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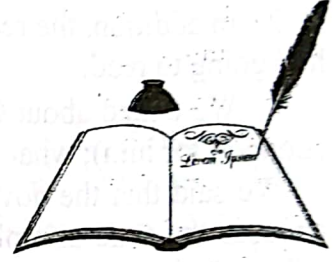
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8



Literary Texts

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مؤسسة العائدي للخدمات الطلابية

Literary Texts II 3.8



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HELLO EVERYONE!

We talked about structure and setting. Today we are going to begin with theme. Then we will move to symbol and image. Hopefully we will reach speech and dialog. Before doing that, let's go through some of the points that we talked about last week.

- What are the questions that we answer when we talk about the setting?

When and where. We are talking about time and place or spatial and temporal. Added to these are the historical and social contexts.

Setting is one element that includes historical context, geographical context, and social context. So we have time, place, and social context.

We also talked about structure and said that the structure organizes plot, theme, and form.

We said that the plot organizes the story and the structure organizes the plot itself. The structure manifests itself through the divisions to sections and chapters in a novel.

- What is the function for that?

There are two purposes:

1. The reader needs to pause from reading. That is why we have sections.
2. In addition, the reader will have the time to reflect on what he read and on what he's going to read.

- We talked about Charles Dickens's three reasons for choosing a certain setting (London for him); what were they?

We said that the novelist use of setting should be one that is familiar to him. He chooses the time and place and the social context that suit him to write about. We talked about many examples where the novelists choose certain settings because they are well-acquainted with these settings.

Theme

If the setting is the answer of the two questions "when" and "where", then theme is the answer to the question "what".

When I say "what is the subject of this novel?" or "what is the novel is going to talk about?" then I'm asking about the theme.

There are novels of theme and novels of thesis الأطروحة

Novels in general pose questions because they argue about problems; social, psychological, mental, etc. When you pose such problems, you are raising questions.

- Novels of theme don't go after answers.
- Novels of thesis propose answers and they tend to be didactic (educational).

Actually, most readers and critics don't prefer didactic educational novels because they pose questions and propose answers and they are not open-ended. These novels don't respect the mind of the reader and don't give him the opportunity to perceive the novel and the questions that it raises.

When you're writing a novel, you are writing to a wide range of audiences. That is why novels of theme are open-ended novels that talk about certain events but they might not leave you with a satisfying conclusion, in opposite to novels of thesis.

- What is theme?

The theme is the subject of the novel. When I say the theme of this novel is love then there might be a certain love affair, the characters are engaged in relationships that are characterized by love, even mother-daughter relationships and husband-wife relationships.

- Does that mean that the only theme in the novel is love? Can a novel have more than one theme?

We may have a general theme and sub-themes. For example, we have a novel that talks about a love relationship and the two protagonists are a man and a woman, but we have other themes of poverty, diseases, war, etc.

Actually war is a very recurrent theme in novels. We have a novel entitled **Love and War.**

This doesn't mean that we don't know what is supposed to happen because the theme is controlling the novel.

- The definition of the theme:

It is the main idea upon which the novel is based.

So we have a main idea and the novel talks about it or revolves around it.

Again:

- Novels of theme: the writer can set up problems and issues and questions. It is open-ended.

- Novels of thesis: they look for answers. They are didactic and educational.

Actually, while the writer answers questions in the thesis novel, he seems to be preaching and lecturing the readers. This is what we call in Arabic تبشيري أو واعظ

When we talk about symbol and image, we will see that the question we answer is the question of "how". We will talk about symbolism.

- What does "symbol" mean?

It means الرمز

We're going to differentiate between symbol and image because they are somehow contrary to each other. We have the movement from the concrete to the abstract and then we have the opposite movement from the abstract to the concrete. We will get two examples about that; one of them is the example of the car as a symbol of something.

- What do you think the car symbolizes?

Talking about the car in the past is like talking about new technologies in the present because the car in the 19th century was a new invention and there were not many cars in the streets of England; cars were only driven by princes. The car is a symbol of social position, speed of life, death (car accidents), technology and modernism, pollution, moving from organic to automatic, etc.

When we talk about the car, we are moving from the concrete (something we can sense with our senses) to the abstract (something we can perceive with our minds).

