The Narratology of the Short Story, "A Hand in the Grave" by Ghassan Kanafani Based on Gérard Genette's Theory

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Extended Abstract

1 Introduction

Narratives are one of the important areas of modern literary theories; their analysis through new theories can facilitate understanding of literary texts. Gérard Genette's theory is a considerably effective narratological theory used by numerous researchers today so as to uncover the narrative patterns of significant writers and offer a better introduction for them by examining their narrative structures.

There are several studies analyzing the works of Ghassan Kanafani using Genette's theory; however, the analyses in these studies are solely through the outlook of a single component such as the narrative time or focus. The present study attempts to analyze the entire components of Genette's theory in this work by Kanafani.

On one hand, the proportion between this story and the narrative pattern suggest that this theorist has managed to achieve an applied, universal pattern to examine narratives. On the other hand, it sheds light on the capability of the writer in making use of elements in the story and creating a rich tale.

2 Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

The present study attempts to analyze the short story, "A Hand in the Grave" (يد في القبر) by Ghassan Kanafani, a prominent Palestinian storywriter, using Gérard Genette's theory. Initially, a short synopsis of the story is presented followed by processing of the subject. After providing a detailed description of components including time, form, and tone in Genette's theory, they are compared and assessed with respect to the story under examination; samples from the text are analyzed against each component.

To date, several studies have examined the works of Ghassan Kanafani using Genette's theory, the majority of whom have sufficed with analyzing only a single component such as time or the narrative focus. Faramarz Mirzaei and Maryam Moradi (2011) investigated time and its various methods of arrangement in stories, "Men in the Sun" and "All that's Left to You" by Ghassan Kanafani. By examining the relation between time and attraction in Kanafani's narrative, "*al-Ofuq varaa al-Bavabah*", Hassan Goudarzi Lamraski and Ali Baba Pourroshan (2012) showed that the writer has managed to create an attractive work using different time-related techniques. Hassan Goudarzi Lamraski and Ali Baba Pourroshan (2013) also examined the relation between time and theme in the story titled "The Land of Sad Oranges" with emphasis on Gérard Genette's theory and attempted to reveal the writer's capacity to enhance

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the narrative's theme. Ahmadreza Saaedi (2014) examined the narrator and focalization in the novel, "All that's Left to You" based on the views of structuralist critics including Genette's.

3 Method

The present study is an attempt provide answers to the following questions by offering a narratological criticism and restoring Genette's narrative components in the story, "A Hand in the Grave" by Ghassan Kanafani through the descriptive analytical approach.

1. How has Ghassan Kanafani used the element of time to present the subject and theme of his narrative to the reader?

2. How has the position and point of view in this story been illustrated? Through which angle and using which techniques does the narrator influence the audience?

3. How has the writer reflected the narrator's tone or voice?

4 Results and Discussion

Examination into the story, "A Hand in the Grave" through the narratological outlook demonstrates its richness and extent of consistency between its elements. By making use of the entire narrative techniques pointed out in Genette's theory, the writer has managed to offer an exciting, audience-friendly story. Examination into Genette's theory in this story demonstrates the narrative's coherent structure; time sequence is adhered to, to a high extent, with only a few limited instances of anachronism. Therefore, the narrative has a simple timeframe.

By making use of theatrical scene and description techniques, the writer has created an environment consistent with his narrative's subject. He has offered attraction to his story using this technique, as well as enhancing its theme. As opposed to the insignificant application of omission and summary, the dialogue technique has been used considerably to reveal the concerns and insights of the characters. All three types of single, repeated, and recount frequencies can be found in the narrative. The repeated frequency emphasizes and highlights the themes that the writer deems important.

Having the maximum presence in the narrative along with offering appropriate, selective information, the narrator attempts to reduce the distance between the story and narration. To this aim, he uses the direct speech method. The narrator in this story is first-person, and his focalization is internal. To offer a natural flow of the story, influence the audience, and connect with the readers, the narrator has used this narrative focus.

As for the subject of tone which was examined at three levels of narration time, narration levels, and person, it was found that the narration time is of the dimensional type. Moreover, the narrator is an accomplice and the whole story is a heterodiegetic narrative. The narrator uses both direct and indirect methods to illustrate the environment of the story, describe the characters, and introduce them to the readers.

5 Conclusion

Gérard Genette has managed to simplify complex literary criticism issues using clear, logical structures and detailed, consistent words times and times again. And today, a large number of scholars conduct studies bases on his theory. According to Genette's theory, a narrative can be divided into three levels including the story, text, and narration, as a structured whole. This model can predict the examination strategies of interaction between levels through time, form, and narration tone.

Given the analysis of the story, "A Hand in the Grave" based on Genette's theory, it can be expressed that Genette's narrative structure principles are compatible with different types of

narratives including short stories. Here, Kanafani's storytelling technique in systematic creation of a narrative work can be pointed out as well.

Since Genette's theory is the most complete theory in the area of Narratology, scholars can apply his theory to different stories so that those interested in narratives can become more familiar with this theory.

Keywords: Narratology, Genette, Kanafani, A Hand in the Grave

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