in the given case more than another of what is to be felt for it, and so serving in the highest degree to *record* it dramatically and objectively, is the person on whom we can count on not to betray, to cheapen or, as we say, give away, the value and the beauty of the thing. By so much as the affair matters *for* some such individual, by so much do we get the best there is of it, and by so much as it falls within the scope of a denser and duller, a more vulgar and more shallow capacity, do we get a picture dim and meagre (1962: 67)

Although James locates his characters in the centre of his novels, he does not much resort to first person narration. Though the novels are conveyed mostly from the viewpoint of characters, he uses an unobtrusive third person narrator speaking/writing from the viewpoint of the character. Therefore, he is also the first author to distinguish between who sees and who speaks, i.e. point of view and voice.

Percy Lubbock, who is a disciple of James, is the first critic to discuss the concept of narrator at length in his historical work *The Craft of Fiction*, which Onega and Landa call “something of an unofficial textbook of the modernist aesthetics of indirection” (1996: 20). It must be accepted that, coming into existence at the dawn of modern literary criticism, Lubbock’s work is not elaborate enough. At times he uses author and the narrator indiscriminately and he does not refer to some fundamental terms such as un/reliable narrator, interior monologue or implied author

but his work certainly prepares a firm base for discussion. His theory on narrative is based on three concepts: picture, drama and point of view. He admits “picture” and “drama” concepts are first used by James in his prefaces to his own novels but Lubbock believes he himself uses them in a broader sense. Picture and drama form “an antithesis which continually appears in a novel” (1923: 110) and many authors tend to use one or the other as the dominant narrative mode in their works according to him. These terms define the author’s relationship to the audience. In drama the author disappears and lets players /characters act their parts to create a certain impression on the audience. The inner feelings of the characters, their hidden desires and the obvious actions are revealed through dramatic action and the book speaks for itself without resorting to the commentary of the author. As he says, “the spectator evidently has no direct concern with the author at all, while the action is proceeding” (1923: 111).

In picture, on the other hand, the author is the one who makes the audience feel his presence with intrusive comments. Therefore, the author gives an interpreted picture of the story. Lubbock illustrates this difference through Thackeray and Maupassant. “Maupassant’s idea of a story . . . would suggest an object that you fashioned and abandoned to the reader, turning away and leaving him alone with it; Thackeray’s would be more like the idea of a long and sociable interview with the reader, a companion with whom he must establish definite terms” (1923: 112). In his understanding some of the authors who tend to use picture are Fielding, Turgenyev, George Eliott and Thackeray whereas Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Henry James prefer drama (1923: 119) .

The third concept Lubbock deals with is the point of view. Just like drama, point of view is of great significance to him. While drama and picture represent the relationship between the author and the reader, point of view concerns the narrator's relation to the story. Lubbock believes when the narrative mode in a novel is not dramatic and scenic, it "inclines always to picture, to the reflection of somebody's mind" (1923: 115). In such a case the question "whose mind, whose point of view is this?" arises. The answer for Lubbock is of a character that can tell the story from within and thus provide the effect of validity and objectivity for the novel. Since the author is no more a traveller who enters a hall and recites his book and that once the book is published, it is "torn away from its author and given out to the world" (1923: 116) and it faces accusations of invalidity. The only way to get rid of this accusation is to confine the novel into the consciousness of a character. Only "when the point of view is definitely included in the book, when it can be recognized and verified there, then every side of the book is equally wrought and fashioned" (1923: 116). Otherwise the book is incomplete for Lubbock.

In the earlier parts of his book Lubbock seems to assert that a novel must be written in the dramatic mode: "The art of fiction does not begin until the novelist thinks of his story as a matter to be shown, to be exhibited that it will tell itself. . . (1923: 62). Consequently, a narrator who interprets the characters, their responses and action must particularly be avoided. He states "everything in the novel, not only the scenic episodes but all the rest, is to be some sense dramatized" (1923: 123). Similarly, he writes " . . . [i]t has to be remembered that drama is the novelist's highest light" (1923: 120) However, later he stresses that what makes the story look "shown" rather than "told" is not limited to preference of drama over picture. The

real enterprise must be meticulous treatment of the subject matter and skilful composition through the use of subjective point of view and scenic presentation.

Though Lubbock's views enjoyed a great popularity in his time, there were some negative reactions to him as well. E. M. Forster, in his ever-popular book *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) questions the importance Lubbock attaches to a stable point of view. *Aspects of the Novel* is a combination of traditional and innovative approaches to the novel. While the first five chapters deal with elements like plot and character, which have come down as elements of fiction analysis to today from Aristotle, the second half of the book has peculiar chapters such as "Fantasy", "Prophecy" and "Pattern and Rhythm".

In the fourth chapter titled "People" Forster, openly but with all due respect interrogates the significance Lubbock assigns to a consistent point of view. He first outlines Lubbock's understanding of point of view:

"The whole intricate question of method, in the craft of fiction," says Mr. Percy Lubbock, "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." ... The novelist, he says, 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 and affect to be in the dark as to the motives of the rest; or there are certain intermediate attitudes. (1937: 107)

While Lubbock considers viewpoint as a central problem of the art of fiction, for Forster it is an aesthetic problem which will surely be figured out by the followers of Lubbock. Forster defines the major problem quite differently: "... for me the whole intricate question of method resolves itself not into formulae but into the power of the writer to bounce the reader into accepting what he says- a power which Mr. Lubbock admits and admires, but locates at the edge of the problem

instead of the centre. I should put it plumb in the centre” (1937: 107). What Forster values more, it seems, is the author’s power to convince the reader into his own scheme.

His objection to point of view as a fundamental problem of fiction is due to two reasons. Firstly, the insistence on a stable point of view is the demand of the critic more than the audience according to him. The audience wants to be thrilled, carried away and touched by the novel. However, critics place an immense significance on it in order to emphasize the eminence of the novel by creating problems idiosyncratic to the genre. They hope to differentiate it from, for example, drama because point of view is an issue peculiar to the novel. By over-stressing it critics try to make people accept fiction as an independent form of art (1937: 108-109). However, a “novelist who betrays too much interest in his own method can never be more than interesting; he has given up the creation of character and summoned us to help analyse his own mind, and a heavy drop in the emotional thermometer results” (1937: 109-110).

The second reason why Forster objects to a stable point of view is that this demand is neither realistic nor in accord with the definition of the genre. He states that a novelist can shift his point of view if he finds it necessary and “this power to expand and contract perception (of which the shifting view point is a symptom), this right to intermittent knowledge: - I find it one of the great advantages of the novel-form, and it has a parallel in our perception of life” (1937: 110). The parallelism between shifting viewpoints and people’s actual perception of life is that people sometimes are stupider than others. At times people can enter into others’ minds but mostly they cannot because it is a tiresome activity. Yet, this inconsistency of mind

and power gives variety and colour to one's experience and existence (1937: 110-111). Therefore, a consistent point of view is quite artificial as a demand from the novelist and a thing difficult to find in real life.

In 1955 Norman Friedman published "Point of View in Fiction: The Development of a Critical Concept". This article is useful in two ways: first, it outlines the literary discussions on point of view starting with Henry James and then analyzes the idea of narrator by analyzing different modes of narration which basically provides the author with "possible degrees of authorial extinction" (1961: 117) and concludes with implications of an author's choice of narrative mode. In the first part of the essay, he outlines the discussions referring to writers such as Henry James, Stewart Beach, Percy Lubbock, E. M. Foster, and Mark Schroder. Here will be included the major contributors to the theories of point of view. James, Lubbock and Foster will not be included for the obvious reason that they have already been outlined in this present chapter.

Friedman's analysis of literary discussions of point of view is particularly important because he reveals the work of critics who are not frequently cited in the canonised texts on the narrator. One of such critics is Selden L. Whitcomb who even precedes Henry James on the discussion of point of view. In her book *The Study of a Novel* dated 1905, she dedicates a chapter on the concept titled "The Narrator. His Point of View". There she basically states the success of a plot is based on the clearness and consistency of the narrator's point of view. Friedman believes that her comment "seems remarkably prophetic of things to come, since from this point on almost every manual published on the art of fiction contains a similar section" (1961: 120).

In the first decade of the twentieth century the leading figure of the discussion was Professor Stewart Beach who in two different works dealt with the concept of point of view. In 1918 he writes:

In a bird's eye view of the English novel from Fielding to Ford, the one thing that will impress you more than any other is the disappearance of the author. . . . This is the great outstanding feature of technique since the time of Henry James . . . that the story shall tell itself, being conducted through the impressions of the characters. It is this which finally differentiates fiction from history, philosophy and science (in Friedman, 1961: 113-114).

It is clear that James and Beach have the same approach to fiction and narrator. Friedman states that Beach even embarks on organising the theory of point of view in line with the fiction of Henry James in his book *The Method of Henry James* but cannot achieve it adequately because "time was not ripe, apparently" according to Friedman (1961: 118). In 1932 Beach undertook the task once again in *The Twentieth Century Novel* and asserted that in the twentieth century novel "the story tells itself; the story speaks for itself. The author does not apologize for his characters; he even does not tell us what they do but has them tell us, themselves" (in Friedman, 1961: 121). In short, he sees extinction of authorial intrusion of different sorts as the main property of the twentieth century novel.

In the forties Mark Schorer approached point of view from a different aspect according to Friedman. He believes Lubbock considers point of view as a means to bestow a consistent and vibrant presentation whereas Schorer recognizes the thematic implications of an author's choice of narrator. He believes each novel creates a world of values and attitudes and by separating himself from the narrator or the character's point of view, the author can avoid loading the narrator or the

characters with his own convictions. (in Friedman,1961: 112). This idea is later developed by Wayne Booth with the term “implied author”.

The second part of Friedman’s article analyzes the types of narrator in relation to authorial intrusion and extinction. In eight different types he illustrates how in each the author uses his “authority” of “transmission of the story material”. The first category, Editorial Omniscience, starts with the famous difference of telling and showing using the expressions “summary narrative” and “immediate scene”. The requirements for immediate scene are dialogue, a definite place and time. The last two elements are there to particularise the experience or the event. In the editorial omniscience the author dominates the narrative by direct intrusion and frequently speaking as “I” or “we”. Having all the powers possible, it makes generalizations about life, characters, morals and manners. These comments may be relevant to the story told, as we can see in Hardy, who, for example, comments about the weaknesses of her heroine Tess. These authorial comments may well be irrelevant to the story as can be seen in Fielding’s *Tom Jones* or Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*. Both of these authors devoted separate chapters of comments in their novels (1961: 124-128).

Neutral Omniscience is the second type of narrator who, similar to the first, have limitless powers. However, this type prefers not to make direct comments and he does not subjectively intrude. In Friedman’s words this type “never editorializes in his own voice. . . His predominant tendency is to describe and explain them to the reader in his own voice” (1961: 128). When the author moves from editorial omniscience to neutral omniscience, he is deprived of the chance to make direct comments. In the next type which is “I” as Witness, the author completely disappears

from the novel. “The witness-narrator is a character on his own right *within* the story itself, more or less involved in the action, more or less acquainted with its chief personages, who speaks to the reader in the first person” (1961: 130). Though the narrator in this mode has lesser powers compared to the previous two, he is not totally armless. He can talk to different people in the novel and can interview the main characters, and above all, relying on his powers of observation, he can make inferences as to how others feel. Fitzgerald in *The Great Gatsby* and Conrad in *Heart of the Darkness* employ such narrators (1961: 130-131).

With the fourth type of narration, “I” as Witness, “the author’s channels of information and his possible vantage points are given up. Because of his subordinate role in the story itself, the witness-narrator has much greater mobility and consequently a greater range and variety of sources of information than the protagonist proper, who is centrally involved in the action” (1961: 131-132). The protagonist-narrator is almost completely restricted to his own thoughts, feelings and comprehension.

Friedman returns to the idea of omniscience in the next two types of narration: Multiple Selective Omniscience and Selective Omniscience. In the first mode there are a number of characters from whom the story comes. “Here the reader ostensibly listens to no one: the story comes directly through the minds of the characters as it leaves its mark there”(1961: 132). Almost everything is scenic in the novel: both the external action and the internal processes of mind are conveyed through action. If there is narrative summary, it is done unremarkably in the fashion of stage directions or it is deduced from the words and thoughts of the characters. Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse* is a good example of multiple consciousnesses through

which the novel becomes accessible to us. The difference between multiple and selective omniscience is that in the second the author chooses to write the story from a selected character's point of view. As a result, the novel reaches the audience from one source: the selected omniscient narrator's point of view. Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* successfully exemplifies this type of narrator (1961: 132-133).

The last two modes of narration, namely The Dramatic Mode and The Camera represent the total extinction of the author, the narrator and the mental states of characters. "The information available to the reader in the Dramatic Mode is limited largely to what the characters do and say; their appearance and the setting may be supplied by the author as in stage directions; there is never, however, any direct indication of what they perceive . . . , what they think, or how they feel" (1961: 134-135). What we have in fact in this mode is a play written in the form of a novel. The last mode, The Camera completely exterminates the possibility of authorial intrusion at the expense of authorial selection and arrangement because here we come across the idea of recording " 'a slice of life' as it passes before the recording medium" (1961: 135).

After Freidman analyzes the eight different types of narrators, he concludes the article by addressing the possible implications of the existence of different modes of narration and by questioning the general tendency in favour of authorial extinction. He states authorial extinction or Henry James' insistent demand for technical mastery is not merely a fashion of the day. Freidman accepts that each choice of narrator or point of view grants the author different possibilities. Echoing Schorer, he contends that choice of the narrative mode has content definitions as well. He accepts that though editorial omniscience is out of date, it provides more

chances for an author who wants to write in an ironic mode. If the purpose is to paint a broad social picture like Huxley does, then Neutral Omniscience seems to be a sound preference. If, on the other hand, the author thinks it is best for the novel to cover different perspectives, then selective omniscience is the most logical choice. In short, Friedman does not favour one mode of narration over another but he insists on the significance of technical care and consistency throughout the novel. This fact does not change even though there are masterpieces written carelessly because “there is surely no necessary contradiction between genius and technical mastery” (1961: 139).

Six years after Friedman’s article Wayne Booth published his much acclaimed work *The Rhetoric of Fiction* in which he discusses the art of fiction from many perspectives. Although his major contribution to the notion of narrator is generally accepted as the introduction of the concepts of implied author and the binary opposition of reliable and unreliable narrator with many implications of the terms, he cannot avoid addressing the famous picture and drama discussion. Like a leitmotif in a novel, picture and drama, in other words, the choice between showing and telling, gets into his agenda again and again. His idiosyncratic approach to the famous opposition is, unlike Lubbock’s, quite flexible. After illustrating both concepts in detail, he concludes that a certain amount of telling is inevitable.

Booth criticizes the disdain for authorial obtrusion or penchant for showing rather than telling by illustrating the fact that it is impossible to eliminate all authorial intrusion. This is impossible because authorial intrusion is not limited only to the direct comments of the author on the action and the characters. Those who are in favour of showing demand that author should be effaced to reach the illusion of

objectivity and reality. However, many devices of literature, which represent the essence of literature for Booth, are artificial, not realistic. Shifts in the point of view, even the idea of point of view are against the illusion of reality because the “reliable statements of any dramatised character “ (1987: 18), which show rather than tell, represent the author’s choice. Any comment of a character, reliable or not, literary allusions and reference to different myths must be left out if the concern is to dramatise life realistically without authorial intrusion because they are all actually employed by the author and are completely artificial. We can also say artistic. “In short,” Booth concludes, “the author’s judgement is always present, always evident to anyone who knows how to look for it” (1987: 20).

Because the showing and telling discussion dates back to Henry James, Booth also comments about how James has been evaluated incorrectly or in a limited fashion. Booth believes that Lubbock and Beach, two disciples of James, tend to be dogmatic or over-enthusiastic about James’ distinction of showing and telling in favour of the first. He states that James elaborates on the famous distinction in addition to many other issues of writing a novel. Therefore, reducing all his theories to dramatic narration is a grave mistake. He rightly emphasizes that James has only one “absolute requirement” which is a novel must be interesting. All other postulates are devices to reach this end (1987: 24-25).

A second major discussion in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* is the idea of implied author which is of great significance for understanding the narrative technique of Julian Barnes. In the chapter on objectivity of the author Booth relates that no matter how objective and impersonal an author tries to be in a novel, the audience builds a picture of the “official scribe,” “implied author” or in Kathleen Tillotson’s coinage,

“the author’s second self” (1987: 71). This author is always in the novel adopting different functions and appearances: “Even the novel in which no narrator is dramatised creates an implicit picture of an author who stands behind the scenes, whether as stage manager, as puppeteer, or as an indifferent God, silently paring his fingernails. This implied author is always distinct from the ‘real man’” (1987: 151) because an author’s presence is felt differently in his different works: “. . . his different works will imply different versions, different ideal combination of norms. Just as one’s personal letters imply different versions of oneself, depending on the differing relationships with each correspondent and the purpose of each letter, so the writer sets himself out with a different air depending on the needs of particular works” (1987: 71).

The difference in the implied author gets clearer when he has an explicit, vocal role in the story. Being a vocal implied author, Fielding is a good example to illustrate the point. In spite of the similarities, the implied authors of *Jonathan Wild* and *Joseph Andrews* are quite different. In the former work we see a person who is over-concerned with public affairs and the power of politicians whereas we see nothing of this sort in the latter work and it would be a grave mistake to associate Fielding completely with the implied author of one work or the other (1987: 72).

The example of Fielding should not make us consider the implied author as a literary fictional device authors use to express their own convictions. The case is much more complex according to Booth. As he states “the ‘implied author’ chooses consciously or unconsciously, what we read: we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man; he is the sum of his own choices” (1987: 74-75). Furthermore,

implied author includes not only extractable meanings but also the moral and emotional content of each bit of action and suffering of all characters. It includes in short, the intuitive apprehension of a completed artistic whole: the chief value to which this implied author is committed regardless of what party his creator belongs to in real life, is that which is expressed by the total form” (1987: 73-74).

As it can be understood from the words of Booth, implied author concerns both the content and the form of the novel. He is the person who chooses to write about certain themes, to present such and such characters, to ascribe to certain values and to do all these in a certain form and style. For this reason, Booth says various concepts such as persona, mask, theme, meaning, symbolic significance, theology and ontology have been used to explain the function and the importance of the implied author (1987: 73).

The third literary concept Booth lays bare in his work is the reliability of the narrator, a concept that has come to be associated with him. A very broad category of narrators for the author is reliable and unreliable narrator. He defines the difference as “...[f]or lack of terms, I have called a narrator *reliable* when he speaks or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author’s norms), *unreliable* when he does not” (1987: 158-159). The difference of values between the implied author and the narrator can occur in a number of ways. The unreliable narrator might be simply lying, he might not have the qualities he thinks he has, that is, he might be lying unconsciously, he might be mistaken or “as in Huckleberry Finn, the narrator claims to be naturally wicked while the author silently praises his virtues behind his back” (1987: 159).

Though use of unreliable narrators provides authors with various artistic manoeuvres such as a sharp twist in the story-line, suspense and surprise, it poses

certain problems as well. The reader may take an unreliable narrator as a reliable one. Thus, he can completely misinterpret the narrative. Booth warns us particularly against the cases which involve irony. He contents “it is true that most of the great reliable narrators indulge in large amounts of incidental irony, and they are thus ‘unreliable’ in the sense of being potentially deceptive. But difficult irony is not sufficient to make a narrator unreliable” (1987: 159). Therefore, for the sake of reading the text correctly, the audience should understand the irony or there must be an agent that reveals the truth which might either be hidden behind the unreliable narrator or unknown to him.

However, there are cases where unreliability of the narrator does not matter. If the purpose of the narrative in a certain part is to reveal the character through the commentary of the narrator, the reliability of the narrator does not matter. If the narrator is unreliable, the commentary is unreliable as well but it still does not matter. For example, Prufrock’s resemblance of the evening sky to an etherised patient does not have any value in the comment’s relation to verisimilitude. This comment enables the audience to recognise the character, not to learn about the weather. Nevertheless, in other cases where the unreliable narrator makes commentary, authors should find a way to confide in the reader the difference between the character’s interpretation and the fact. Otherwise, such transmitted information is misleading (1987: 175).

One way to solve the stated problem of unreliability is dramatic irony according to Booth. However, “there can be no dramatic irony, by definition, unless the author and the audience can somehow share knowledge which the characters do not hold” (1987: 175). That means, audience needs reliable commentary that

contrasts with unreliable commentary, which in the end generates the irony. Reliable commentary is not the only way to reveal the irony but it is a very useful method particularly if the author is the only person to hold the knowledge of what needs to be known (1987: 175).

The last issue discussed in *The Rhetoric Fiction* relevant to this study is the chapter titled “Types of Narration”. Booth starts this part with a complaint: though literary criticism has a long tradition, it has not paid enough attention to the classification of point of view. Referring to Friedman without citing his name, Booth states that classification has been limited to some categories depending on the “variables only of ‘person’ and the degrees of omniscience” (1987: 149). However, for him it is not meaningful and precise enough to state a narrator is the first-person or the third-person until what kind of effects each choice of narrator produces is analysed. He rightfully claims that some characteristics like being an undramatized narrator rather than a dramatized narrator belong to both the first and the third-person narrators. Finally, he comes up with the following types of narration.

Narrators in a novel can be first categorised according to their presence or omniscience. Therefore, a narrator can be undramatised or dramatised. In the first case the story is told to the reader through the consciousness of someone who is not a part of the novel. He may not be given certain characteristics but his presence is felt especially when he refers to himself as “I”. In the second case we have narrators who take part in the novel. These narrators may be as vivid as those whose stories are told. They also include characters from whose consciousness events are narrated as well. Therefore, they are filters through which the narrative is related and we come across more of these narrators in the modern fiction (1987: 149-153).

Booth also divides the dramatised narrators into two according to their degree of involvement in the action. Thus, narrators can be mere observers and narrator-agents: Dramatised narrators can be just observers as in the case of *Tom Jones*, *The Egoist* and *Troilus and Criseyde*. Or they may take a part ranging from minor to major in the story. Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby*, Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* and Paul Morel in *Sons and Lovers* are some well-known examples of narrator-agents (1987: 153-154).

Manner of narration is another matter of discrimination. All narrators and observers, regardless of their type, can choose to narrate their story as scene or summary, though a combination of the two is mostly preferred. Therefore, their function is more important than their type and pinpointing the type does not matter much without defining the function. One function of the narrator is to provide comments that accompany the direct relation of events. The nature of commentary immensely varies and all commentary cannot be treated in the same way. Narrators' commentary can be ornamental or a part of the dramatic structure or it can have a rhetorical purpose (Booth, 1987: 154-155).

Self-consciousness of narrators is another gradient according to Booth. All narrators covered so far can fall into one of these categories: those who are aware that they are in the process of writing a literary work or those who are not. The narrators of *Tom Jones*, *Tristram Shandy*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, and *Remembrance of Things Past* belong to the first group whereas the narrators of Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, Camus's *The Stranger* and Bellow's *The Victim* are of the second type (1987: 155). We can undoubtedly add the narrators of Julian Barnes in *Flaubert's Parrot*, *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* to this list.

Booth's contribution to the theory of narrative in general and to the understanding of narrator is certainly much more complicated than covered here. For the sake of clarity and in order to represent what he added up to the understanding of narrator, we have limited ourselves to the famous discussion of omniscience of the author, the distinction of reliable and unreliable narrators, the analysis of the implied author and finally to the types of narration. He certainly provided food for thought particularly for those who would follow him either in the study of narratology or stylistics.

The discussions cited so far can be called mainstream for two reasons: any critic who deals with the concept of narrator touches upon more or less the theories covered here. Besides, their definitions have so much been recognised and accepted worldwide that one can come across these definitions of the narrator even in College handbooks or manuals on writing fiction. These definitions are even cited without reference to the original producers. Consequently, narratologist study of the narrator have towered on the base established by the stated founders. Certainly, they have provided a much deeper analysis of the term.

1.3. Contemporary Discussions of the Narrator

Contemporary discussion of the narrator is not limited to but mostly carried out by narratologists and stylisticians. Because the narrator can be in the form of a mere vocal entity embodying certain moral and aesthetic values, as in the case of third person omniscient narrators, or a character in the novel with many variations, both narratology and stylistics find relevant aspects of the narrator in their endeavour. Narratological discussions of the narrator are dominated by two

European critics, namely Gérard Genette and F. K. Stanzel. Both approached the narrative theory from many aspects but both grossly dealt with the concept of the narrator. Their books have become the milestones of narratology and almost everything written after them in the field has referred to their works. Stylistics, on the other hand, as stated before, deals more with the linguistics properties of a work. Because a novel is a linguistic construct, just like the narrator, some experts of stylistics such as Leech and Short, Dorrit Cohn and Seymour Chatman focused on the idea of point of view and voice alongside the ways of rendering speech and thought. Because the issues of stylistics and narratology converge on the study of the narrator, they have not been treated separately.

Gerard Genette's *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, which appeared first in 1972 in French, is one of the masterpieces of narratology. The book is composed of five chapters, namely "Order", "Duration", "Frequency", "Mood" and "Voice". The last two chapters are outlined here since they are more relevant to the aim of the present study.

Genette treats the concept of mood, which is called mode by some others like F. K. Stanzel, under two headings: distance and perspective. Genette briefly outlines the history of the narrative theory in relation to the problem of distance between the text and the author/narrator. After summarising Plato's definitions of mimesis and diegesis, he focuses on Anglo-American critics such as Lubbock and Booth. Though he agrees with Booth that mimetic mode of narration cannot be considered to have a superior value to diegesis, he goes one step further to assert that "no narrative can 'show' or 'imitate' the story itself. All it can do is tell it in a manner which is detailed, precise, 'alive,' and in that may give more or less the *illusion of mimesis*

[because] narration . . . is a fact of language, and language signifies without imitating” (1993: 164). Genette concludes “the truth is that mimesis in words can only be mimesis of words. Other than that, all we have and can have is degrees of diegesis. So we must distinguish here between narrative of events and ‘narrative of words’” (1993: 164).

Genette distinguishes between three different ways for the narrator to treat the uttered or the inner speech of the character:

1. Narrativized or Narrated Speech: This is the most distant and reduced form of speech. The narrator narrates the speech and the statement becomes an action of the narrator rather than the character. Going back to the example from *Recherche*, narrated form of the sentence becomes “I informed my mother of my decision to marry Albertine” (1993: 171).
2. Transposed Speech in Indirect Style: In this style, the narrator writes the sentence again in the indirect style. As the example “I told my mother/thought that I absolutely had to marry Albertine” shows, this form is more mimetic compared to the first form. However, the narrator’s presence is still felt in the sentence and the audience cannot know to what extent the sentence uttered by the character and the transposed sentence are similar to each other.

Genette remarks that free indirect style and transposed sentence are not the same since free indirect style includes more indeterminacy as we can see in the sentence, “I went to find my mother: it was absolutely necessary that I marry Albertine.” The second part of this free indirect style sentence can be both the thoughts of Marcel while looking for his mother and the sentence he utters on finding his mother. Besides, there is another ambiguity between the speech of the character

and the narrator since we cannot correctly ascribe one to the narrator and the other to the character (1993: 171-172).

3. Mimetic Style: In this style the narrator pretends to have let the character speak directly to the audience: "I said to my mother (or: thought): It is absolutely necessary that I marry Albertine." This style of reported speech was christened as the most valuable since it is dramatic. This tendency of valuing the dramatic mode continues up to the end of the nineteenth century and Genette claims that emancipation of the novel form is embedded in its rejection of pure mimesis (1993: 172-173).

In all three of these styles, the distance between the narrator and the character are different. While the presence of the narrator is felt the most in the first, it is completely obliterated in the third. The last similarly evokes the feeling of immediacy whereas the first sounds more like a summary.

The second element of mood is perspective in Genette's understanding of the narrative theory. He believes that, of all the aspects of the narrative theory, point of view is the one that has got the most attention of critics. However, he states that there is semantic confusion in the use of the term since most critics use it to answer the questions who sees and who speaks at the same time. Genette uses different terminology and resorts to the term focalization in order to avoid the confusion and the visual implications of the terms like vision, field and point of view. He divides the narratives into three according to the type of focalization used in the text.

1. *Nonfocalized* narrative or narrative with *zero focalization* : As the term suggests there is not a discernible focalization the narrator makes use of.

2. Narrative with internal focalization: In this type focalization can be *fixed* as in the canonical example of *The Ambassadors*. Everything is filtered through the

consciousness of Strether. Internal focalization can be *variable* as well. In this case more than one person's consciousness can be used successively. In *Madam Bovary*, for example, the focal character is first Charles, then Emma and then Charles again. Finally, internal focalization can be *multiple* like in epistolary novels where the same incident might be related a number of times according to the perspective of the letter writer.

3. Narrative with *external* focalization: In such narratives the hero performs in front of the reader but the reader is not allowed to learn about the hero's thoughts and emotions. Famous examples of the type are Hemingway's "The Killers" and "Hills Like White Elephants". Such a narrative strategy is also used in the novels of intrigue and adventure in which the tradition and the structure of the novel force the author to conceal or delay the transmission of some information until the last moment of the narrative (1993: 185-190).

Although the distinctions between the forms of focalization may look clear, Genette warns us that "any formula of focalization does not . . . always bear on entire work, but rather on a definite narrative section, which can be very short" (1993: 191). A good example Genette uses to illustrate this point is from *Madame Bovary* again. As stated before the dominant focalization of the novel is internal variable but Flaubert adopts an external and objective narration in the love scene in the carriage for the sake of propriety (1993: 191) or to avoid charges of obscenity, which he got anyway when the novel was published.

Such transitory variations in the point of view are called *alterations* according to Genette. For him alterations are momentary violations of the dominant mood of the narrative that do not bring the existence of the general code under question. In

other words, the general code or the dominant mood continues to exist and the author goes out of this mood for a short while. Within the context of mood and, particularly, focalization, there are two types of alterations: *paralipsis*, which means “giving less information than is necessary in principle” (195) and *paralepsis*, that is “giving more than is authorized in principle in the mode of focalization governing the whole” (1993: 195).

As Genette comments, alterations, *paralepsis* in particular, should not be confused with the reader’s capacity of and authority to interpret what is given in the text. The reader can make inferences from what is given to him in certain limits. In Genette’s words, “narrative always says less than it knows, but it often makes known more than it says” (1993: 198).

With a power very much like that of the reader, a narrator with internal focalization may also interpret what he observes. Using expressions like “seem”, “appear”, “perhaps” and “undoubtedly”, he may continue being confined to his own sphere and go outside the internal focalization while conveying us ideas that he does not have insight into. Genette considers such inferences of the narrator as an emphasis of focalization rather than *paralepsis* because the reader can never be sure whether these uncertain remarks are prophetic and indirect expressions of facts or not. This is particularly valid when the narrator produces a number of contradictory hypotheses (1993: 202-204).

The last relevant section of Genette’s work is on the voice of the narrator that was either discussed or hinted by critics and authors formerly. Genette starts his chapter on “Voice” by focusing on the narrating instance and accentuates that the narrating instance cannot be considered regardless of the subject executing it. By

subject he means “not only the person who carries out or submits to the action, but also the person (the same one or another) who reports it, and if need be, all those who participate, even though passively, in this narrating activity” (1993: 213). Certain difficulties have been encountered in the analysis of the narrating instance as for Genette. As he has already stated, critics have limited themselves with the question of point of view in the evaluation of the narrative enunciation. Besides, they have identified “the narrating instance with the instance of ‘writing’, the narrator with the author, and the recipient of the narrative with the reader of the work” (1993: 213). Such confusions can be legitimate in historical narratives or real autobiographies, but not so in a narrative of fiction in which the part or the activity of the narrator is completely fictive. Separating the author from the narrator and the hero, Genette asserts that an adequate evaluation of a narrating situation requires a violent act of tearing this complex web into parts. He defines these parts as “time of narrating”, narrative level” and “person” while pinpointing that these elements function together (1993: 213-215).

In relation to the time of narrating, Genette maintains that one can tell a story without specifying the place where it happens and whether this place is close to or far away from the place the person is telling the story; however, that person cannot avoid defining the time of the story as he has to use present, past or future tense. For this reason, the temporal determinations of the narrating instance, which refers to the action of the writing while narrative instance means completed work in Genette’s terminology, is overtly more important than its spatial determinations.

The temporal relations between the narrated event and the narrating instance seem simple at first glance: it may seem obvious that the narration can only come

after what it relates. However, a more careful analysis generates the following four types of narration in the realm of the temporal relations: *subsequent* (i.e. the classical past tense narrative, the most popular type generally in the form of “far and away”), *prior* (predictive or prophetic narrative generally told in the future or present tense), *simultaneous* (narrative in the present, taking place contemporaneously with the action) and *interpolated* (happening between the moments of action) (1993: 216-217).

“The last type is . . . the most complicated since it involves a narrating with several instances, and since the story and the narrating can become entangled in such a way that the latter has an affect on the former” (1993: 217). This complexity appears especially in the epistolary novels in which the letter is both a medium of the narrative and an element of plot. Interpolated narrating can also be “the most delicate” in that rejects analysis because it has an indefinite and incoherent temporal position. It is also difficult to handle as “the extreme closeness of the story to narrating produces here, most often, a very subtle effect of friction... between the slight temporal displacement of the narrative of events (‘Here’s what happened to me today’) and the complete simultaneousness in report of thoughts and feelings (‘Here’s what I think about it this evening’)” (1993: 217-218). What Genette means here is that the narrator is both the hero and “already someone else” at the same time. The events of the day are close to the time of narration but the viewpoint may have changed since the occurrence of the events. In spite of the lapse of time, the emotional traces of the event are still present. Therefore, focalization through the narrator, in this context, is focalization through the hero as well just like it happens in Barnes’ *Talking It Over* and its sequel *Love, etc.*

Compared to the complexity of the interpolated narrating, simultaneous narrating is the simplest because the tight simultaneousness of the story and the narrating deletes all the possibilities of inference of the narrator or temporal tricks. Prior narrating has enjoyed a lesser popularity though it lends itself to more complexity. Works of prophetic genre locate its stories in the future but they “almost always postdate their narrating instances, making them implicitly subsequent to their stories” (1993: 219). In simpler terms, though the work is about the future, the tense used is past tense with the implication that the narrator recounts the story after it is over.

First type, i.e. subsequent narrating is what the majority of narratives have made the most use of. Employment of past tense makes the narrative subsequent but the temporal difference between the moments of narrating and the story is mostly indefinite. It seems to mark some kind of an ageless past; therefore, the temporal difference here is irrelevant. Yet, Genette takes our attention to the fact that in some works story time and narrating time can converge either at the end or the beginning of the novel (1993: 220-221). First-person Bildungsromans which end with the maturity of the protagonist are of such type since it is assumed that the novel is written by the mature character-narrator subsequent to the achievement of maturity.

The time of narration must be thought in relation to the person who tells the story in order to understand Genette’s concept of voice. So far he has discussed when the story is relayed; now he discusses who tells the story. He certainly does not discuss the personality of the narrator but his relationship to the story told.

The main distinguishing variant in the person to be used as a narrator is not the first or third-person according to Genette because a narrator can only be the first-

person in his own narrative. On the contrary, the main distinguishing variant is “to have the story told by one of its ‘characters,’ or to have it told by a narrator outside of the story” (244). Therefore, the categories of person for Genette is a heterodiegetic narrative “with the narrator absent from the story he tells” and a homodiegetic narrative “with the narrator present as a character in the story” (1993: 244-45).

When the narrative is heterodiegetic, not much has to be said since the key term in the classification is the absence of the narrator and absence has no degrees. However, homodiegetic narration needs further analysis because presence has degrees. Homodiegetic type has at least two gradients: the narrator can be the hero of his own narrative, in which case he is the autodiegetic narrator, or he can play a secondary role as an observer and a witness. Ishmael in *Moby Dick*, Marlow in *Lord Jim* and Carraway in *The Great Gatsby* are of the second type narrators (1993: 245).

Regardless of its type, the narrator has some functions besides the obvious function of narrating. These functions, five in number, can be distributed according to some aspects of the narrative which they are connected to. The *narrative function* is the most fundamental one for a narrator’s existence depends on it. Refusing to narrate is refusing to survive for the narrator. The second function is *directing function*, which to a certain extent is metanarrative. It involves marking connections and interrelations through which the narrative is given a cohesiveness and internal organization. Therefore, the narrator does not only tell a story but tell it in a certain working principle.

The third function, the *function of communication*, concerns the narrating situation itself with the opposing forces of the narrator and the narratee. The narrator has to establish certain relations with the narratee. He has to maintain a good

dialogue with the narratee particularly if he is a narrator that resembles the narrator of *Tristram Shandy* who, as Rogers says, mostly faces the audience and pays more attention to the audience than the narrative.

Genette compares the fourth function of the narrator to Jacobson's "emotive" function of the language. A narrator, a limited first-person narrator in particular, has to justify his source of information and prove the validity of the information he gathers through different channels, vindicate the precision of his own memories and support the rightness of his emotional reactions. This *testimonial function* or the function of *attestation* can easily change into the fifth function, namely the *ideological function*, when the narrator intrudes into the narrative to make didactic commentaries as Balzac does (1993: 256).

Genette admits that he is not trying to derive a "cumbersome typology" from the functions of the narrator outlined above since none of the categories is completely pure and exempt from complicity with the others. Only the first one is an exception as the narrative function of the narrator is indispensable from narration. He concludes, "it is rather a question of emphasis: everybody knows that Balzac 'intervenes' in his narrative more than Flaubert, that Fielding addresses the reader more often than Mme. de La Fayette does. . . "(1993: 257).

The last pages of Genette's book are devoted to the concept of narratee whom Barnes' narrative technique in the novels under question heavily relies on. Genette maintains that narratee, just like the narrator, is one of the elements of the narrating instance because he stands at a diegetic level. For this reason, a narratee is not the reader or even the implied reader just as the narrator is not necessarily the author. Genette believes that "to an intradiegetic [which is a synonym for homodiegetic or

simply diegetic in Genette's terms] narrator corresponds an intradiegetic narratee . . . [and] the extradiegetic narrator, on the other hand, can only aim at an extradiegetic narratee, who merges with the implied reader and with whom each real reader can identify" (1993: 259-260).