The abstract is called metaphysical. The abstract is something known to people but cannot be sensed with our five senses; it can be perceived with our minds such as

honesty, love, care, death, etc. We know the idea of these things but we can't sense them with our senses.

So the abstract is the idea while concrete is what we can sense with our five senses.

When we talked about the car, we moved from the concrete (the car itself) to the abstract (development, social position, etc.).

In images, it is the opposite. Let's take an example: when I say that the sky is weeping, then I mean it is raining. I am using an image of a human being that is crying; this is an abstract idea.

We will begin with theme. We will differentiate between the novel of theme and the novel of thesis. We will have examples about them. Let's begin...

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9. Theme

'Theme' is a much used word in the literary criticism of the novel, and a favourite word for use by lecturers and teachers in essay and examination questions, 'Discuss the treatment of the theme of evil in Crime and Punishment'; 'Write about the theme of escape in Huckleberry Finn'; 'the theme of alienation in The Castle', and so on.

Crime and Punishment is a novel by Dostoevsky who is a Russian writer. It talks about the struggle between good and evil. Evil in this novel is a major theme. So the subject or the idea behind the novel is the struggle between good and evil. The main theme is evil.

Huckleberry Finn is a novel by the American novelist Mark Twain.

The Castle is a novel by the Jewish German novelist Franz Kafka.

Write please:

The definition of the theme: It is the main idea upon which the novel is based.

We have to differentiate between two kinds of novels: novels of theme and novels of thesis.

Some critics find it useful to distinguish between theme and thesis. The simple distinction here is that although both pose questions, a thesis also suggests or argues for answers. A theme, in contrast, can involve the establishing of a set of issues, problems, or questions without any attempt to provide a rationale or answer to satisfy the demands these make of the reader.

Write please:

رواية thesis هي رواية تبشيرية أو وعظية لأنها تطرح الأسئلة وتحاول الإجابة عنها
رواية الموضوع theme تطرح الأسئلة وتترك الإجابة عنها للقارئ أي أنها لا تملئ عليه الأجوبة
وتحترم عقل القارئ

As a writer when you have a theme, you tend to raise questions and to argue for or against something. Unlike that, we have thesis which argues for answers.

Traditionally, novels dominated by a thesis have been valued less highly

than those in which certain themes are raised or treated: in contrast to earlier generations of readers perhaps, some recent critics have preferred our novels not to be overtly didactic, to be open-ended rather than pointed towards solutions at which the author has already arrived.

The novels of thesis are less praised than the novels of theme.

• What are the main differences between novels of theme and novels of thesis?

☞ Novels of thesis are less praised because they are didactic. (Important for the exam)

☞ Novels of theme are open-ended. They respect the mind of the reader. They don't impose answers for the questions.

Examples of exam questions:

The following type of the novel is less praised:

The novel of thesis are less praised because:

Let's write:

بشكل تقليدي، تلك الروايات يغلب عليها الفرضية thesis الجاهزة. لطلما اعتبرت أقل قيمة من تلك التي تطرح مواضيع مختلفة.

على خلاف الأجيال السابقة من القراء، يفضل نقاد اليوم الرواية التي تكون أقل وعظاً، أي أن لا تكون تبشيرية. يفضل أن لا تكون الروايات تعليمية بشكل مباشر أو واضح وأن تكون بعيدة عن التبشير لأن الأدب التبشيري أمر ممل.

يفضل نقاد اليوم الرواية ذات النهاية المفتوحة على الرواية التي تشير بشكل مباشر إلى الحل الذي توصل إليه الكاتب.

Remember that the word "didactic" is related to thesis novels.

The word "open-ended" is related to theme novels.

We should ask whether such an attitude is always justified; novels that are filled with their creators' crusading zeal or commitment to a belief or a cause constitute a very substantial part of the body of fiction, and since its birth the modern novel added a significant commitment to didacticism.

Let's write:

هناك صراع دائم بين الإبداع creativity والوعظ didacticism

Let's now summarize what we talked about:

Novels can be classified into two types:

1. Novels of thesis: they pose questions and try to answer them. These types of novels are didactic and valued less than the novels of them. They are boring.

2. Novels of theme: they are creative and open-ended. They don't impose answers. They have a wide range of ideas.

Theme is the dominant idea of the text.

Both types of the novel pose questions.