In terms of distance the narratee's importance stems from the fact that the narratee creates a distance between narrative and the reader since he always steps in between the narrator and the reader. When the narratee is a specific person, the identification between the narratee and the reader is difficult to accomplish. As a rule, the more silent and transparent the narratee gets, the easier it is for the audience to identify with him (1993: 260).

A second figure as important as Genette in the field of narratology is the German critic F. K. Stanzel. His magnum opus *A Theory of Narrative*, which was first published in Germany in 1979 is almost exclusively on the concept of the narrator. He starts out with the idea that there is always a mediator in narrative. Whenever something, a piece of news, an action, or a story is conveyed, there is a mediator who tells it to the reader. Stanzel calls this situation mediacy.

There are three rough ways of rendering mediacy of narration according to Stanzel.

a. First Person Narrative Situation: In this situation "the mediacy of narration belongs totally to the fictional realm of the characters of the novel: the mediator, that is, the first-person narrator, is a character of this world just as the other characters are. The world of the characters is completely identical to the world of the narrator" (1988: 4). In this type, the first-person narrator is a fictional character and therefore, is subject to all fictional laws of the novel.

b. Authorial Narrative Situation: In this case “the narrator is outside the world of the characters. The narrator’s world exists on a different level of being from that of the characters. Here the process of transmission originates from an external perspective...” (1988: 5). Though Stanzel does not, at least at the beginning of his book, elaborate on the powers and the degrees of presence of the author, it is clear that this type of narrator has superior powers to the characters. The word “authorial” implies omniscience and omnipotence of the third-person narrator. However, the witness narrator is not elaborated on in Stanzel’s classification. The narrator, in this case, may well be someone who does not take much attention on himself. He can be someone almost transparent but observing, witnessing and relaying the action as Friedeman covers in his category of “I” as witness. Perhaps because of this negligence, Stanzel suggests that this is a rough classification.

c. The Figural Narrative Situation: In the realm of this narrative situation “the mediating narrator is replaced by a reflector: a character in the novel who thinks, feels and perceives, but does not speak to the reader like a narrator” (1988: 5). The reader gets to know about other characters and the action in the narrative only through the subjective perception of the “reflector-character”. However, the actual narration does not belong to this person. A third-person narrator who does not take place in the narrative relates the novel. “Since nobody ‘narrates’ in this case, the presentation seems to be direct. Thus, the distinguishing characteristic of the figural narrative situation is that the illusion of immediacy is superimposed over mediacy” (1988: 5).

The importance of these narrative situations stems from the fact that in each a different element of mediacy, i.e. person, perspective or mode, is dominant: “What

determines the nature of a particular narrative situation is above all, the first *person* as a character in the novel in the first-person narrative situation, external *perspective* in the authorial narrative situation, and reflector-*mode* in the figural narrative situation” (1988: 5) (italics mine). As he also states above, Stanzel explains the whole narrative situation in a typological circle which is comprised of three axis and their binary oppositions. These are oppositions of person, perspective and mode which is called mood by Genette.

In the first opposition, i.e. person, he basically discusses the implications of first-person and third-person narration while relating these to the concept of point of view. Stanzel, agreeing with Genette, believes that although point of view is a clear term, its application by the authors and how it is handled in literary theory have not been so. In simple terms, it means two different things. The first meaning of the word is “viewpoint” or “attitude toward a question”, and the second one is “standpoint from which a story is narrated or from which an event is perceived by a character in the narrative” (1988: 9). The second meaning, which is relevant to the narrative theory has two distinct uses: to perceive and to narrate. Point of view, therefore, refers to who experiences/perceives and who narrates (1988: 9). In other words, the questions of who sees and in corollary to this, from whose point of view the reader perceives the matters, and who speaks are both answered with the concept of point of view. This is a semantic ambiguity discussed by many critics including Genette.

These two aspects of the concept have not been used consistently according to Stanzel. He states

the actual difficulty is that the two functions of point of view can overlap. This happens especially frequently where authorial and figural elements of

the narrative situation of a novel appear in close association. In this case the perception of the represented reality takes place from the standpoint of a figural medium, but the voice of an authorial narrator can still be heard in the transmission of the figural perception, and his point of view can consequently be registered by the reader, too, although only quite vaguely. (1988: 91)

The vagueness in the perspective from which the novel is related is so important for Stanzel that he ventures to divide the history of the novel into two: perspectival and aperspectival narration. In the first, the perspective of the author and the narrators are not easily distinguished. Authors in the first category use narrators as their mouthpieces. Perspective of the narrator and the author overlap, in fact, to enable the author to write an essay. As an example, Stanzel points out that Moll Flander's moralistic retrospection is mostly expressed in the voice of Defoe, not the protagonist herself. This tendency towards aperspectivism is a property of the novel up to the modernist novel (1988: 11-12). In this case, going back to Booth, we can say the moral, intellectual or aesthetic values of the author and the narrator are almost identical in the 18th and 19th century novel. The works of 20th century novelists like Woolf, Joyce and James belong to perspectival manner of narration because perspectives and the value judgements of the narrator and the author are markedly different. That is the reason why unreliable narrators are more common in the 20th century novel.

After establishing the difference between the author and the first-person narrator, Stanzel goes on to argue the main differences between first-person and third-person narration. The difference does not reside in the credibility of a third-person narrator over the first-person as some argue. According to him the first-person narrator is unreliable by rule. This is not so because of the narrator's personality but because of his ontological status. Being a character in the novel, the first-person

narrator is bound to be limited in perception and knowledge. Therefore, “he can have only a subjective and conditionally valid view of the narrated events” (1988: 89). Yet, reliability of the narrator is not sufficient to differentiate first-person from the third “because some authorial third-person narrators . . . are only conditionally credible, since they, too, are to be considered fictional characters created by the author and equipped with a certain individual personality. Only the unrestricted omniscient narrator would have to be excluded from this qualification of the narrator’s role” (1988: 89). After arguing that all narrators except the third-person omniscient are more or less unreliable, he concludes that “reliability is, therefore, a problem of the dramatized narrator in general, that is to say, of both the authorial narrator and the first-person narrator who reveal their personality” (1988: 89).

According to Stanzel,

The main difference between a personalized first-person and an authorial third-person narrator lies in the fact that the former belongs to the represented reality, the fictional world in which the characters live; the latter does not. The first-person narrator is distinguished from the authorial third-person by his physical and existential presence in the fictional world. In other words, the first-person is ‘embodied’ in the world of the characters. The authorial third-person narrator may also say ‘I’ in reference to himself, but he is embodied neither inside nor outside of the fictional world. Personal features can, of course, become visible in an authorial narrator, as well, that is why the criterion of credibility is applicable to him, too – but these personality features are not linked with the notion of his physical existence and corporeality. The situation is quite different in the case of the first-person narrator, in particular the first-person narrator of the ‘classical,’ i.e., the quasi-autobiographical novel. The first-person narrator is very concretely an embodied self, that is to say, his corporeality is part of his existence as an experiencing subject. (1988: 90)

As the long quotation above also demonstrates, Stanzel defines the first main difference as the ontological status of the first-and-third person narrators. A second important difference between the first-person narrator and a third-person narrator is

that the first is an embodied narrator who writes about himself and/or his life. This has a direct relevance to the motive of narration: the embodied narrator, just like the narrators in the works of Julian Barnes analyzed in this study, has an existential motivation to write . Narration for an embodied narrator

is directly connected with his practical experiences, with the joys and sorrows he has experienced, with his moods and needs. The act of narration can thus take on something compulsive, fateful, inevitable, as in the case of the first-person narrator of *The Catcher in the Rye*. The motivation to narrate can also originate, however, in the need for an organizing overview, in search for meaning on the part of the matured, self-possessed 'I' who has outgrown the mistakes and confusions of his former life. Here, too, the motivation to narrate is in the end existentially determined by the narrator's existential situation, although a greater distance is involved . . . The narrative process and the narrator's experience form an entity, in other words, the reader is constantly invited to keep in mind this existential unity of the experiencing self and the narrating self. (1988: 93)

While the motivation to narrate is existential for the first-person narrator, it is "literary-aesthetic" for the third-person authorial narrator. He does not have an existential craving to narrate. He may like some people in the narrative and detest others and this may influence the narrative process. However, still remains the fact that he is not existentially motivated to tell the story (1988: 93).

The second binary opposition in Stanzel's typological circle is perspective. In his words,

The opposition perspective . . . involves the control of the process of apperception which the reader performs in order to obtain a concrete perceptual image of the fictional reality. In addition to this regulation of the perception of fictional reality and the spatio-temporal orientation of the reader in this world, the concept perspective also influences the choice of certain areas and events of the fictional world for presentation. (1988: 111)

In this second opposition Stanzel focuses more on the audience rather than the author. Here he is concerned with the questions of the audience like “where do I stand in this fictional world of the novel and from whose point of view do I perceive time, place and the events?” As an answer to these questions Stanzel provides the opposition of internal and external perspective.

In the internal perspective part of the opposition, the point of view through which the fictional world is perceived or represented is situated in the main character or in the centre of events. We can see internal perspective in “quasi-autobiographical novels”, epistolary novels, autonomous interior monologues and the novels in which mostly figural narrative is used (1988: 111-112). In external perspective, on the other hand, the point of view from which the novel is reflected is located outside the main character or outside the centre of events. Novels narrated through a third-person narrator and a first-person who is not an important agent in the course of events like *Lord Jim* of Conrad are examples of external perspective (1988: 112).

The third opposition in Stanzel’s typological circle is mode. He defines mode as “the sum of all possible variations of the narrative forms between the two poles of narrator and reflector: narration in the true sense of mediacy, that is, the reader has the impression that he is confronted by a personalized narrator, as opposed to direct or immediate presentation, that is, the reflection of the fictional reality in the consciousness of a character” (48). In the chapter on the opposition mode he further defines it as two types of mediacy: explicit mediacy of narration and implicit mediacy “which produces the illusion of immediacy in the reader” (1988: 141). What he refers to is the traditional difference of diegesis and mimesis and in Plato’s coinage, “simple telling” and “scenic presentation” in Lubbock’s words and “telling”

and “showing” as Friedman suggests. However, it is worth remembering that, differently from the above cited people, Stanzel considers all narration a form of mediacy regardless of the rhetoric employed. As regards mode he points out that very rarely a work of fiction is executed completely in one single mode. This happens only in short stories. In novels the mode oscillates between explicit and implicit mediacy throughout the chapters of a work though one can be the dominant mode (1988: 141-142).

As he mentions in his definition, Stanzel’s understanding of mode heavily relies on the opposition of narrator and reflector. He comes up with two types of characters that influence the mode of transmission: teller characters and reflector characters.

A teller-character narrates, records, informs, writes letters, includes documents, cites reliable informants, refers to his own narration, addresses the reader, comments on which has been narrated and so on. . . By contrast, a *reflector-character* reflects, that is he mirrors events of the outer world in his consciousness, perceives, feels, registers, but always silently, because he never ‘narrates’, that is he does not verbalize his perceptions, thoughts and feelings in an attempt to communicate them. The reader seems to find out directly, by direct insight into the consciousness of the reflector-character, about the events and reactions which are mirrored in his consciousness. (1988: 144)

Though there are variations of teller and reflector characters, Stanzel states that pre-modern novels tend to employ teller-characters whereas reflector-characters mostly populate the modern novels (1988: 144-145).

The distinction between the stated characters is evocative of Booth’s concept of self-conscious narrator who is aware that he is writing a novel. Actually, as Stanzel puts forward, a teller-character can be likened to a “transmitter” since he narrates as if he is reporting to a “receiver”. Consequently, he is conscious of himself

as a producer of messages, he is conscious of the writing process and of the audience he wants to influence. This requires the use of different strategies and rhetoric including summarising, evaluation and scenic presentation. However, the reader's communication with the reflector-character is different. Because he does not narrate, he cannot be a transmitter in the sense defined above. With the reflector-character the audience is under the illusion that he is witnessing the scene directly through the eyes and mind of the reflector-character (1988: 146-147).

The difference between these two modes of narration or the process of communication is important for the interpretation of a text since the choice of mode within this context brings along the issues of credibility and reliability. Since a teller-character is aware of the audience, he is compelled to designate proper narrative strategies and rhetorical devices for the work and the reader. This conscious effort changes all the aspect of the story. This does not happen with the reflector-character. Not being aware that his experiences, emotions and thoughts are communicated to a body of audience, the quality of his experience remains untouched by the process of communication. Consequently, the reliability of the presented material is not harmed (1988: 147).

Another aspect of the difference between teller and reflector-characters, which also affect the interpretation of a given work, is related to the areas of indeterminacy in a work of literature. As a reflector-character is not aware of and responsible for the reader, what he conveys is limited to what he perceives. He is not in a struggle to paint a complete picture that the reader can rely on in understanding or interpreting the story. Outside what he perceives is blank or indeterminate for the reader. However, a teller-character is a conscious author who carefully selects details

to provide the reader with relevant information. Moreover, he overtly explains why he selects or deletes some parts of a story, skips the description of a character or the setting. There is an unspoken agreement between the reader and the teller-character that nothing of importance will be left out and the reader will be provided with the necessary information and explanation. Therefore, provided that the narrator is reliable and the author chooses not to challenge the conventions intentionally, there are fewer areas of indeterminacy in this mode compared to a passage related by a reflector-character (1988: 152-155).

Genette's and Stanzel's works, as it has been illustrated, are invaluable when the degree of development they have provided for the theory of the narrator. However, both lack one important aspect of the theory: narratee. Narratee is a relatively new concept and it was introduced into the narrative theory recently by Gerald Prince in 1971 (Chatman, 1996: 164). Genette briefly touches upon the concept, as we have seen, in a page or two in *Narrative Discourse*. Mieke Bal follows Genette's footsteps adopting the brevity he has. Similarly only twice she mentions the concept without elaborating on it while Stanzel does not mention it at all. Fortunately, Gerald Prince in his article "Introduction to the Study of the Narratee," first published in *Poétique* in 1973, shed an immense light on the issue.

According to Prince narration of all types assumes at least one narrator and a narratee. However, while the narrative theory invested a lot in the narrator, narratee has been neglected. For him the reason of the negligence is not incomprehensible. Narrators on the surface level are considered to be more responsible than a narratee for almost all aspects of the story. Besides, because the person who tells the story and the person it is told are interdependent on each other, studies on the narrator more or

less touch upon the issues related to the narratee. “Whatever the case may be,” Prince wraps up, “narratees deserve to be studied” (1996b: 227).

Prince’s study of the narratee starts out by defining the narratee and distinguishing it from other related concepts. As for Prince, narratee is the fictional person the narrator addresses. Yet, he is not the reader because of the simple fact that narratee is a fictional construct whereas the reader is not. Narratee should not be mistaken for the virtual reader- the reader the author has in mind while writing the novel. All authors write for a public which carry certain characteristics the author imagines or hopes them to have and this public is not comprised of the real readers. Finally, narratee should not be confused with the ideal reader in spite of the similarities between them. The ideal reader is supposed to have the necessary qualities to interpret the text perfectly well but some narratees may not have these characteristics.

As a second step, Prince embarks on classifying the characteristics of the narratee. He has a simple way of doing it: situating these characteristics with reference to a kind of “zero-degree” narratee. Zero-degree narratee has perfect mastery of the language of the text with its langue, parole, paragrammatical possibilities and semantic ambiguities. In addition, he has certain abilities of reasoning and deduction alongside the knowledge of narrative grammar, which enable him to grasp the story correctly. In contrast with these positive characteristics, he must lack some traits. He should not have any personality and social characteristics that may bestow him with certain biases and prejudices. Similarly, he should not have any previous knowledge of the incidents and the characters of the novel. Above all he should be totally lost if the narrator is not there to direct him,

which means he must be unable to determine the morality or immorality of a character, the verisimilitude or excessiveness of description, the virtues of a rejoinder or the satirical value of a tirade.

Any narratee, unless otherwise stated, has these characteristics. Yet, it is more than exceptional to find narratees lacking these traits. In fact, the departure from the zero-degree narratee, that is, the deviations from the features of the zero-degree narratee, gradually builds up the portrait of a certain narratee. The portrait of the narratee, though may be deduced from the part not intended for the narratee, mainly generates in the narrative addressed to him. Considering that a narration is comprised of a group of signals directed to the narratee, two main categories of signals can be observed: in the first category are the signals that do not differentiate him from the zero-degree narratee and in the second are the ones that define him as an individual narratee, distinct from the zero-degree narratee (1996b: 227-232).

There are obvious references to the narratees especially in the nineteenth century novels some of which are in the form of “Dear gentle reader...”. The example Prince quotes from *Le Pere Goriot* is of particular clarity: “That’s what you will do, you who hold this book with a white hand, you who settle back in a well-padded armchair saying to yourself: perhaps this is going to be amusing. After reading about old Goriot’s secret misfortunes, you’ll dine with a good appetite attributing your insensitivity to the author whom you’ll accuse of exaggeration and poetic affection” (1996b: 228). In contrast with the clarity of these hypothetical and actual examples, Prince cautions us, the signals in a text that are capable of delineating the narratee vary and only some of them are easy to detect. Direct addresses as in the example of “dear reader/listener”, use of indefinite pronouns like

“we” or “one”, and questions asked to the narratee are comparatively easy to detect. Negations - negative answers given to the narratee-, using comparisons and analogies, which imply that both the narrator and the narratee are familiar with the elements of comparisons, and over-justifications are more subtle signs that depict the narratee in the text. (1996b: 232-233). Over-justifications, which according to Prince are “perhaps the most revelatory and at times the most difficult to grasp” (1996b: 233) need some clarification. A narrator with varying degrees makes explanations about the universe he exists in. For example, in *La Chartreuse de Parma*, the narrator tells the narratee that at La Scala it is customary to limit the visit to the box to twenty minutes or so. The purpose of the narrator is to provide the narratee with the information required to understand the events. However, when the

explanations or motivations are situated at the level of meta-language, meta-commentary, or meta-narration, they are over-justifications . . . [W]hen the . . . [narrator] asks to be excused for a poorly phrased sentence, when he excuses himself for having to interrupt his narrative, when he confesses himself incapable of describing well a certain feeling, these are over justifications that he employs. Over-justifications always provide us with interesting details about the narratee’s personality, even though they often do so in an indirect way, in overcoming the narratee’s defences, in prevailing over his prejudices, in allaying his apprehensions, they reveal them. (1996b: 233-234)

All of these rhetoric elements indicate the presence of someone the narrator is addressing. In such passages where we get the signals of the presence and the characteristics of the narratee, the narrator establishes a common identity with the narratee directly or indirectly, makes explanations to him, justifies his own manoeuvres or simply addresses him. Out of this relationship we get the portrait of the narratee. However, as Prince states, narrators at times can send contradictory signals about the narratee, which creates a confusion about the personality of the

narratee. Going back to *Le Pere Goriot*, Prince cites another quotation where Balzac depicts his narratee as a refined Parisian, which contradicts with his opening lines where he accuses the narratee of being insensitive. Prince believes such contradictions cannot be resolved and at times they are indicators of the author's insufficiency, carelessness or idiosyncratic choice. Nevertheless, it is still the fact that, in spite of carelessness or contradictions, in each case the reader comes across a different type of narration. Therefore, it is possible to categorize a narration according to the type of narratee it is addressed to, which is what Prince does in the next step of his discussion of the narratee (1996b: 234-235).

Prince finds it useless to categorize the narratees according to their personality, belief system or social status because that would be useless and too complicated. Instead, he classifies them "according to their narrative situation, to their position in reference to the narrator, the characters, and the narration" (1996b: 235).

In some texts, particularly the ones in which the narrator chooses to be transparent, there may be no direct reference to the narratee. Yet, a closer examination of even these texts, reveals that the narrator is addressing someone. For example, in *Un coeur simple* the narrator identifies the people whose proper names he cites like "Robelin, the farmer. . . Liebard, the farmer from Touques . . . M. Bourais, a former lawyer." The narrator cannot be identifying them for himself; explanation can only be directed to the narratee. Besides, the comparisons employed indicate that the narrator and the narratee belong to the same universe. "Thus," Prince concludes, "even though the narratee may be invisible in a narration, he nonetheless exists and is never entirely forgotten" (1996b: 236).

In narrations in which the narratee is explicitly mentioned, unlike the case above, the narratee may or may not be a character. In *Tom Jones*, the narratee is not a character but so many pages have been devoted to him that he is as vividly defined as any character in the novel. In *Heart of Darkness*, *Portnoy's Complaint* and *Les Infortunes de la vertu*, on the other hand, the narratees are characters. Character-narratees may play certain roles other than being mere listeners. In *L'Immortaliste* one of the three narratees writes a long letter with the indication that he becomes a temporary narrator. In *La Nausée*, because the novel is written in the form of a diary, the narrator is the only narratee or vice versa. It is important to note that the narrator of this novel relies on the fact that it is only he who will read the diary and this determines the narrative to a good extent.

The last role Prince attributes to the narratee is much more significant for the narration: the existence of the narration completely relies on him. In simple terms, the narration is executed solely for him. In *Heart of Darkness* the character or the presence of a certain narratee is not compulsory for the narration to take place but in *L'Immortaliste* the narrator gathers three of his friends particularly to tell them his story hoping that they will understand him, not condemn him for the bad things he has done but help him get over the situation he is in. A similar case happens in *A Thousand and One Nights*: Scheherazade can tell her stories as long as the narratee, i.e. the caliph, listens to her because, as the tale goes, once the caliph is bored, he will stop listening to her and she will be killed (1996b: 236-237).

Prince admits that the categories of the narratee can be extended since narratees are as variable as the narrators, but the main point of the study of the narratee is that "it permits us study better the way in which a narration functions"

(1996b: 237). In all types of narration a dialogue develops between the narrator(s), narratee(s) and the character(s) in corollary to the distance separating them from each other. Certainly, a narratee who participates in the events recounted, is much closer to the characters than a narratee who has no knowledge of them. The moral, intellectual, emotional and physical distance or identification among the narrator(s), narratee(s) and the character(s) determine which values to be praised or justified and which ones to be rejected alongside which events to be emphasized and which ones to be neglected in the course of a narration.

The last part of Prince's work focuses on the specific functions of the narratee in a narrative. The narratee can function as a channel of transmission of information between the reader and the narrator. If the narrator wants to defend certain values, illuminate some ambiguities or vindicate a character, he can easily do this in the form of an aside. This is a very economical way of putting things into perspective. Besides, narratee has an illuminating effect on characterization particularly for the narrator-characters. Because the narrator-character is at a distance from everything including himself, his relationship with the narratee reveals a lot about his character. The same relationship between the narrator and the narratee emphasizes certain themes and values and contributes to the development of the plot. As a result, Prince concludes his article by emphasizing that "the narratee is one of the fundamental elements of all narration. A thorough examination of what he represents, a study of a narrative work as constituted by a series of signals addressed to him, can lead to a more sharply delineated reading and a deeper characterization of the work" (1996b: 241).

Prince's work can be associated with narratology and, though in a different vein, with Genette and Stanzel. However, there are critics who employ a methodology which can easily be associated with narratology as well as stylistics. Seymour Chatman is one of these people who enjoys venturing in different fields. In the chapter "Voice" from his book *Story and Discourse*, Seymour Chatman aims to clarify the difference between point of view and voice since, as indicated before, point of view is used incorrectly to cover both concepts. To do this he touches upon some elements of the narrative such as author, implied author, narrator and narratee, which have been annexed to point of view and voice.

Chatman starts by affirming that all narratives are composed of a content plane, which some call story, and an expression plane called discourse. The expression plane is a combination of narrative statements: they are the basic components of the form of expression. Looking at narrative broadly, Chatman upholds that a certain stance in ballet, a series of film shots or a complete paragraph in a novel can be a narrative statement.

Once the narrative statement is defined, Chatman focuses on the question "Is the statement directly presented to the audience or is it mediated by someone- by someone we call the narrator? (1996: 161). To comprehend the idea of the narrator's voice, Chatman writes, we have to reflect on " the interrelation of the several parties to the narrative transaction, the meaning of 'point of view' and its relation to voice ... " (1996: 162). The parties involved in the narrative situation are real author, implied author, narrator, narratee, implied reader and the reader. Chatman agrees with Booth's definition of the implied author in general: implied author is a construct of the reader; he does not have a voice, but he shapes the work with his choices.

However, Chatman disagrees with Booth that the choices of the implied author are moral choices. He asserts that the universe created by the implied author is not made up of a set of moral values but aesthetic ones. Therefore, the reader's acceptance of the universe is not moral but aesthetic (1996: 162-163).

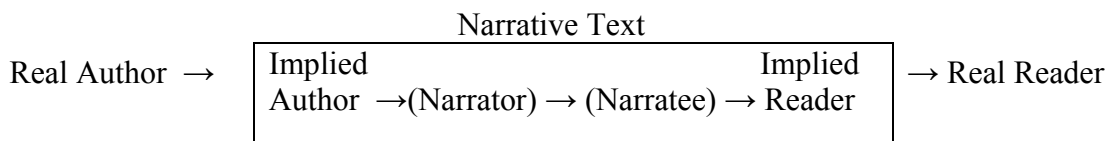
The equivalent of the implied author is the implied reader who is not the flesh-and-bone reader holding the book but a reader alleged by the narrative. Unlike a narrator and a narratee, implied reader is always present and indispensable. Just as the audience constructs the implied author, the narrative generates the implied reader (1996: 163-164).

Chatman, like Genette and Prince, views narratee as an element of the fictional realm. That is the reason why he is indispensable to any narrative. He may manifest as a character in the narrative, like someone listening to Marlow while he is telling the story of Kurtz or Jim. In other instances, there may not be explicit references to him but his existence is sensed. In the works with a narratee-character, he is a means by which the implied author tells the real reader how to act as the implied reader. The implied author explains the real reader which world view to ascribe to through the narratee. In works without a narratee-character, this process of acculturation or orientation can only be inferred by reference to ordinary cultural and moral values (1996: 163-164).

There is an ontological difference between the parties involved in the narrative transaction. Real author and the real reader are outside the narrative construct. They are real people and consequently are not functioning or living in the fictional world of the work. Implied author and the implied reader are products of the narrative, i.e. they belong to the realm of fiction. Though the narrator and the

narratee also belong to the fictional realm, they are not indispensable. There is a parallelism between the narrator and the narratee: each of them varies between a fully characterized person to no one. A story implies the existence of a teller and a listener but an author may choose to leave them unmarked for various reasons.

Chatman summarizes these stated elements in the following diagram:



The box indicates the narrative text and the parenthesis show that these elements in them are optional.

In the second part of his chapter, Chatman provides a really detailed analysis of the concept of point of view. It is interesting to see that, unlike Chatman, all the critics and authors covered so far in this study consider point of view as a fixed entity in meaning. Chatman, on the contrary, shows us that point of view may refer to at least three senses:

- a) literal: through someone's eyes (perception);
- b) figurative: through someone's worldview (ideology, conceptual system, *Weltanschauung*, etc.)
- c) transferred: from someone's interest-vantage (characterizing his general interest, profit, welfare, well-being, etc.) (1996: 165)

Chatman illustrates these three senses with the following sentences:

- a) From John's point of view, at the top of Coit Tower, the panorama of the San Francisco Bay was breath-taking.
- b) John said that from his point of view, Nixon's position, though praised by his supporters, was somewhat less than noble.

c) Though he didn't realize at the time, the divorce was a disaster from John's point of view. (1996: 165)

"The panorama of the bay", in the first sentence, is described as perceived by John standing at the top of the tower and having a half-circle of vision. In b nothing of his physical situation in the real world is mentioned because the focus of the point of view is his attitudes and way of thinking. Consequently, the point of view is not perceptual but conceptual. In the last, there is no reference to John's mind at a perceptual or conceptual level: he is unaware of the stated consequence. Therefore, a synonym for this case can be "as far as John is concerned". Chatman calls this his *interest* point of view. He concludes the explanation by stating that point of view, if not defined adequately, can refer to an action as in the cases of perceiving and conceiving or to a "passive state" as we see in the third case (1996: 165).

Texts or daily conversation may involve one or more of the senses outlined above. The situation is even complicated for narrative texts because there are at least three presences there: characters, narrators, and the implied author, and each of them may employ one or more kinds of point of view. An event may be perceived by a character and/or how he conceptualizes can be presented and/or his interest in it may be cited by a narrator even though he may be unaware of this interest (1996: 166).

In reference to his analysis of point of view Chatman explains the difference between point of view and voice very precisely:

. . . point of view is the physical place or the ideological situation or the practical life orientation to which narrative events stand in relation. Voice, on the contrary, refers to the speech or other overt means through which events and existents are communicated to the audience. Point of view does *not* mean expression; it only means the perspective in terms of which the expression is made. The perspective and the expression need not be lodged in the same person. (1996: 166)

The distinction between point of view and voice has already been made by Stanzel and Genette, and implied by James. However, the development Chatman provides for the theory resides in his observation that “perception, conception and interest points of view are quite independent of the manner in which they are expressed. When we speak of ‘expression’, we pass from point of view . . . to the province of narrative voice, the medium through which perception, conception, and everything else are communicated. Thus, point of view is in the story (when it is the character’s), but voice is always outside, in the discourse” (1996: 167).

Seymour Chatman, in his successful attempt to distinguish between point of view and voice takes a short excerpt from *Ulysses*: “Coffin now. Got here before us, dead as he is. Horse looking round at it with his plume skewways. Dull eye: collar tight on his neck, pressing on a bloodvessel or something. Do they know what they cart out here everyday?” (in Chatman 1996: 167). Chatman states that what we see in this short quotation is the perceptual point of view and the words of Leopold Bloom. Nevertheless, he is not the narrator, nor is he telling anything to the narratee. “Indeed, he is not speaking even to himself: the convention argues that he is directly perceiving the coffin and the nag’s dull eye, nothing more. There *is* no narrator” (1996: 167).

Chatman is right that Leopold Bloom is not speaking but he does not elaborate on the indirect voicing of the character in his work. The convention Chatman mentions, which is based on, in a sense, indirect vocalization of the character is called narrated monologue in Dorrit Cohn’s coinage. In her book

Transparent Minds: Narratives Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction she adequately explains what it means.

Dorrit Cohn's purpose in this book is to discuss how novelists make the minds of the characters' transparent for the reader to see through. In other words, she illustrates how authors render the consciousness of characters, undoubtedly the most idiosyncratic feature of fiction and the most challenging task of the novelist. In broad terms, because the consciousness of the character can be conveyed by a third-person narrator or the character himself, Cohn divides her book into two parts, namely "Consciousness in the Third-Person Context" and "Consciousness in the First-Person Text". She studies three techniques in the first part which are psycho-narration, quoted monologue and narrated monologue. Because narrated monologue, particularly in the first-person narration is directly relevant to the purpose of the present study, more thought and space have been devoted to it.

Cohn defines narrated monologue as

A transformation of figural thought-language into the narrative language of third-person fiction is precisely what characterizes the technique for rendering consciousness . . . and that I call narrated monologue. It may be most succinctly defined as the technique for rendering a character's thought in his own idiom while maintaining the third-person reference and the basic tense of narration. This definition implies that a simple transposition of grammatical person and tense will 'translate' a narrated into an interior monologue. Such a translation can actually be applied as a kind of litmus test to confirm the validity of a reader's apprehension that a narrative sentence belongs to a character's, rather than to a narrator's mental domain (1983: 100-101).

In simple terms, narrated monologue is the transposition of a character's mental process into the tense and mode, i.e. the third person narration, of the narration while retaining the wording of the character.

Two of the examples Cohn uses bears citing here for clarity's sake. The first example is from *The Castle* while K. is walking at night with Barnabas, the messenger from the castle. Cohn italicized the sentences that are in the form of the narrated monologue.

At the moment Barnabas stopped. *Where were they? Was this the end of the road? Would Barnabas leave K.? He wouldn't succeed.* K. clutched Barnabas' arm so firmly that he almost hurt himself. *Or had the incredible happened, and were they already in the Castle or at its gates? But they hadn't done any climbing so far as K. could tell. Or had Barnabas taken him up by an imperceptibly mounting road?* "Where are we?" asked K. in a low voice, more of himself than of Barnabas. (qtd. in Cohn, 1983: 101-102)

The second example is from *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* while Stephen is waiting for confession.

The slide was shot to suddenly. The penitent came out. He was next. He stood up in terror and walked blindly into the box.

At last it had come. He knelt in the silent gloom and raised his eyes to the white crucifix suspended above him. *God could see that he was sorry. He would tell all his sins. His confession would be long, long. Everybody in the chapel would know then what a sinner he had been. Let them know. It was true. But God had promised to forgive him if he was sorry. He was sorry.* He clasped his hands and raised them towards the white form, praying with his darkening eyes, praying with all his trembling body, swaying his head to and fro like a lost creature, praying with whimpering lips. (qtd. in Cohn 1983: 102)

As Cohn states, narrative language in these quotations looks like a mask behind which we can hear the mind of the figural character. The figural characters' sentences reflect their psychological state, i.e. Stephen's anxiety and K.'s sense of loss. Their sentences are marked with questions, exclamations, repetitions, overstatements, and colloquialism. The content and the style of these sentences,

consequently, cannot be ascribed to the narrators. Once the reader understands this situation, the content and the style get completely reasonable.

This style of rendering consciousness, by leaving the relationship between words and thoughts concealed “casts a peculiarly penumbral light on the figural consciousness, suspending it on the threshold of verbalization in a manner that cannot be achieved by direct quotation” (1983: 103). Besides, it provides an intact intersection between narrated monologues and their narrative context since “the same basic tense is used for the narrator’s reporting language and the character’s reflecting language, two normally distinct linguistic currents are [thus] made to merge” (1983: 103).

Demarcation of narrated monologue from narration may prove difficult since simple linguistic criteria are not reliable. A sentence reflecting the consciousness of a character, having adopted the grammar of narration, can be taken for a piece relaying the fictional fact. As can be seen in the examples, the context generally signals the narrated monologue for the attentive reader. An author who wants the reader to decode the text correctly has to lodge enough clues for the correct recognition of the narrated monologue. The clues may be contextual, semantic, syntactic, and/or lexical (1983: 104-106).

The second part of Cohn’s book as stated before concerns the reflection of consciousness in first-person fiction. Cohn divides first-person retrospective technique of rendering past consciousness into two: Dissonant self-narration and consonant self-narration. Dissonant self-narration is quite obvious and well-known. An aged or mature narrator writes about his past self and the identification distance between the past and the present self is big. The past self is ignorant, confused and

deluded whereas the present self is enlightened and elevated. Cohn views *la recherche* as a perfect example of dissonant self-narration, in which Proust writes about Marcel the hero. Though the example is really perfect, a better-known and simpler example can be *Great Expectations*. Pip the boy believes that his secret benefactor is Miss Havisham and she plans a marriage between him and Estella, that Provis is a nuisance and he will ruin Pip's life. The matured Pip, at the time of writing the novel or his autobiography, knows that it is Provis who protects Pip throughout the novel and Miss Havisham is not a benevolent woman at all. Consequently, though there is a temporal continuity between the two forms of Pip, a remarkable dissonance separates them. The matured Pip confronts the naivety and gullibility of Pip the boy with a bitter simile which dissociates him from his former self. This is why Cohn calls this technique dissonant self-narration.

However, dissonance should not be understood as stemming from wisdom and maturity alone. The experiencing self or the former self of the narrator only experiences while the narrating-self remembers, organizes, interprets and narrates the memories. That is what Proust does in *la recherche* above all. The slides up and down the story line while a chronological narration could have been adhered to, different uses of adverbs and tenses underline the overt temporal and existential distance between the narrating-self and the experiencing-self (1983: 148-151). Cohn salutes Proust's method for rendering Marcel's past consciousness as "elucidation and interpretation: the elaborate mental vocabulary, the hypotactic style, the expansive concern with psychological motivation, the occasional ironic self-quotation. . ." (1983: 151).

Consonant self-narration is the opposite of dissonant self-narration not because there is not a temporal difference between narration and experience but precisely because the narrator chooses not to dissociate -unlike Pip- himself from his previous self. Narrator of a dissonant self-narration can be compared to an obtrusive narrator who has the privilege and vantage point of view to comment on the past experience and psyches. In this second retrospective technique, which is not as common as the first, the narrator relinquishes or gives up “all manner of cognitive privilege” over the former self (1983: 155). In the narrative, to put it more simply, the narrator chooses to identify himself with his previous self retaining the psyche and the diction of the former. For this reason, the monologues written in this fashion can be compared to free-indirect speech or narrated monologues but with the difference that the narrator is the protagonist himself in this context.

Rendering of consciousness by a first-person narrator certainly requires conveyance of monologues. In fact the dissonant self-narration is very much like psycho-narration as the first-person narrator narrates and explicates his own past-psyche. In parallel to her methods of rendering past consciousness in third-person narration, Cohn discusses self-quoted monologue and self-narrated monologue. The main characteristics of these techniques are same as the ones in a third-person narration. One relies on direct quotation of a past monologue and the other one on the narration of the monologue.

Cohn states that “occasional quotations of past thoughts –on the pattern of ‘I said to myself: . . .’ –are a standard component of traditional first-person narration” (1983: 161). However, the word-by-word quotation of past thoughts is rare in modern autobiographical novels for two reasons. First, in a dissonant narration where

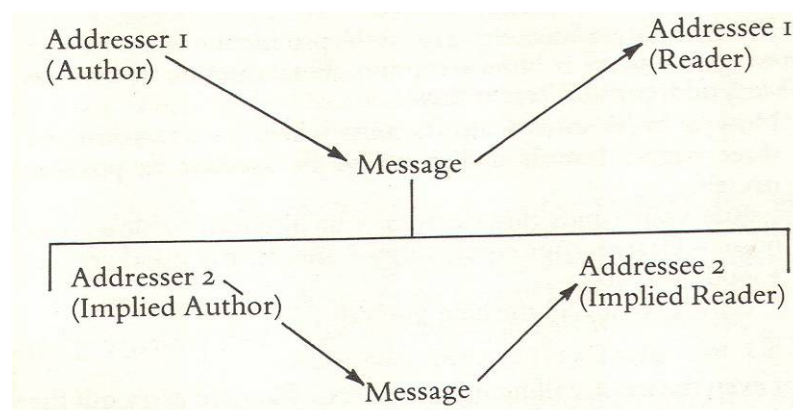
the experiencing-self and the narrating-self are distant, the past thought may be taken as the thought of the present narrator. Therefore, an author using this technique must use redundant expressions to separate the thoughts of past and the present thoughts of the self. Secondly, self-quoted monologue poses the problem of credibility. A first-person narrator is a limited entity compared to the omniscient and omnipotent third-person narrator. When the first-person narrator quotes a monologue word by word, he is at the stake of not being credible. Such a precision of memory is impossible. Because he can reach the past thought only through retrospection, the more precise and detailed his account is, the less plausible the process seems. For this reason, many authors employing this technique feel an urge to use expressions like “this is what my thought must have been like then” or “the above lines have the gist of my thoughts in that circumstance”. Cohn also remarks it is easier for the reader to suspend disbelief when a narrator has a perfect recall in other areas such as description of a place or re-enactment of a dialogue (1983: 162).

Self-narrated monologue is less problematic since it does not suggest a precise copy of thoughts. Besides it is a perfect medium to convey the narrator’s past uncertainties and distress, to depict a self-centred narrator’s existential crisis that remains to be solved and to exhibit the narrator’s empathy with his past self. In general, narrated monologue self-narrated or not, creates the illusion of immediacy: the novel tells itself without the mediacy of a narrator (1983: 167-169).

Though Cohn does not seem to be aware of it, she was following the footsteps of two famous hard-boiled experts of stylistics, Geoffrey Leech and Michael Short, while she was discussing different means of rendering a character’s consciousness. The work of Leech and Short, as the title *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction*

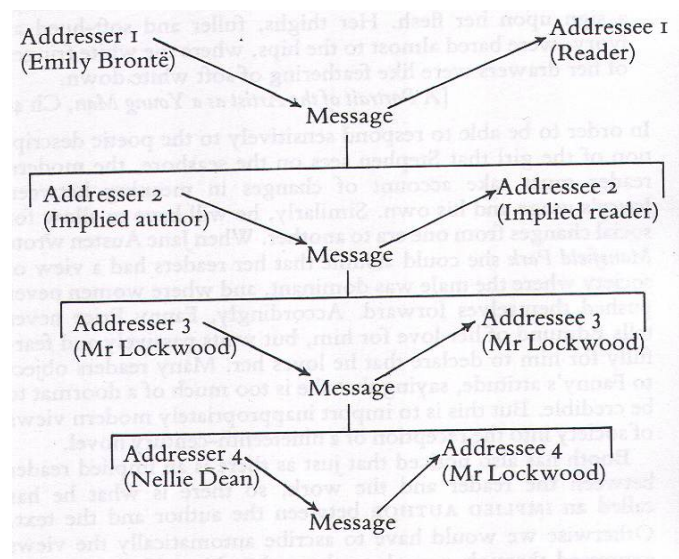
to English Fictional Prose suggests has a broader scope than that of Cohn. Only towards the end of the book, Leech and Short discuss different forms of speech and thought presentation. However, almost all their theories are based on one fundamental idea: they consider fiction-writing as a discourse between the author and the reader.

As we have seen in Booth, Chatman, and partly in Prince, the parties involved in this discourse are not limited only to the author and the reader of the novel. Leech and Short first state that there are four elements in the ordinary transaction: addresser, message, addressee and the situational context in which the discourse occurs. In fiction-writing the scheme gets more complicated for two reasons. First, the constituents of the discourse are greater in number: we have the real author, the implied author, the message, the implied or mock reader and the real reader. Leech and Short agree with Booth that implied author is a product of the text: his characteristics are defined by the text. Implied reader, on the other hand, is a hypothetical personage expected to share a set of values with the author. Therefore, the author reaches the reader through the implied author and the implied reader (1981: 257-261). That is how Leech and Short make a diagram of the fictional discourse.



(1981:262)

The second complexity of fictional discourse appears when narrators and characters are also considered as addressers and addressees. In this case we have a multi-layered transaction with a number of addressers and addressees. The multiple layers of discourse can be observed in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. This is a first-person narration, an "I-narration novel" in Leech and Short's terminology "which apparently takes the form of a diary which Mr Lockwood writes to himself... This narration itself contains long passages reporting Nellie Dean's narration of the events of the story to Mr Lockwood" (1981: 263). In other words, Mr Lockwood recounts in his diary what he has learnt from Nellie Dean. In this case the discourse structure gets more complicated:



(1981:263)

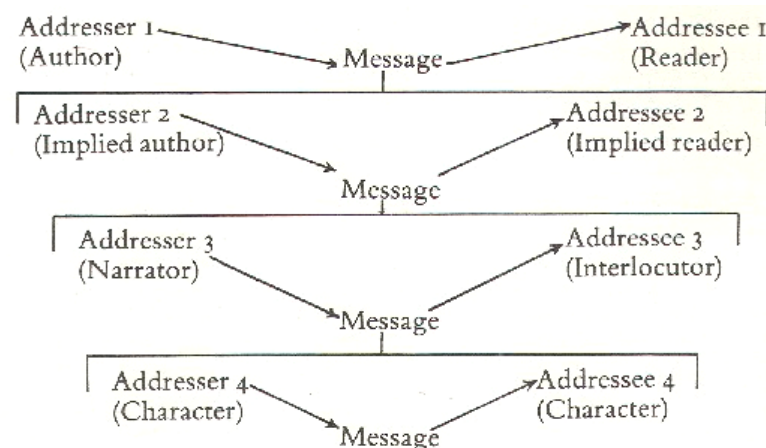
Leech and Short note that “square brackets around a discourse participant indicate that that category is collapsed into the equivalent participant in the immediately superordinate level of discourse structure” (1981: 264). It is also important to note that Leech and Short do not use the words narrator and the narratee but it is clear that Mr Lockwood is both the first-person narrator of the novel and the narratee of himself through his diary and Nellie Dean when he is the listener. Leech and Short do not mean that all fictional discourses have to be that complicated. In *David Copperfield*, for example in the addressee part we have David, implied author and the real author named Dickens. In the addressee part we have an assumed interlocutor listening to David, implied reader and the reader (1981: 264).

The choice of a first person narrator seems to make the fictional discourse more complicated compared to a third person narration. However, first-person narration, as Leech and Short emphasize, establishes a personal relationship with the reader through which the reader is biased in favour of the narrator or the character. By the use of this device the implied author can make the reader adopt even views that are difficult for the reader to digest. A good example of this happens in Nabokov’s *Lolita*, in which the reader forgives Humbert Humbert, the protagonist, for his bad deeds of murder and seduction of a teenager. The same sympathy, however, is never produced for the protagonist of Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange* (1981: 265-266). Therefore, we should conclude that an author using the device of first person narration has more potential to direct the reader’s emotions and attitudes.

Third person-narration is not without its advantages. The first advantage is that the absence of an “I” gives the reader a sense of immediacy without the

indirection of the first-person narrator. It also combines the implied author and the narrator since the narrator becomes omniscient having all the knowledge and wisdom. However, even in the novels with complete transparent narrators, immediacy is an illusion. As long as there is a message, there must be an addresser. This addresser, that is the implied author, can only pretend to be invisible by using some linguistic features appropriate for his purpose (1981: 266-269). This is a fact voiced by almost all contemporary critics.

Another level of the literary discourse is formed with the addition of the characters to the previously noted agents of discourse. This means another layer in the discourse chart:



(1981:269)

In this case the conversations between the characters form a part of the message from the author to the reader. This is a common characteristic of the fictional discourse but the third- person narration generally separates the level of characters from that of narrator discourse. I-narration novels, especially epistolary novels, on the contrary,

make more use of characters' narration in which the role of the narrator and the characters merge (1981: 271).

As all critics dealing with the narrator issues do, Leech and Short also focus on point of view with a difference: they approach the issue from a stylistic point of view and call it discorsal point of view. They define discorsal point of view "as the relationship, expressed through discourse structure, between the implied author or some other addresser, and the fiction" (1981: 272). This requires the discussion of other important terms such as irony, tone and distance, which suggest attitude and judgment. The main point of Leech and Short is that the reader's point of view to the elements of the mock reality created in the fictional work is determined or shaped by the narrator. The narrator may directly address the audience and make corrective judgments, say, about characters. Or he can bias the reader's point of view within the narration through the use of language which includes some element of value. Consequently, the novel creates a value picture (1981: 272).

This picture sometimes depends on standard shared values such as it is wrong to harm people. However, most narrators cannot solely rely on the shared values. That is why through the use of language and plot structure, the narrator or the implied author makes the reader accept certain points of views or values. The reader's acceptance of the value picture of the novel relies heavily on the light under which events and characters are presented to him. The disclosure of a character's point of view and the coverage of his thoughts, emotions and experiences lead to an identification between the character and the audience. In short, the reader subscribes to the values or viewpoint of the character. This is exactly what happens in provocative works like *Lolita* (1981: 272-275).

The value picture of novels is normally complex since there are different levels of discourses and different agents involved in the discourses. As Leech and Short illustrate in the charts of discourses, a novel can contain an embedded hierarchy of discourses and there may be, though not necessarily, distinctions between character, narrator, implied author and real author. If a difference is not indicated, the levels merge. The same rule applies for value pictures associated with levels, too. In *David Copperfield*, there is not much difference between the character David, narrator David, Dickens as the implied author and Dickens, the real author since they represent the same set of values. Because the reader shares the values of these stated agents, the author can lead the reader into the value picture of the novel (1981: 276).

However, in some cases the shared values of one level of discourse can contradict with the others. Booth's sense of unreliable narrator is one of such instances. Another instance is the monologues of characters. When a fallible character reveals his point of view, the reader responds to it as an interlocutor in the instance of the character's narration. The reader, however, at the same time responds to it as an implied reader within the general content and context of the novel. In simple words, the fallible characters' values are contrasted with the values of the implied author and the reader's response is corrected accordingly. The same correction can be achieved by reliable characters as well (1981: 276-277).

1.5. Conclusion

Conclusion implies a sense of finality and completeness. However, it is difficult to imagine a final word for any issue of literary criticism. As we have seen,

the discussion around the narrator has gotten more and more complicated and refined. At the expense of being crude, we can state that the general approach to the mode of narration as a consequence of choice between mimesis and diegesis is no more a major item in the agenda of the contemporary critic. In less than a hundred years time the types of narrator were defined again and again. Each time a new aspect of the narrator was realised and the theories were formulated accordingly. Point of view has been finely defined and clearly separated from the central narrator, just as the narrator has been separated from the author. Similarly the difference between voice and perspective has been emphasized. Distinct use of language to convey speech or the thought of the character or the narrator has been discussed at length and the theory has reached the far end of itself with the introduction of the concept of narratee. All of these novelties can still be summed up in one sentence: the importance of the narrator has been realised.

CHAPTER II

NARRATOR-PROTOTYPES IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL

The purpose of the present study is to discuss the idiosyncratic features of Julian Barnes' use of narrators in *Flaubert's Parrot*, *Talking it Over* and *Love, etc.* This task requires a consideration of the discussions on the study of the narrator which is presented in the previous chapter. A second task, to achieve the main purpose of the study, is to have a brief look at what kind of narrators have been used in the British novel since the official beginning of it in the 18th century when Defoe "serendipitously invented the English novel" (Stevenson, 1990: 5). This second task will enable the study to reveal how Barnes challenges and uses the tradition. In other words, the traditions Barnes employs and the novelties he brings to fiction, in terms of the use of narrators, can thus be discussed in detail.

Outlining the history of types of narrators used in the English novel is a formidable task since the body of work at question is immense. It certainly makes sense to focus only on the typical novels from each era. The task of defining the narrator-prototypes of the English novel still requires a careful delimitation and one viable method in this task might be to enlist Roman Jakobson's idea of "the dominant". "The dominant may be defined as the focusing component of a work of art: it rules, determines, and transforms the remaining components" (McHale, 1992: 6). It can also determine the characteristics of the works of a period. Jakobson's definition, however, can be very broadly understood; the "dominant" element might be anything. For example, according to Brian McHale, the dominant element of the modernist fiction is epistemology, while it is ontology for the postmodernist fiction

(1992: 1988: 11). Jacobson's idea is later echoed and developed by Stanzel very usefully in the context of the narrator in his book *A Theory of Narrative*. Stanzel argues that each historical period tends to favour a certain form of narration and therefore, certain forms of narrator, which he calls a prototype. For example, the prototype of the Victorian novel is *authorial* and *autobiographical* narration, whereas it is a combination of *authorial* and *figural* narration in the mid-twentieth century (1988: 7).

The next step, to refine the method of discussing the tradition of the narrators as used by British novelists, is to try to understand why a certain dominant element or prototype is accepted by the majority of authors. It must be accepted that the reasons for such a choice are numerous. In this context, Jeremy Hawthorn asserts that narrative technique cannot be assessed in isolation from the historical context which justifies its existence or popularity. As an example, he cites the importance given to letter writing and the popularity of epistolary novels in the 18th century. Similarly, the emergence of the stream of consciousness technique is related to progress in the study of psychology (1986: 43). Hawthorne comes up with four factors that determine the existence, acceptance or popularity of particular narrative techniques: "changes in the dominant modes of human communication, the effect of different world-views, philosophies, ideologies, changes in readership patterns and habits, [and] larger changes in human life and modes of consciousness" (1986: 43).

Bearing all these in mind we can postulate that the dominant type or prototype of narrator changes in each movement of the novel, sometimes remarkably and sometimes latently. As it has been argued, all movements of the novel are concerned with some central issues, including the use of narrator. In fact, that is how

movements are formed and how we can categorize different periods of fiction under an embracing umbrella term like realism, modernism or postmodernism. Categorization of periods of the novel, needless to say, is not a matter of historical division. Demarcation of novelistic tendencies is not done through dates. Otherwise, all authors would be writing the same type of novels in a stated period of time. However, in fact all types of novels are written in all periods. Now we can easily find an author writing with the sensitivity of modernists or we can cite a number of writers having written within Victorian standards although they historically lived in the modernist era. Therefore, the general or the rising sensitivity of the novelists forms the standards of a specific period. Having said this, we can divide the history of the British novel into three broad periods - realism, modernism and postmodernism - and extend the argument to the observation that the main concern of the realists is to provide a true depiction of life; of modernists, the expression of the inner experience of the character; and the postmodernists, that of undermining the tradition and experimenting with the canon. The terms *realism*, *modernism* and *postmodernism* represent major breaks with the previous understanding of the novel, with modes of narration and consequently with the types of narrators employed.

2.1 Realist Fiction

Realist fiction covers a longer period in history compared to modernism or postmodernism. It covers the 18th and the most part of the 19th century. However, it would be naïve to think that the novel remained the same throughout these two centuries. Though the two centuries that precede modernism are simply termed the *realist period*, it should not be understood that the same norms prevailed for almost

two hundred years. On the contrary, the sensitivities of the authors and the reading public changed markedly and the works of first novelists such as Defoe, Richardson and Fielding were quite different from the novels of the next century. It might even be hard for the average reader to associate the 18th century novel with realism. Ian Watt, however, emphasizes that what distinguishes the works of early novelists from romances and epics is their *realistic attitude* in this new form of writing.

Watt starts his seminal work *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* with an extended definition of the 18th century novel. He states that “Defoe, Richardson and Fielding do not in the usual sense constitute a literary school. Indeed their works show so little sign of mutual influence and are so different in nature . . .” (1987: 9). However, later he compiles a number of similarities between the works of these authors, which enable him to define the 18th century novel. Realism, for him, is the idiosyncratic feature of the 18th century novel. He defines the 18th century novel through six properties it has which romances, epics or the hybrid early fiction do not acquire. We observe the following characteristics in the novel, according to Watt:

1. The plot does not rely on mythology, history and already existing stories.
2. Major characters are presented with their individual characteristics in a detailed background; they are “general human types”.
3. Characters have realistic and appropriate proper names; these names are neither archaic, mythological or foreign, nor indicative of the identity of the bearer.
4. The time the characters live and act are particular.
5. Characters are studied in their particular physical setting.

6. Language employed in the novel is referential and proper for the character and the persona of the author. (1987: 13-30)

In brief, by use of the term *realist fiction*, he means the particularization of the protagonist and the adventures he experiences through detailed specification of time and place in the use of prose (1987: 9-30).

To emphasize the points advanced by Watt on the realistic tendencies of the first novels, Lennard Davis's comparison of romance and the novel, from his book *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*, can be cited. Davis formulates nine points of contrast between the romance and the 18th century novel:

1. The romance is set in the distant, idealized past; the novel is set in a more recent, less heroic, setting.
2. The romance is based on the epic; the novel is modeled on history and journalism.
3. The romance is not usually set in the country of the author but in a remote and exotic location; the novel tends to be set in the locale of the author, that is, the novel tends to be a national form of literature.
4. The romance depicts the life of the aristocracy and is designed for an upper-class reader; the novel tends to be more middle-class in scope and is geared to a slightly less aristocratic readership, although the statement is less true in France of the seventeenth century than in England.
5. Romances tend to be long and episodic; novels are shorter and more compact to plot.
6. Romances value the preservation of virtue and chastity; novels tend to focus on illegal doings and forbidden passions.
7. Novels of the eighteenth century tend to be written in the first person or in letter form; romances are never written in these forms.
8. Romances make clear that they are mixing fact and fiction to create a fictional plot; novels tend to deny that they are fictional.
9. Romances follow the rules of *bienséance* and *vraisemblance*; novelists openly reject these rules since they claim to be writing history or recording life as it is. (qtd. In Kroll, 1998: 6)

Among his findings two are particularly interesting and relevant to our context: 18th century novels claim to be factual and most 18th century novels are written in the first person or in letters. These two facts are interrelated because one

way to prove factuality is to use a form of narration that signifies factuality and verisimilitude. The novel's claim to be factual is not without reason. Regardless of the fact that the novel became a very popular form of literature in less than a century, society, particularly the learned upper class and the conservative middle class, approached it with suspicion in the beginning. Being made up and full of unreal and immoral stories, as Davis point out, the novel did not have a moral justification. Full of lies, novels were thought to degrade both the writer and the reader morally. The reaction of the society can be seen as an irrational reflex of a very conservative society that is very much accustomed to viewing literature as a tool of moral education and social correction, which the new form did not seem to offer. As Ida Koningberg puts it

. . . at this point the novel is not yet an established literary form, and the various types of fiction are merely vehicles for entertaining stories. The serious reading public of the eighteenth century seems to have had a mania for punishing itself with didactic and moral literature; and even when it was allowing itself pleasure, the pretext for edification had to be there. Made-up stories had no relevance to life; there was nothing to learn from them . . . There was no mimetic theory to justify fiction in the way both comedy and tragedy could be justified. (1985: 18-19)

The eighteenth century novelist's method of justification was to claim the novel as fact and emphasize its moral and educational aspects. Most novels of the period pretend to be true accounts of actual people's lives and they are accompanied by long prefaces where the moral and didactic values of the novel are emphasized. As Koningberg says, "true stories, true lives of people . . . were valuable since they were applicable to real life. If the novel were to make a start, it would have to do so in disguise, pretending to be what it was not- pretending to be true" (1985: 19).

That is precisely what Defoe does in *Moll Flanders*, the novel “often called the first English novel” according to some critics (Bradbury, 1973: 45). Being aware of the objections he may face, Defoe starts the novel with a long preface in which he stresses that his novel is made up of facts and personal history, not fiction. He justifies his work at the expense of degrading similar works when he claims “The world is so taken up of late with Novels and Romances, that it will be hard for a private history to be taken for Genuine, where the Names and other Circumstances of the Person are concealed” (1991:1). In this short quotation from the Preface to *Moll Flanders*, Defoe makes claims for the verisimilitude of his account for two reasons: the proper name of his protagonist, which certifies the existence of an actual human being, and the detailed narration, which serves the same purpose. However, in the next paragraph Defoe reveals that he has changed the name of the protagonist to protect the actual person because Moll Flanders has a long life of crime and immorality even though she becomes a chaste person in the end. The complete title of the novel, as the tradition then was, summarizes her relation to crime and shame: *The Fortunes and misfortunes of the famous Moll Flanders : Who was born in Newgate, and during a life of continu`d Variety for Threescore Years, besides her Childhood, was Twelve Year a Whore, five times a Wife (whereof once to her own brother) Twelve Year a Thief, Eight Year a Transported Felon in Virginia, at last grew Rich, liv`d Honest and died a Memorandums.*

Defoe also states that “The Author is here suppos’d to be writing her own History” (1991: 1) but he has made some alterations, for example, in the style of the “famous lady”:

It is true that the original of this Story is put into new Words, and the Stile of the famous Lady we here speak of is a little alter'd; particularly she is made to tell her own Tale in modester Words than she told it at first; the Copy which came first to Hand having been written in Language, more like one still in *Newgate* than one grown Penitent and Humble, as she afterwards pretends to be . . .

The Pen employ'd in finishing her story . . . has had no little difficulty to put it into a dress fit to be seen, and to make it speak language fit to be read . . . (1991: 1)

Vindication of *Moll Flanders* goes on with a directly moral justification. Fearing that he might be accused of depicting a low, lewd and immoral form of life, Defoe time and again insists that his work might be fit for moral use. He writes "All possible Care . . . has been taken to give no lewd Ideas, no immodest Turns in the new dressing up this Story" (1991: 1-2). For this reason, Defoe claims he has omitted some parts of the original story. "What is left", he hopes, ". . . will not offend the chastest Reader, or the modestest Hearer" (1991: 2). Finally, he concludes ". . . as the whole Relation is carefully garbl'd of all the Levity, and Looseness that was in it: So it is all applied, and with the utmost care to vertuous and religious Uses" (1991: 3) and ". . . [u]pon this Foundation this Book is recommended to the Reader, as a Work from every part of which something may be learned, and some just and religious Inference is drawn, by which the Reader will have something of Instruction . . ." (1991: 4).

That there exists an original account written by Moll Flanders, and that Defoe has edited this text in a way to make it proper for publication, enhance the verisimilitude of the novel as well. Defoe implies that though the name has been changed in the novel, there is a woman who led the life depicted in the book. The account of this life and the way it is told by the very person, though indirectly, prove

its truth to life. When this vindication is supported by moral justification, the novel defeats the criticism it initially faced.

Vindication of the novel is not limited to wordy prefaces, of course. The novel of the eighteenth century itself is highly didactic and moralistic. Defoe, in his famous preface, overtly states that throughout the work he sticks to one essential principle: “there is not a wicked Action in any Part of it, but is first and last rendered Unhappy or Unfortunate: There is not a superlative Villain brought upon the Stage, but either he is brought to an unhappy End, or brought to be a Penitent” (1991: 3). Defoe’s principle then was certainly not an artistic or aesthetic. The moral climate of the century was so dense that novelists felt they had to abide by the norms and values of the society to fend off rejection. Though Watt overtly states that the first novels were written in a secular “age” (1987: 82), many critics disagree with him. What Watt means by “secular” might better be understood to mean *more* secular, compared to previous ages, since there is a strong emphasis on religion and morality in the ideology of the 18th century. A number of critics and historians have pointed this out. As Paul Hunter points out, for instance, the 18th century reader expected a high degree of spiritual guidance and catechism, which is unthinkable for the contemporary reader. McKeon holds that romances were replaced by the novel in the eighteenth century because they were no longer able to deal with and elucidate the historical and ideological forces of the time. Margaret Doody believes that only certain types of literary utterances, which were “safe and sanitized”, were dignified according to the moral standards of the 18th century. Finally, William Warner argues that what Fielding and Richardson did was to re-write often unusual romantic tales in a new narrative form in order to redirect their moral influence (Kroll, 1987: 8-12).

In *Telling New Lies* Melvyn New asserts that “one would be hard-pressed to find any serious fiction writers between 1600 and 1800 who did not claim that their fiction mirrors a providential world, in which God’s hand is actively present for the protection and reward of virtue, the thwarting and punishment of vice” (1992: 29). In this respect New believes not only that the novel is similar to romance, in that romance is an embodiment of poetic justice, but also that the works of Defoe, Richardson and Fielding are full of incidences that highlight a god-ordained world in which the bad is punished and the good is rescued at the last minute through improbable appearances (1992: 28-43).

Though seemingly in contradiction with these stated authors, Watt himself admits that religion takes up a very significant portion of *Robinson Crusoe*:

Crusoe certainly exhibits frequent signs of Bibliolatry: he quotes some twenty verses of the Bible in the first part of *Robinson Crusoe* alone, besides making many briefer references; and he sometimes seeks divine guidance by opening the Bible at random. But the most significant aspect of his spiritual life is his tendency to rigorous moral and religious self-examination. Each of his actions is followed by a passage of reflection in which Crusoe ponders over the problem of how it reveals the intentions of divine providence. If the corn sprouts, it is surely a divine miracle ‘so directed for my sustenance’; if he has a bout of fever ‘a leisurely review of the miseries of death’ eventually convinces him that he deserves reprobation for neglecting to show his gratitude for God’s mercies to him. (1987: 76)

The eighteenth century novel was clearly written under an immense moral pressure. For this very reason vindication of the novel, in the form of truth claims or long prefaces demanding a moral status for the novel, was cardinal. The vindication, so far, has been treated in terms of content. However, technique is also involved in the process. As Koningberg also states, first novelists had to devise narrative

techniques which would emphasize the claim to truth (1985: 19). This narrative technique is the use of a first-person intradiegetic narrator.

If a person who actually lives tells the story, then it cannot be made up of lies altogether. For this reason, at the beginning most stories are told in the voice of first-person. In other words, the protagonist tells the story. That is the case with small variations in the works of Defoe, Henry Fielding and Richardson. While Defoe and Fielding use first person narrators, Richardson chooses to use an epistolary technique, which is in effect very similar to the first-person narration. It must be said that the epistolary novel was very popular both in England and Europe in the 18th century. Among the most well-known epistolary novels of the time are Richardson's *Clarissa*, Rousseau's *Nouvelle Heloise*, Laclos's *Liaisons dangereuses*, Goethe's *Werther*, Giovanni Paolo Marana's *Letters Writ by a Turkish Spy* and Defoe's *Continuation of Letter Writ by a Turkish Spy*. Because the epistolary novel is in essence a form of first-person narration, we can conclude that the dominant mode of narration or the prototype of the 18th century novel is first-person narration.

Use of an authorial voice, in other words, of third-person narration would not do, for a number of reasons.

. . . a voice speaking to us . . . is a convincing, lifelike voice. We are listening to someone talk to us, telling us about herself and her adventures . . . First-person narration directly showed the central character responding to external reality. Third-person point of view dramatizing the internal perspective of the character may do the same . . . but such a narrative method was not developed yet or a consistent technique at the time-- most third-person narration was omniscient, and distant from the characters and their perceptions of the world . . . if fiction had to seem authentic, then it had to imitate the most authentic kinds of writing-- autobiography, memoirs, and letters. Narratives told in the third person, even though they may claim to be histories, have the aura of storytelling, of something made up. In part,

this is because the narrator does not directly partake in the actions, and much of what he describes either has to come to him indirectly or must be imagined by himself. First-person narration seems to be authentic because here is the person who was engaged in the action, actually telling to us because we hear it; if the person in the story is the same as the person describing the story, then we are more ready to believe in him as well. (Koningsberg, 1985: 21)

David Lodge makes similar remarks for the epistolary novel, pointing out that the epistolary novel is a sort of first-person narrative, though it differs from the autobiographical novel in the sense that the narrator knows the story before he starts the novel, while writing letters suggests an “ongoing process”, with the implication that the epistolary novel includes a more heightened suspense. Lodge indicates a number of advantages epistolary has over third-person narration, the most important being the strong sense of reality: When the existence of an author holding the pen in another form of novel is revealed, the illusion of reality is broken. However, the presence of an author in the epistolary novel reinforces this illusion. As a result of all these, Lodge calls the epistolary “a kind of novel originally designed to make fiction look like fact” (1992: 23-24).

In brief, both first-person narration and the epistolary technique foster this sense of reality, while a third-person mediator would distance the reader from the novel. The very presence of a third-person narrator would create doubts about the verisimilitude of the novel. Consequently, novelists of the time prefer to call themselves editors rather than authors. This naturally is a pretension the authors have to bear for the sake of heightening the verisimilitude of their works. They consciously refuse to be a part of the story. Even if they do not display any Flaubertian transparency, which was to arrive on the literary scene almost two hundred years later, they dissociate themselves from the texts by three means: long

prefaces (which imply a man existing outside the “factual” world of the novel), direct addresses to the audience in the novel (a privilege that separates the “editor” from the character), and finally the claim to historical fact (implying that the fictional work is, indeed, a history and therefore factually based).

Most of these traits can be observed in Henry Fielding, who is the boldest of the first novelists, probably because he wrote towards the end of the 18th century. Homer Goldberg asserts that what mainly differentiates Fielding from other fiction writers of the 18th century, such as Defoe and Richardson, is that he “was not embarrassed to acknowledge [*Joseph Andrews*] fiction” (1964: 214). Truism or bravado further developed in Book Two of *Tom Jones*, where Fielding openly asserts that he is the founder of a new form of writing and he has every right to make laws and rules for it: “as I am, in reality, the founder of a new province of writing, so I am at liberty to make what laws I please therein. And these laws, my readers... are bound to believe in and to obey” (1985: 88). Fielding is also different from Defoe or Richardson in that he uses a third-person narrator, even though he detaches himself from the story and appears there as the editor. However, he still calls his novel *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling*. This reveals, that in spite of his claim to a new form of writing, Fielding, it seems, still tries to guard himself against the moral censure of his times.

Consequently, as even the atypical case of Fielding reveals, what characterizes the 18th century novelists’ choice of narrator is based on the moral pressure on the novel. Novelists have to resort to the first-person intradiegetic narrators to authenticate their narratives. Romances of the time were exempt from such an obligation because, as Koningberg states, they are the works of a different

order. The worlds depicted in romances are too remote and events too improbable to require authenticity (1985: 259). When the British intellectual climate became more secular, authors of the succeeding century did not feel this same sense of moral subjection, despite the Victorian Age being one of acute moral prudence in public life.

2.2. Victorian Age

Victorian Age is named after Queen Victoria who reigned between the years 1837 and 1901. The word Victorian does not only refer to things that happened or were made in England in the 19th century, when Victoria was the Queen of England. It is also used to describe people having old-fashioned qualities which are thought to have been common in the time of Queen Victoria, especially an attitude of strict discipline, extreme moral conservatism and sexual repression. Prudence and self-complacency are the most common concepts attributed to Victorians. Additionally, they are thought to have adopted “duty” and “manners” as keywords that dominate their lives.

However, there was more to it in the Victorian Age than these. Historian David Thomson believes that “The whole meaning of Victorian England is lost if it is thought of as a country of stuffy complacency and black top-hatted moral priggery. Its frowsty crinolines and dingy hansom cabs, its gas-lit houses and over-ornate draperies, concealed a people engaged in a tremendously exciting adventure” (“The Victorian Age”, 1985: 918). This “exciting adventure” should be studied in various aspects, such as social reforms, science and literature in the era.

Although Victorians are accused of social lassitude and regression, the Victorian Age is an era of social progress. Almost all historians agree that it is the time when Britain changed from a rural life to an urban life. Urban life had an industrial aspect but most importantly it enabled a strong middle class to flourish. The middle class of the era, strong at least in terms of money, forced the parliament to make new laws (Randle, 1986: 110-112). Consequently, the Victorian Age was “the great age of the middle classes”(Gilmour, 1993: 1) not just because of political rights but also because of economical freedom and a rapid rise of literacy and institutionalized secular education, though compulsory education started only in 1870 (Randle, 1986: 119).

The scientific scene of the era was as colourful as the social life. Steam power was perfected and used in ships, trains, factories and printing presses. Photography, anesthetics and intercontinental cable were invented. More importantly, as Gilmour states, science had been a study for the enthusiastic amateurs until the Victorian Age, since there had been no institutions to support scientific studies except Oxford and Cambridge. These universities, in fact, did not do much for science because of a syllabus relying heavily on religion and classics. The professorships of geology and mineralogy were institutionalized and people were free to specialise in different disciplines but only after passing an exam in classics. The second part of the Victorian Age witnessed a reformation in the sciences in an age of social progress and reform. New institutions and periodicals were established, especially after new universities were founded and university education was released from the pressure of religious and traditional curricula (1993: 6-7).

The most interesting figure in the science scene of the era, without doubt, was Charles Darwin, whose *The Origin of Species* incited a moral and religious outcry upon publication in 1859. There was more than mere paleontology in his theories on the origin of species and natural selection since they were claiming a new theory of creation that was impious and against the beliefs of the Church and Christianity. There was evidence to support Darwin's ideas but it was very difficult to refuse the basics of religion and God's will. "T. H. Huxley, Darwin's greatest disciple, claimed for Darwin a place in science comparable with Galileo's and Newton's, but many scientists believed that Darwin had destroyed the moral basis of scientific studies" (Randle, 1986: 129).

Different reactions to Darwin are significant in that they are almost a symbol of the age in many respects. It was not altogether a glorious age. For example, the free trade laws and improvement of technology enabled the middle classes to gain power and wealth; but the Victorian Age was - at least the first half of the Age - also a time of great economical distress. Making a fortune or going bankrupt was a matter of months according to Barnard (1986: 106).

Consequently, people had faith in advancement but at the same time people were either too conservative or suffered from lack of faith:

The Lyttletons: A Family Chronicle (1975) [of Lytton Strachey] asserts that during the period from 1830 to 1880 "the educated classes of England believed that they had the answer to everything. . . It was an age of certainty and of faith only paralled by the great cathedral-building epoch of the Middle Ages." But according to *The Finer Optic* (also 1975), this same period was one of "agony and confusion. The Victorians felt . . . a desperate pessimism based on the fear of . . . experience with no meaning beyond itself. ("The Victorian Age", 1986: 919)

Victorians were happy to enjoy the privileges and honour of being citizens of England, which had by then become the centre of the world with her political and industrial power. Yet, they were unable to adapt to the pace of technology and social change and were consequently alienated and displaced. For that reason, "Walter Beasant, one of [the]. . . late Victorians, observed that so completely transformed were 'the mind and habits of the ordinary Englishman' by 1897, 'that he would not, could see him, recognize his own grandfather.'" (*"The Victorian Age"*, 1986: 917)

Distress of the age was expressed in the literature of the era, especially in poetry. Emily Brontë and Alfred Tennyson were perfect examples of people who were unable to cope with the speed of the depressing urban life which made them seek refuge in nature and even in death. Emily Brontë, in her narrative poems, enjoys the liberty wild nature offers and considers death as a unification with the universe which leads the soul to total bliss. Tennyson meditates on death, too, though quite differently from Brontë. For him, death is not just a way to liberty but a very good indication of the "dreaminess of life" (Sanders, 1990: 353-354). His handling of death was entirely conditioned by the lifestyle the Victorian Age offered and imposed on people:

Much of the time . . . [Tennyson] felt . . . that leadership in commerce and industry was being paid for at a terrible price in human happiness. In . . . [Victorians'] experience a so-called progress had been gained only by abandoning the traditional rhythms of life and traditional patterns of human relationship which had sustained mankind for centuries. (*"The Victorian Age"*, 1986: 918)

Although the Victorian Age produced poets versatile and highly sensitive to the spirit of the age, such as Emily Bronte, Tennyson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Christina Rossetti, the greatest literary success of the era is the novel.

G. D. Klingopulos states “there was an obvious demand for . . . [novels] for entertainment and edification (1982: 68). Davis Skilton believes “Prose fiction was, as the mid-Victorians never tired of telling themselves, *the* literary form of the period: this was indeed ‘the age of the novel’, just as Shakespeare’s had been the age of drama” (1986: 143). In his essay “The Victorian Novel” Gail Cunningham writes

It is a commonplace of modern criticism that the nineteenth century--or perhaps more specifically the Victorian Age-- was dominated by the novel. . . . “Novels are in the hands of us all: from the prime Minister down to the last appointed scullery-maid” wrote Anthony Trollope. . . . an estimated 40.000 titles [were] published in the course of the nineteenth century. (1994: 27)

This popularity not only enabled the novel to establish itself on firm grounds but also to flourish in different sub-genres. *A Companion to the Victorian Novel* (2005) edited by Patrick Bratlinger and William B. Thesing ventures to discuss the forms of the Victorian novel under these titles: Detective Fiction, The Historical Novel, The Bildungsroman, The Gothic Romance, The Provincial or Regional Novel, Industrial or ‘Condition of England’ Novels, Children’s Fiction and Victorian Science Fiction. Only this list by itself suffices to display the complexity the novel reaches roughly in a century; however, we can as well add the political novels of Trollope, Dickens’s *The Pickwick Papers* and intellectual novels like George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*, George Meredith’s *The Egoist* and most works of Thomas Hardy.

This complexity was not achieved in a short time. As the eighteenth century and the Victorian novel are considered to belong to the school of realism, Victorian fiction can be viewed as a continuation of the previous century with the distinction that it achieved a huge diversity and complexity in time. A general overview of the fiction of the time reveals that the emphasis on the individual in the eighteenth century fiction goes on for a while. However, as the century progresses, this tendency is left aside in favour of more social novels. This change is in strict parallel to the external and social reality experienced and the ideals held in the Victorian Age.

Barbara Dennis states that in the Victorian period “the most popular narrative devices were those inherited from the 18th century. Two examples are the omniscient author. . . and the author who purports to be writing autobiographically . . .” (2000: 60). When the fiction of the age is considered as a whole, we can see that, on the one hand, first-person narration goes on particularly in the form of Bildungsromans and, on the other hand, third-person narration, which is rare in the previous century, becomes more common especially in the second half of the era. Both forms have social and historical justifications.

Fritz Martini states that the term Bildungsroman was first used by Karl Morgenstern much earlier in 1817 (qtd. in Gohlman, 1990: 12). Today, Bildungsroman is used to define the type of novel that illustrates a hero’s life starting from childhood and ending in early adulthood while at the same time depicting the process he goes through on the way to maturity. In more explicit terms Bildungsroman, which is also, at times incorrectly, called “the novel of youth, the novel of education, of apprenticeship, of adolescence, of initiation or the life-novel”,

studies “the development of a character from early adolescence to young adulthood, the period when the person works out questions of identity, career, and marriage” (Labovitz, 1988: 2).