Now we will turn to symbol and image. We said that the question that symbol and image answer is "how". The use of the question "how" is related to style. Style

includes symbolism and imagism الترميز والتصوير

The use of symbols and images in novels is to explain characters and events. When I talk about the characters in my novel in a very dull direct way, it becomes very boring for the reader. I need to use figures of speech in order to make my novel interesting and more appealing to the reader.

The symbol of the car in the 19th century is considered a symbol of:

- Civilization
- Technology
- Modern age

It is like the computer nowadays. The computer is a sign of technology and civilization.

We call something "a symbol" when it stands for something else and when it represents something else. For example, computers represent technology and cars represent advanced modernism. The symbol is the connotation something has.

Could a car used in a work of literature mean something related to relationships as a symbol? Some relationships are characterized by being fast and speedy just like a car is fast. So the car may be a symbol for speedy love relationships.

Write please:

- *Symbol: the movement or shift from the concrete to the abstract.*
- *Concrete means something sensed with our five senses.*
- *Abstract means idea, symbolic, metaphysical, theoretical consideration, etc.*

The watch is a symbol of time, waiting, etc. It is something concrete that moves us towards something that we perceive with our minds (abstract).

The book is a symbol of knowledge and education.

The desk is a symbol of learning and education.

A flower is a symbol of beauty.

White in our culture is a symbol of happiness and purity.

Colors are a very rich playground of symbols. Green symbolizes spring, life, going through a new stage in life, etc.

In our culture, we relate the blue color to the boy and the pink to the girl.

We have also blue collar and white collar and pink collar that are related to jobs and positions. The blue collar refers to people who work in hard mechanical conditions.

10. Symbol and Image

In E.M. Forster's *Howards End* the motor-car plays an important role. We could respond to this fact by pointing out that the car had not been around for very long at the time that the novel was written, and that Forster was merely incorporating a piece of contemporary reality into his novel for the purpose of increased verisimilitude.

Howards End is a novel written by E.M. Forster.

Here we are talking about the novel as something that is related to reality. We said earlier that the novel reflects reality and that the mission of the writer is to reflect reality itself in order to have the readers feel that they are reading something real but

injected with symbolism and figures of speech and fictional events; the things that are related to creativity. Realism is very important in the novel. That is why we are talking about the motor-car as a symbol that is injected into the novel in order to make people at the time feel that it is real.

Write please:

The reason why the car is used in this particular novel is to give a sense of reality or to imitate the real world, E.M. Forster put the car in the novel for the purpose of verisimilitude, i.e. to create or enhance a sense of reality. In other words, if you want to make your novel real, imitate reality. The car is a symbol that stands for (or represents) something that is abstract (idea).

We cannot say that something concrete as a watch is a symbol of another thing that is also concrete. For example, the watch is a symbol of time (abstract).

السيارة لم تستخدم كوسيلة نقل في الرواية، بل استخدمت كرمز.

- Concrete means الشيء المحسوس
- Abstract means الفكرة المجردة
- Verisimilitude means imitation of reality
- Why does he bring the car into his novel?

To make people believe that he is imitating reality.

The motor-car in Howards End clearly stands for or represents something; it is not merely a means of transport but a symbol in the novel. By this we mean that it carries with it various ideas, associations, forms of significance that in ordinary life it might not have in people's minds: 'the new and destructive of the traditional'; 'the mechanical as against the organic'; 'unfeeling social change'; 'violence and death'; 'the selfish pursuit of personal comfort by the rich' - and so on.

'The new and destructive of the traditional'; 'the mechanical as against the organic'; 'unfeeling social change'; 'violence and death'; 'the selfish pursuit of personal comfort by the rich', all these are possible connotations of the car as a symbol.

Notice that there is no suggestion that the car in Howards End stands for just one, fixed thing; it is characteristic of symbols that they do not have a simple one-to-one relationship with what they stand for or suggest.

Mechanical الآلية

Organic life الحياة الطبيعية

Write please:

As you notice, the car has various connotations depending on the way you use it or upon how you use it as a symbol. Car is made up of metal (concrete) and it sometimes stands for death. Death is something that is abstract so we don't have "a symbol one-to-one relationship" between the car and death or between the flowers (concrete) and the idea of beauty (abstract).

- Do symbols have a one-to-one relationship?

No they don't because you don't go from something concrete to something

concrete or from something concrete to something obviously directly abstract; you are moving to another level of meaning, which is from concrete to abstract.