As the definition posits, the Bildungsroman tradition focuses on the individual; however, in the present context it should be considered in relation to some Victorian ideals such as personal development, upward social mobility, and particularly becoming a gentleman. The period, particularly the first half of it, both promotes and enables moving, as the famous dictum states, from rags to riches. *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield* and *Vanity Fair*, though not Bildungsroman, are the very embodiments of this quite possible ideal.

These are features that are associated more with the first half of the age. That is why first-person narration is the prototype of the first half of the period. It is the form that suits the content best because Bildungsromans tell individual stories, though in a social context. The second half of the age is more turbulent. Optimism in progress is replaced with the after effects of unprecedented and unplanned progress, such as mounting social problems. Novelists are quick to respond. Victorian novelists look to life for their material and literarily reflect everything in their novels. Consequently, social novels not aiming at depicting the life of an individual but the experience of social life begin to dominate the Victorian novel.

The Victorian novel, especially in the middle decades of the century, often has a documentary function and a historic significance quite outside and intrinsic merit as a work of art, though often the two features coincide. In the twenty years which followed the mid-century, there appeared a handful of novels which are great by any standards and which provide a birds-eye-view of a whole society. None of them offers a close-up of any individual scene, but instead a panorama view

in which society at large is surveyed and its values asserted. (Dennis, 2000: 37)

Since the dynamics of life and the novel change, the form of narrator should change as well. This change occurs in the form of a shift from first-person to third-person narration. The scope of the author gets larger; the structure of the society should be criticized. Therefore, the author must get into different layers of the society, must encounter different people and above all comment on the ills of the society. A first-person narrator does not suffice; a different mode of narration, even at the expense of “looseness”, must be made use of. This is what Dickens does according to Sanders:

Dickens, probably the best Victorian novelist, wrote about different aspects of life in the era embellishing them with a large spectrum of characters from different classes and professions. He was popular even after the publication of his first novel *Pickwick Papers* and continued his popularity for almost thirty-five years appealing not only to a certain reader group but to a vast majority of Victorians both high brow, middle brow and low brow. His popularity was due to his writing about contemporary issues; in fact he was the first great author to write about the distress of living a modern urban life. At times his stories seem to be knit loosely which is a perfect tool to reflect the real nature of the society and life in the Victorian Era. (1990: 343-345)

In *The Victorian Bildungsroman* Petru Golban states that the general tendency in the Victorian novel is to employ first-person autodiegetic narrators or third-person omniscient narrators. These narrators, which in most cases merge with the actual author even if the points of view assigned, at times, diverge from the narrator, have the freedom to tell the story, make comments on the significance of the action, move in space and time and freely shift from the fictional objective world to the subjective world of the characters. In short, they are omniscient and

omnipotent narrators. Golban believes that the Victorian author is not objective enough. Even when he lets a secondary character tell a certain portion of the story, as happens in *Wuthering Heights*, he uses this character as his mouthpiece (2003: 106). What needs to be emphasized at this point is that the Victorian narrator or the author is very much in the novel not only as a transmitter of the story but also as a commenter who not only shapes his fictional construct but also the audiences' response to this fictional identity through his commentary.

The intruding author or narrator would be much criticised in the twentieth century by critics like Lubbock. However, Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth views the commenting narrator as an indispensable part of the Victorian novel:

These narrators with their indiscreet powers of inclusiveness, their vantage point in the far future of the narrated events, their lack of individual identity or accessibility in the history narrated, all voice a common power, the power of interpretation. That power itself is more important than any specific interpretation; without it the story could not exist and neither could the reader, to the extent that the reader's consciousness is supplemented or supplanted by the narrator in the text. The main discourse of this fiction is that of an interpreting observer-- engaged and distanced at the same time, performing a zig-zag between locale and generalization, between particular and meaning, between one impulse and its opposite. Characters come and go, but the narrator is a constant: a necessity for the text yet only invincibly present. (1986: 127)

The intruding Victorian novelist or the narrator representing the implied author is invincible or indispensable because he has such a privilege and power for three reasons: most novels of the time are published in journals in installments and the author has a continuous and stable relationship with the audience. The reader has a direct response to the work and the author, to the benefit of the work or his financial venue, adjusts the work in line with the response received. Secondly,

because the Victorian fiction reader is mostly the middle class, which is not very literate, an interpreting authorial narrator is necessary to direct the comprehension of the reader. Finally, in spite of the turbulent and hectic nature of the Victorian era, the author and the reader share common worldviews and norms. In short, there is a close identity between the author and the reader, which enables the reader to respond appropriately to the commentary of the authorial third-person narrator.

David Skilton discusses this aspect of the Victorian fiction in relation to Trollope but certainly the issue is not limited to him:

Few periods of fiction can demonstrate such a clear assumption that there exists a close social identity between narrators and readers as that which was commonplace in 1860s. Trollope's narrators go further and insist on involving the principal character too in the relationship, which is indicative of the identity of interest between writer and public. . . (1986: 150)

Though Golban argues that most Victorian narrators are unreliable theoretically since all the discourse is manipulated by the author (2003: 106), the value distance between the author and the reader is relatively close. Besides, the intruding author reveals all the unreliability of the transitory narrators or of the viewpoints that belong to agents other than the narrator. This privilege of the close identity between the author and the audience would not be available to their modernist grandchildren and they would have to resort to different constructions of discourse.

2.3 Modernist Novel

Although there is much speculation about literary modernism, most critics agree that it represents a radical break from the traditional artistic and cultural norms

of the nineteenth century. Its climax spans from 1890 to 1930. This radical shift is accompanied by, or brought about by, some crucial social, artistic and historical incidents. Some historical events like the Boer War, the general strikes, the Wall Street crash, women's social and political enfranchisement in England, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, economic crisis in Germany and World War I demonstrate that the world is in a chaotic state between the afore mentioned years. Major scientific progress, which might be represented by Röntgen's discovery of X-rays, Einstein's special and general theory of relativity, Freud's and Jung's psychoanalytic studies with a heavy emphasis on the function and the role of the subconscious and sexuality, and the anthropological studies of Frazer, (Mc Farlane and Young 1991: 571-612) somehow does not help the modern individual find a meaning in life. On the contrary, it emphasizes that man is no longer living in standards of the comparatively traditional Victorian Period. All these studies and advancements are attempts to look at man and the universe in a larger scale. Then, perhaps, man is closer to the eye but more difficult to see since man has grown to be a much more complex creature that cannot be measured by Victorian standards.

Contrasting the Victorian and modernist worlds Peter Faulkner summarizes the state of the world in the modernist era and points out how they change the values of the society:

The world of 1910 was felt to be much more complex than the orderly world that had been presented to the reader in Victorian Literature. The war of 1914-1918 dramatically crystallized and hastened the changes . . . For the modern Western world is less sure of its values than most previous cultures with which we are familiar; relativity and subjectivity are the facts of everyday experience. (1977: 14-15)

Randall Stevenson voices very similar ideas while discussing Ford's *Parade's End*, which is about the World War I:

Ford dramatizes at length the erosion and the collapse of a securely, perhaps complacently, self-confident pre-war society. Its values, habits, faith and even morals are radically challenged and permanently altered by economic and ideological changes brought about by the events of 1914 to 1918. The war is described [in the book] . . . as a "crack across the table of History" . . . and as an irreparable fracture of continuity of history and experience. (1986: 22)

As both authors emphasize, the modernist period suffers from a transition from an illusionary optimism to a realistic pessimism. As Mathew Arnold states in "Dover Beach" the sea of faith is at low tide (1986: 1383) and people are at a loss to give meaning to their existence by clinging to traditional moral and social values.

It is natural that a new era needs artistic novelties. Soon artists reacted against this situation. Impressionists were the first to bring about radical changes in the art of painting. Impressionism, which postulates not painting the thing but painting the impressions left on the mind of the painter, is historically significant in two ways. First, it introduced the idea that one thing can be perceived in different ways by different subjects. This weakens the idea of objectivity and on the contrary encourages the idea of subjectivity, which altogether undermines the realistic notion of art and literature. Secondly, and as a corollary to the first, it is a rebellion against a longstanding artistic idea: the mimetic function of art, namely art an imitation of life, people or things. The Impressionists imitated reality or an object but this was not a direct traditional imitation as suggested by the mimesis theory. Consequently, this indirect imitation soon leads to abstract painting that does not imitate anything at all. Soon, the art of painting is no more a means of imitation; it is the aim and the

result of itself. In other words, art is more conscious of itself.

This modern approach in the conception of art and creativity was a need felt in the era. Since man and the world changed greatly, old modes of expression were not sufficient to express the complexity of the world and the experience of man. Moreover, perhaps the old medium was a part of the problem (Faulkner, 1977: 15). Therefore, the old medium comes under the critical scrutiny of the modernist novels in the literary discussions of Henry James with H. G. Wells, of Virginia Woolf with Arnold Bennet and John Galsworthy and of D.H. Lawrence with again Galsworthy. Woolf, for example, in her “Modern Novel” accuses Bennet and Galsworthy of being “materialist” and deems their novels simple. The tradition, which Woolf calls a “tyrant”, makes these authors find a story embellished with love, comedy or tragedy but above all “with an air of probability”. While these writers pay great attention to the surroundings of the characters, in order to give the reader an air of authenticity and verisimilitude, they miss the essence of the character (1986: 1993-1996). Lawrence, in a tone reminiscent of Woolf’s, criticizes Galsworthy for exhibiting “the psychology of the social being”, not “the psychology of the free human individual” (Stevenson, 1986: 13).

These debates are signs of a new sensitivity that is not happy with the past and traditions of expression at all. In “Towards a Definition of ‘Modernism’ ” Lawrence B. Gamache states that modernism’s main concern is with the present, urban and technological world that is short of a meaningful context transmitted from the past. Therefore, it is a search for new contexts, forms, traditions, styles and techniques to perceive reality. This search is subjective, relativistic and introvert (1987: 33). In a similar vein Steve Giles quotes four tendencies of the modernist art

that Bradbury and MacFarlane postulate:

1. away from the representational realism and towards abstract and autotelic forms
2. towards a high degree of aesthetic self-consciousness
3. towards an aesthetic of radical innovation, fragmentation and shock
4. towards paradox. (Giles, 1993: 172)

As Gamache, and Bradbury and MacFarlane assert, modernism is an antithesis to realism in that modernists refuse to imitate objective reality. They refuse to imitate life and make a direct correlation between objective reality and the novel. In this respect, David Lodge makes an analogy between modernism and Saussure's idea of the signifier and the signified. There is a direct relationship between life and realistic works. However, as it is between the word and its meaning, the relationship between life and art is arbitrary in the modernist age (1986: 5). For modernists the novel is beyond reality or necessity; it does not imitate but creates. As a result, according to Bradbury and MacFarlane, modernism is a "turn from realism and humanistic representation towards style, technique and spatial form in pursuit of a deeper penetration of life"(1991: 25). Consequently, "[modernism] set the artist free to be more himself, let him move beyond the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of light. Now human consciousness, and especially artistic consciousness, could become more intuitive, more poetic; art now could fulfill *itself*" (1991: 25).

Such a novel can no more be associated with a middle class readership. Experimentalism, carried to extreme degrees in works like *Ulysses*, is not favored and easily comprehended by the middle class. Modernist fiction, particularly the

works of high modernism requires a reader much more educated and refined than the Victorian middle class. If the genre novel is defined in the Victorian Age, the best-seller novel is delimited in the modernist era as a means to distinguish between the novel for the refined reader and the ordinary middle class reader. In this respect, the modernist novel is elitist, which implies a huge sensitivity difference between the author and ordinary people. There might also be value differences between the author and the reader, regardless of whether the reader is ideal or not, due to the complexity of the world experienced and the erosion of traditional values. Consequently, the modernist novelist is not at ease when he makes comments about the world: the reader may not share his values and the ironies may easily be lost.

Reflection of this new sensitivity and understanding based on elitism, subjectivity, and experimentalism embraces a whole set of radical changes in the art of fiction, including the use of narrators. The third person, all-knowing and all-wise narrator is no longer the prototype or the favoured form of narration in modernist fiction. Authorial intrusions carried out for the purpose of enlightening the reader or to reveal the significance of an action or an issue are left behind in the Victorian novel. The new understanding of narration shifts either to a subjective first-person narrator or to more than one subjective narrator who is unable to do what the third-person omniscient narrator does because of the new *Weltanschauung*. There might be some minor or transitory narrators in addition to the major narrator who might be objective and detached from the story. Even in such cases, the complexity and vividness of the narration stem from the subjectivity of other narrators or shifts in the points of view that are particularly conveyed through interior monologues of characters. Modernist novel can be called the fiction of interior monologues since

characters are given ample time to express themselves without the mediation of a narrator. In short, the demand of Lubbock, for example, that the novel should tell itself rather than be told by the narrator is finally met.

Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, like many other modernist novels, fits perfectly into this understanding. A detached, extradiegetic third person narrator appears at the beginning of the novel, and in the third part, but its function is limited since most narration is communicated through the interior monologues of the characters. Using free indirect speech, the narrator makes it clear that the reader gets access to the issues either through the characters' point of view or in their own wording. The outcome of such a narration is not a definite discourse heavily determined by the authorial narration but one that relies on subjective and, at times, contradictory pieces and bits of information gathered through the characters.

Though some critics consider Conrad outside high modernism, his use of narrators is typically modernist. In *Lord Jim* there is clearly one narrator but Marlow tries to learn about the real Lord Jim by investigating what other people have to say about him. Consequently, each story told through a certain point of view constitutes a new discourse and each speaker becomes a narrator for a while. In *Under Western Eyes* we can observe two narrators, in addition to an omniscient narrator, only at the beginning of the novel: Razumov, a young Russian and a European language teacher. It is worth noting that the European teacher does not really understand Razumov and his story, which emphasizes the subjectivity of his point of view. This, according to Fletcher and Bradbury, "make(s) dense the feel of life, and the conditions of uncertainty and complexity under which is lived" (1991: 400).

Due to its high degree of subjectivity and frequent use of stream of consciousness, the modernist novel at times may seem diffused, particularly to the dilettante. It is certainly true that it is more difficult to read a Woolf or a Joyce compared to a Dickens or a Thackeray. However, it would be wrong to claim that the modernist novel lacks unity. Woolf, in “The Modern Novel”, which might be considered a unique poetics of the modernist fiction by all means, rejects well-rounded plots executed through a cause and effect relationship in a chronological order. She argues that “life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged” (1986: 1996) and treating it in a clear-cut division of introduction, development and conclusion is unnatural. What she asks us instead to do is to “record atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall. . . [to] trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness” (1986: 1996). The disconnectedness or the incoherence on the surface of modernist fiction is worked out particularly through the use of leitmotifs. Thus, by getting rid of structural fictional conventions, such as third-person narration or a chronological ordering of events, modernists gain the opportunity to put the work into “a satisfactory artistic form” (Stevenson, R., 1986: 14).

2.4. The Postmodern Fiction

Modernism became canonized around the 1960s and gave vent to postmodernism. The social conditions of postmodernism in the Anglo-Saxon world were not very different from those of modernism. The society in the second half of the twentieth century was much more chaotic. A second world war had been

experienced. Erosion of values was felt much more acutely due to the emergence of different sub or counter-cultures, such as the rock culture, ethnocentric cultures and gay/lesbian cultures. Because the media consumption was at an incredible speed in this age, changes of all sorts had become widespread very quickly and had, consequently, influenced big masses of people. As cited at the beginning of this chapter, Brian McHale (1992) believes “the dominant” of the postmodern period is ontology. By this, he is referring to the ontological doubt the late 20th century individual was suffering from. In the second half of the twentieth century, the values of the society that had come down from the past, united people and enabled them to communicate with each other, did not function any more. This signals the death of master or meta-narratives. Lyotard believes that what principally determines postmodernism is the deep disbelief in master-narratives or meta-narrative (Hutcheon, 1993: 246-247). Master or meta-narratives are the fundamental institutions of Western civilization such as myths, arts, faith in scientific development and aesthetic implications of all these (Causey, 1994: 31). Man used to find a meaning in life and his existence by clinging to these values and institutions which do not function any more in the postmodern society.

Another key term to define the postmodern period, which is as important as ontological doubt, is de-centering. For Raman Selden de-centering embodies almost all the characteristics of the postmodern condition.

If there is a summarizing idea [of the postmodern condition] it is the theme of the absent centre. The postmodern experience is widely held to stem from a profound sense of *ontological uncertainty*. Human shock in the face of the unimaginable (pollution, holocaust, the death of the ‘subject’) results in a loss of fixed points of reference. Neither the world nor the self any longer possess unity, coherence, meaning. They are radically ‘decentered’. (1989: 72)

Ontological doubt and de-centering are significant for Hans Bertens since they mark a big difference between modernists and postmodernists. Postmodernists accept the death of privileged languages and meta-narratives, whereas modernists avoid confronting the radical indeterminacies by clinging to certain centres (1991: 64). In spite of the concepts of subjectivity and relativity, which were the order of the day in the early twentieth century, modernists still believe in universal cultural and moral values or the unity of the psyche. Modernism considers the author a prophet-like figure who is refined, enlightened and consequently much ahead of the society. Postmodernists, who discard even the unity and consistency of ego and personality, reject the prophet-like qualities of the author. Linda Hutcheon argues that postmodern novels are “romans a hypothésé” rather than “romans a these” since they refuse to guide the reader in the perception of the universe. They place their fictive universe in a centre and then ask the reader to challenge the dynamics of this universe (1991: 107-108). This is due to the postmodernist rejection of the traditional understanding of author and literature. For them, neither the universe nor art embodies a meaning and, as a corollary to this, it is useless to draw a distinction between the two (Hutcheon, 1993: 246-248).

According to Hutcheon, the main characteristics of postmodernism must be sought in the 1960s when there was a tendency to challenge tradition and question everything. Questioning may not be positive or fruitful all the time but it was approved as a positive quality in the 1960s since change and improvement could only be achieved through questioning (1993: 248). The stated tendency to challenge the tradition and the institutions of Western civilization leads to a new understanding of

life or sensitivity which is later termed postmodernism. Though the meaning of postmodernism is still debated, most people tend to define it as anti-modernism or as a continuation of modernism. However, the agreed upon characteristic of postmodern thought is that postmodernism considers all man-made institutions and values of the civilization as problematics of civilization. This definition applies to all aspects of life including history, science, religion, gender and literature. Art, for example, undergoes a rapid transformation. Traditional understanding of art is interrogated and challenged by new forms such as soft-sculpture, pop-art, installation, happening and video-art. As Hutcheon states, former distinctions of and borders between disciplines have been effaced as a result of the interaction between different forms of art. Consequently, art becomes multi-disciplinary (1993: 249). Theodore Ziolkowski even claims that each form of art is intertwined with other forms. Art cannot survive when confined within its traditional borders, since poetics today has been intermingled with the general scope of poetics and the novel has been blended with cinema. Contemporary poetry is more interested in contemporary music and fine arts rather than old poetry (in Hutcheon, 1993: 249-250).

Postmodern fiction gets its share of the opportunity of interrogation; it considers the tradition of fiction or the canon as something to be challenged and questioned. For the modernist novelist the tradition was the canonized form and content of the realist novel. Consequently, criticism of Woolf and D. H. Lawrence can actually be regarded as an attack on the realist notion of literature. For the postmodernist, on the other hand, tradition includes the modernistic tendencies as well since they had also become canonized by the time postmodernism emerged. Challenging and re-appropriating traditional understanding take many forms, some

radical and some not so. Some authors have used innovative methods to undermine traditional novelistic practices, such as binding a book of black pages together or putting loose leaves of the novel in a box and have expected the reader then to put them together, but most authors have developed less radical and more logical strategies.

Linda Hutcheon's books and articles on postmodernism are very helpful in understanding the new strategies the postmodern novel has developed. In all her works, including *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, *The Politics of Postmodernism* and *Narcissistic Narrative : The Metafictional Paradox*, she emphasizes the point that postmodernism uses and abuses the conventions of modernism. While they use modernist devices, for example, they use them with an ironic distance. The same literary devices could be detected, both in modernist and postmodernist fiction but the latter uses them to challenge the previous use of them.

In her article "Beginning to Theorize Postmodernism" Hutcheon draws a parallelism between postmodern art and fiction: both are interdisciplinary. Postmodern fiction mingles the novel with the short story, biography, autobiography, and history. While the borders between these genres disappear, the modernist idea of the genres of the novel dies out. Now the novel is a multi-disciplinary genre itself. Consequently, modernist compartmentalization of genres is questioned in postmodern novels such as Alice Munroe's *Lives of Girls*, which is both a novel and a short story; Salman Rushdie's *Shane* blending history with fiction and Michael Ondaatje's *Coming through the Slaughterhouse*, which amalgamates poetry with fiction. The first major strategy of postmodernists to problematize the tradition of writing, which is the effacement of genres of fiction and disciplines of art, even

extends itself to the idea that there is no definitive distinction between life and art, and thus, between fact and fiction (1993: 250). It is no coincidence that many postmodern novels employ factual characters. Some striking examples are *Dr. Copernicus*, *Kepler* and *The Newton Letter: An Interlude* by John Banville, *Flaubert's Parrot* by Julian Barnes, *The White Hotel* by D. M. Thomas, *Camel Clouds* and *Don Carlos* by Thornwald Steen and *Chatterton* and *Hawksmoor* by Peter Ackroyd.

A second major postmodern strategy to challenge conventions of the novel is to create confrontations of worlds. The ontology of the novel is always under question in postmodern novels by the co-existence of different discourses. These discourses can belong to different genres, as Hutcheon (1993) states. Therefore, a novel can start as science-fiction but can develop into biography and end as social criticism. This is achieved through, in Brian McHale's words, "destabilization of the projected world" which "involves 'weakening' the fictional world by placing it at several narrative removes" and "the paradoxical reproduction. . . *within* the fictional world of the fictional world itself" (1992: 155).

The best example of this strategy is John Fowles's *A Maggot*. Using trial accounts and newspapers reports, Fowles constructs a discourse very proper for a historical novel, since the novel takes place in the 18th century. However, there are science fictional elements in the novel which are only science fictional for the time of the narrative of events. Ordinary elements of contemporary life, like space shuttles or television screens, are used as science fictional elements in the novel. The indeterminate nature of the novel is further fostered by conspicuously fantastic elements and a pseudo-Victorian author. The author not only writes a preface

resembling the prefaces of 18th century novelists but also inserts authorial comments throughout the novel. What we have in the end can only be defined as a Victorian fantastic science fiction projecting today from the eighteenth century.

A Maggot is not a rare specimen. Many authors use authentic methods to destabilize the world they construct in their novels. David Lodge's *Changing Places* produces the same indeterminacy by using different discourses in the same novel. It starts as a third-person narration but the second chapter of the novel is conveyed through letters and, thus, the novel becomes an epistolary novel. The last chapter is a film script. Polish author Gombrowicz keeps changing his narrative devices in *Ferdydurke*. At times he uses long dialogues employing free direct speech but later resorts to narrative report of speech acts and free indirect speech almost indiscriminately. D. M. Thomas employs diary, pornography and poetry in *The White Hotel* in addition to using factual and fictional characters together.

It must be accepted that only a small fringe of the postmodern poetics of fiction is covered here. Other aspects of the postmodern novel which problematizes the tradition of the novel can be indicated as a tendency to history, magical realism, parody, pastiche, intertextuality and metafiction. The narrator prototype is difficult to determine for the postmodern novel because of the complexity it displays. However, we can still make a clear observation: the postmodern narrator must do what the postmodern novel does, i.e. problematize the traditional narrator. Therefore, the narrator that represents the values of the implied author and speaks on his behalf, or the narrator that gives coherence or unity to the work or the narrator that pretends to disappear for the illusion of immediacy or the narrator that enables different points of views to function at the same time or a combination of two or more of these

narrators, must be problematized in the postmodern novel. In short, the prototype narrator of the postmodern novel is a parodic re-handling of the traditional narrator and this can take many forms.

Thus, it is only inevitable that Barnes's use of the narrator displays some characteristics of postmodernism. Being a well-read novelist and a strong believer in novelty, Barnes must confront tradition and find new ways to further develop the employment of narrator. His concerns while framing his narrative and the functions of the narrator(s) in *Flaubert's Parrot*, *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* will be discussed in detail in the coming chapters.

CHAPTER III

FLAUBERT'S PARROT

Flaubert's Parrot was published in 1984 but Barnes's interest in Flaubert goes much back to the time when he first read *Madame Bovary* at the age of fifteen. In "When Flaubert Took Wing" he wrote for *The Guardian* in 2005, almost 20 years after the book's initial publication, Barnes explains how he started to write the novel:

I can identify exactly the moment at which the novel began - even if I didn't recognise it myself at the time. I had first read *Madame Bovary* at about 15; had done a special paper on Flaubert at university; and felt that at some point I would want to write about him. All I knew was the sort of book I didn't want to write - any kind of biography, for instance, or something in that charmingly illustrated Thames & Hudson series about writers and their worlds... (2005:1)

In 1981 Barnes went to Normandy for a short holiday and visited three main areas associated with Flaubert. He first saw, just like Geoffrey Braithwaite, the statues of the author and then came across a stuffed parrot in the Flaubert museum at Hotel Dieu which was said to be used by Flaubert as a model while writing the short story *Un Cœur simple*. A few days later, Barnes finally went to Croisset to see the small pavilion built on the remains of the author's house. There he saw another parrot having the same claim. The duality of the parrots had left an impression on Barnes, an impression he did not really know what to do with. He first thought of writing a short academic article on which the real parrot Flaubert used as a model might be but later he started thinking

What if someone - clearly not me, but someone sufficiently interested in Flaubert, someone whose life might have parallels and points of bouncing contact with Flaubert's work and perhaps life - were to have the same experience? It could be the opening - or perhaps clinching - moment in a story about life and art, about France and England, about the pursuit of the writer by the reader, and that moment of contact - practical yet mystical - between the two of them. (2005:2)

Barnes finally started writing the short story: "I began writing what I intended as a freestanding short story, but then felt increasingly that I was on to something with this mix of fact and fiction, something which might be elastic and capacious. So: not a story but the beginning of a novel, one in which an at times attenuated fictional infrastructure would support a factual superstructure" (2005:2).

Flaubert's Parrot, which started as an idea for an academic article, thus, ended up as a very idiosyncratic novel which has caused much discussion among the critics and has become a set text for the postmodern poetics of fiction in less than a decade. It is a multi-layered novel that tells three main stories at the same time: the story of Flaubert, the famous parrot and Geoffrey Braithwaite, the narrator of the novel.

3.1. Synopsis

Flaubert's Parrot starts with Geoffrey Braithwaite's trip to Rouen where Flaubert spent most of his life. While visiting places associated with Flaubert, Braithwaite, just like his creator, comes across two different stuffed parrots which are individually claimed by two different museums to be the original parrot Flaubert used as a model while writing the short story *Un cœur simple*. In the rest of the novel, Braithwaite tries to solve the mystery and find out which of the two is the real

parrot. Eventually, at the very end of the novel, he finds out that Flaubert borrowed the parrot from a museum and returned it when he finished writing the story. The museum then had a room full of stuffed parrots three of which still survive. The museum does not have any records of the parrot Flaubert actually borrowed. Besides, as one Flaubert scholar tells Braithwaite at the end of the novel, Flaubert might have altered the physical characteristics of the parrot while writing the story. Consequently, the mystery is left unresolved.

The search for the real parrot is just one theme of the novel which appears at the beginning, at times touched upon throughout the novel and concluded at the end. The biggest part of the novel presents a selective Flaubert biography, his literary career with a special emphasis on *Madam Bovary* and his relationship with women. A third dimension of the novel is Braithwaite's pathetic relationship with his wife Ellen who betrays him with a number of men and commits suicide (though the incidents are not related with each other). None of these stories is told separately; particularly Ellen's story - an oblique narrative which is just hinted at and delayed for a long time and finally enunciated towards the end of the novel.

3.2. The Structure of the Novel

3.2.1. Layers of Diegesis

As the synopsis illustrates, the novel is comprised of three distinct layers of diegesis. There are three stories that progress almost simultaneously through use of leitmotif, flashback and foreshadowing. These diegetic levels are the mystery of the parrot, Flaubert's selective biography and Braithwaite's relationship with his wife.

Consequently, *Flaubert's Parrot* is a multi-generic novel that not only blends fact and fiction, but also employs different conventions of writing.

The first diegetic layer that is about the parrot can be seen in the paradigm of traditional detective fiction. Braithwaite encounters an enigmatic situation which can be compared to murder in traditional detective fiction. Later, through investigation, he tries to solve the puzzle just like a detective trying to find out who the murderer is. At the end of the novel the mystery is uncovered. Because *Flaubert's Parrot* is a postmodern novel that abuses traditional conventions of genres, the novel does not end in the fashion of detective fiction; the mystery is uncovered only to a certain extent. In other words, the murderer is never found out. In this respect, we can call the novel a failing detective story. Why Barnes chooses to follow such a pattern will be discussed in detail later in the sections on postmodernism and historiographic metafiction.

The second diegetic level consists of Flaubert's biography. As it has been hinted before, this is a selective biography that focuses mostly on Flaubert's literary career and affairs. Barnes puts on his postmodern hat while writing this part as well. In chapter two, titled "Chronology", Barnes writes three chronologies of Flaubert's life respectively. In the first two he makes use of an objective third-person narration whereas in the third, he makes Flaubert write it. The content of each biography is different. The first one is a heroic depiction of Flaubert and his literary career. This very positive picture of the author is juxtaposed with the second chronology that is full of failures, distress, and losses. The last one is an inner picture of Flaubert supposed to be written by Flaubert himself. Barnes once again problematizes the

conventions of biography in this second diegetic level by hinting that writing biography is a matter of emphasizing certain facts and ignoring some others.

The last diegetic level is devoted to Braithwaite's personal story. It is a story that is kept deferred in the narrative which finally reveals his relationship with his wife, his wife's adultery and suicide. In this partial autobiography the narrator has an existential motivation to narrate through which he seeks some sort of salvation. There, to his failure, he tries to understand his relationship and the reasons why she had affairs and committed suicide.

3.2.2. Discourses in the Novel

The diegetic levels of the narrative are certainly unlike that of traditional novels, particularly of autobiographical novels where the homodiegetic narrator is always the focal point. What makes *Flaubert's Parrot* more complicated and more interesting to read is the co-existence of multiple discourses. Discourse here refers to two different narrative methods. Firstly, it can be associated with conventions of narratives indicating different genres such as detective fiction, historical novel, science fiction novel or autobiographical novel. Because each of these genres has idiosyncratic features and traditions of narrative, each represent a different discourse. Secondly, as Leech and Short (1981) illustrated in their study, discourse refers to narratives constructed by different agents in the narrative like the narrators or characters. *Flaubert's Parrot* has a complex web of discourses in both senses.

3.2.2.1. Discourse as Genre

The diegetic layers already point up to the different discourses at work in the novel. However, genres employed in the novel are not limited to the variety of diegetic layers. The novel is actually like a chameleon that keeps changing its colors. It starts out as a traditional detective narrative in which the observer narrator is trying to figure out a mystery. The mystery is half solved only at the end of the novel in the last chapter. Consequently, the first and the last chapters are blatantly written in the detective fiction genre.

The second chapter is an extra-ordinary chronology which is further developed with biographic information in the next chapter. Chapter four is a bestiary that attempts to trace the animals Flaubert has some strange relationship with either directly or symbolically. For example the bear item focuses on how Flaubert associates himself with bears while dogs include the dogs Flaubert used to have as pets. This pseudo-dictionary certainly includes the famous parrot. This chapter of the novel can also be considered biography since the chapter is full of Flaubert's life though approached with a very definite point of view.

Chapter six, titled "Emma Bovary's Eyes", can be described as literary criticism since Braithwaite here discusses the literary mistakes novelists make and how unimportant these mistakes, in fact, are. In that section of the novel he severely criticizes a real critic named Dr Enid Starkie from University of Oxford. Dr Starkie points out that Flaubert is not consistent about the color of Emma Bovary's eyes; "on one occasion he gives Emma brown eyes (14); on another deep black eyes (15); and on another blue eyes (16)" (74). Braithwaite takes great pains to prove her wrong and refutes her argument beyond any doubt by also referring to other writers such as

William Golding and Alfred Lord Tennyson. He provides such a better analysis of the subject than that of Dr Starkie and supports his claims with external materials that the chapter can easily be presented at an academic conference.

Braithwaite continues his literary criticism discourse in the seventh chapter and even discusses poststructuralist theories of literature. Because poststructuralism and postmodernism are heavily interested in historical representation of the past, he makes a special emphasis on the impossibility of recording history correctly- a major idea of New Historicists. He even fantasizes about being a dictator of literature and writes a list of prohibited types of novels and forbidden themes in novels. Though the chapter is at times littered with Braithwaite and his wife, it can still be considered a serious discourse on historiography and literary criticism.

Chapters eight and nine are respectively on Flaubert's relationship to trains and the books Flaubert thought of writing but never managed to. Because they throw further light on the author, they can be considered biography again. Though the next chapter, i.e. chapter ten, can be regarded in a similar fashion, its discourse style is completely different. It is a long dialogue between the narrator and the narratee, in which the narrator poses as a lawyer and answers the narratee's charges against Flaubert such as hating humanity, democracy and progress, not being interested in politics, and living in an ivory tower. Chapter twelve resembles the tenth in two ways: it is about Flaubert's life and it is conveyed again in a totally different way. This time the novel masquerades as a dictionary as the title demonstrates: "Braithwaite's Dictionary of Accepted Ideas". This dictionary, a pastiche of Flaubert's *Dictionary of Accepted Ideas*, includes one entry related to Flaubert for each letter.

In chapter eleven the narrator leaves the stage to Louise Colet with whom Flaubert had his longest lasting affair. This time Colet speaks to the narratee and gives him inside information about the affair. This chapter poses a duality; it is both Flaubert's biography and Colet's autobiography since a certain aspect of both subjects' lives is exposed.

The thirteenth chapter, "Pure Story", is devoted to Braithwaite's wife Ellen. Braithwaite briefly tells us about their lives, her affairs with other men and how she killed herself. As Braithwaite himself confesses, this is the most difficult part to write because he does not really know why she killed herself. This difficulty makes him defer telling the story throughout the novel. In the first chapter we are told that he is married, in the second it is implied that she died and in the others the reader is kept thinking about her and her death. Ellen's story normally looks independent of Flaubert and the parrot but Barnes skilfully weaves the three stories together through teasers and leitmotif up to this chapter. In this chapter he implicitly identifies himself with Flaubert and explicitly compares Ellen to Madam Bovary. In addition, he makes frequent use of Flaubert's lines or refers to events from Flaubert's life while telling the story.

Before Braithwaite finishes the novel with the parrot's unsolved mystery, he resorts to one final extraordinary discourse: the novel becomes an exam paper in the chapter titled "Examination Paper". The exam paper, which must be written in three hours according to the instructions, includes various questions on Flaubert related to literary criticism, economics, geography, logic, history, biography and psychology.

3.2.2.2. Discourse in Relation to Enunciation

The complexity of the discourses as determined by different genres and disciplines in the novel is further strengthened by the existence of different discourses in relation to enunciation. In other words, we can also approach the novel from the aspect of “voice” and ask “who speaks?” There are four major agents of enunciation in *Flaubert’s Parrot*. The biggest share of enunciation belongs to Braithwaite: he tells us the story. However, as Todd (1988:121) and Moseley (1997:74) state Braithwaite makes very little narration in the conventional sense. He is not the agent that controls the narration all the time; “he appears to relinquish control at times, as in the chapter (‘Louise Colet’s Version’) that is surrendered to the principal mistress in Flaubert’s life” (Todd, 1988: 121). Additionally, even in the most personal story of his wife, he makes hefty direct quotations from Flaubert which are mostly taken from his letters. The third chronology alleged to be written by Flaubert should also be seen as his enunciation though it is fictive. Consequently, Flaubert gets the second biggest share of enunciation.

The third belongs to the narratee. Barnes makes extensive use of the narratee not only in *Flaubert’s Parrot* but also in his other major works. In this novel the narratee is a completely diegetic entity and it directly contributes to enunciation. This is most evident in chapter ten where he, as a public prosecutor, accuses Flaubert of the mentioned so-called offences. Its sentences are italicized and thus is clearly differentiated from the enunciation of Braithwaite.

The last enunciator of the novel is Louise Colet whom Braithwaite lets tell the story of the affair between her and Flaubert from her own point of view. One of the

longest chapters belongs to her and she voices a different story that subverts some aspects of Flaubert's enunciation.

When *Flaubert's Parrot* was first published, some critics did not welcome it so warmly. Some critics did not even qualify it as a novel and the main reason for this is the complexity created by the co-existence of different discourses some of which are difficult to associate with fiction. However, effacement of genres and employment of different disciplines in a given novel soon became a major characteristic of postmodern fiction which most of Barnes' novels should be discussed in relation to.

3.3. *Flaubert's Parrot* and Poetics of Postmodernism

In *The Modern British Novel*, Malcolm Bradbury describes *Flaubert's Parrot* as

half critical text, half a human narrative ... the text itself takes multiple forms: it is a research, a meditation, an examination paper, a playful latter-day commentary, on Flaubert's own ambiguous realism, and on the strange stimuli of art. It busily plays with the notions of the real and the fictional, makes its own rules, breaks up its own discourse, leaves behind its own ambiguities: a postmodern "text" indeed. (1994: 437)

That *Flaubert's Parrot* is a text with "multiple forms" or in better words, employing multiple discourses and that it is a postmodern novel goes without saying: almost all serious studies on Barnes indicate these two points. Because the existence of multiple discourses resides in the idea of postmodernity, poetics of the postmodern fiction is the key to understand Barnes's fiction in general and his use of narrator in particular.

Even at the outset of discussions evolving around the narrator, it is to be stressed that a simple formal analysis of the narrator does not mean much. Booth, for example stresses that it is not precise and meaningful enough to say a narrator is first

or third-person (1987: 149). A much more meticulous discussion which includes the implications of the choice of narrator must be preferred since each choice brings along some possibilities and limitations. Besides, as we have seen in the third chapter, the choice of narrators may not simply be a result of aesthetic or artistic concerns. The need for a complex analysis method is felt particularly for the first-person narratives as Dorit Cohn indicates. She logically states that "... all formal elements in first-person narration contribute to the characterization of the narrator, and therefore call for more than merely formal interpretation" (1983:160). When the first-person narrator recounts his own story, when he is an autodiegetic narrator in Genette's terms, he is not only the mediating agent but also the story, the protagonist and the designer of the formal and the linguistic properties of the text. As a corollary of all these, Julian Barnes's *Flaubert's Parrot* must be discussed on a much profounder level which includes the postmodern understanding of fiction.

Understandably enough, the poetics of postmodern fiction is a complex phenomenon and it is not possible to quote all elements of it in any study. However, we can focus on two elements of the postmodern poetics that directly determine Barnes's the use of narrator. These two elements are the postmodern understanding of history and an inevitable tendency towards solipsism.

3.3.1. *Flaubert's Parrot* as Historiographic Metafiction

At the onset of the discussions it must be noted that modernism did not produce many historical novels. As Bradbury and MacFarlane (1991) stated before, modernism is concerned with its own time and the individual subject. These concerns make it very difficult for modernists to write historical novels. Historical novels are

marginalized and separated from the main stream novel as a sub-genre and deemed a lower form of novel in the modernist period. Postmodernism is anti-modernist in this respect; postmodernists shifted their attention from present to the past as well. It is not a coincidence that some postmodern classics such as *Name of the Rose*, *Shame*, *The Public Burning*, *A Maggot* and *Ragtime* are historical novels.

The postmodern penchant for historical novel is not without reason. History as understood by postmodern thought is not the traditional history which can be summarized as the objective documentation of people or countries that lived in the past. History, like all other man-made institutions is problematic particularly because it is conveyed through language. Neither the language's ability to convey reality, nor the reliability of the material conveyed through language can be trusted. Besides, writing history includes a relative degree of objectivity – now that the historian is also a human being - and narrativity. These characteristics are also valid for the writing process of fiction. Hutcheon holds that historiography is not an objective and impartial account of the past: “it is more an attempt to comprehend and master it by means of some working (narrative/explanatory) model that, in fact, is precisely what grants a particular meaning to the past” (1991: 64). As Collingwood argues it is making plausible stories out of diffused and incomplete information. Objectivity is out of question in this process, as Hayden White says, because the historian gives history a certain meaning by emphasizing, repeating, organizing, subordinating or de-emphasizing some facts (Hutcheon, 1991: 67).

Raman Selden, the author of *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literature*, summarizes the poststructuralist or postmodern idea of history writing i.e. the ideology of New Historicism through four new assumptions:

1. There are two meanings of the word 'history': (a) 'the events of the past' and (b) 'telling a story about the events of the past'. Poststructuralist thought makes it clear that history is always 'narrated', and that therefore the first sense is tenable. The past can never be available to us in pure form, but always in the form of 'representations'.
2. Historical periods are not unified entities. There is no single 'history', only discontinuous and contradictory 'histories'. There was no single Elizabethan world-view. The idea of a uniform and harmonious culture is a myth imposed on history and propagated by the ruling classes in their own interest.
3. Historians can no longer claim that their study of the past is detached and objective. We cannot transcend our own historical situation. The past is not something which confronts us as if it were a physical object, but is something we construct from already written texts of all kinds which we construe in line with our particular historical concerns.
4. The relations between literature and history must be rethought. There is no stable and fixed 'history' which can be treated as the 'background' against which literature can be foregrounded. All history (histories) is 'foreground'. 'History' is always a matter of telling a story about past, using other texts as our intertexts. 'Non-literary' texts produced by lawyers, popular writers, theologians, scientists and historians should not be treated as belonging to a different order of textuality. Literary works should not be regarded as sublime and transcendent expressions of the 'human spirit', but as texts among other texts. We cannot now accept that a privileged 'inner' world of 'great authors' is to be set against the background of an 'outer' world of ordinary history. (1989: 105)

The ideas voiced by Hutcheon and Selden is a brief expression of scientific studies of New Historians such as Stephen Greenblatt, Hayden White, Louise Montrose, Jonathan Goldberg and contemporary philosophers like Foucault, Kristeva and Lacan. What these authors achieved can be summarized as the de-mystification of history. After their works, history is considered no longer an untouchable document of the past. Novelists have benefited a lot from this new concept of history and have seen in history a good potential for good stories for their novels. Since the 1960s postmodern novelists are digging in the archives to write novels that blend history and fiction.

Hutcheon calls this type of novel, historiographic metafiction in her influential article “ ‘The Pastime of Past Time’: Fiction, History, Historiographic Metafiction”. This seems a very good coinage because it replaces history with historiography since the postmodern novelists’ concern is as much with how to write history as with the past. Consequently, historiographic metafiction is not merely a contemporary historical novel but one that questions man’s ability to write history, which is a major theme in historiographic metafiction. The coinage is also pertinent because it extends to another major characteristic of the postmodern novel: metafiction.

Metafiction, though is a convention as old as the genre of novel itself, is employed at a great extent by the postmodern novelists. It is generally described as fiction about fiction which indicates “the sort of novel or short-story which deliberately breaks fictive illusions and comments directly upon its own fictive nature or process of composition” (Hawthorn, 1985:21). Metafictional discourse, according to David Lodge, mostly takes the form of “asides” which in the realistic fiction are used to describe character and action. In contemporary fiction it concedes the artificiality of the conventions of realism while employing them, disarms criticism by incorporating it in the novel but above all emphasizes the fiction status of the novel by integrating the writing process into the novel (1992:206-207). For this reason, metafictional novels are also called self-reflexive or self-referential novels by some critics.

Because postmodern fiction writers do not want their work to be considered a slice of life, but a fictional construct, many of them acknowledge the reader that they are writing a novel. John Barth starts his *The Floating Opera* with a big aside where

he discusses the difficulty of starting a novel, how he named his novel, the investigations he made to write the novel and other issues of fiction writing. John Fowles at a certain point of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* openly says that everything we have read has taken place in his mind and that the characters never lived in real life. In the famous thirteenth chapter of the novel he discusses at length the difficulties of writing a good novel. Italo Calvino achieves the same effect of illusion breaking by focusing on the reading process rather than the writing in his famous novel *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*. The novel opens with the following paragraph:

You are about to begin reading Italo Calvino's new novel, *If on a winter's night a traveler*. Relax. Concentrate. Dispel every other thought. Let the world around you fade. Best to close the door; TV is always on in the next room. Tell others right away, "No I don't want to watch TV!" Raise your voice-they won't hear you otherwise- "I am reading! I don't want to be disturbed!" Maybe they haven't heard you, with all that racket; speak louder, yell: "I am beginning to read Calvino's new novel!" Or if you prefer, don't say anything: just hope they will leave you alone. (3)

Later by moving on to the most comfortable position of sitting, the direction of lights, possible interrupting elements while reading, the narrator emphasizes the fictionality of the book through its reading process.

Lodge states that "metafictional discourse is not much a loophole or alibi by means of which the writer can occasionally escape the constraints of traditional realism; rather a central preoccupation and source of inspiration" (1992:208). It is, therefore, not a nice postmodern trick but a fundamental characteristic of the postmodern fiction. Hutcheon's coinage of historiographic metafiction should, consequently, be thought in these terms.

In brief, historiographic metafiction is the type of self-reflexive novel which combines the anxieties and difficulties of writing fiction and history. These two modes of writing are believed to share the same concerns today. Paradoxically, history and literature were considered to be the same in the old world. That is why Homer is regarded as the first historian and poet. However, around the nineteenth century these two modes were separated and were compared to each other at times to one's benefit, and at other times to that of the other. In the course of history, vindication of drama and novel were carried out by comparison to and in emulation of history many times. One just needs to remember how Defoe pretends to be writing histories or how Fielding claims novel to be superior to history.

More than two centuries later, postmodern thought once again focuses on the shared concerns and instruments of the historian and the novelist. Hutcheon summarizes the similarities in the following sentences:

They have both been seen to derive their force more from verisimilitude than from any objective truth; they are both identified as linguistic constructs, highly conventionalized in their narrative forms, and not at all transparent, either in terms of language or structure; and they appear to be equally intertextual, deploying the texts of the past within their own complex textuality (1989:54).

These are the “implied teachings” of historiographic metafiction- “novels that are intensely self-reflexive but that also both re-introduce historical context into metafiction and problematize the entire question of historical knowledge” (Hutcheon, 1989:54-55). Historiographic metafiction is the outcome of the common skepticism in empiricist and positivist epistemologies. Neither fiction nor history is believed to be able to reflect the reality. Skepticism does not mean total disbelief and postmodern novels do not reject any historical fact but open the idea of

representation to question. Relying on the idea that fiction does not represent but creates its own reality, historiographic metafiction asserts that truth is never singular but plural; there is not truth but truths for historiographic metafiction. Employing the discourse of history and fiction, both transparency of history and originality of fiction and the conclusiveness of representation are challenged (Hutcheon, 1989:55-59). In her own words “postmodern fiction suggests that to re-write or to re-present the past in fiction and in history is, in both cases, to open it up to the present, to prevent it from being conclusive and teleological” (1989:59).

Historiographic metafiction “... both installs and blurs the line between fiction and history” (Hutcheon, 1989: 62). It installs the historical discourse by the use of historical personages, facts or documents but in order only to foreground possible mistakes in the recording of history or the potential for deliberate or accidental mistakes. It similarly emphasizes the fact that past is only available to us through texts. While traditional historical novels employ real personages to approximate the ontological status of the novel to history, historiographic metafiction purposefully distorts these figures in order to challenge the idea of representation into question since, as Dominick LaCapra argues, processing historical documents for the purpose of interpretation is also historically conditioned (Hutcheon, 1989: 63-71).

Historiographic metafiction, while intentionally mingling completely fictional constructs with historical structures, “challenges the genuineness of *any* history and concedes the *discursive* reality of the past, while foregrounding questions of representation and of the knowledge of the past” (Oppermann, 1995:60). It uses the conventions of the realist literature to depict itself as a historical account

meanwhile insisting that the novel is a linguistic construct. It posits that it is referential because it used history as a departure point but at the same time it is self-referential due to the fact that it is fictional. Consequently, the reader has to accept the problematic relationship between history and fiction (Oppermann, 1995: 60).

The deep down motive of the new understanding of New Historicism is affiliated with the death of perhaps the grandest narrative of all that is based on human perception. The most fundamental notion of traditional Western philosophy is based on man's ability to perceive outer reality and record it seamlessly. This hypothesis is intertwined with the belief that world is an orderly place where things can be figured out by intelligent and diligent minds. Postmodernists are confident about neither man's ability to comprehend the outer reality nor the existence of an order in the world. The complexity of the world, multiplicity of the values of people, and the de-centering and the ontological doubt man experiences all have pushed him to solipsism.

Solipsism, as a philosophical theory holds that the self is the only thing that can be known and verified; therefore the self is the only reality. In the twentieth century solipsism, as a painful result of de-centering and the death of meta-narratives, intruded in the novelistic practices. "British novelists in the 1970s and 1980s have ... increasingly apprehended the truth that solipsism not only exists but must be lived with: it cannot be side-stepped or ignored" (Todd, 1988: 117-118).

The most blatant reflection of solipsism is that the postmodern authors have refused to consider them prophet-like figures and quit producing meanings in their novels. The modernist vision of author imposing order and meaning onto seemingly diffused and fragmented reality is altogether abandoned. That is the reason why the

novelists tend to incorporate the process of writing, particularly the difficulties of writing fiction into their novels in the postmodern era. Indeterminacy has become almost the order of the day in postmodernist novels as Ihab Hassan (1993) argues . John Fowles acts as if he is the spokesperson of his generation on the matter of indeterminacy and solipsism. In *The French Lieutenant's Woman* he tells the audience that "...[p]erhaps you suppose that a novelist has only to pull the right strings and his puppets will behave in a lifelike manner; and produce on request a through analysis of their motives and intentions... You may think novelists always have fixed plans to which they work, so that the future predicted by Chapter One is always inexorably the actuality of Chapter Thirteen" (1971:85-86). This refusal to be an authority even on his own creation or simply the tendency of solipsism is manifest in almost his all fiction. *The Magus* starts and ends in mystery; neither the protagonist nor the readers make sense of why he went through a mysterious experience. In *The Collector* the audience is confronted with two unreliable narrators who are never corrected or put into line by an all-knowing narrator or an implied author. *A Maggot* does not go beyond presenting inexplicable events although it greatly approximates to traditional detective fiction. Even in a novel like *The Name of the Rose* in which the puzzle is solved, it is solved at the expense of epistemology. As Brian McHale states the protagonist works with the principles of modern epistemology to find out the murderer and finds him indeed but only by chance, which underlines the problematic means of epistemology (1992:147-148).

Solipsism blends well with historiographic metafiction because they both derive from the man's inability to know and record reality in a world shorn of meta-narratives. Barnes's narrator, Braithwaite, is the very embodiment of a person who

suffers from solipsism and lack of faith in the possibility of writing history accurately. Let alone knowing and understanding the different dimensions of the truth about Flaubert, he is unable to give a meaning to his own experience with his wife Ellen. In this respect we can call him a postmodern narrator.

3.4. Braithwaite, the Hesitating Narrator

Flaubert's Parrot starts with an objective description of Flaubert's statue in Rouen and a group of North Africans playing *boules* beneath the statue. However, before the first paragraph is over, as Bruce Sesto also indicates the Flaubertean transparency vanishes (2001:43) and the reader becomes aware of the narrator since he refers to himself in the first person pronoun. The narrator's presence is still not very much emphasized in the first two pages in spite of the common use of the pronoun I. In these pages he might be considered, though an intrusive narrator, an observer or a tourist in France who subjectively records what he sees. However, the information he gives about Flaubert's statue indicates otherwise:

This statue isn't the original one. The Germans took the first Flaubert away in 1941, along with the railings and the door-knockers ... For a decade or so, the pedestal was empty. Then a Major of Rouen who was keen on statues rediscovered the original plaster cast- made by a Russian called Leopold Bernstamn- and the city council approved making of a new image. Rouen bought itself a proper metal statue in 93 per cent copper and 7 per cent tin: the founders, Rudier of Chatillon-sous-Bagneux, assert that such an alloy is guarantee against corrosion. (11-12)

The detail and precision of information about the history of the old statue and the material of the new immediately changes the narrator's status of a tourist and elevates him to that of, perhaps, a tourist guide. However, two paragraphs later he says "I begin with the statue, because that's where I began the whole project. Why

does the writing make us chase the writer? Why can't we leave well alone? Why aren't books enough? Flaubert wanted them to be: few writers believed more in the objectivity of the written text and the insignificance of the writer's personality; yet still we disobediently pursue" (12). From the first sentence we learn that he has a project about Flaubert; from the others we may conclude that he has mixed feelings about his project. He has an urge to prepare a project about Flaubert's against his will but it is obvious from the word "project" that Braithwaite will seriously pursue it. Besides, the references to Robert Louis Stevenson, Flaubert and Sartre and, two works of the last two authors, which immediately follow the remark above, make it clear Braithwaite has the necessary interest and expertise to carry out the project.

On page three the narrative takes a different turn and he becomes the focal point of the narrative: he starts to talk about himself, his wife and children, how he once thought of writing books and how he wandered about the town trying to recognize the places he had been forty years ago during the World War II, and he does all these in quite an informal and latent conversation with the narratee. While eating at a hotel nearby the shore where his friends died during the war, to his surprise, he realizes that "[m]emories came out of hiding, but not emotions; not even the memories of emotions" (14). Watching a film afterwards about the landing, he feels more perplexed and asks the famous questions which will be repeated a number of times throughout the novel: "How do we seize the past? Can we ever do so?" (14). He answers the question himself recalling an event. While he is a medical student, some students release a piglet covered with grease into the dance hall during an end-of-term party. People make themselves look ridiculous trying to catch it without

success. Braithwaite concludes “[t]he past often seems to behave like that piglet” (14). This is a metaphor that will also haunt the narrative.

He sees the first parrot at the museum in Hotel-Dieu and he is moved this time: “... [Flaubert’s] statue was a retread; his house had been knocked down; his books naturally had their own life- responses to them weren’t responses to him. But here, in this unexceptional green parrot, preserved in a routine yet mysterious fashion, was something which made me feel I had almost known the writer. I was both moved and cheered” (16). After giving a synopsis and possible interpretations of parrot in *Un cœur simple*, Braithwaite relates “four principle encounters between the novelist and a member of the parrot family” and asks “Was any of these four birds, in whole or in part, the inspiration behind Loulou?” (18). In his hotel room later he thinks about the parrot and asks the first crucial question: “What had Flaubert done with... [the parrot] after finishing *Un cœur simple*?” (19). The second crucial question comes when he sees the second parrot in another museum: which one is the original parrot Flaubert actually used writing the story? Coming back to England, he writes letters to some academics, authors and the French Embassy to make inquires and ends the first chapter: “I hoped to get my replies soon” (22).

The first chapter sets the tone of the narrative to a great extends. There is a homodiegetic narrator who goes beyond narrating what he observes. He converses with the narratee in quite an informal tone but at the same time the quotations he makes and the specific information he gives elevates him to the status of an expert. Emphasis on Flaubert and the parrot hints that this is not going to be a novel only about the narrating character. Consequently, the first chapter is almost like a

microcosm of the novel. It has all the veins the novel would develop in later, i.e. the parrot, Flaubert, and Braithwaite himself.

The narrator in the first chapter is not really extra-ordinary; it can be defined in traditional terms as a limited first-person narrator who hints intrusion into the novel both as a commentator and a character. He obviously will not be a Pip or a David Copperfield; he will somewhat be different from those who merely tell their own stories. He will not either have Kurtz's modesty by limiting his existence to an observer. His characteristics as a narrator will unravel gradually and the second chapter is the first place for the novel to illustrate his difference.

In the second chapter the narrator almost vanishes. While Barnes subverts "such novelistic techniques as temporal linearity and narrative closure" (2001: 33) to quote Bruce Sesto, the first-person narration is alternated with third person narration. Braithwaite presents us with three different chronologies of Flaubert employing an impartial third-person voice in the first two and adopting Flaubert's voice in the third. Only the voice is impartial in the first two chronologies; the narrator's relation to Flaubert's life is not. The first chronology, which is mostly about his affairs and literary career, only focuses on positive aspects of his life and depicts Flaubert as a conqueror of women's and readers' hearts. As James E. Martin indicates, even his first epileptic fit is presented as useful in the long run since it ends Flaubert's studies in law and provides him with the confinement and solitude necessary for writing (2001: 13). The second chronology, written again in a detached language, delineates a very contradictory line of life and includes almost only losses, deterioration and literary failures. The first two entries of this chronology on the death of Caroline and Emile-Cléophas - short-living sister and brother of Gustave- are not directly related

to Gustave's life. They are inserted in the chronology as if to make it more depressing than it is.

The first two chronologies, though both written in the distanced language and the manner of traditional biography discourse, are problematizing each other. Abiding to this notion, Moseley points out one blatant contradiction between the same items in the two chronologies on Flaubert's death (1997:89). In the first chronology Flaubert's death is conveyed in the following words: "1880: Full of honour, widely loved, and still working hard to the end, Gustave Falubert dies at Croisset" (27). In the second chronology, the same historical event is recounted as "1880: Impoverished, lonely and exhausted, Gustave Flaubert dies" (31). While the two chronologies are negating each other, the third one, alleged to be written by Flaubert, problematizes both of them. Flaubert's account of his own chronology, an attempt of self-portrait, is comprised of statements about himself. At this point the postmodern narrator tackling with the conflicts of writing history emerges. The question "How can we seize the past? Can we ever do so?" of the previous chapter are answered implicitly. Multiple chronologies illustrate the fact that even if the diction of the historical discourse is the same, two different kinds of history can always be written: one that is glorifying and one that is defaming the historical figure and both of these can have serious frictions with the history one writes about himself. The greasy piglet, in other words, keeps running about in the crowd evading the hands of the historian.

If the first chapter sets the tone of the overall narrative, the second chapter hints Braithwaite's approach to history. The multiplicity of the historical discourses confuses the reader and forces him, as Hutcheon (1989) and Oppermann (1995)

indicate, to accept the problematic nature of historical knowledge and historiography. This blatant comment is not the only reason that should make us see *Flaubert's Parrot* as a work of historiographic metafiction. Braithwaite, being a postmodern narrator, both discusses and makes historiography a theme of the novel.

The third chapter starts with a metaphorical definition of historiography: "You can define a net in one of two ways, depending on your point of view. Normally, you would say that it is a meshed instrument designed to catch fish. But you could, with no great injury to logic, reverse the image and define a net as a jocular lexicographer once did: he called it a collection of holes tied together with string" (38). Braithwaite believes the same can be done with biography writing. The biographer sets his net to catch bits and pieces of information about the historical figure, collects as much as possible of him and then writes a book. Subscribing to the second definition of a net, Braithwaite concludes: "Yet consider what he doesn't catch: there is always far more of that" (38). In other words, Braithwaite is convinced that there are always more holes than strings in the net and illustrates this conviction with the story following this discussion.

Braithwaite meets an unsuccessful scholar named Ed Winterton by chance when both reach for the same copy of Turgenev's *Literary Reminiscences* in the Europa Hotel. On Winterton's suggestion, they briefly talk about their interest in the book. Winterton does not inflict a positive impression on Braithwaite and is soon forgotten until the narrator gets a letter from him. In the letter Winterton asks Braithwaite whether he is interested in Julie Herbert or not. He is because "Julie Herbert is a great hole tied together with string" (40).

Julie Herbert is the English governess of Flaubert's niece. She stays at Croisset for some years, Flaubert writes letters to her and she replies back and they visit each other after she goes back to London but not much is known about her. In Braithwaite's words, "[b]eyond this, we know nothing. Not a single letter to or from her has survived. We know almost nothing about her family. We do not even know what she looked like. No description of her survives, and none of Flaubert's friends thought to mention her after his death, when most other women of importance in his life were being memorialised" (40). That is the very reason why she is a great hole in the net. However, there are some hypotheses about her which, according to Braithwaite, are "spun from the temperament of the biographer" (40). Depending completely on secondary evidence like Flaubert calling his greyhound Julio, biographers claim that she was one of his mistresses, probably the "Great Passion" of his life. Braithwaite detects an explicit reference to her in one of the letters of Flaubert to Bouilhet but he suspects the reliability of the event cited there.

The importance of the Juliet Herbert case stems from the fact that it illustrates a dead end of historiography. She is known or estimated to be a part of Flaubert's life but historians have no evidence to write a history of her and Flaubert, which altogether indicates that historiography is problematic and history is actually full of holes in the net. Her case gets more complicated in the novel when Winterton gets hold of a bunch of correspondence between Flaubert and her by chance. That is why he writes to Braithwaite who promptly answers back. A meeting is arranged. While Winterton recounts how he got hold of the letters and what the letters include, Braithwaite is already extremely excited and he muses over the idea of writing an article on the relationship since the letters prove the relationship beyond any doubt.

However, Winterton has burnt all the letters considering Flaubert's demand from Herbert. In the last letter to her, Flaubert definitely asks her to burn all the correspondence with this additional request: "If anyone asks you what my letters contained, or what my life was like, please lie to them. Or rather, since I cannot ask you of all people to lie, just tell them what it is you think they want to hear" (48). It seems Herbert did not heed Flaubert's demand but Winterton believes it was his moral duty and a token of his respect for the great author to burn the letters.

With the emergence and destruction of the letters, criticism of historiography takes a different turn. Before the letter, there were some hypotheses not verified because of lack of documents. After the letters, some hypotheses are proved to be true and they become historical facts. However, when they are burnt, a known fact to some people or a hypothesis that can be verified has to remain unknown because of again lack of document, which takes us to total indeterminacy and solipsism.

Covenant with poetics and politics of historiographic metafiction, Barnes pulls the problematizing strings harder and juxtaposes Juliet Herbert case with another hypothesis about Flaubert. Though not taken very seriously, there is a claim suggesting that Flaubert committed suicide. This claim, according to Braithwaite, is "pure crankery... The crankery of a single man: a Rouennais called Edmond Ledoux. This fantasist crops up twice in Flaubert's biography; each time all he does is spread gossip" (180). The first "gossip" of suicide, as Braithwaite calls it, "runs counter to the writer's beliefs" (181) which are briefly illustrated by the narrator immediately. Apart from Flaubert's personal convictions, suicide is highly unbelievable when actual situations of his death are considered. According to the formal report of the doctor who issued the death certificate, Flaubert takes a hot bath, has an apoplectic

fit, staggers to his study where he is found dying. Ledoux's theory is ridiculous for Braithwaite to the extent of driving him indignant: he thinks

it is more plausible than saying that he electrocuted himself with sleeping pills... No smoke without fire, they say. I am afraid there can be. Edmond Ledoux is a prime example of spontaneous smoke. Who was he, anyway, this Ledoux.? Nobody seems to know. He wasn't an authority on anything. He's a complete nonentity. He only exists as the teller of two lies. Perhaps someone in the Flaubert family once did harm him (did Achille [Gustave's brother] fail to cure his bunion?) and this is his effective revenge. (181-182)

The diction used in this over-fervent defence is unlikely of Braithwaite who is haunted with the impossibility of knowing history and who diligently tries to find out the cases of Juliet Herbert or the stuffed parrot. In terms of historiography Ledoux's claim has the same ontological status of Braithwaite's hypothesis on Juliet Herbert and Flaubert affair. Consequently, by juxtaposing a hypothesis verified and one never verified Barnes once again emphasizes the holes in the net.

Ironically the second "lie" of Ledoux is about Juliet Herbert. In Braithwaite's words,

His first unwelcome utterance is the assertion that Flaubert actually became engaged to Juliet Herbert. Ledoux claimed to have seen a copy of *La Tentation de saint Antoine* inscribed by Gustave to Juliet with words '*A ma fiancée*' [*To my fiancé*]. Odd that he saw it Rouen, rather than in London, where Juliet lived. Odd that nobody else ever saw this copy. Odd that it hasn't survived. Odd that Flaubert never mentioned such an engagement. Odd that the act would run diametrically counter to what he believed in. (181)

There is a clear contradiction between Braithwaite's approach to the first Juliet Herbert case and the second. He should normally accept the possibility of such an engagement because he is the very person who claims historians, while trying to

collect data about the historical figure, miss big chunks of information. He is the person who suggests that it is very difficult to write biographies particularly if one tries to write about a person as playful as Flaubert. More blatantly, he is one of few people who knows there was positively a relationship between Herbert and Flaubert. In the mentioned meeting, one of the first questions he asks Winterton is “And was she his fiancée?” The answer he gets is not completely definite: “It’s hard to say. Pretty nearly, I’d guess” (45). Yet, while the conversation progresses, he starts to fantasize about writing an article titled “*Flaubert’s English fiancée*” (45).

The proofs about the invalidity of the claim are also susceptible. That Ledoux claims to have seen the book in Rouen does not disprove the existence of the book. Nor that nobody has seen the book surely annihilates the book; Winterton is the only person having seen the correspondence between Herbert and Flaubert but Braithwaite never considers that Winterton has lied to him about the letters. As for survival of the book, the letters have not survived as well and Flaubert never mentioned about the letters, too. Braithwaite defends this case so blindly and self-contradictorily that the self-appointed quest to prove Flaubert’s normal death is viewed suspiciously by the reader.

How can we justify or explain his negligence and the contradiction Braithwaite finds himself in? The answer lies in Barnes and Braithwaite. One approach can be simply stating that Barnes has made a mistake and has forgotten all about the Juliet Herbert case. This approach would really be crude since such a mistake is not very much likely to evade the eye and the mind of a great writer like Barnes. Though we can associate Barnes and the implied author with the narrator particularly when we consider how parallel the stories of Barnes and Braithwaite are,

Barnes dissociates himself from his narrator in his creation. In an interview by Robert Birnbaum, Julian Barnes complains about people's tendency to associate protagonist with the author, which is a mistake that critics tried to prevent with concepts like implied author. Barnes says "...[t]he assumption often is that if you write a book about a deposed Communist leader – we know that's not autobiographical – the one about a love triangle or whatever terrible phrase the publisher uses, that's probably about him"(2000: 6). In the interview, Barnes emphasizes that his books like *Talking it Over* and *Love, etc* are not more personal and autobiographical than *Flaubert's Parrot* (2000: 6). There is a big potential for the logical fallacy of associating Braithwaite with Barnes in *Flaubert's Parrot* particularly for the learnt reader who knows that Barnes has a special devotion to Flaubert and the French culture.

We are more likely to make the same mistake when we consider the parallelism between how Barnes decided to write the book and the beginning of the novel. However, it is still a mistake because, though not as a good contribution to the novel all the time, his personality is strongly felt in the book. While he is emphasized as a husband in the chapter on Ellen, in the rest his personality is given as much attention as that of the search about Flaubert. In other words, though the book is about Flaubert, Braithwaite never reveals himself as a transparent and unobtrusive narrator. His contradictory approach to Enid Starkie and his search for the real parrot is a good indicator of the difference between Barnes and Braithwaite. Braithwaite accuses Enid Starkie of being simple-minded and too literal when she accuses Flaubert of not being consistent about Emma Bovary's eyes. However, he makes the same mistake when he tries to find the real parrot. Just like Enid Starkie comparing

the colors of the eyes, forgetting all the rude words he utters about her, he compares the colors of the two parrots to the one in *Un cœur simple* until a scholar at the very end indicate that Flaubert might have changed the colors in his short story. Both in the parrot and Julie Herbert issues Barnes carefully detaches himself from Braithwaite. We cannot associate the narrator and the author since he already states in an interview that, unlike his narrator, he has serious doubts about the genre of biography: “I regard biography with some suspicion as a genre. I am frequently made uncomfortable and even disapproving of the certainties with which biographers describe lives” (qtd. in Guignery 2006:45). Similarly, in “When Flaubert Took Wing”, the article he writes for *The Guardian*, Barnes openly indicates he has consciously chosen a narrator that is not himself:

What if someone - clearly not me, but someone sufficiently interested in Flaubert, someone whose life might have parallels and points of bouncing contact with Flaubert's work and perhaps life - were to have the same experience? It could be the opening - or perhaps clinching - moment in a story about life and art, about France and England, about the pursuit of the writer by the reader, and that moment of contact - practical yet mystical - between the two of them.

So I came up with my narrator: a retired English doctor, a widower and war veteran, returning to the Normandy beaches as well as to Rouen. (2005:2)

Consequently, it must be concluded that Braithwaite is completely distinct from the author. As for the similarities, we can, like Richard Todd does, say there are “some teasing similarities between Braithwaite and Barnes” (1988:121).

What Barnes does in creating his narrator is characterising him, as he also explains in “When Flaubert Took Wing”, as an embodiment of a historian who not only has a personal relationship with his subject matter but also a blood and flesh human being who has concerns other than history. Being a postmodern author,

Barnes moulds his narrator-character in line with what Hutcheon calls “the defining paradoxes of postmodern discourse”:

Postmodernism is a contradictory cultural enterprise, one heavily implicated in what it seeks to contest. It uses and abuses the very belief it takes to task; it installs and only then subverts the conventions of the genre. Historiographic metafiction, for example, keeps distinct its formal representation from its historical context, and in so doing problematizes the very possibility of historical knowledge, because there is no reconciliation, no dialectic here- just unresolved contradiction. (1989: 55)

Barnes takes the task one step further by confronting the task of history writing with someone who knows and is concerned about the limited possibility and the historians’ erring capacity of writing history correctly. Braithwaite fails in spite of his consciousness of difficulties of writing history because, unlike Flaubert who strongly believes in remaining outside his work, he cannot succeed detaching himself from what he aims to represent. The main problem of Braithwaite is that, as Emma Cox also indicates, he identifies himself with Flaubert.

According to Cox, though pathetically and unsuccessfully, Braithwaite tries to identify himself with Flaubert “in terms of both his life and his character” (2004: 53). His identification with Flaubert influences his narration to an important extent. The narrator who looks completely objective at the beginning and fairly so at times throughout the novel, gets outside his countenance when Flaubert is not merely a historical figure for him. When talking to Winterton about the letters, his narration changes completely. The detached person speaking in an informal but remote and polite manner is replaced with a very excited mind. Here the narration masquerades as if the subsequent narration was undercut; Braithwaite does not look like a person narrating the past but narrating the present. The time of the narrative and the time of

narration all of a sudden seem to merge. The tense used in the narrative does not change; however, the consonant self-narration and the progressive unfolding of the events create the impression that Braithwaite experiences the events at the time the reader does. While Winterton tells about how he got hold of the letters, the content of the letters, and the relationship between Herbert and Flaubert, Braithwaite keeps judging and making predictions about Winterton, fantasizing about the possibility of publishing a paper about the case and trying to justify why Winterton hasn't brought the letters. When he learns that Winterton burnt the letters, he starts to express his emotions using an untypical language: "The man was a maniac, that much was plain. No wonder they kicked him out of his university. If only they'd done it years earlier" (46). "Did this criminal, this sham, this failure, this murderer, this bald pyromaniac know what he was doing to me? (47). These asides accompanying the dialogue between Winterton and Braithwaite, which according to Emma Cox "are most revealing of his furiously intense emotion and obsession with Flaubert" (2004:55), create the impression of immediacy but the complete book is written at least two years before the last line of the book is written as we understand at the end. In short, at the time of narration, he knows that the letters are burnt but he still expresses his inner self as if he did not.

The change particularly in the diction and tone manifests itself when Braithwaite feels Flaubert is attacked. In chapter six thus he introduces Dr Enid Starkie:

I once heard Dr Starkie lecture, and I'm glad to report that she had an atrocious French accent; one of those deliveries full of dame-school confidence and absolutely no ear, swerving between workaday correctness and farcical error, often within the same word... it did strike me as peculiar that someone who lived by French literature should be so calamitously

inadequate at making the basic words of language sound as they did when her subjects, her heroes (her paymasters, too, you could say), first pronounced them. (75).

What makes Braithwaite so furious is that Starkie accuses Flaubert of not being consistent about Emma Bovary's eyes. Though he admits that he may seem "vengeful towards a dead scholar who can't answer for herself" (79), he cannot stop himself saying "I was too far away to observe what colour Enid Starkie's eyes were; all I remember of her is that she dressed like a matelot, walked like a scrum-half, and an atrocious French accent"(79).

What Braithwaite is doing is a simple logical fallacy named poisoning the well. She might be making a mistake in her judgment as Braithwaite proves beyond any doubt but her mistake has got nothing to do with her style of clothing or speaking French. Braithwaite simply cannot help feeling vengeful when someone speaks ill of Flaubert as we can also see in chapter ten where the narratee reads the charges against Flaubert and Braithwaite defends him. Though he starts the defence calmly, he loses his patience soon and gets furious and rude again. He openly makes fun of him, when the narratee accuses Flaubert of believing in beauty. He completely ignores the charge with a joke: "I think I've got something lodged in my ear. Probably a bit of wax. Just give me a moment to grip my nose and blow out through my eardrum" (135).

Braithwaite's identification with Flaubert and particularly his attacks on the people who dare to criticize the great author should be considered as means of solipsism and problematization of finding out historical truth. It is already obvious that objectivity of the historian is an improbable dream; however, an obsession with

the subject matter to the extent of Braithwaite's, obliterates all the possibility of the search for the truth:

Those unwarranted personal attack [to Winterton, Ledoux and Starkie] serves not only as further evidence of his ill temper but also reveals that his convictions about Flaubert are fragile and insecure. Furthermore, such sustained loathing enables Braithwaite to direct his analytical energy away from his own life-to abstain and hide from particular realities. Perhaps he clings so tenaciously to his convictions about Flaubert and to his judgments of others because he feels that the Flaubertian world is one area that he can control and can keep constant, which he was unable to do with his marriage. (Cox, 2004:56)

That Braithwaite identifies himself with Flaubert in order to avoid the facts about his own life is indicated by a number of critics. For example, David Leon Higdon believes that Barnes has pushed his protagonist narrator into a chaotic and insane universe full of ignorance, cruelty and "a paralyzing tangle of displacements" so that "he may avoid confronting the knowledge that his married life has but parroted that of Flaubert's Charles and Emma Bovary" (1991: 175). Higdon defines Braithwaite's case as "a classical example of displacement, whereby his ego erects a defence mechanism by unconsciously transferring emotional challenges and symbolic significances from one object to another" (1991: 181)

This notion of parroting and identification reveals itself most manifestly in chapter thirteen where he tells the story of his wife. It must be noted first that as Braithwaite himself confesses this is the most difficult story to tell: "Three stories contend within me. One about Flaubert, one about Ellen, one about myself. My own is the simplest of three – it hardly amounts to more than a convincing proof of my existence – and yet I find it the hardest to begin. My wife's is more complicated, and more urgent; yet I resist that too" (85-86). His resistance stems from the difficulty of

confronting the reality which Cox and Higdon indicates. Braithwaite even confesses that he wants the audience to be prepared for her story. Consequently, he first pours books, parrots, lost letters, bears, opinions of Enid Starkie and himself before he can reluctantly tell her story. All these are a pretext to tell her story or to defer telling her story as he reveals: "Ellen's is true story; perhaps it is even the reason why I am telling you Flaubert's story instead" (86).

Because of the difficulty of confronting the reality about himself and his wife, Braithwaite tells all the other stories but her wife haunts him all the time. The novel, from the beginning to the thirteenth chapter, which is almost exclusively about Ellen, is full of direct references, allusions and inferences about her. After a while she becomes one of the leitmotifs of the novel. In the thirteenth chapter she finally becomes the main issue; however, even there she is not alone in spite of the initial remark: "This is a pure story, whatever you may think" (160).

What does not leave Ellen alone is Braithwaite's identification with Flaubert and his desire of indirection. Her story and his life with her and after her are related to Flaubert mainly in two different ways. First, Braithwaite makes very frequent use of quotations from Flaubert and events from his life while telling the story. Talking about the mourning time, he remembers what Flaubert once advised people who want to forget dead friends. Remembering his own friends who sympathetically encourage him to speak about Ellen, he cites what Flaubert once said about language: "Language is like a cracked kettle on which we beat out tunes for bears to dance to, while all the time we long to move the stars to pity" (161). Identifying himself with Flaubert, he says, "You talk, and you find the language of bereavement foolishly inadequate. You seem to be talking about other people's griefs" (161).