Symbols are not limited to literature and art: they are central to all known human cultures. When a woman gets married in white she makes use of the symbolic force of that colour for dress within our culture - a symbolic force that has existed for an extremely long time. Any writer incorporating this convention in a novel would be taking what we can call a public symbol and adapting (or challenging) it for use within his or her work.

Write please:

Some writers take the public symbol from society and put it in their novels without changing it. In this case we call it a public symbol. An example of the public symbol is the white wedding dress.

Now we have to notice the difference between symbol and image:

Although it is not always easy to distinguish symbols from images, the following points are worth remembering:

1. Images are usually characterized by concrete qualities rather than abstract meanings; images normally have a more sensuous quality than symbols - they call the taste, smell, feel, sound or visual image of the referred-to object sharply to mind.

2. symbols, in contrast, because they stand for something other than themselves bring to mind not their own concrete qualities so much as the idea or abstraction that is associated with them"

Symbols don't stand for themselves; the car doesn't stand for a car and the watch doesn't stand for a watch.

Sensuous: related to the five senses

Write please:

في الصور نستخدم الشيء الحسي (المرتبط بالحواس) على خلاف الرمز الذي يذكرنا دائماً بما هو معنوي.

Images always call attention to their concrete qualities. Any concrete object can be used as a symbol, whereas images do the opposite; they remind us of the five senses.

- Symbols move us from concrete to abstract.
- Images move us from abstract to concrete.
- We can say that somehow images are the opposite of symbols.

The last thing for today is dialog and speech. It is very easy and very straightforward. A dialog can be between two people or more. When I talk to myself, it is a monolog. As a literary term, a monolog is called a soliloquy.

For example, in a dramatic play you might have a character that is standing all alone on the stage talking to himself. It is a monolog. When we have two characters, it is a dialog.

There are kinds of dialogs in novels related to the form (to how they are written). In traditional novels, we had something called the dialogs that would go on

for a long paragraph. It was very hard to read them. The structure of the dialog itself was very condensed. The voice of the narrator in the old-fashioned conventional traditional way of writing dialogs must impose itself between every line and the other. (*The narrator is the one who is telling the story; it may be a character or may be ambiguous or may be a third person omniscient narrator*). We can always find the voice of the narrator. For example, a traditional novel might be like this:

She said " how are you today?"

He answered "fine, but I'm hungry"... etc.

In the modern novels, we may have a separate line or a separate paragraph for each of the characters. You may have the name of the characters and what they said, or you may not have the names of the characters. When you are reading the dialog, you know who these characters are.

So we have quotation marks and tag phrases. Tag phrases are a part of speech and dialog. It is when you say "he replied" and "she replied", "He answered" and "she answered", "He said" and "she said", etc.

- Why is the dialog important for the novel?

It is because the novel reflects real life. Characters must be similar to human beings. Dialogs are very important because humans cannot exist without interacting and communicating with others.

- Is conversation more important in novels than in dramatic plays?

It is more important in drama because in a play we are watching two characters talking to each other and interacting.

- Is conversation more important in novels or in TV?

It's more important in TV because TV includes dialogs between characters. Actually, there are some silent plays and silent TV shows but they are not an entire school.

Dialog is the most essential thing in TV shows and dramatic plays. In novels, it is very important but it is not the most essential thing.

Dialogs make novels more appealing to us because we are drinking our coffee and listening to our neighbors while reading the dialog. In novels we have dialogs but in real life, we have bodily posture and face expressions and slips of tongue. These things are not found in novels. We only have straightforward direct lines of characters.

In dramatic plays, there is something that is called script and the ones who are performing them add a whole new life to the script itself.

Let us start reading:

11. Speech and Dialogue

One of the extraordinary achievements of realism (and not just in the novel) is that it gives us something that to us resembles the world even though it is formed and constrained by conventions of representation different from those that operate in the real world.

The novelist follows conventions in the representation of speech and dialogue with which we are so familiar that we are unaware of any

conventionality. People in novels tend to talk in complete sentences, with few indicated hesitations, mistakes of grammar, 'ums' and 'ers', and so on.