Again in the same narrative, while he expresses how much he misses her, he once again identifies himself with Flaubert: “And you still think about her every day. Sometimes, weary of loving her dead, you imagine her back to life again, for conversation, for approval” (161). This confession is followed with how Flaubert, after his mother’s death, asked his housekeeper to dress up in her mother’s clothes and walk around in the house. These quotations and allusions to Flaubert’s life go on for pages but as the chapter progresses, Braithwaite quits making quotations obvious. He either adds them to the story by detaching them from his discourse only with quotation marks or with quotation marks and dates as it happens while explaining her wife’s mood. He thus incorporates what Flaubert says about the conditions of happiness into his own explanation of her unhappiness: “‘To be stupid, and selfish, and to have a good health are the three requirements for happiness – though if stupidity is lacking, the others are useless’. My wife had only good health to offer” (166-167). Similarly, the unnamed direct quotation “Is it splendid or stupid to take life seriously?” (168) is immediately followed by “Ellen lay with a tube in her throat and a tube in her padded forearm” (168).

Braithwaite’s second striking but overt means of identification with Flaubert takes the form of comparison between *Madam Bovary* and Ellen. In this respect Higdon claims that “... [Braithwaite] displaces his onto Flaubert and creates a literary investigation to escape his own fears of having been already inscribed or scripted by Flaubert... [He] already knows that he and his wife have already been written” (1991:180). However, Braithwaite’s comparison ends in differences rather than similarities between the two women:

Did she display the cowardly docility which Flaubert describes as the characteristic of the adulterous women? No. Did she, like Emma Bovary, 'rediscover in adultery all the platitudes of marriage'? We didn't talk about it... Did she find, in Nabokov's phrase, that adultery is a most conventional way to rise above the conventional? I wouldn't have imagined so: Ellen didn't think in such terms. (164)

Besides, he also notes that Emma Bovary is "brought down by money; my wife was never like that" (165). Consequently, while comparison fosters his identification with Flaubert, he never identifies Ellen with Madam Bovary. It only indicates his struggle to understand his own experience indirectly, through Flaubert.

The overall effect of identification in this chapter is that of Flaubert interpreting Ellen's story for Braithwaite so that he can make sense of it. Emma Cox interprets this chapter as the manifestation of the ultimate link between Braithwaite's personal life and his interest in Flaubert: "Although the chapter is entirely about Ellen, Flaubertian references are never far away, making this chapter the novel's most explicit illustration of the strength of the connection between his interest in Flaubert and his own personal trauma" (2004:58). Consequently, contrary to what Braithwaite says, it is not a pure story. He tries to understand Ellen through "some rash devotion to a dead foreigner" (166) but cannot achieve it as he himself confesses:

Ellen. My wife: someone I feel I understand less well than a foreign writer dead for a hundred years. Is this an aberration, or is it normal? Books say: She did this because. Life says: She did this. Books are where everything is explained to you; life is where things aren't. I'm not surprised some prefer books. Books make sense of life. The only problem is that the lives they make sense of are other people's lives, never your own" (168).

The point we are taken to is once again solipsism. Braithwaite can never understand why his wife committed suicide. It is already the part where the narrator keeps asking

questions. Though some of these questions can be simply rhetorical, most of them represent his inability to comprehend the experience he has gone through. The way he goes back and starts the story all over again twice with the remark “I’ll start again” (162) is simply a continuation of his habit of deferring to tell her story. All these come together to indicate his inability to come to terms with his wife’s adultery and suicide.

One reason for his failure to understand his wife, in addition to the general sense of solipsism prevalent in the novel, is his abstinence from life: “Some abstain and observe, fearing both disappointment and fulfilment. Others rush in, enjoy and take risks... I know in which camp I belong; and I know where I’d look for Ellen” (169). His abstinence from life is strictly related to Flaubert since abstinence is a thread of the novel that starts with the first chapter and revisited again and again. In chapter one Braithwaite relates the story of two young school boys from *L’Education sentimentale*, who later in their old age look back to their life and try to find out their favourite memory. It happens to be a visit to a brothel. They spent a week thinking and dreaming about the visit; on the last two days they got prepared for it. They got their hair curled and even stole flowers for the girls. However, when they got there, one of them was afraid and they ran away from the brothel. Still, the week spent by preparation, dreaming, and anticipation of the joys is their favourite memory. Braithwaite interprets the event as “Isn’t the most reliable form of pleasure, Flaubert implies, the pleasure of anticipation? Who needs to burst into fulfilment’s desolate attic?” (13).

The visit to the brothel, which is a symbol of abstinence, is revisited four times by the end of the novel. It is a symbol of both Flaubert and Braithwaite;

Braithwaite's abstinence is revealed in Chapter Thirteen; Flaubert's is implied throughout the novel. In two parts it is voiced openly though. In the trial of Flaubert, when the narratee accuses him of not involving in life, Braithwaite makes a strong defence starting with a quotation by Flaubert: "You can depict wine, love, women and glory on the condition that you're not drunkard, a lover, a husband or a private in the ranks. If you participate in life, you don't see it clearly; you suffer from it too much or enjoy it too much" (131). After the quotation comes a long discourse which suggests that the best life for a writer is the one that help him write the best books, which means isolation. Secondly, we learn from Luise Colet that Flaubert frequently quotes "Abstain and Hide your Life!" (150) from Epictetus and argues that all writers should "live obscurely in the provinces, ignore the affections of the heart, disdain reputation, and spent solitary, back-breaking hours reading obscure texts by the light of a tiring candle" (150).

Flaubert's abstinence comes from his devotion to art and it is consistent with his avoidance to be seen in his work. The same comment cannot be made for Braithwaite since he cannot detach himself from his work. He uses his work or in better words his obsession with Flaubert, as a shield that prevents his involvement in life or a pretext to abstain and hide. His abstinence results in his inability to have a real connection with his wife. He, for example, as he himself confesses, never asks about Ellen's affairs even though his friends in knowledge of her affairs tried to talk to him about the issue. His response to them is evading and hiding from the fact: "Why do they think you want to know? Or rather, why do they think you don't know already... ?(165). As he says perhaps he is "too accepting" (168). Although at first he was hurt by the situation, he eventually concludes that "Ellen did have affairs,

because, I suppose, she was interested enough” while he was never interested in having one (163). Instead he was interested in Flaubert with an impairing obsession.

These altogether turn him into a “reluctant narrator” in Higdon’s words: a narrator “who is reliable in strict terms, indeed often quite learned and perceptive, but who has seen, experienced or caused something so traumatic that he must approach the telling of it through indirections, masks and substitutions” (1991:174). Braithwaite defines himself slightly differently than Higdon does: he calls himself a “hesitating narrator” (89). His hesitation stems from his nationality and embarrassment: “I hope you don’t think I am being enigmatic, by the way. If I’m irritating, it’s probably because I’m embarrassed; I told you I don’t like full face” (102). His hesitation and reluctance is not difficult to understand: he is a flesh-and-blood character who has had a traumatic experience, who has had a problematic relationship with Ellen and Flaubert and who is unsure of man’s ability to understand and write about past correctly. However, how about embarrassment? Where does embarrassment spring out?

3.5. The Narratee

To be able to decipher the source of embarrassment we need to define the motivation of the narrator. As hinted before, being an autodiegetic narrator, he has an existential motivation to write. He writes about himself and writes in order to come to terms with his wife’s suicide in particular and his life in general. In spite of the multiple genres used in the novel, he is writing the “pure story” of Ellen throughout the novel. That is why Ellen permeates the novel; that’s why she is always in the mind of the narrator and the audience. Furthermore, Braithwaite himself confesses

that all the other stuff about Flaubert and parrot, perhaps, is a means to prepare the audience for the most difficult story. In this respect Moseley believes Barnes uses a complex technique: “He has no need to use Flaubert’s story as a way of avoiding Braithwaite’s; he uses Braithwaite’s telling of Flaubert’s story as Braithwaite’s way of telling his own story, mostly against his will and without his knowledge” (1997:72). What needs to be emphasized in Moseley’s comment is that Braithwaite uses Flaubert as an indirection, as Higdon also indicates, but in the meantime he cannot get Ellen out of his mind either. Consequently, Moseley is right to underline that he tells Ellen’s story “against his own will” at times.

Higdon calls the novel “a most oblique and reluctant confession by a man who blames his hesitation on his typically reticent English nature, on his own embarrassment, and finally on his fear of unmasking himself as a cuckold, especially after he has earned the reader’s respect by way of his erudition, his sincere love of Flaubert and his skilful amateur sleuthing” (1991:181). Though Higdon’s comment can be supported on the grounds that everything he says about Braithwaite is right, he makes the mistake of associating the reader with the narratee. As Genette, Prince and Chatman have previously shown, narratee and the reader is not the same entity. As a rule, a heterodiegetic narrator is not more concerned with the reader than any other fictional character is simply because he is not aware of the reader. The reader is not a diegetic entity for whom the narrator should have concerns about. Only when there is a narratee in the realm of the diegesis, the narrator can be aware of him. Then, as Genette asserts, the narrator has to maintain a certain relationship with him. He needs to keep the dialogue going especially if the narrator is someone like Tristram Shandy (1993:255-256). Therefore, what Higdon should have said is

Braithwaite is embarrassed because there is a strong sense of the narratee in the novel. This is indeed the reason why Braithwaite's narrative is an "oblique" confession.

Braithwaite's narrative, because it has been written in the confession mode, can be compared to a diary. However, the ordinary diaries are not meant to be read by anyone other than the writer himself. Once there is a legal reader, diary transforms into a correspondence or a conversation. It should also be noted that novels written in the confession mode or novels presented as diaries rest on the fictive illusion that the novel will not be read. Naturally both the reader and the writer know that it will be read and only on this account it is different from the actual diary. Braithwaite's narrative is different from a diary and an ordinary confession novel since there is not only a reader, but also the narratee that Braithwaite at times refers to directly. The narratee might be quite vague in some novels as Genette, Chatman and Prince illustrate. The more specific the reference to him is, the easier it is to characterize him. In *Flaubert's Parrot*, the narratee is both specific and varied. In other words, there is not just one narratee with specific features but two types of narratees.

In the beginning, just like the narrator, the narratee is quite vague as in most realistic novels. The tone of the direct sentences like "I thought of writing books once..." (13) or questions like "How do we seize the past? Can we ever do so?" (14) suggest a listener; yet, these remarks might be interpreted as directed to the reader rather than the narratee. In such cases, we do not come across a definite narratee as it happens in traditional narratives. Considering the amount of French he uses and the way he speaks about Flaubert and the places he lived, we, at most, can deduce that

the narratee is a Francophile. Looking at his references to literature and literary criticism, we may suggest that the narratee is a well-read person as well.

In chapter seven, however, we come across the first specific narratee who is completely intradiegetic. There, for the first time Braithwaite refers to the narratee in a very specific context. He is crossing the channel and we feel he has started a conversation with a passenger on the ship. Talking about the sky on the French side he says "...[t]he sky is a theatre of possibilities. I'm not romanticizing. Go into the art galleries along the Normandy coast and you'll see what the local painters liked to paint, over and over again: the view north" (83). This suggestion, which can be considered a rhetorical remark, is later followed with two questions –“would you read on?”(84) and “isn't it perfectly fair” (85) and finally with a very direct reference to the person he is talking to: “The fat lorry-driver on the banquette is snoring like a pasha. I've fetched myself another whisky; I hope you don't mind” (85).

These last lines clearly indicate not only that he is talking to someone but he is talking to him in a certain place attended with other people as well. In the following lines of "...[j]ust getting braced to tell you about... what? about whom? Three stories content within me. One about Flaubert, one about Ellen, one about myself.” (85-86), Braithwaite reveals two interesting aspects of the relationship between him and the narratee. By repeating his questions, he solidifies the existence of the narratee and by stating that he has just fetched another whisky to summon up his courage before telling the famous stories, he indicates his embarrassment. Consequently, he has a very realistic relationship with the narratee in human terms.

The conversation, certainly dominated by Braithwaite, is accompanied with questions, exclamations and interrupted sentences which indicate a very lifelike

conversation: “You expect something from me, don’t you?” (86), “As for a hesitating narrator – look, I’m afraid you’ve run into one. You’d guessed that, at least – that I’m English? I... I...” (89-90). The narrative even includes how they part:

Listen, I hope you won’t think this rude, but I must really take a turn on deck; it’s becoming quite stuffy in the bar here. Why don’t we meet on the boat back instead? The two o’clock ferry, Thursday? I’m sure I will feel more like it then. All right? What? No, you can’t come on deck with me. For God’s sake. Besides, I’m going to the lavatory first. I can’t have you following me in there, peering round from the next stall.

I apologise; I didn’t mean that. Two o’clock, in the bar, as the ferry sails? Oh, and one last word. The cheese shop in the Grande Rue: don’t miss it... I suggest you get a Brillat-Savarin... That is, if you like cheese... (90)

Braithwaite and the narratee whom we figure out to be sitting and conversing with him at the bar meets again four pages later. Consequently, the narratee gets to become almost a nameless character in the novel as someone Braithwaite meets at the bar on the ferry.

Later the narratee becomes a prosecutor in chapter ten; this time his ideas are included in the book not as the repetitions of the narrator but concrete sentences separated with italics from the words of Braithwaite. In the next chapter, narratee finds himself accompanying Louise Colet when she starts to write about her affair with Flaubert. As Colet’s words indicate he is treated as an alive, performing agent:

Now hear my story. I insist. Look, take my arm, like that, and let’s just walk. I have tales to tell; you will like them. We’ll follow the quai, and cross that bridge – no, the second one – and perhaps we take a cognac somewhere, and wait until the gas-lamps dim, and then walk back. Come, you’re surely not frightened of me? So why that look? You think I am a dangerous woman? Well that’s a form of flattery – I accept the compliment. Or perhaps ... perhaps it’s what I might have to *say* that you are frightened of? Aha ... well, it’s too late now. You have taken my arm; you cannot drop it. After all, I am older than you. It is your job to protect me. (137)

Similar to the previous cases, the narratee is a definite person in a definite context. This time he is even taken back to the nineteenth century France. Colet speaks to him just like in ordinary conversation: she makes deductions about his behavior, she answers his unvoiced questions, and she playfully coerces him into her idea.

The narratee becomes almost invisible or rather general from this point on. Consequently, we can perceive four different narratees in the novel. The first is the general narratee who can be defined as a well-learned Francophile. The second is a passenger Braithwaite meets on the ferry to France, the third a public prosecutor and the fourth is the chaperone of Colet. The narratee is easily identified and analysed in relation to Braithwaite: he is the source of his embarrassment. He is under normal human conditions when with the narratee as can be seen from the facts that he fetches himself another drink and that he changes the topic of discussion from Ellen to other things. He is the person against whom Braithwaite feels he has to defend Flaubert and indirectly his obsession with Flaubert. He is the person who listens to Braithwaite getting confused while telling the pure story of his wife. If it were not for the narratee, the general or the specific ones, the novel would be an ordinary confession in which Braithwaite would freely explain himself without any suppression and indirection. Consequently, Barnes challenges the traditional use of the narratee by treating the narratee as a completely diegetic entity with a status very close to a character.

However, it must be stated that the narratee is also a large area of indeterminacy resisting further analysis. A number of questions remain unresolved when the novel is over: if the stated three narratees perform as specific people in very definite contexts, then what is his relation to the general narratee? If the stated parts

are conversations with the narratee, does Braithwaite also speak the rest of the novel to an undefined narratee? Who does he speak to when, for example, he parts with the narratee in the bar? What is the relationship between the specific narrators and the general one? In two instances when with the specific narratee, we can visualise Braithwaite and the narratee in a certain setting. Additionally, while he is walking around Rouen or when he is in the museum, we know the whereabouts of the narrator. How about the other parts? Does he write in his study as suggested in the last chapter? What is the relationship between the time of narration and time of narrative? Can all this indeterminacy be attributed to the carelessness of Barnes? Can we, just like Enid Starkie, accuse the author of inconsistency?

In “When Flaubert Took Wing” Barnes implies that he is aware of all the indeterminacy. He, as his wont is, consciously tries to challenge the possibilities of traditional narrative while writing the novel. In his own words, “I ... found myself excitedly wondering how far I could push the constraints of traditional narrative: how far I could distort and fragment the narrative line while still keeping ... a continuous and rising expectation in the reader” (2005:2). The end result of Barnes’s experiment with the traditional narrative is a novel that does not bear resemblance to the real world. This is a world which is manifestly declared a fictional construct in a number of instances. Talking with the narratee he states that the narratee does not know the color of Flaubert’s eyes “simply because... [he] suppressed it a few pages ago” (95). As for his own eyes, he was planning to put a photograph on the cover of the book but the photograph was quite old (103). While defining himself, he openly declares himself to be a “hesitating narrator” (89). When discussing Ledoux’s theory, he reveals “few books on Flaubert ends without a discussion” of the theory and it

happens in his book as well (182). Going impatient on the narratee's dumbness, he suggests putting his own words into italics since "this seems to be ...[his] favourite mode of utterance" (129). The point indicated again and again in the stated lines is that *Flaubert's Parrot* is a fictional construct where even time is measured in terms of not minutes but pages.

3.7. Conclusion

Consequently, the novel should not be considered an attempt to depict the real Flaubert or solve the mystery of the stuffed parrot. Barnes himself declares that he has never intended to write a biography of Flaubert (2005:1). Besides, Braithwaite is convinced that "history is another literary genre; the past is autobiographical fiction pretending to be a parliamentary report" (90). These are the words of a narrator who compares history to a piglet smeared in grease running about among people, and historian to a man trying to catch fish with a net full of holes. Such a narrator cannot be a traditional omniscient and omnipotent third-person narrator who comfortably crouches upon the highest point of the hierarchy of discourses. It is only natural that he is an embodiment of certain contradictions to quote Allison Lee: "His contradictory reaction is an appropriate one ... since, while as a character Braithwaite is obsessed by concerns we might associate with Realist reading - detail, authority, intention, reference – as a narrator, he constantly undermines his own obsession" (1990:38-39).

The novel should, likewise, not be considered an attempt to recount Ellen's story since, as Braithwaite insists that "we no longer believe that language and reality 'match up' so congruently – indeed, we probably think that words give birth to things

as much as things give birth to words” (88). It is not a coincidence that he repeats the Flaubert’s quotation on the capacity of language three times in the novel: “language is like cracked kettle on which we beat out tunes for bears to dance to, while all the time we long to move the stars to pity” (19, 51, 161). Braithwaite shares Barnes’ concerns about the limitations of traditional narrative techniques. He is convinced that “... Flaubert was, as always, right. Style does arise from the subject-matter” and no matter how hard one tries to write about an issue “candidly”, he is “beaten down by the form” (95). In order to prove his point, he refers to the form and content of personal advertisements, through which people try to find company:

I always read those pining paragraphs in the back of magazines, though I never feel like replying; and I’ve just realised why. Because I don’t believe any of them. They aren’t lying – indeed, they are trying to be utterly sincere – but they aren’t telling the truth. The column distorts the way the advertisers describe themselves. No one would think of himself as an active non-smoker inclined to melancholy if that wasn’t encouraged, even demanded, by the form. (95)

Thus even at the beginning, we can conclude, Braithwaite does not have a hope of reflecting her wife’s story correctly or sincerely. His hesitation and procrastination should be attributed to his lack of confidence in the capacity of language to reflect reality.

What we, as readers, end up with is not a documentary on Flaubert. As the contradictions Braithwaite embodies illustrate, the seemingly-documentary side of the novel, represented with letters, quotations, biographies and locations, is self-effacing. They are pseudo-facts infused in a fictional construct and thus made fictionalised. In Allison Lee’s words,

Both the story and the letters ... are linguistic constructs which exist in Flaubert’s parrot, itself a fiction. Gustave Flaubert is an historically

verifiable entity, but we can only know him through the written evidence of novels, letters, and reminiscences. As narrative shows, there is no single, direct correspondence between the written word and “reality”. Language creates “reality,” and language is inescapably plural ... As a narrator, he cannot but create an indeterminate Flaubert, Flaubert’s parrot, and *Flaubert’s Parrot*.. (1990: 39-40)

The same comment of indeterminacy must be made for Ellen as well. She remains to be as much a puzzle as the parrot is. The novel “... busily plays with the notions of the real and the fictional, makes its own rules, breaks up its own discourse, leaves behind its own ambiguities”(Bradbury, 1994: 437). In *Flaubert’s Parrot*, like most postmodern authors, Barnes manifests the poststructuralist scepticism about the ability of language to reflect non-linguistic reality including history and social sciences (Sesto, 2001: 31). In the final analysis, Barnes has created a playful metafictional and self-reflexive text which is permeated with solipsism. Much of this effect obviously stems from the characterization of the narrator and his puzzling relationship with his subject matter and the narratee.

CHAPTER IV

TALKING IT OVER AND LOVE, ETC

By the time his sixth novel, *Talking It Over*, was published in 1991, Barnes had made a reputation for writing extraordinary and experimental novels like *Flaubert's Parrot* and *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters*. Before the publication of *Talking It Over*, Barnes announced that his next novel would be “less experimental-looking” than *Flaubert's Parrot* and *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters* (qtd. in Guignery, 2006: 73). The novel is really less experimental and innovative in terms of subject matter: a triangular love relationship between three people living their thirties in London. Stuart and Oliver has been close friends since high school and though it is difficult to call their friendship intimate and strong, it goes on without any major problem for almost fifteen years until Stuart meets Gillian and marries her. On the day of the wedding, Oliver realizes that he is in love with Gillian. In the rest of the novel Oliver tries and manages to win away Gillian from Stuart and marries her. At the end of the novel, unable to cope with the situation, Stuart leaves for America while Oliver and Gillian move to France and have a daughter.

Nine years after the publication of *Talking It Over*, as some critics then predicted, the sequel *Love, etc* came out. In the fictional world ten years had elapsed and in these ten years Oliver and Gillian have had another daughter and have moved back to London. While Gillian has slightly improved her trade in restoration of old paintings, Oliver has lost his job, got into depression and started to spend his time looking after the daughters. Stuart, too has come back from America where he

remarried, divorced and made profitable investments. Now he owns a chain of organic food suppliers and he wants to help his friends who have not been so fortunate. The second novel is gloomier and bleaker compared to the first: the air of comedy and romance is replaced with revenge and depression. Elaine Showalter believes “romantic comedy has turned into madness and horror” in the second novel (qtd. in Guignery, 2006: 81). Stuart has come back from America to get Gillian back. As the novel unfolds, we learn that Stuart has never recovered from the effects of his failing marriage and has long been making plans to get even with Oliver. With the themes of rape, depression, revenge and illnesses, *Love, etc* turns out to be a bitter comment on human affairs. The characters have become older now and as one of the characters in the novel says “grown-ups are fuck-ups” (2000: 221).

When *Talking It Over* appeared, it got mixed responses from the critics though the audience response was generally good. It won the Prix Femina for a foreign novel in France in 1991 (Guignery, 2006: 73) and was made into a French film in 1996 (Guignery: 2006: 83). It is not difficult to understand the audience response: it is a funny and witty novel about love. Some reviewers and critics felt uneasy about the speed of narration, the difficulty of categorising the novel and Barnes’ stinginess in explaining the motives of the characters. However, almost all celebrated the narrative technique. Edward T. Wheeler says Barnes has once again broken the realistic narrative frame (1992: 23). Michael Levenson states Barnes has found a perfect form for the story he recounts (1991: 43). Though Peck Dale dislikes Barnes and his novels in general, he calls the narrative technique in *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.* clever (2001: 33).

4.1. Narrative Technique

Talking It Over and *Love, etc.* are comprised of the monologues of the three principle characters and a number of secondary characters. However, these monologues are not written in the form of a diary but “talked” with the implication that there is an indefinite listener to whom narrators refer to as “You”, ask questions and try to persuade. Different critics have resembled the narratee to a confidante, a police detective, an interrogator, a researcher, a friend and a therapist but not much is indicated about his personality in the novel. Edward Wheeler compares the novel to “a television play done in narration and voice-over” in which we have “talking-heads” (1992: 23). David Holloway draws parallels between the novel and a television documentary where the narrator-actors answer the questions of a researcher. For John Bayley it is more like a modern play where actors directly refer to the audience. (qtd. in Guignery, 2006: 74).

Wheeler also compares *Talking It Over* to the epistolary novel because of “a demand for suspension of disbelief” (1992: 23). This is a better comparison since each narrator speaks in isolation as if s/he is having a private conversation with the narratee. Each part of the narrative is preceded with the name of the narrator and they take turns speaking without interruption as it happens in writing letters. Furthermore, in epistolary novels each letter gives vent only to a small portion of what happened since then and the account in the letter is very subjective, which altogether create suspense in relation to the reliability of the account and what will happen next.

Yet the comparison between the epistolary technique and Barnes’ technique is limited. Discussing the technique of the epistolary novel, Genette rightly indicates that the letters have a dual function in the narrative: “... in epistolary novel with

several correspondents ... the letter is at the same time both a medium of the narrative and an element of plot” (1983: 217). In other words, a letter not only narrates but also influences the rest of the events since the receiver acts according to the content of the letter. In *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* the act of narration, as opposed to the letter, does not impact on the content since narrators do not have access to each others’ narratives. Otherwise, the course of events would take a very different turn. Stuart, for example, would know that Oliver was in love with Gillian when Oliver told it to the narratee and he would act accordingly. Most of the suspense and irony, which is based on the ignorance of one or more characters, would fail immediately.

A second difference between Barnes’ technique and the epistolary is based on the distance between the enunciator and the receiver. In epistolary novels there is a distance between the writer and the reader of the letter. However, in *Talking It Over*, the narrators and the narratee seem to be in the same room. The existence of the narratee suggests a dialogue but the dialogue is limited to the narrators and the narratee. Each narrator speaks in the absence of the others and none of them speaks with each other in the narrative transaction. Because they live together, they normally communicate with each other but this act happens only in the story, not in the narrative. Consequently, there is a clear separation of diegesis and narration of it in the novels. Even though the diegesis is the same, narrative of each homodiegetic narrator differs, at times slightly, and at other times greatly, which makes the novel puzzling and enjoyable at the same time.

In the narrative no one interrupts each other and there are no signs of interruption caused by the circumstances. They seem to speak one by one in a dark

and locked room which we may call the narrative chamber. Even if they know that others also talk about the same issues and voice their opinions, they do not speak at the same time or do not listen to each other. Why they have chosen to speak to the narratee and the physical conditions of this transaction is totally indeterminate. No one makes any direct references to conditions of the narrative in *Talking It Over* but there seems to be a rule in this game, which refers to general mode or mood of narration in Genette's terms (1983: 191).

The rules of the game are openly stated only in *Love, etc.* The sequel starts with the dialogue of the principal character-narrators. When Stuart and Oliver get into a quarrel, Gillian warns them not to act against the rules and stop talking back to each other. The order is restored at the end of the first chapter and narrators go on playing the game by the rules: they again speak one by one to the narratee. It is difficult to know why Barnes had chosen not to discuss the rules in the first novel but felt the need in the second. However, one might claim that Barnes considered the criticism made on the persistent indeterminacy in the first novel and made the necessary changes in the second.

Though the rule suggests that each one speaks in isolation without interruption, there is one exception which has not taken the attention of Barnes scholars. When one of the secondary narrators named Val claims that Oliver is gay and he is in fact after Stuart, not Gillian, Stuart and Oliver intervene in her narrative. If we see the narrative situation as a chamber of narrative that provides isolation and power to speak, Oliver and Stuart get into the chamber and kick her out. For the first time more than one narrator are in the narrative and three of them speak at the same time in the first novel:

Oliver & Stuart Out.

Get that bitch out of here.

Go on.

Out.

Out.

OUT.

Val They can't do this to me. *You* can't let them do this to me. I've got just as much right...

Oliver & Stuart OUT. It's her or us, Out, you bitch. OUT. Her or us.

Val You know this is against all the rules?

I mean, you realise what you're doing here? You know what the consequences of this are likely to be? Have you thought about them? This is player power. Hey *you* – aren't *you* meant to be the manager, aren't you meant to *own* the whole fucking team? (1991: 219-220)

In the rest of the conversation between Oliver and Stuart, it is suggested that they silence Val with a scarf and kick her out of the narrative. This is also the only part where the rules of the narrative are implied in the first novel.

Why Barnes lets his characters violate the general rule of the narrative is indeterminate though three explanations can be suggested: Barnes probably could not resist the temptation of poking more comedy into his novel at the expense of violating his own rule. A second way to see this violation is to call it "alteration" in Genette's coinage. Elaborating on focalization Genette states that "any formula of focalization does not . . . always bear on entire work, but rather on a definite narrative section, which can be very short" (1983: 191). Authors might, for example, change the type of focalization in a certain part of the novel for a certain reason. This should be seen as a momentary violation of the general mode of the narration and it should not be seen as endangering the general mode of narration. The general mode continues to exist in spite of the violation (1983: 194-196). An illustrative example of the case can be considering the speed of narration and information provided for

the audience. Authors may choose to increase the speed of narration or give limited amount of information in a certain part of the novel in order to create suspense.

Barnes' violation of the general mode in fact has a more profound reason other than alteration, which should be considered in relation to postmodern poetics of fiction. Wheeler praises *Talking It Over* because it breaks the frame of the realist narration by employing and subverting literary conventions of realism at the same time (1992: 23). He indicates that Barnes approximates to realism by using extra-diegetic details such as the particular features of a building a character sees on his way to work or how people clean the front yard of their houses in a French town. However, the rest of the novel intentionally undermines the realist effect and openly declares itself to be a novel like most metafictional postmodern novels do. This effect is achieved mainly in three ways.

Firstly, the narrative technique itself is anti-realist; it does not have an equivalent in real life. The gap between the narrative technique and life is even pushed bigger when all the main characters leave the country: they are no more in a certain chamber which must be close to where they all live but the narrative technique goes on. Consequently, we cannot compare the narrative situation to any situation in real life without any seams.

Secondly, there are direct allusions to fictionality of the novel. Oliver, for instance, while explaining the reason why he changed his name from Nigel to Oliver, states that one cannot be called Nigel throughout a book. Similarly, after a short narrative Val says she will not speak again unless "there is a real turn-up for the book" (1991: 185). She makes the same point when she asks "Isn't ... [Gillian] just a heroine?" (1991: 189). This attitude is maintained in *Love, etc* as well. Just before

the second chapter titled “The Story So Far”, Oliver makes a plea: “I merely have one request, made on grounds not of egomania, self-interest or marketing, but of decorum, art and a general horror of the banal. Please don’t call this next bit ‘The Story So Far’. Please don’t. Please. Pretty please” (2000: 9). His meditations on fiction, particularly biographical fiction also suggests the fictionality of *Love, etc.*

Barnes’ violation of his own rule is his third way of saying *Talking It Over* is not a slice of life but a literary construct the rules of which, at the author’s will, can be altered temporarily. Even if the reader at first realizes the artificiality of the narrative technique stemming from the indeterminacy of the narrative situation, he may tend to internalise the indeterminacy and start considering it “normal”. In other words, Barnes’ experimental technique might be canonised by the middle of the novel and its artificiality might be taken for granted; the reader might form a mental picture of the narrative situation in which the narrators, after having experienced certain events, come into the chamber of narrative and talk the events over. However, the violation prevents this automatic perception and puts emphasis on the metafictionality of the novel. Consequently, just like he does in *Flaubert’s Parrot*, Barnes’ announces that his novel is a literary and linguistic game through the alteration in or the violation of the general mode of narration.

Another major aspect of the narrative technique employed in *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* relies on the complicated, almost indeterminate relationship between the time of the events and the time of narration. As Genette indicates a narrative can be written after, before, during or between the events of the narrative. Genette calls the last type interpolated narrative, which requires the narration to be done between the moments of action (1983: 217). In interpolated narrative, just as it happens in

epistolary technique, something happens and this event is later communicated through the narrative. Interpolated narrative is both “complex” and “delicate” according to Genette since it involves several instances of narrative and it has an indefinite and incoherent temporal position which might be very close to the time of the narrative. Consequently, the narrator might be someone who is experiencing the event and someone who has experienced and now narrating it. In other words, he might be the hero and “already someone else” at the same time since some time has passed between the event and the instance of narration (1983: 217-218). Consequently, the narrator uses both the present and the past tense; the latter for narrating the event and the former for the effects of the event on him.

The indefinite temporal relationship between the narrative and the instance of narration also makes it more difficult to determine whether the narration is, in the terms of Cohn, consonant or dissonant. The extreme closeness to the time of event suggests a consonant narration implying that the narrator is still under the effect of the event but the indefiniteness of time of the narration makes a definite verdict impossible.

The reader comes across all of these suggested complexities due to the use of interpolated narration in *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.*. The instance of narration takes place between the events but it is very difficult to establish a definite temporal relationship between the time of the event and the time of the narration. Time phrases like “last summer” or “two weeks ago” is of partial help. Only in three chapters in *Talking It Over* does the reader understand that times of the event and the narration coincide or get very close to each other. In Chapter four titled “Now” narrators explain their present situation as,

Stuart It's now. It's today. I got married last month. I love Gillian. I'm happy, yes I'm happy. It finally worked out for me. It's *now* now.

Gillian I got married. Part of me didn't think I ever would, part of me disapproved, part of me was a little scared, to tell the truth. But I fell in love, and Stuart is a good person, a kind person, and he loves me. I'm married now.

Oliver Oh shit. Oh shit shit shit SHIT. I'm in love with Gillie, I've just realised it. I am in love with Gillie. I'm amazed, I'm overawed, I'm poo-scared, I'm mega-fuckstruck. I'm also scared out of my cerebellum. What's going to happen now? (1991: 49-50)

The summary-like quality and brevity are repeated in chapter ten and thirteen of *Talking It Over* and the reader again gets the impression that times of the event and the narration coincide. In chapter nineteen of *Love, etc* the times of event and the narration coincide once again because for the first time the narratee gets the control of the narrative, which should be cited as another alteration, and he asks questions to the narrators. The rest of the novels do not provide definite hints about temporal relations of the narrative and the act of narration.

Dissonance and consonance of narration, similarly offers only little help to understand the temporal relations between events and narration. Because the narration is not altogether subsequent, most narration reveals the still progressive effects of the events on the narrators. This impression gets stronger especially when the narratives get shorter. Yet, the personalities of the narrators obscure any definite conclusions. Gillian is a detached person and her narration almost always has an air of dissonance whereas Oliver's bombastic and flamboyant language has the counter effect.

4.2. Implications of the Narrative Technique

Barnes' narrative technique in *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* can be seen as simple narration i.e. diegesis in Plato's terms. In the terms of Henry James and other early critics, it is based on summarising or telling rather than showing. However, while demarcating the difference between showing and telling, Henry James and his followers had the Victorian novel in mind. What they objected to was the intrusive author who not only told or summarized the events to the reader but also commented on them. Lubbock uses the terms of "picture" and "drama" to emphasize the difference between showing and telling and he concludes that when an author makes use of drama "the spectator evidently has no direct concern with the author at all, while the action is proceeding" (1923: 111). In this respect, Barnes' technique blurs the boundaries of telling and showing. All the events are told, or in better words, narrated to the reader; yet, this is done in the absence of an omniscient narrator with the implication that the audience has no concern with the author. To put it simply, all the narration is handed over to the narrators and the material conveyed to the reader is filtered through their consciousness.

The narrators in the novels are first-person narrators who recount only what they have direct access to. This limited point of view, in Chatman's coinage, is both literal and figurative (1996: 165). At times, they convey what they have learnt from others or comment on how someone might have felt or thought in a certain condition but the narration of the characters is mostly limited to what they actually perceive, experience or witness. It is also figurative i.e. "through someone's worldview (ideology, conceptual system, *Weltanschauung*...)" (Chatman, 1996: 165) because the narrators are solipsistically selfish and self-centred.

The traditional outcome of character-narrators, particularly if they are flawed like the narrators at hand, is the unreliability of the narration which may result from the fact that the narrator might be lying; he might not have the characteristics he believes he has, i.e. he might be lying unconsciously or he might be in the wrong. There must be an agent that protects the reader from the unreliability of the narrator and who should ensure that the reader judges the events correctly (Booth, 1987: 159). This can be done through other narrators or the intrusive narrator who lays bare the unreliability of the narrator. Obviously, the correcting narrator, either as another limited narrator or as the omniscient narrator, should be more reliable than the susceptible narrator.

This brings along the idea of a hierarchy of discourses. As Mahmoud Salami states “...the author organizes the narrative in such a way that some discourses are more privileged than others. This hierarchy operates through the authoritative exposition of discourses either by means of dialogue and the constant authorial comments on it, or through the third-person narrative that gives more privilege to one discourse than another” (1992: 20). Logically enough in realistic fiction the third-person omniscient narrator is at the top of the hierarchy and he can easily subvert the reliability of a dialogue between two characters through commentary on it and the reader never feels he has to make a choice between the wisdom of the characters and the narrator.

In *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* there are no mediators like a reliable observer or an omniscient narrator that represents the highest point in the hierarchy of discourses. In an interview Barnes points out that in such a narrative technique “... because there is no author mediating ... [in the narrative], because there is no third-

person narrator introducing Oliver as a character, readers tend to respond much more quickly to the characters in the book. And they come to judgement much more quickly. Because the membrane between readers and character is so thinned, if it works, is (sic) like meeting real people” (2000: 2).

Though Barnes is right about the overall effect of a narrative without a mediator, a small correction can be made. Even if the reader does not come to a conclusion about a character quickly, he has to make the judgement himself because there is not a narrator who puts the validity of characters’ discourse into the correct perspective. This is a difficult task since the novels are totally devoid of the hierarchy of discourse. The narrators are reliable or unreliable to the same extent since there is no one to help the reader out in this entangled narrative. Each narrator speaks for himself and all the narration is not only skewed with subjective perception and memory but also with the hidden agendas of the narrators. For this reason Mosseley describes *Talking It Over* as an embodiment of “alternative versions of events and the evanescence or inaccessibility of truth” (1997: 125). Likewise, Bruce Sesto sees “not truth but whose truth” as the “central credo of postmodernist fiction” and correctly asserts that “nowhere is this relativism more pronounced than in such novels as *Flaubert’s Parrot*, *A History of The World in 10 ½ Chapters*, *Talking It Over*, and *The Porcupine*” (2001: 8). *Love, etc* should not be added to the list without indicating that it is a much more solipsistic novel.