The novelist has to convey exclusively in words what in ordinary conversation we convey by words, tone of voice, hesitations, facial expression, gesture, bodily posture - and by other means. Learning how to do so was not accomplished overnight, and we can note a great difference between the way novelists in most of the eighteenth century represented dialogue and the way later novelists have done so. If, for example, you open Henry Fielding's novel *Joseph Andrews* (1742) at Chapter 5, which is the chapter directly parodying Richardson's *Pamela* in which Lady Booby attempts to seduce her servant Joseph much as Mr B- in Richardson's novel had attempted to seduce Pamela, then you will notice something odd about the layout of the page. Although conversation takes place all through this short chapter, the prose is set out in one *continuous unparagraphed stream*. Thus Fielding has to keep including 'tag-phrases' such as 'he said' and 'she replied'. The result is not just that reading the chapter is rather hard work, but that the guiding presence of the narrator keeps intruding: we have narrative tag phrases in addition to the actual words spoken by the characters.

Parody means تهكم أو سخرية

Prose النثر

Intruding يقتحم

The continuous unparagraphed stream is the old conventional way of writing a dialog in novels where the novelists used tag-phrases.

We have the dialog and the tag-phrases but it is a continuous stream of lines so it is very confusing to read. The conventional old way was hard and boring for the readers.

If we move to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* we see a very different picture. Dialogue is presented in a recognizably modern form, with each new utterance by a different character given a new paragraph.

Utterance عبارة

The difference in the modern way is that each character is given a new paragraph and a new line.

Here the narrator may intrude or remain hidden at will. If necessary the characters can be left to speak for themselves with no interruption from anyone. This certainly increases the dramatic effectiveness of scenes involving dialogue; we feel that we are actually witnessing conversations taking place rather than being instructed by an intrusive stage manager who keeps pointing out what we have to notice.

At will: in his own power

The intrusive stage manager is the narrator

In the modern way, the narrator MAY intrude. In the old conventional way, the narrator MUST intrude and here the author must include tag-phrases.

- What does using the modern way of dialog do?

It increases the dramatic effectiveness of scenes involving dialogs. (Important)

The narrator can now use the different possibilities available to create an appropriate effect. Take the conversation between Mr Bennet and his wife that we are given on the first page of Pride and Prejudice:

Here we will find out that Mr. Bennet doesn't want to talk or answer or even hear anything.

'My dear Mr Bennet,' said his lady to him one day, 'have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?'

Mr Bennet replied that he had not.

'But it is,' returned she; 'for Mrs Long has just been here, and she told me all about it.'

Mr Bennet made no answer.

'Do not you want to know who has taken it?' cried his wife impatiently.

'You want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it,'

This was invitation enough.

Here, at first we have something similar to the old way because it is one block and we have the intrusion of the narrator. Then we have the modern way in which each paragraph is a line of a dialog. At last we have one line by Mr. Bennet but it is a separate line which is the modern way. We have also tag-phrases like "she replied" and "she cried impatiently".

Note how Jane Austen wrings so much significance out of her use of Direct and Indirect Speech here. 'Mr Bennet replied that he had not' must be one of the most economically sarcastic lines in English literature: the shift to Indirect Speech somehow conjures up Mr Bennet's weary, long-suffering response to his wife's importuning. We can see that the narrative comments here are more like touches on the tiller than fuller-scale intrusions; we feel that we are witnessing a real conversation but with someone beside us whispering in our ear comments concerning the participants in the discussion.

Weary: boredom

Importuning: saying something over and over again إلهاح

Jane Austen is the writer of the novel **Pride and Prejudice**. Mr. Bennet is very bored and he doesn't want to hear anything but she is insisting over and over again that she wants to tell him the story.

In this dialog, the tag-phrases are only small touches; they are not full-scale intrusions.

الراوي لا يقتحم كل الرواية ويروي كل جملة بل يتدخل فقط عند الحاجة.

The whispers they are talking about are from the narrator himself. These touches and these whispers are narrator's voice in modern dialog.

We said that:

- Parody محاكاة ساخرة
- Concrete ملموس
- Abstract مجرد
- Verisimilitude: the appearance of being true or real
- ☞ Dialogs in the old conventional way are described as being horizontal أفقية
- ☞ In the modern way, the dialogs are vertical عمودية

Thank You

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دورات متابعة ومكتشفات

بإشراف نخبة من أفضل الأساتذة الجامعيين

في معهد الكندي

لطلاب الترجمة (التعليم المفتوح) ولجميع المواد



Page:

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Group:

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