4.2.1. Subjectivity of the Narrators

Indicating that the narratives of Stuart, Oliver and Gillian are subjective is less than a claim. It is only normal that the narratives of first-person narrators are subjective. There is pervasive subjectivity in the novel, and subjectivity arises from the difference of personal perception and memory to a certain extent. For example, both Stuart and Oliver tell the narratee when their friendship started but the versions are slightly different. Both agree that their friendship started at high school when Oliver approached Stuart with the request “Lend us a quid” (1991: 20). Stuart agreed to give the money only with a condition: “Five percent simple interest on the principal per week, repayment within four weeks otherwise the interest rose to 10 percent per week” (1991: 21). Oliver accepted the terms and paid £1.20 back according to Stuart’s version of the story. According to Oliver’s story, everything happened as Stuart told but he, of course, did not pay the interest.

A more striking shift in narration happens between Oliver and Gillian. Their narrative of the morning Oliver goes to Gillian’s house with a bouquet of flowers to declare his love is totally different. Oliver recounts the event as follows:

So what happened was this. I rang the door-bell, holding my flowers spread across both outstretched forearms. I did not want to appear like a delivery man. Rather I was a simple, a frangible petitioner, assisted only by the goddess Flora. Gillian opened the door. This was it. This was it.

‘I love you,’ I said.

She looked at me, and alarm put to sea in her tranquil eyes. To calm her, I handed over my bouquet, and quietly repeated, ‘I love you.’ Then I left. (1991: 90-91)

Gillian’s account is rather different:

‘Oliver!’ I said. ‘What a surprise. Come in.’

But he stood there, trying to say something. White as sheet, and holding his arms out as rigid as a shelf. His lips moved, and some noises came out but I couldn’t make sense of them. It was like films when people have a heart attack ... I looked at Oliver and he seemed in genuine distress ... his face was frighteningly lacking in colour, he was trembling, and his lips seemed to be sticking together as he tried to speak ...

He ... stood there with his arms sticking out, like a robot butler without a tray to carry. Suddenly, and very loudly, he said,

‘I love you.’ (1991: 93-94)

Such perception differences pervade the novel and it is only natural. What is not natural is that Oliver, Stuart and Gillian separately claim that they have a good memory. The novel opens with Stuart saying “My name is Stuart, and I remember everything” (1991: 3). Gillian, in her first encounter with the narratee, expresses her unwillingness to speak but still adds “Just because I don’t have a confessional nature doesn’t mean I forget things” (1991: 10). Oliver’s approach to memory is quite different. He believes one should, just like he does, only keep the important things in mind: “I’m Oliver and I remember all the important things” (1991: 11).

Mediating on the functions of the narrator, Genette cites five tasks including the function of testimony or attestation. If a narrator is a limited first- person, he has to justify his means of collecting information, the validity of the information, the precision of his memory and the rightness of his emotional reactions (1983: 256). The statement of “I remember everything” works in the same way: each separately claims that s/he is telling the truth. Consequently, they are trying to make the narratee choose his/her own narration over the others’.

All narrators have the same purpose, means and status in the narrative, which makes it difficult for the reader to make a choice among their testimonies. “It is no surprise that these testimonies disagree in places. We would hardly expect any of them to tell the whole truth. And we rightly expect each of them to be shaded by the

motives and personality of the character who speaks it. The novel invites us to mentally construct our own master narrative of the true events” (Martin, 2001: 34) while each narrator tries to construct their own master narrative. Although they belong to the same hierarchy of discourse, it would be wrong to say their means of constructing their own master narrative, which is their personal testimony, are of equal force and effectiveness.

4.2.2. Conversational Style of the Narrators

The testimony of each narrator relies on their personalities and their reactions to events as reflected by themselves or others, and the language they employ in the narration of these. There is no truth that can be verified beyond the text and what they choose to narrate is what we have to be satisfied with. In this respect, not only their personality but also their conversational styles determine the extent of their reliability and unreliability as character-narrators. It must also be noted that persuasiveness replaces the reliability and validity in the text since there is nothing that can be verified through traditional epistemology. Consequently, language tends to be a tool of verifying the testimony and manipulating the narratee and the audience. When language is perceived as a tool of manipulation, all the narratives of each character tends to be a great speech act.

The idea of speech acts, as Leech and Short indicate, is based on the pragmatic analysis of language “which can be broadly understood to be the investigation into that aspect of meaning which is derived not from the formal properties of words and constructions, but from the way in which utterances are used and how they relate to the context in which they are uttered” (1981: 290). As an

important component of pragmatic analysis of language, speech acts theory is developed by J.L. Austin and J.R. Searle. Searle observes that when people pronounce a sentence, they perform various acts, too, such as stating, asking, pleading, ordering and promising. The performed act may be obviously stated though this is usually not the case as people tend more to say “Come here” than “I beg you to come here”. Speech acts, therefore, might well be independent of syntax and semantics (qtd. in Leech and Short, 1981: 290). Consequently, in *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* all the statements of the narrators bear the implied speech act “Please believe me, not the others”.

Leech and Short make two more points that are directly relevant to the use of language in *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc*. Firstly, they say “speech acts also have conditions of success; a command or a question is successful if it elicits an appropriate response” (1981: 293). The response of the narratee is unknown because it does not have a voice. As for the reader response, each reader has to make his own decision because of the narrative technique employed. The second point Leech and Short make is on the “cooperative principle” of H. P. Grice:

[Grice] ... suggests that when people converse with one another they acknowledge a kind of tacit agreement to cooperate conversationally towards mutual ends. This agreement he calls the COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE. When one abides by the cooperative principle one agrees to act according to various rules, or rather MAXIMS, as Grice calls them. (1981: 295)

Grice proposes four conversational maxims: maxim of quantity, quality, relation and manner. The speaker must give the necessary amount of information, not too much or too little according to the first maxim. The maxim of quality requires the speaker not to lie or say something that he does not have evidence for. The last two maxims

ask the speaker to make relevant contributions to the conversation in a logical manner: he should avoid obscurity, fuzziness, wordiness and confusion (qtd. in Leech and Short, 1981: 295).

When the linguistic and conversational style of Stuart, Gillian and Oliver are analyzed and interpreted carefully, it is obvious that their reliability, or in better words, persuasiveness is strictly attached to their use of language. Stuart has a straightforward language which is mostly comprised of short and direct sentences devoid of embellishment and metaphors. The description of a common element to all narrators can help us see the stylistic differences they embody. Stuart describes Gillian's wedding ring as "placed on a plum-coloured cushion made of velvet" (1991: 8) whereas according to Gillian it was "sitting on a fat burgundy cushion" (1991: 10). Oliver's description is not simply sensory: "The ring glittered on its damson *pouffe* like some intra-uterine device" (1991: 13).

The linguistic difference is a sign of personality differences as well. Stuart introduces the first novel as an ordinary and dull banker who bears a stark contrast with his best friend Oliver. Stuart is aware of their differences. In Chapter two of *Talking It Over* he openly compares Oliver and himself:

We're rather different, Oliver and me, as you might have noticed. ... Oliver impresses people, he talks well, he's travelled to distant lands, he speaks foreign languages, he's conversant with the arts – more than conversant - and he dresses in clothes which don't fit the contours of his body and are therefore declared to be fashionable by people in the know. All of which isn't like me. I'm not always very good at saying what I mean, except at work, that is; I've been to Europe and the States but never to Nineveh and Distant Ophir; I don't have much time – literally – for the arts, though I'm not *against* them in any way, you understand (sometimes there's a nice concert on the car radio; like most people I read a book or two on holiday); and I don't give much thought to my clothes beyond looking smart at work and feeling comfortable when I get home. (1991: 19-20)

Stuart's comparison is quite accurate in that it summarizes their most fundamental characteristics as narrators: he is not so good at speaking whereas Oliver is very skilled at it.

Yet one more point of importance should be made that reflects on their narrative as well. Stuart is not a self-confident person as he himself reveals:

The fact is, I've never been at good at meeting people. Some people are naturally good at it and others aren't... I don't have what is referred to as an out-going personality. When I meet people I like, instead of saying more and showing I like them and asking questions, I sort of clam up, as I don't expect them to like me. Or as if I'm not interesting enough for them... Half of the world seems to have confidence and half of the world doesn't, and I don't know how to make the jump from one half to the other. In order to have confidence you have to be confident already: it's a vicious circle. (1991: 22-23).

As the narrative progresses, he confesses that he has always lived with the guilt of disappointing other people including his family and spent all his life trying to make others like him. When Gillian leaves him to get married to Oliver, he feels it is his fault since he "didn't make her so happy that it was impossible for her to leave" (1991: 213). He states a number of times that he is not as clever and articulate as Oliver is. Only after he goes to America and ends up a very successful businessman, does he believe he has become a much wiser man and he can control the feeling of inferiority.

Stuart's lack of self-confidence influences his narrative as well. In *Talking It Over*, he apologizes a number of times to the narratee for not being good at narrating; he frequently asks questions and he openly states "You have to bear with me. I don't have the flashing brain of my friend Oliver. I have to work things out step by step" (1991: 131). Probably because of this, he sticks to the story. He very rarely digresses

from the diegesis and when he does, he mostly apologizes to the narratee for having done it. Only after he gets some confidence coming back from America, does he start to digress from the diegesis in *Love, etc.* However, even then the digressions are about his job and as he has revealed in *Talking It Over*, he gets more clever and articulate when talking about business. Except for one case in *Love, etc.*, he seems to obey all the maxims of Grice: he tells what needs to be told to the narratee and the audience to the best of his abilities. His greatest resource is his memory and he gives a detailed account of the events but cannot exceed to wit and insight.

Stuart's lack of self-confidence is mentioned by everyone including Gillian's mother, Madam Wyatt. Both Gillian and her mother observe that Stuart is trying too hard to be liked. Madam Wyatt even says "Stuart would always sit in front of me as if he was being examined by a doctor or a schoolmaster or somebody" (1991: 224). Both Madam Wyatt and Gillian, unanimously, observe Oliver to be just the opposite of his best friend in this respect. Using almost the same words, they say Oliver behaves as if it is impossible for anyone not to like him.

Oliver's self-confidence is announced to be groundless and he is not as adorable as he himself believes to be in a number of cases but he is certainly the most remarkable character in the novels, especially in *Talking It Over*. His verbal virtuosity, wide range of cultural references, ability in phrase-making and witty digressions dominate *Talking It Over*. As Sarah Harrison Smith states he is "given to impressive riffs of chatter, some of it nonsense and some of it profound" (2001: 29). His flamboyant sentences are garnished with expressions from Latin, French and German; for example, in the second chapter of *Talking It Over* he uses fourteen different foreign expressions in eight pages. He freely moves in and out of the story

to talk about issues like the etymology of honeymoon, the history of English pubs, the relationship between smoking and Alzheimers, how to open a champagne bottle, and why people finish their letters with “yours etc”. His narrative is pervaded with cultural references like Gregor Samsa, Russian operas, Italian architecture, Casanova and Martin Luther King.

A good amount of Oliver’s reliability or persuasiveness spring from his verbal virtuosity and his range of cultural references; it is quite difficult not to be influenced by his speech. One inevitably depicts him in his mind as an intellectual and a charming man in spite of his flamboyant style. However, his reliability is always under question. He, unlike Stuart, rarely sticks to the maxims of Grice. As he himself declares he has “a reputation for serving up the truth with more than the traditional British accompaniments. Two veg and Oxo gravy is not... [my] style” (1991: 126).

His tendency to flavour truth, and language as well, is paradoxically one reason of his unreliability. Both Stuart and Gillian sees through his strategy and do not take everything he says as true. Stuart, for example, does not believe him when Oliver says he resigned from his job: “A year or two ago I would have believed him, and maybe the truth would come out a few months later. But now I instinctively thought, Oh no you didn’t Ollie, you didn’t resign, you got sacked” (1991: 72). Gillian states a number of times, especially after she is disillusioned with Oliver, that he does not have self-confidence at all. Both Stuart and Gillian separately indicate that they have developed a filtering system which enables them to listen to Oliver when he is in one of his talking fits. They do not even listen to him attentively. Consequently, the self-confident and charismatic Oliver, who enters the novel with

“Hi, I’m Oliver, Oliver Russell. Cigarette?” (1991: 10), loses his reliability as the novel progresses.

Ten years later Oliver enters *Love, etc* once again in the same fashion of self-confidence: “I’m Oliver, by the way. Yes, I know you know. I could tell you remembered *me*” (2000: 3). However, if the second part of *Talking It Over* represents the decline in Oliver’s charm, *Love, etc* signifies a total deterioration. He is unemployed, his attempts at writing scripts have all failed and he is having a second depression. His verbal virtuosity and riff are no more there to fix the eyes and ears of the narratee on him. He defines himself as having arrived “in the vale of tears” and “disinherited by Fate” (2000: 129-130). He has difficulty finding metaphors and entertaining stories and, just like Stuart does in the first novel, apologizes to the narrator for his wilting conversation. The most frequent foreign word he uses is *tristesse*, i.e. sorrow and when Gillian asks him what the matter is just before his first depression, he curtly says “The inexpressible sadness of things” (2000: 83). This is the moment when Gillian is genuinely alarmed because inexpressibility is really not for Oliver.

Stuart’s and Gillian’s negative representation of Oliver reinforces his unreliability in *Love, etc*. As Gillian observes at the end of the first novel, Stuart’s dullness enables Oliver to shine in the first novel. In the second, there is still a contrast but to the benefit of Stuart this time. Stuart starts to outwit Oliver and especially after he employs Oliver in his company, he turns Oliver into a puppet. He gets more and more critical of Oliver’s wisdom and reliability.

Gillian, on the other hand, mostly expresses her disillusionment. She asks “...[h]ow do you explain ... that ... it’s normal to want something without ever

standing a chance of getting it? Or the opposite: getting something only to find out you didn't really want it after all, or that it wasn't what you thought it would be?" (2000: 138). She no more regards him as the man she fell in love with. Consequently, there is a serious detachment between them and none tries to improve the situation: "I don't ask Oliver about his projects and I don't ask him about his moods. In return, he doesn't ask me if I'm feeling hemmed in or frustrated or exhausted or whatever. Well, perhaps he doesn't ask because it doesn't cross his mind" (2000: 119).

Gillian, who gets more and more articulate in the novel, especially about Oliver, does not start the novel as someone who is willing to speak. Her conversational style varies throughout the novels. She starts out as a very reluctant narrator who is not at all eager to speak about her private life: "Look, I just don't particularly think it's anyone's business. I really don't. I'm an ordinary, private person. I haven't got anything to say ... [T]hese things aren't for public consumption. What I remember is my business" (1991: 9-10). She is already a person who does not like talking much. She is sceptical about language: she believes "words don't always hit the mark" and she likes her job of restoring old paintings because "there aren't any words involved" (1991: 60).

However, she cannot altogether keep her silence and in her reluctant way, she decides to join the "game": "Listen, I'm not playing this ... game. But equally there's no point in sitting in the corner with a handkerchief stuffed in your mouth. I'll say what I have to say, what I know" (1991: 59). Consequently, she opens later up to the degree of crying "Now listen to me. To *me*" (1991: 242), but she still remains to be the most hesitant and curt narrator of the first novel.

Gillian never digresses from the diegesis but she never provides the narratee and the audience with enough information either. One major mystery of the novel, as she also reveals, is coiled around her: she first falls in love with Stuart and in less than two months after her marriage, she falls in love with Oliver but she never explains how this has happened. When the narratee asks how this has happened in the only one instance his words are directly used in the novel, Gillian cannot make a reasonable explanation: “I didn’t choose what happened. I didn’t manipulate things, suddenly decide that Oliver was a ‘better deal’ or something than Stuart. It happened to me. I married Stuart, then I fell in love with Oliver. I don’t feel complacent about that. Some of it I don’t even like. It just happened” (1991: 179). In the second chapter of *Love, etc* while each character summarizes what has happened so far, she returns to this issue and makes an even shorter explanation. She simply says “you can love two people, one after another, one interrupting the other, like I did. You can love them in different ways... I loved each of them truly. You don’t believe me? Well, it doesn’t matter, I no longer argue the case. I just say: it didn’t happen to you, did it? It happened to me” (2000: 16).

While Barnes moulds his characters, he has not only given them different personalities but also different voices and styles of speaking. Many critics praise him for achieving a different style for each narrator which distinguishes one from the other. Sarah Harrison Smith states that “Barnes has a brilliant gift for mimicry. Thus, while he tends to portray recognizable ‘types’, their monologues are so cleverly constructed that they really come to life” (2001:1). We can even argue that a careful reader can get an unidentified sample from the novel and can find out who the narrator is by examining the style in the section. This feature applauded by critics

such as Mosseley, Smith and Guignery, is not so positive according to Dale Peck. He claims that these novels

make a little more sense if you think of them not as novels but as explorations of three modes of narration. In this view, Stuart, Oliver, and Gillian become voices rather than characters, voices whose distinctions are less psychological than semantic ... Oliver represents the language novel, where the character is the voice and the voice is the story ... Stuart represents the confessional, plodding American plain style ... And Gillian represents the novel as ventriloquism or borrowed identity. (2001:35)

It would be unfair to claim that the characters in the novels are not personalities. Peck seems to ignore the fact that each narrator tries hard to write his/her master narrative and the differences between them result from a number of factors including their personalities. It is wiser to state that each character represents a different type of narrator. Although they are all homodiegetic conscious narrators with existential motivations to narrate, Oliver's principal motivation is "literary-aesthetic" in Stanzel's terms (1988: 93). As Stanzel indicates literary-aesthetic motivation is one of the characteristics of the third-person authorial narrator. Oliver is talking about his own practical experiences indeed; yet, he is the most conscious of them all. He is trying to embellish his narrative with metaphors, allusions and digressions. Consequently, he can be compared to a third-person omniscient narrator when the liberties he takes are considered. He can get in and out of the story at his will and makes observations and witty remarks about life. Stuart, in contrast, is the first-person narrator writing in the confession mode whereas Gillian is the reluctant narrator who hesitates a lot and is not so willing to write. One should only remember that she heartily demands the narratee to listen to her only towards the end of the first novel.

Resorting to the idea of the hierarchy of discourses, it can be argued that Oliver is the luckiest of all in constructing his master narrative simply because he, as a narrator, is the closest to the God-like narrator. However, can we conclude that Oliver is right just because he is the best-talker? Stuart answers this question for himself: "... I'm suspicious of people comparing things with other things. In the days when I was more impressed with Oliver, I used to think that this mania of his proved he had not just better powers of description than I had, but also a better understanding of the world. ... Now I think all these fancy comparisons were a way of not looking at the original object, of not looking at the world?" (2000: 159). Should we not agree with Stuart that describing life with flashy words does not necessarily mean a better understanding of it? When, for example, each narrator in *Talking It Over* separately claims that s/he is the one that is going to get hurt the most in this triangular relationship, should we believe Oliver because he expresses this idea most forcefully? Similarly, to what extent can we believe the commentary of the narrators about each other? Has Stuart become wiser and more self-confident because he claims to be so and the others confirm him? The main question is can we trust any of these narrators when they make a comment about her/himself and about others?

4.2.3. Unreliability of the Narrators and the Influence of the Narratee on the Narrative

The inquiry into whether they are telling the truth or not should take the reader to the beginning of *Talking It Over*. The novel starts with an epigraph presented as a Russian proverb: “He lies like an eye-witness”. This should be taken as a warning Barnes makes for his readers; he warns the reader about the unreliability of the accounts of the narrators and sheds scepticism on all the statements. Any reader who takes this warning seriously soon realizes that all the major narrators are unreliable. Their unreliability does not really originate from the comments of other people since all these comments are subjective and unreliable as well. Their unreliability can only be understood from the inconsistency of and contradiction in their accounts, which amounts up to the idea that all these characters lie to the narratee and, indirectly, to the reader. The next logical question is why they feel the need to lie. Just like it happens in *Flaubert’s Parrot*, the narrators’ motivation to lie resides in the existence of the narratee. Similarly, the existence of the narratee differentiates *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* from the traditional confessional writing. The narrators lie basically because they are in communication with the narratee and they try to make a good impression on him. Consequently, they are all narratee-conscious narrators openly seeking to obtain the narratee’s sympathy.

The narrators’ struggle to get the narratee’s approval is evident from the start and is openly voiced a number of times. Being the least self-confident of the three, Stuart seems to demand or care about the narratee’s sympathy the most. While he is expressing his cynical ideas about love from America, he directly refers to the narratee saying “you may not like me much now. Perhaps you never did” (1991:

232). A few pages later where he is trying to patronise the narratee, he still cannot completely give up caring about the narratee's opinions of him: "I don't want your pity. I'm wiser than I used to be, and you can't patronise me so easily now. You may not like me (*perhaps you never did*)" (italics mine) (1991: 236). The same attitude survives in *Love, etc* as well with minor differences.

Oliver seems to be the most self-confident of the three but this does not save him from desiring the narratee's sympathy. Being the most articulate, he demands it most feverishly:

...I probably shouldn't be telling you all this if I want to keep your sympathy. (have I got it in the first place? Hard to tell, I'd say. And do I want it? I do, I do!) It's just that I'm too involved in what's happening to play games – at least, to play games with you. I'm fated to carry on with what I have to do and hope not to incur your terminal disapproval in the process. Promise not to turn your face away: if *you* decline to perceive me, then I really *shall* cease to exist. Don't kill me off! Spare poor Ollie and he may yet amuse you! (1991: 88).

Oliver hopes to maintain the narratee's approval or sympathy by amusing him, which is the sole reason of all these riffs, metaphors and amusing references. Just like his insecure friend Stuart, he is worried over the possibility that he may bore the narratee. He frequently refers to this worry throughout the narrative. When he repeats what he has told before, he asks the narratee not to "scowl and sigh" (1991: 247) and suggests saying something new, something the narratee has not heard before. Towards the end of *Talking It Over*, his sense of insecurity reaches the peak and he almost begs for sympathy: "... you still find me fun, don't you? Just a little? Go on, admit it. Crack us a smile! Corners up!" (1991: 266). Towards the end of *Love, etc*, he is convinced that he bores the narratee: "I bore *you*. Don't I? It's all right. You don't have to be polite. What harm can another pinprick do to a burst balloon?

Perhaps I might be interesting as a test case, a counter-example. Watch Ollie fuck up his life, go thou and do not likewise” (2000: 220). When looked from this new point of view, he is the least self-confident of all, at least in his relationship with the narratee.

Gillian, on the other hand, seems to be the least narratee-conscious of all. She does not complain about her capacity to tell a story effectively; she does not seem to try to manipulate the narratee in the first novel. However, she joins the sympathy-beggars in the second novel on the narratee’s question though still with some distance: “And me? Well, I prefer you to like me rather than the reverse, but that’s normal, isn’t it? Depending on who you are, of course” (2000: 3).

The narratee-consciousness influences the narrative of each narrator to some extent. They either try to manipulate the narratee to make him accept their individual version of the story or to maintain the sympathy of the narratee. The extent to which narratee-consciousness effects the narrative is most manifestly demonstrated by Madam Wyatt. In the twelfth chapter of *Love, etc*, the narratee asks each narrator what s/he wants. Madam Wyatt, after stating that she is an old woman only with “soft feelings”, makes a list of her desires:

I want little comforts for myself. I do not want love or sex any more. I prefer a well-cut suit and a sole off the bone. I want a book written with a good style that does not have an unhappy ending. I want politeness and short conversations with friends for who I have respect. But in general I want things for others – for my daughter, for my grand daughters. (2000: 139)

The narratee and the audience have no reasons to question the sincerity of these desires; however, very soon Madam Wyatt confesses that she lied to the narratee:

So, I have convinced you, with my little discourse about soft feelings, about not desiring things, wanting them only for others? Let me explain you this. The old are very good at being old, it is a skill they learn. They know what you are expecting from them and they give it to you. What do I desire? I desire, bitterly and without cease, to be young again. I detest my old age more than I detested anything in my youngness. I desire love. I desire to be loved. I desire sex. I desire to be held and to be caressed. I desire to fuck. I desire not to die. I also desire to die in my sleep, suddenly, not to die like my mother, screaming with the cancer... (2000: 144)

Madam Wyatt's list goes on for almost a page and the list is not comprised of "soft feelings" at all. She concludes the list and the chapter as "... you see, I also have hard feelings. You are very naïve about us, the old people" (2000: 145).

Madam Wyatt lies to the narratee just because she believes that she has to act in a certain manner as an old woman. Up to that point she has been the most reliable narrator, whose wisdom and charm is voiced especially by Stuart and Oliver. She herself states that she is known to be a wise person. According to her own account, this might be because she does not hastily judge people but wait. Although she does not accept the compliment of being a wise woman, she keeps her profile high in the first novel. She fails only once in her judgement about her husband who left her for an eighteen-year old girl. When her husband enters the narrative and tells the story from his own point of view, she loses some blood but she still manages to finish the first novel as the most reliable narrator. In *Love, etc* she overtly lies because she does not want to alienate the narratee and speaks accordingly.

As Madam Wyatt's case demonstrates, each narrator makes certain assumptions about the personality of the narratee and tries to find out how s/he can influence the narratee. Another stark example can be observed in *Talking It Over* when Oliver tells Stuart that he loves Gillian and Stuart must let the new lovers be together with a long speech by making references to "market forces". While the

speech, to be precise, Oliver's tirade, goes on, both men drink and smoke. Oliver wants to light another cigarette. Seeing that there are no matches around, he leans towards Stuart thinking that he will light Oliver's cigarette. At that moment, according to Oliver "an accident" occurs and their heads clash. Oliver comments that fortunately Stuart "had lenses in; otherwise he might have broken his glasses" (1991: 161).

According to Stuart's account there is no accident. Oliver, not having any matches, asks Stuart to give him "a Dutch fuck" (1991: 164), which refers to lighting a cigarette from another one. Oliver gets Stuart's cigarette and lights his own. Furious of the word "Dutch fuck", Stuart decides he has had enough:

I stood up and said, 'Oliver, have you ever had a Glasgow kiss?'

... 'No' he said, interested. 'I've never been to Sporransville.'

Dutch fuck, Glasgow kiss. Dutch fuck, Glasgow kiss. 'I'll show you.' I stood up, and motioned him to do the same.

He rose rather unsteadily. I took him by the sweater and looked into his face, that horrible sweaty face that had fucked my wife. When? When last? Yesterday? Two days ago?

'This is a Glasgow kiss,' I said, and butted him in the face. He fell over, and at first was sort of half-laughing, as if I must have been going to show him something else but had slipped. Then it became clear that it hadn't been a mistake, and he ran away. (1991: 164)

From Stuart's detailed narrative it is evident that there has not been any mistake. The difference in the narrative cannot be stemming from difference of perception or the fact that both were half-drunk. Although Oliver chooses to present it as an accident to the narratee, to Gillian he tells the entire story as an evidence for Stuart's brutality. In Gillian's words "... the expression on Stuart's face had to be seen to be believed. He said he thought Stuart wanted to kill him... He begged me to leave at once" (1991: 174).

Oliver's manipulation of the incident is twofold. On the one hand, he uses the incident as a reason for Gillian to leave Stuart immediately. On the other hand, he wants to protect his image for the narratee. He does not want the narratee to know that he is a coward, and he cannot fight back. Thinking optimistically, he might be trying to protect Stuart as well.

The possibility that Oliver is trying to protect Stuart is not unthinkable. Indeed, it is very possible because all the narrators are human beings who know each other for a while and they are speaking about their own affairs with a stranger. This is another factor which twists the narrative. As it can be understood from the way they introduce themselves to the narratee, it is clear that the narratee is a total stranger. In spite of their differences of personality and interest, they try to protect each other from the stranger, the narratee. At the beginning Oliver, who really enjoys making fun of Stuart, after a long derisive part, wants the narratee not to underrate him: "... don't underestimate my friend, by the way. He comes on a bit slow, sometimes, and the old tribune up top doesn't always chug away like a Lamborghini, but he gets there, he gets there. And sometimes sooner than I do" (1991: 29).

Gillian too has a tendency to defend Stuart; her defence of Stuart is stronger because she feels guilty about all that happened to him. Although all that she tells the narratee about how they met and decided to get married suggest otherwise, she insists that she did not marry him "out of pity" (1991: 143). She states a number of times in both novels that their separation has got nothing to do with sex, i.e. Stuart's sexual performance. She clearly declares that she does not "like Stuart being criticised" (1991: 176).

Gillian's most striking defence of Stuart comes in *Love, etc.* When Stuart comes back from America, he sees that Oliver and his family live in a neighbourhood that is not good enough for them and particularly for the daughters. He insists that they move to his house where Stuart and Gillian used to live. After they settle in the new house, Stuart starts to visit them frequently. In one of these visits, while Oliver and the girls are sleeping, Stuart and Gillian have a couple of glasses of wine. Stuart goes upstairs to check the girls and when he comes down, they have sex. This affair is told in a very ambiguous and contradictory manner.

First Gillian recounts the event taking all the responsibility on her. After stating that Stuart came down the stairs and kissed her, she says they were drunk but immediately she states that this is not an excuse because "...[a] woman knows how not to be close enough if she doesn't want to be kissed" (2000: 215-216). When Stuart wants to touch her, it does not occur to her as much to ask. She resists briefly when he slips his hand under her knickers but in the end she gives in and takes the leading role in the intercourse.

Her narration, though with small interruptions and hesitations, is calm. She does not present the case as a sign of love - though she reports Stuart saying "I've always loved you" during the action - but she does not at the same time feel guilty about it: "I thought - no, at those moments it's barely a thought, it's something that passes through your mind, something for which you're hardly responsible - I thought: I'm fucking Stuart, and it doesn't matter because it's Stuart" (2000: 216).

In Stuart's narration, which comes right after hers, the event is not very much emphasized. He comes down to see Gillian blue and puts his arm around her:

So I put my arm round her and said – well, I can't remember. 'Cheer up, love' or something like that. I mean you can only say simple things in those circumstances...

Then we comforted one another.

Well, in the obvious way.

However else? (2000: 219)

It is strange that Stuart, who is proud of his memory, gives so little detail about the event. He gives a detailed recipe of the dish he cooked for that evening; he talks about the difference between “frittata” and “piperade” at length but he does not get into any details about such an important event. He presents it as an impromptu act but it is known from the beginning of *Love, etc* that he is back in London to get Gillian back. In his extra-textual comments he relates two newspaper articles which are both about a revenge crime, which indicate that he is obsessed with the idea of getting even. Besides, as his second wife says, he always had a photo of Gillian in his wallet throughout their marriage.

When Stuart comes back to the event again a few pages later, he first makes a correction about the word “comforting”: “When I said ‘we comforted one another’, that probably gave the wrong impression. As if we were a couple of old things, snuffing into one another’s shoulders” (2000: 224). On the contrary, to him, they were like “a couple of kids” (2000: 224). Then he claims that Gillian started everything. When he says he is going up to check the girls, Gillian suggests that he checks Oliver as well. Besides, she has “a look in her eye” when she says it. They start kissing but after a while she tries to stop him. It does not stop him because

it was perfectly obvious what we were both after. It was also clear that she wanted me to take the lead, to be the boss... my guess is she thought that if I took the lead, this would make her feel less guilty towards Oliver...

So it was one of these scenes where I was touching her and pulling her into it all the time. And she was playing not exactly hard to get, but like Convince me. So I convinced her over to the sofa... (2000: 225-226)

In the heat of the moment, they fall on the ground and Gillian hits her head but he “wasn’t going to be knocked out of her, not for anything” (2000: 226).

A second correction comes to the previous narrative from Gillian, who presents a completely new story. According to her new account Stuart rapes her. She tries to stop him but Stuart does not heed her. What Stuart interprets or chooses to narrate as “convince me” is actually her struggle to stop him according to her narrative. She even threatens him of screaming but he simply says people will think she is having sex with Stuart because she is not making love to Oliver any more. On the narratee’s question, Gillian, unlike what she says in the first account, explicitly states she does not consent to having sex with him because she feels guilty about what she did to him ten years ago; she says “Yes, I do consider it to have been rape” (2000:229).

She confesses that she altered the truth in the first account in order to protect Stuart: “It didn’t happen as I said it did. I wanted you to keep the good opinion you have of Stuart – assuming you do” (2000: 226). That she is trying to protect Stuart makes her write a completely different story, one she would prefer to be the true one as she says: “The way I told you is the way I would have liked it to happen, if I knew it was going to be” (2000: 227). Besides, she is making the correction because she is pregnant and she is sure that “it can’t be Oliver’s” (2000: 229). To what extent she tells the truth in the second account is also dubious. Two chapters later she still displays some uncertainty, if not about the event, with its expression: “...[w]hen we

were making love – no, when he was raping me – no, let's say when we were having sex..." (2000: 242).

One certain conclusion we can make from the narrative is that the major narrators and Madam Wyatt lie to the narratee. The motives for the lies reside in narrators' presence. If there had not been a narratee, the novel could have been written in a diary format in which the narrators would write freely without restricting their narrative and caring about the judgement of the narratee. As Wheeler indicates their language is "rhetorical, manipulative" (1992: 23). Erica Hateley states that "incorporation of several voices... forces the men into open competition for reader sympathy" (2001: 4). This desire to retain the narratee's sympathy is combined with the narrators' desire to protect each other. The end result of narratee-consciousness is a narrative that is completely unreliable, which end up in indeterminacy and solipsism.

4.2.4. Solipsism as the Determining Philosophy of the Novel

Wheeler rightly points out that one of the major symbols of the novel comes from Gillian's profession, i.e. restoration of old paintings (1992: 23). For Gillian the most exciting part of her job is to remove the overpaint to discover something hidden underneath. This does not happen very often but many nudes were censored through a thick layer of paint applied, for example, on the breasts in the nineteenth century. Or a painter may not like his painting and alter it by blackening out a certain element in the painting. Gillian once discovers "a wild boar... hiding behind a large and actually rather unconvincing bush for a hundred years or so" (1991: 61). The

painting initially depicting a horseman enjoying a peaceful ride turns out to be a hunting scene after her touch.

Apart from this mystery-solving, her job mostly includes removing the dust and dirt accumulated over the years. Gillian gets her scrap and solvents and rubs the surface of the painting. In one of his visits, Oliver asks Gillian how she determines where to stop the process. He asks "... how can you tell when you have finished?" Gillian's answer is quite indefinite: "You can sort of tell" (1991: 122). However, Oliver insists that there must be a point at which she actually sees on the canvas what the painter saw when he had finished his painting. Otherwise, she might "go a little bit too far or not quite far enough", which means she might never reveal the "real" picture. Gillian curtly states that "...[t]here is no 'real' picture under there waiting to be revealed..." (1991: 122). On her answer, Oliver makes his authorial remark:

It is, oh it is. Isn't that wonderful? Oh effulgent relativity! *There is no 'real' picture under there waiting to be revealed.* What I've always said about life itself. We may scrape and spit and dab and rub, until the point when we declare that the truth stands plain before us, thanks to xylene and propanol and acetone. Look, no fly-shit! But it isn't so! It's my words against everybody else's! (1991: 122).

"My words against everybody else's" actually explains the entire narrative situation. Each narrator conveys his/her own point of view and all their narratives are of the same sort and degree. They are all unreliable narrators and there are no hierarchical differences in their status as narrators. All their accounts are subjective. Subjectivity and the existence of multiple points of view are means of arriving at a fuller and more reliable sense of reality in the modernist fiction. However, in *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* different perspectives do not lead to a certain understanding.

The narratives simply cannot be put together to form the jig-saw puzzle. On the contrary, subjectivity and co-existing perspectives only emphasize the inaccessibility of truth and solipsism.

As Wheeler puts it, “Oliver and Stuart trade words and Gillian has a child. In a sense words can’t resolve the talk...” (1992: 23). For Levenson, the title of the first book is a “great irony, since talking is exactly what these people fail to do. All through Barnes’ body of work, in fact, dialogue signally fails to occur... [*Talking It Over*] never gives its people the chance to muddle their way into understanding” (1991: 43-44). Dale Peck similarly argues that

Talking It Over and *Love, etc* are more concerned with the telling than the tale... Sometimes characters defend one another without seeming to realize that they are being attacked behind their backs...; other times they dispute each other’s versions of events as if they were seated around the same conference table...; and still other times they reach out to readers directly, reminding us that our faith in them is a condition for their continued existence ... The net effect of these asides is a mocking but not irreverent deconstruction of the traditional alliance between character and reader. (2001: 33).

In a similar vein Smith, too, states that when the characters lie to the reader, they obliterate “whatever is left of the novel’s moral structure” (2001: 30).

What Peck and Smith refer to is the alliance between the characters - in fact the narrator - and the reader in traditional novels in which the reader could arrive at certain conclusions about the characters and solve the mystery in the novel. *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* do not lend themselves to such an easy process of decoding. Peck’s conclusion is “what’s missing... [in the novels], is epiphany” (2001: 33).

Solipsism replaces epiphany in the novels. As Peck claims dialogue does not function in the novel. Stuart is only good at speaking about business whereas Gillian

enjoys working silently all by herself in her studio. Though Oliver is a great speaker, he can barely continue a serious talk for half a minute. He has a strong tendency to narrativization rather than narrating. In Gerald Prince's words, he is consciously "imposing 'story form' on events or making the world speak itself as a story" (1996a: 97). In an interview Barnes reveals that "... Oliver thinks that the facts of life are a bit measly, and that life is only liveable through extravagant reinvention" (Brotton, 2000: 2). In one of the cases when he has to maintain a serious speech, he cries "... why can't I do it? Why can't I say the right things..." (1991: 152). In one of the two serious dialogue attempts narrated to the reader, Stuart butts Oliver in the head and in the other Oliver and Gillian have a detrimental quarrel. *Love, etc* is by itself a manifestation of the death of the dialogue particularly between Gillian and Oliver.

The failure of the dialogue is signalled even at the very beginning of *Talking It Over* when Stuart, Oliver and Gillian discuss over the correct possessive pronoun that should be used for everyone. Oliver believes expressions like everyone, someone and no one are singular and should be followed by "his". Gender-conscious Gillian demands "his or her" to be used whereas Stuart suggests that the pronoun "their" should be used. This little discussion on a trivial issue bothers Stuart afterwards: "here we were, three reasonably intelligent people... Tiny little words, yet we couldn't agree. *And* we were friends. Yet we couldn't agree. Something about this worried me" (1991: 6). After all that happened in the first novel, Stuart makes another comment in the same line: "You can't feel someone else's pain, that's the problem. That's always the problem, the whole world's problem. If only we could learn to feel someone else's pain..." (1991: 198).

“You cannot feel someone else’s pain” and “my words against everybody else’s” take us to the same end of solipsism. It is found out that, as Gillian says, there is not a real picture under the picture waiting for to be revealed. In this context, when Sophie, Gillian’s older daughter in her childish mind concludes that her real father is Stuart, the reader cannot help feeling that she might be right.

Michael Levenson sees the roots of solipsism and lack of epiphany and dialogue in the personalities of the characters. For him “... [t]hey are conceived as essentially, irrevocably different. It is not for them to discover some common root, some shared pith. The most they can hope for is to arrange themselves in pleasing contrast, side by side, like red and blue” (1991: 44). Consequently, Levenson observes that in the novel talking it over is “talking about someone else, some lover, some husband, some wife, in a chain of monologues that never lock into dialogue... It is all private yearning put into urgent speech, without the consolation of an answering voice” (1991: 44). Guignery agrees with Levenson in that the relationship of Stuart, Oliver and Gillian suffer from “the failure of the conversational mode and the solipsism of each character” (2006: 74).

4.3. The Implied Author: The “Real” Picture under the Picture

As it has been argued so far, the character-narrators of the novels are all unreliable narrators in their own fashion. What they choose to narrate has been distorted basically because of their desire to protect themselves and others and to keep the sympathy of the narratee. As Smith contends they “are not always forthright; they often delude themselves as much as anyone else” (2001: 29). Because there is not a hierarchy of discourses, none of the narratives has the power

to refute or vindicate another or itself. Consequently, the novels make up a big heap of indeterminacy. However, can an author as clever and playful as Barnes be content with just putting some narratives one after the other and let the reader choose to decide on whose account is “correct” and “truthful”? Can he, in fact, prevent himself from favouring one character over the others, and therefore, his narrative over the others’? Can he efface himself altogether from his own master-narrative?

In *Flaubert’s Parrot*, Braithwaite covertly makes fun of John Fowles because he provides two different endings in his novel *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* for the sake of rendering reality more authentically. Braithwaite is of the idea that the author is always in the novel determining the choices of the reader and the author handling the matter of the choice to the reader is simply a “ploy”:

... the assumed divinity of the nineteenth-century novelist was only ever a technical device; and the partiality of the modern novelist is just as much a ploy. When a contemporary narrator hesitates, claims uncertainty, misunderstands, plays games and falls into error, does the reader in fact conclude that reality is being more authentically rendered? When the writer provides two different endings to his novel (why two? Why not a hundred?), does the reader seriously imagine he is being ‘offered a choice’ and that the work is reflecting life’s variable outcomes? Such a ‘choice’ is never real, because the reader is obliged to consume both endings... The novel with two endings doesn’t reproduce ... reality: it merely takes us down two diverging paths. It’s a form of cubism, I suppose. And that’s all right; but let’s not deceive ourselves about the artifice involved. (1986: 89)

Braithwaite is convinced that the author is always in charge of the novel no matter how hard he pretends to be transparent. It might be argued that these are Braithwaite’s ideas, not necessarily Barnes’. However, there is nothing in *Flaubert’s Parrot* to refute these ideas. In fact, *Flaubert’s Parrot* is the very embodiment of this idea since Braithwaite never achieves to get himself out of the novel. Similarly, although Barnes pretends to exclude himself from *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.* by

using a narrative technique without a mediator, he is always there as the implied author. As Barnes himself states in an interview by Jerry Brotton his technique *in Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* allows a wider range of relationship between the characters and the readers but he is “still behind the scenes and running the show to some extent” (2001:1-2).

Wayne Booth states that no matter how hard an author tries to look objective and impersonal in his work, the reader makes a mental picture of him standing behind his creation. This implied author, different from the actual author, carries out different functions. He might be “a stage manager, ... a puppeteer, ... or ... an indifferent God, silently paring his fingernails” (1987: 151). While defining the unreliable narrator, Booth states that a narrator is reliable when he “speaks or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author’s norms), unreliable when he does not” (1987: 158-159). Consequently, the implied author relies on a number of moral and aesthetical norms and values while creating his works and the picture the reader forms of him is a picture of his values, not his physical picture obviously.

It is futile to try to find out whose narrative Barnes vindicates as it is obvious that all narrators are unreliable. It is also fruitless to test the narrators’ values about love and sexuality against Barnes’; what is fruitful and meaningful is to find out who is responsible for all the hostility and the main conflict according to Barnes, the implied author. Does it all start because Oliver is jealous of Stuart’s happiness? Is it all because Oliver is a typical Casanova? Is Gillian a victim, a prize two men fight for? Or as Erica Hateley (2001) argues, is she an object of exchange in a male

homosocial relationship? On the other hand, is Stuart a typical cuckold who deserves all that happened to him because he is insensitive and dull?

It is possible to answer most of these questions, if not all, only with the help of some hints Barnes carefully placed in the narratives of the narrators. Because there is not an omniscient narrator, we have to consider that they come from a source that is susceptible. Yet, a number of evidence suggests that, unlike what Hateley (2001) argues, Gillian is the puppeteer, not the victim of the triangular relationship.

In “Erotic Triangles in Amis and Barnes: Negotiations of Patriarchal Power”, Hateley compares Amis’ novel *Success* and *Talking It Over* and comes to the conclusion that triangulated affairs in these novels “serve to illustrate the ascribed importance of male homosocial relationship and the subordination of female autonomy to male authoritarianism” (2001: 1). What she refers to is that in both novels, the males of the triangular relationship fight for the female and the female protagonist is objectified. She argues that female protagonists are powerless because they do not have narratorial power, i.e. they are excluded from the narrative as enunciators. This is the case for Ursula, Amis’ female protagonist since the novel is narrated by two male characters and Ursula is never given the chance to narrate the events from her point of view. However, Gillian has as much narratorial power as the others. Hateley dismisses this fallacy in her argument by stating that “her voice is always responsive, often passive and rarely independent” (2001: 5). Hateley’s article was written before *Love, etc* was published. It is very possible that she changed her mind after reading the second novel since the implied author of particularly the second novel illustrates that Gillian is not a powerless victim but the victimizer; in the narratee’s words “a professional victim” (2000: 240).

The possibility that Gillian is the “manipulator” and conductor of all the relationship is first hinted by Val in *Talking It Over*. She invites the narratee to “take a closer look at Gillian” and asks “Isn’t she just a heroine, isn’t she such a little *coper*?” (1991: 189). According to Val, “things... like seducing your husband’s best friend” do not just happen as Gillian claims and “... [t]he quiet sensible ones who claim that things ‘just happen’ to them are the real manipulators” (1991: 189). Val asserts that Gillian seduces Oliver discreetly by showing him her good sides and she still keeps Stuart’s control although they are no longer married. In the meantime, she keeps “her head above water while doing the right thing” as Val suggests (1991: 189). Val is more than convinced that Gillian is manipulating both men and warns the narratee not to let her do the same thing to him.

Val’s comments on Gillian might be dismissed as subjective and biased since Val has had an unsuccessful relationship with Stuart. However, there are other hints that support her opinion. Firstly, Gillian, who believes she has “always been able to explain things” (1991: 144), cannot or does not explain how she falls in love with Oliver. Gillian and Oliver move to France, have a child and then move back to London on her decision.

She also plots her fake fight with Oliver to make Stuart believe that there is nothing to envy in their life. When she understands that Stuart has followed them to France and has been watching them secretly from his hotel room, she decides to orchestrate a fight so that Stuart sees that their life is not so well and he can get rid of the idea of Gillian. By this way, she hopes, Stuart will be free of them and start living his own life. She believes she owes this liberation to Stuart. Pretending to be jealous of one of Oliver’s young students, she starts a quarrel at home just before Oliver

leaves for work. She keeps provoking him and follows him out to his car. Oliver finally loses his control and hits her in the face. Watching the fight, Stuart feels a temporary relief and leaves for America immediately.

This act of benevolence, which Hateley describes as “self-sacrifice” (2001: 6), is only benevolent on the surface. She plans all this by herself because she believes she cannot trust Oliver. There is a risk of ruining her relationship with Oliver but she believes she can handle the situation because she believes “I can manage things, that’s what I’m good at” (1991: 270) - an idea she will repeat in the opening of *Love, etc.* Gillian is the typical manipulating wife in this scene though she seems to have a good reason for it: she keeps control of Oliver without him realizing it, just like Val suggests.

Oliver likes handing the control to Gillian at the beginning. He accepts that she is stronger than him and he compares his situation to be bonded with “silken cords” (1991: 247). However, towards the very end of the second novel, after all disillusionments and resentments, he tells the narratee that Gillian has been manipulating him throughout their life together: “Gillian. The sainted one, the light of my life. Certainly been manipulating *me* all these years. Not to mention Mr Cherrybum [i.e. Stuart]” (2000: 239). Very much like Val did ten years ago, he warns the narratee: “Point is – question is – how much has she been manipulating you as well? Think about it” (2000: 239).

The truth value of Oliver’s and Val’s comments is susceptible because holders of the opinion are subjective and unreliable anyway. However, the implied author makes the reader take them as true and insightful ideas through repetition.

Besides, the comments' validity is also supported with events and Gillian's own expressions on herself.

The fact that Gillian stage-manages everything is emphasized once again in the nineteenth chapter of *Love, etc* titled "Question Time". This chapter is the only one completely run by the narratee. Though the narratee gets more active in *Love, etc*, his role has been limited to asking follow up questions. In this chapter he determines the questions and asks them one by one to the concerned people. His questions are not still voiced but they can easily be understood from the answers and when people repeat them. There are two interesting aspects of these questions. Firstly, the narratee seems to be absolutely at ease in asking questions about whatever he wants to learn and he asks them insistently as if running a criminal investigation when needed. Secondly, his questions demonstrate his opinion and judgement of the characters which coincide with the values of the implied author. He implicitly demonstrates that Stuart is telling the truth about the rape issue and that Gillian plans and runs the entire scene.

The narratee does not ask any questions about the sex affair to Stuart; instead he asks questions about issues such as his family and his sister, his first marriage, and his business. He does not feel the need to re-test Stuart's statement whereas he is very suspicious of Gillian's account. He has already shown signs of distrust when she recounts the sex affair as a rape incident. He asks four questions in half a page as if to make sure that she is telling the truth. That much of interruption and interrogation is not typical even for *Love, etc*. "Question Time" is the place where the implied author makes the reader and the narratee understand that Gillian also manipulated Stuart. The insight is reached in two steps.

The narratee first asks Sophie how long Stuart and Gillian spent in the kitchen on the stated evening, whether she has heard anything odd and whether her mother was crying. That's how she answers:

About an hour, maybe less. I told you. Then the dishwasher went off, then the front door banged, then I heard Mum come upstairs and creep past our door in case she woke me.

No, I didn't hear anything 'odd'. Why should mum be crying? (2000: 233).

In the next step he asks Gillian whether she provoked Stuart that evening and then indicates that she did provoke Oliver ten years ago. Finally he asks what she thinks about the term of professional victim. She answers furiously:

That's the stupidest question I've ever heard. *Me?*

Yes, Oliver attacked me ten years ago.

Yes, Stuart attacked me recently.

But I provoked Oliver deliberately. Whereas I didn't provoke Stuart. There's no connection between the two incidents. None at all.

It's a very stupid term, in my opinion. Professional victim. (2000: 240)

When the accounts of Sophie and Gillian are considered, it is obviously seen that the incident has taken place as Stuart narrates. She initiates the event, she takes the leading role and she has done all this probably to get pregnant. Pregnancy would be an easy way out for her; she would keep her head above the water again as Val said. If she simply told the narratee that she had sex with Stuart, this would alienate her from him and she would lose his sympathy. She could not keep it as a secret either since she knows Stuart would talk about it. Considering her habit of manipulating others, we can even suggest that her pregnancy is planned since in the last chapter she reveals that she is against abortion. She also says she cannot go to

bed with Oliver and pretend the baby is his. She, as she says, cannot claim it is from someone Oliver does not know because she works at home and Oliver spends most of his time there. When the situation is public, he will guess anyway. Therefore, Gillian has already decided that she will not deny it. She will not deny it and she will have the baby. This inevitably will make a good excuse for her to leave Oliver and get married to Stuart who is a much better deal now. The “key question” for her now, as she asks to the narratee, is whether Stuart really loves her as he said – not what will happen to Oliver, who is going through a second depression and who might be thinking of committing suicide. She is aware of all these but her main question is whether Stuart will take her back or not. The novel ends at this crucial point but it is obvious that she has planned to go back to Stuart. She will, ironically, carry out this entire plan as a victim; in the narratee’s words as a “professional victim”.

All this has not been openly stated in the novel. For the naïve reader the novel does not make any conclusions about who controls this triangular relationship; for the naïve reader there is not a “real” picture underneath the picture. However, a careful reader can reveal that picture with the help of the implied author and the narratee. As Chatman states the narratee, when a character in the novel, is a means through which the implied author tells the real reader how to act as the implied reader. The implied author moves the reader towards the values he has to adopt in order to comprehend the novel correctly. Without a character-narrator, Chatman states, the guidance of the implied author can be done only by reference to common cultural and moral values (1996: 163-164).

The narratee in *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* is a character-narratee in Chatman’s terms even if he does not have a name. He is used almost as a reliable

narrator who is placed in a higher point of discourse than the narrators and who consequently gets to become the voice of wisdom. When viewed this way, the narratee turns out to have a dual function in the novel. On the one hand, he is the reason for the narrators to distort reality to a great extent. On the other hand, he helps the reader to find out the truth especially in the last chapter with his questions. Besides, as Prince states, the narratee has an illuminating effect on the narrator-character's personality. The relationship between the narrator and the narratee contributes both the development of the plot and the reader's understanding of the narrator's character (1996b: 146-147). It is obvious that the reader would not have that much information about the narrators, particularly about Gillian. This would mean that, the narrative would take a completely different meaning and form without the narratee.

4.4. Conclusion: What if...?

Each choice implies the negation of other choices. In other words, when one makes a choice, he, at the same time, refuses to make other choices. Approaching Barnes' choice of narrators and the narrative technique from this point of view can be very enlightening in the task of understanding the strengths of *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.* In simple words, we can question how differently Barnes could have written these novels by applying a different narrative technique. He could have written them basically in three major narrative situations.

One choice Barnes could have made was to write the novel employing an authorial third person narrator. Starting again on the eve of the marriage of Stuart and Gillian, the third person omniscient narrator could have told us their story. In such a

scheme the narrator would see through their lies and distortions from the beginning and the reader would know who to trust. There would not be that much suspense in the novel and the reader, then, would assume a much more passive role. The characters' idiosyncratic use of language, particularly that of Oliver, would be very limited since the narrator would normally use his own language.

The novels could have also been written by one of the principle characters or could have been narrated from his/her point of view. Using a first-person narration, Gillian, for example could have narrated the novel or the authorial narrator would have written from her point of view but using his own voice. This time her means of information would have been restricted; her narrative would have been limited to her own experiences and what she learns from other characters. This would end up in the absence of many details we have in the present novels. She would have all the power of narration and we would never really know about other people's perspectives.

As the third option, Barnes could have written the novel in the confession mode in which everybody writes just for himself/herself without any repression. This mode would have included most of the ironies of the present novels but the suspense would have been limited again. Gillian, for instance, would have explained her plans for seducing Oliver in the first novel and the reader would have coded her as an evil manipulator then.

It is obvious that any of the narrative situations delineated above is not adequate to provide the depth and complexity the novels have now. This is due to the combined effects of the multiple narrators with their solipsistic viewpoints and the narratee who is not simply a rhetorical figure but an active participant of the novel. Just to illustrate one aspect of the complexity, we can cite the intricate narratives of

the multiple narrators. At times supporting but generally subverting each other, the narratives demand the wholehearted participation of the reader.

As Barnes says in an interview, in his present narrative technique “the membrane between readers and the character is so thinned, that if it works, is like meeting real people” (Birnbaum, 2000: 2) and real people do not have an authorial narrator who speaks for them. Just like with real people, the reader has to find his way out of the maze created by the multiple viewpoints and voices. Narratee’s voice, though inaudible, is one of these many voices. Normally narratees distance the reader from the characters and the narrators but the narratee turns out to be another “real” person the readers meet in the novel. The reader has to consider his effect on the narrative in the task of interpreting the novels.

Interpretation of these novels is not easy; the “thinned” membrane paradoxically is “thicked” as well. The reader has to be very careful in rubbing the surface of the painting if he wants to see the “real” picture. He can stop whenever he feels he has reached the “real” painting; the narrative technique grants him this right. However, if he goes “a little bit too far or not quite far enough” as Oliver says, where he will reach is total indeterminacy. If he can get to the real picture, what he will see is a very idiosyncratic and intricate narrative technique and very playful novels.

CONCLUSION

As it has been stated before, the purpose of this study is to discuss Barnes' use of narrators and narratees in *Flaubert's Parrot*, *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.* This is only possible by analyzing how Barnes has benefitted from the tradition and what he has added to the tradition. Consequently, this study starts with a brief outline of the discussions of the narrator in a historical perspective.

Notwithstanding the short history it has, the narrative theory reached an immense complexity and sophistication particularly in the second half of the twentieth century. In the beginning, the narrative discussions revolved around the distinction of "telling" and "showing" – two general modes of telling a story coined "diegesis" and "mimesis" in ancient Greek rhetorics. Henry James, who is alleged to be the first modern critic and novelist to tackle with the distinction of "telling" and "showing", was concerned with the appropriate way of telling a story in his non-fiction and prefaces. It might be right to say that the basic questions of mode of narration, point of view and voice had dominated the literary scene until the 1960s. Then Booth introduced the ideas of unreliable narrator and the implied author. He also fine-tuned the types of narrators in his own way by resorting to the idea of presence and omniscience of the narrator, the degree of its involvement in the novel, its consciousness and its distance to other agents in the novel.

Narratology, which became a canonical study of literature around the 1970s as a systematic study of how a story is told, has handled most of the discussions on the study of the narrator since then. The main task of narratology is to understand, analyse and interpret the narratives – not only in literary texts but in all texts and

filmic representations. In relation to the narrator, narratologists have tried to understand how different modes of narration are influenced by the choice of narrators. Mainly a European school of criticism, narratology has been represented by the works of Genette, Stanzel, Prince, Chatman and Cohn in this study. The major contribution of narratologists to literary criticism has been both to re-define the concepts of the earlier critics and to institutionalise other concepts such as mood, perspective, focalization, prototypes of narrators, different means of narrating speech, time of narrating, and above all the narratee.

The narratee, receiving very little attention from the critics and authors alike, remained an obscure concept until Gerald Prince discussed it in “Introduction to the Study of Narratee” in 1973. In this article Prince defines author and the reader as non-diegetic elements of any narrative transaction whereas implied author, implied reader, narrator and narratee are purely literary and diegetic constructs. He emphasizes that the narratee might have a huge impact on the novel depending on the role the author grants him as we see in the novels of Barnes.

The complexity the narrative theory has developed in time is parallel with the novelists’ use of the narrators since efforts to understand different novelists’ practices force the critics to produce idiosyncratic means. Though the novelists by definition are free to use any device to tell their stories, there has been certain kinds of narrators commonly used in certain periods of time. Stanzel calls this favoured form of narrator the prototype. Eighteenth-century novelists tended to use first-person narration. Because the novel was viewed suspiciously then, the novelists of the time felt a need to present their work as “fact” and first-person narration was a good tool to foster this illusion since an alleged factual person stood behind the novel

when told in the first-person. In cases of authorial narration, the author declared his role in the book merely of an editor and again showed the existence of a real person as an evidence for the factuality of the novel.

The novelists of the realist period did not limit themselves with being editors; on the contrary, they exerted their existence in the novel through authorial comments. They did not simply present the characters and events but commented on them: they put the perception of the reader in a correct perspective. This required a third-person omniscient narrator that placed his discourse on top of all others involved in the narrative transaction. Consequently, novels tended to be a means of moral and political edification. Modernist novelists were not as sure of their values as the realists. Facing the complexity of life, they did not feel secure enough to preach. Consequently, though they maintained the third-person narration, they remained outside the value picture of the novel by using different points of view in the same novel. For that reason, modernist fiction is characterized by subjectivity and point of view.

Postmodernist novelists have faced a much more complicated world; they share their modernist ancestors' discontent with the past. As a result, they consciously started to challenge the traditional assumptions of Western civilization as regards art, culture, politics, ethics and science. The postmodernist novelists' discontent contains all the previous literary traditions including that of the modernists. Consequently, their prototype, though difficult to define precisely, relies on employing the traditional narrator prototypes with an ironic distance. Unreliable narrators are frequently used in the absence of a reliable third-person narrator.

Multiple narrators and parodies of realist narrators are also common in the postmodern fiction.

Robert Burden rightly states that any author setting out to write a novel has to confront with two distinctive forces: novelty and tradition. He has to use the tradition so that he can communicate with the audience but he has to add something new to the tradition so that he can justify his own action of writing (in Onega, 1989: 70). Julian Barnes surely has confronted this binary opposition. Looking at his work critically, we can claim that he has invested more to the second element of the opposition: he is more experimental than traditional especially in *Flaubert's Parrot*, *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.* That some of his novel defies categorization and that some critics even refused to call his books novel only show the extent of his experimentalism. In an interview he says to Brotton: "I'm a writer who's interested in form, and a lot of English writers are quite conservative in their use of form" (2001: 2). He frequently complains about the English critics' conservative attitude to the form of the novel which he challenges particularly with *Flaubert's Parrot*.

In *Flaubert's Parrot*, Barnes writes three different stories with different discourses. On the one hand, he writes a selective biography of Flaubert, relays the secret of the stuffed parrot which Flaubert used while writing *Un cœur simple*, and finally tells the story of the protagonist-narrator Braithwaite. Consequently, the novel, in addition to being many other things such as a bestiary, a dictionary and an exam paper, is a biography, a detective fiction and an autobiography. On the other hand, when discourse is considered as enunciation, the reader listens to Braithwaite tell his own story and that of Flaubert, reads an account of Luise Colet, comes across numerous quotations from Flaubert and experiences the intervention of the narratee

in the novel. Therefore, the novel functions in three different levels of diegesis vocalized by four principal agents of narration. Such a scheme is so strange for traditional critics that many regard it as a hybrid text, but not a novel.

Flaubert's Parrot is always cited in the discussions of postmodern fiction particularly by Hutcheon as a perfect example of historiographic metafiction. Such novels present themselves as novels that employ the means of writing history only in order to show the impossibility of recording past truthfully. They open historiography into discussion just as Barnes does through his protagonist's endeavour to find out the real Flaubert and the story of the stuffed parrot. Barnes, as a postmodern author, moulds his narrator in a way to make him fail in his attempt by illustrating the fact that history is only accessible to us through texts, it is full of gaps and the material we have might be inconclusive as the theories on Flaubert's suicide or his devotion to Juliet Herbert demonstrates. Braithwaite's failure also stems from the fact that he is too much involved in Flaubert, to the extent of identifying himself with Flaubert, and that he cannot provide the objectivity the study of history requires.

This identification, which means abstinence from life for Braithwaite, influences both his endeavours and his narration. In the end, his obsession with Flaubert turns out to be a means of coming to terms with his life and particularly his wife's adultery and suicide. Even when he recounts his wife's story, Braithwaite cannot dissociate himself from Flaubert and tries to understand and vindicate his wife through the words of Flaubert. He fails in this attempt as well. Therefore, where the novel ends is total solipsism.

Higdon calls Braithwaite a "reluctant narrator": a narrator "who is reliable in strict terms, indeed often quite learned and perceptive, but who has seen, experienced

or caused something so traumatic that he must approach the telling of it through indirections, masks and substitutions” (1991:174). As Higdon (1991) states Braithwaite is actually writing about his wife’s suicide through masks and indirections. He cannot simply write in the confessional mode, without indirection, because he is a conscious narrator who is actually speaking to a number of narratees. He defers telling his wife’s story because he is embarrassed of being a cuckold and of not being able to keep his wife in life. Braithwaite ascribes his embarrassment to his being English but actually embarrassment comes from the narrative situation: he is telling the entire story to someone.

If Barnes had used a third-person omniscient narrator, the novel would have ended up a very flat narration. The distance between the character and the reader would have been larger because of the mediation of the narrator. The narrator would probably have told us about the traumatic experience of Braithwaite at the beginning and most of the suspense in the novel would have been undercut. In another narrative option, the novel would have been written in the traditional confession mode. In this case, there would have been no reluctance; Braithwaite would have told a straightforward story since there would have been no one, no listener or no reader, that would have stressed him out. Then he would not have been embarrassed or reluctant; he would not have been obliged to defend himself or Flaubert. Consequently, the narrative situation in *Flaubert’s Parrot* calls for two certain deductions: the novel is not and cannot be written in the traditional confessional mode as in the form of a diary and the narratee impacts on the narrative to a great extent. Without him, we would never have that oblique confession and *Flaubert’s Parrot* would be an ordinary novel.

When we come back to the question of the balance between tradition and innovation, we can see that Barnes uses first-person narration. As it has been stated before, first-person narrators, by rule, are unreliable. So is Braithwaite. However, in traditional novels the unreliability is laid bare and compensated for by either other narrators, the narrator himself or the third-person narrator. In *Great Expectations*, for example, Pip's unreliability in his earlier years is counterweighted later by Pip the adult. He, as an enlightened and matured young man, explains us how wrong he was in his judgement. The omniscient narrator of *Tom Jones* constantly warns the reader about the true nature of Blifil no matter what he does to flatter Mr Square or Thwackum while praising Tom Jones in spite of his rude or rash manners. Consequently, the reader is always saved from the unreliability of characters or narrators.

Barnes, however, does not resort to such manoeuvres in *Flaubert's Parrot*. There are no agents to save the reader from the inherent complexity of Braithwaite, who starts the novel as a hesitating and reluctant narrator and finishes the novel without any improvement. That he still tries to find out the real parrot reveals that he has not changed or improved in any way. On the contrary, Barnes makes the situation more complicated by introducing a narratee in the narrative situation. As Genette (1993), Chatman (1996) and Prince (1996b) state, narratee is a diegetic element and there have always been narratees from the beginning of the novel. However, no novelist has given the narratee such a big role as Barnes has done. The narratee travels with the narrator, converses with him, has drinks, asks questions and argues with him. Above all, he lingers in the narrator's mind as a person whom he should care about in his enunciation.

As it has been stated before, narrative theory develops when a very innovative novel forces the critic to think differently. Once the critic is not able to decipher a novel with the given theories, he has to add to the existing theory. *Flaubert's Parrot* represents such a case: many critics were confused at the beginning and had to redefine novel. Now many terms of the postmodern fiction such as pastiche, parody, metafiction, historiographic metafiction, effacement genres, multi-disciplinary writing and indeterminacy are explained with reference to *Flaubert's Parrot*.

Barnes' contribution to the discussions of the narrator is much more specific. Because Braithwaite cannot simply be called a first-person unreliable narrator, Higdon (1991) had to devise a new term for him and called him a "reluctant" narrator. That this term has not been applied to any other narrators so far shows that Barnes has not only employed the tradition of the first-person narration, but has given it a new dimension.

Compared to Braithwaite, the narrators of *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* are more traditional. There are three principal protagonist-narrators or homodiegetic narrators who are all unreliable to different degrees. These narrators, in an interpolated mode of narration, take turns in telling their stories as they perceive them or as they choose to narrate to the narratee and the reader. However, because there is not a certainly reliable first-person narrator or an omniscient narrator who puts the things into perspective, it is almost impossible to draw certain conclusions about the events. For all the narrators are at the same level of the hierarchy of discourse, their motto ends up with "my words against everybody else's". In other words, as the Russian proverb suggests in the epigraph of the novel, all narrators lie like an eye-witness. They lie basically for two reasons: to protect each other and to

manipulate the narratee. They all openly want the narratee's sympathy and twist their narration in order to collect and maintain it. Consequently, the reader is made aware that they are all lying but because he is left alone with the narratives of each narrator, he cannot distinguish between a lie and the truth. Such a narrative technique, which has not been tried before in this extent, forces the reader to participate actively in the novel.

The narratee is as active as the reader in these novels; he is not an element of ornate rhetorics. On the contrary, he has a dual effect on the narrative. On the one hand, it is the reason for the narrators to distort the reality in which case the narratee ends up an obstacle between the reader and the truth. On the other hand, he is an entirely diegetic entity, almost a character who shares the reader's desire to find out the truth hiding behind the narratives of each narrator. Consequently, similar to the prosecutor narratee in *Flaubert's Parrot*, he asks questions to the narrators demanding clarification. The narratee does not have a voice that is represented in the novels but the replies of the narrators make the narratee's questions clear. The narratees are known to create a distance between the reader and the narrators. However, the narratee collaborates with the implied author in these novels to enable the reader to understand the main manipulator in the affairs of the three narrators. To put it more simply, the narratee creates the confusion in the narratives of the narrators and, similar to a Victorian third-person omniscient narrator, helps the reader out of the confusion to a certain extent. Needless to say, he does not do all these as openly as a Victorian obtrusive narrator.

Though *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* look less experimental compared to *Flaubert's Parrot*, there are certain similarities between the three novels. *Talking It*

Over and its sequel *Love, etc* employ the same narrative technique. There are multiple narrators who take turns in talking about their private lives and their collective lives marked by friendship, love and betrayal. The narrators talk to the narratee about their most private secrets just as Braithwaite does in *Flaubert's Parrot*. Narrators of both novels suffer from and are restricted by the narrative situation which requires talking to a total stranger. This eschews both narratives. Consequently, the narrative tends to be a battlefield where the narrators either fight against each other as in the case of *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* or his own self as it happens in *Flaubert's Parrot*. Narrators of the previous novels try to manipulate the narratee whereas Braithwaite, through narration hopes to come to terms with his own life. Therefore, both narrators are existentially motivated to narrate.

Flaubert's Parrot can be said to be different from the other novels since it facilitates only one narrator, i.e. the Braithwaite. Nevertheless, *Flaubert's Parrot* is a vast field of ventriloquism since Braithwaite makes very little narration in the traditional sense. Just like the implied author of *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc* who lets the protagonists speak and construct their own discourses, Braithwaite lets different voices and discourses exist in the same narrative. The speaking agent becomes a biographer, an autobiographer, a lexicographer, an attorney, Flaubert himself and Luise Colet. Therefore, it might be correct to conclude that *Flaubert's Parrot*, too, employs multiple narrators.

Utilizing multiple narrators is not a new device. Even in the beginning of the novel, authors writing in the epistolary technique benefitted a lot from multiple narrators. Nor is the existence of multiple discourses rare when we particularly consider that each character builds his own discourse when he makes lengthy

statements. However, letting different narrators or characters speak without the mediation of a third-person narrator is very innovative. Unlike Barnes' characters, some voices in the novels are authenticated by the third-person pushy narrators of the Victorian novel. Consequently, the intruding narrator always has the right to say the last wise word and there is not actually any polyphony in such novels. Though modernists enjoy polyphony and existence of multiple perspectives, the confusion is almost always quietened through epiphany.

The epiphany granted to modernist characters is not affordable for Barnes' characters. They live in a solipsistic world and subjectivity is not depicted as means to reach a fuller and insightful picture of life but a curse for people who have to live together. It is not conflict resolved but conflict accentuated since all narrators cry out loud that he is right but not the others. This is achieved through the existence of multiple narrators who are never put into a coherent perspective by an implied author. For these reasons, Barnes challenges the tradition of the use of narrators more than compromising with it.

Mieke Bal contends that "the narrator is the most central concept in the analysis of narrative texts. The identity of the narrator, the degree to which and the manner in which that identity is indicated in the text and the choices that are implied lend the text its specific character (1997:19). Pinpointing similar aspects Jeremy Hawthorn states ". . . different narrators, different narrative media *change* a story, they affect not just how we are told something but what we are told, and what attitude we take towards what we are told" (1986: 36). As discussed in the previous chapter, Barnes could have written the three novels in question using a different technique, employing different narrative situations. Yet, the novels would never have

been the same, could never have produced the same effect. His success as a novelist is embedded in his innovative use of narrators, particularly the first-person narrators.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to discuss the idiosyncratic features of Julian Barnes' narrators in *Flaubert's Parrot*, *Talking It Over* and *Love, etc.* This discussion requires analysing how Barnes benefits from the canon of narrators in fiction and what he adds up to the tradition of narrators. Though a survey of modern discussions on the narrator and the prototypes of narrators used in the English fiction has been written, narratology has been used as the major theoretical background. When the stated novels of Barnes have been examined in this fashion, it has been found out that Barnes is a very innovative author who stretches the limits of the narrative theory.

In *Flaubert's Parrot*, Barnes employs a "reluctant" postmodern narrator through whom he tells three different stories: the story of Braithwaite - the homodiegetic narrator -, a selective biography of Flaubert and the unresolved secret of the stuffed parrot Flaubert used as a model while writing his short story *Un cœur simple*. Braithwaite is a failing narrator since he cannot tell any of these stories seamlessly. Covenant with poetics of postmodern fiction, Barnes uses him to demonstrate the idea that it is impossible to write about past reality truthfully, particularly when the historian identifies himself with the historical figure. Narratee, which makes Barnes' most innovative aspect of narration, takes an important part in the novel since the narratee is one of the reasons why Braithwaite cannot function as a reliable narrator.

Barnes utilizes first-person narration in *Talking It Over* and its sequel *Love, etc.*, too. However, this time he makes use of multiple narrators who try to construct

their master-narratives and make the narratee and consequently the reader accept their version of the events. Because there is not a third-person narrator guiding the reader in the novels, the implied author and the narratee end up having a vital role for the reader to decipher the intriguing narratives.

Barnes' narrators in these novels can simply be called first-person narrators but the relationship Barnes puts them in with other agents of narrative transaction distinguishes them from traditional narrators. Particularly the narratee's impact on the narratives is completely without any antecedent.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı Julian Barnes'ın *Flaubert'in Papağanı*, *Seni Sevmiyorum* ve *Aşk, vs* romanlarındaki anlatıcıların özelliklerini irdelemektir. Bu irdeleme yazarın anlatıcı geleneğinden nasıl faydalandığını ve anlatıcı geleneğine getirdiği yenilikleri tartışmayı gerektirmektedir. Dolayısıyla çalışmanın giriş bölümünde Barnes'ın yazarlık hayatı özetlendikten sonra, birinci bölümde, anlatıcı odaklı edebi tartışmaların ayrıntılı bir dökümü yapılmıştır. Bu bölüm, ilk modern roman eleştirmeni sayılan Henry James ile başlayarak, Percy Lubbock ve Wayne Booth gibi ilk dönem eleştirmenleriyle devam ederek, ve anlatıbilimcilerin ve biçembilimcilerin çağdaş çalışmalarıyla sonuçlanarak geniş bir tarihsel dönemi kapsamaktaysa da, roman çözümlemelerinde çoğunlukla anlatıbilim kullanılmıştır. Bu teorik bölümden sonraki ikinci bölümde, 18. yüzyıldan bugüne İngiliz romanında sıklıkla kullanılan anlatıcı prototipleri özetlenmiştir. Teorik bölümlerin sonrasında yapılan roman çözümlemelerinde Julian Barnes'ın, anlatı kuramının sınırlarını ihlal ederek genişleten yenilikçi bir romancı olduğu görülmüştür.

Üçüncü bölüm Barnes'ın en etkileyici çalışması olan ve “tedirgin” bir anlatıcı tarafından anlatılan romanı *Flaubert'in Papağanı*'nı irdelemektedir. Yazarın bu romandaki anlatıcı kullanımı postmodern roman poetikasıyla, özellikle de postmodern tarihsel roman kavramıyla tartışılmıştır. Yazarın roman tekniği incelenmiş ve anlatıcının bu teknikteki yeri ve önemi belirlenmiştir. Romanda Barnes anlatıcısına üç farklı öykü anlattırmaktadır: anlatıcının kendi özyaşamsal öyküsü, kısmi bir Flaubert biyografisi ve Flaubert'in *Saf Bir Yürek*'i yazarken model olarak kullandığı doldurulmuş papağanın çözümlenemeyen gizemi. Barnes Braithwaite'i

başarısız bir anlatıcı olarak kaleme almıştır çünkü anlatıcı hiçbir öyküyü sorunsuz anlatamamıştır. İnanmış bir postmodernist olan Barnes, Braithwaite’i tarihin nesnel ve tarafsız olarak yazılamayacağını göstermek için kullanmıştır. Yazarın anlatı tekniğinin en deneysel yönünü oluşturan “dinleyici” (narratee), roman kurgusunu büyük oranda etkilediği için, bu bölümde ayrıntısıyla incelenmiştir. Çalışmada gösterildiği üzere Braithwaite’in başarısız bir anlatıcı olmasının en önemli sebebi dinleyiciyle girdiği insani ilişkidir.

Dördüncü bölümün konusu *Seni Sevmiyorum* ve bu romanın devamı olan *Aşk*, vs’dir. Yine bir birinci tekil şahıs anlatı olan romanlarda, birden fazla anlatıcı kendi asıl-anlatılarını oluşturmaya ve dinleyiciyi ve dolayısıyla okuru, olayların kendi anlattıkları şekilde gerçekleştiğine inandırmaya ve kendi yanlarına çekmeye çalışmaktadırlar. Romanda, okuru yönlendiren güvenilir bir üçüncü tekil şahıs anlatıcı olmadığı için, romansal yazar (implied author) ve dinleyici, okurun romanı doğru okumalarında vazgeçilmez bir öneme sahiptirler.

Barnes’in sözkonusu romanlarda kullandığı anlatıcılara kabaca birinci tekil-şahıs anlatıcı diyebiliriz. Ancak, Barnes’in anlatıcılarını anlatı düzlemindeki diğer unsurlarla içine soktuğu ilişkiler, onları geleneksel anlatıcılardan önemli ölçüde ayırmaktadır. Özellikle dinleyicinin anlatı üzerinde bu kadar baskın bir role sahip olması, roman geleneğinde görülmeyen bir uygulamadır.