CHAPTER 2

Literary Review

Criticism on *Wuthering Heights*

Studies of Emily Bronte's single novel *Wuthering Heights* can be divided into two major categories: formal and thematic studies. The formal study focuses on the work's structure. The narrative of *WH* takes the form of descriptions of things and events in a diary. The story of *WH* is narrated in the way that the main narrator Lockwood is writing down his memories in a notebook. Lockwood attempts to novelize events of Wuthering Heights in a creative writing, with the people in Wuthering Heights as characters in his story. Knoepflmacher (1971), Anderson (1978), Steinitz (2000) and Vermeule (2006) agree that both Lockwood and Nelly Dean make references in their narration because both Lockwood and Nelly Dean are unable to recount a story independently. The narrative references are defined by these critics as "the vehicle narrative" or a tool which the narrators use to support and establish their narrative in the-story-within-story form.

The formal studies lead to an insight of the work's structure. They stress on the fact that *WH* is a story narrated in Lockwood's diary, and *WH* is the story consisting of several layers of stories of remote minor narrators and the main narrators Nelly Dean and Lockwood. Moreover, the formal critics of *WH* do not only concentrate on the structure of the work, but they also examine the language of the narrators in their recounting. Mathison (1956), Anderson (1978) and Haggerty (1988), for instance, explore the narrators' uses of language and conclude that the language in *WH* is articulated by the self-assumption and self-edition of the narrators and the effect is the narration has a sense of unreliability.

Another focus of *WH* analysis is its thematic study. Bell (1962) and Anderson (1978) discuss the relationship of the characters in the three generations of the two families as a tortuous connection. There is a spiritual affair among the characters who shared their childhood and through the marriage between the cousins. This connection of the characters establishes the theme of sibling relationship. Bell

and Anderson analyze the theme of sibling relationship to explore the notion of the originality of the incest relation, its effect and resolution.

The formal and thematic studies both examine complicated aspects of the novel. The formal studies point out the embedding and related narrative; the thematic study analyzes the sibling relationship of the characters. This research will demonstrate that the study of formal narrative can lead to an understanding of themes, particularly of incest, as the embedded narrative structure reflects the structure of the characters' sibling connection.

The next section will explore studies of form and theme as they form a foundation of an analysis of *WH*.

A Study of Form

The diary form

Steinitz (2000) states that there are two diaries in *WH*. The first is Catherine Earnshaw's diary, the other Lockwood's diary, both of which "has no physical specificity, no book or pages"[1]. In the novel, Catherine uses the diary as "the proverbial place"[2] of her own. She writes down the things she needs to express but in the private space. Regarding Lockwood's, on the other hand, Steinitz notes that there is no evidence to suggest, or otherwise, that Lockwood's narration is written in any materialistic diary, and remarks that the act of recounting stories by starting the year "1801" (*WH*, p. 1), however, gives an image of writing diary. Steinitz sees a common aspect in the two diaries: an attempt to seek for a locus by recounting the story. Steinitz associates writing diaries of the two characters to the act of displacement. To Catherine, the texts and writing are the way out of the suffering and mournfulness influencing her life in Wuthering Heights. Similarly, Lockwood suffers the anxiety of

---

[1] All of the citations in this study are from Steinitz, R. (2000, Winter). Diaries and Displacement in Wuthering Heights. *Studies in the Novel, 32*(4), 407-19. It is also available at http://www.usfca.edu/library/research/lit.html, in which the page number is not provided.
[2] *Ibid*

place and uses his diary to record his compensatory search for himself …Lockwood begins the novel with the conviction that he has found a suitable location"[1]. The "anxiety of place" here creates the complication and the intense atmosphere in Wuthering Heights. The narrative of Lockwood in the diary form, according to Steinitz, forms as a frame for all stories and functions as a container of the narrator's personal anecdotes:

> Yet, though Lockwood's voice begins the novel, the dated entry, immediacy, and first person account of events and thoughts which characterize the diary soon give way to the recounting, though multiple narrators, of the complex story of the Earnshaws, the Lintons, and Heathncliff, a saga which takes place in the past, albeit a past which grows closer as the novel progresses. This diary, it would seem, functions primarily as a frame, an excuse for telling this story (Steinitz, 2000).

Once the narrative of Lockwood is seen as the container of stories (i.e. the report of his conversation with Nelly Dean and the account of the stories which Nelly Dean tells him), his frame narrative is removed in terms of distance, accountability and authority from the embedded stories. Some critics term this container of stories "vehicle narrative".

Vehicle narrative

Knoepflmacher (1971), Anderson (1978), Steinitz (2000) and Vermeule (2006) agree that the main narratives of Lockwood and Nelly Dean are dependent. Their narratives need supports from other narratives, what these critics call "**vehicle narrative**". The vehicle narrative is the tool which the narrators use to enhance their story telling to become more reliable and more solid. Lockwood tells his stories in the diary frame using Nelly Dean's narrative. Likewise, Nelly Dean moulds into her own narratives of the other characters such as Heathcliff, Isabella, the maid, the Grimmerton people and the villagers. The stories of these people are the necessary narrative tools for Nelly Dean's narration.

---

[1] *Ibid*

The vehicle narrative is stories embedded in others in the Chinese box structure. The more vehicle narratives are used, the more complicated is the structure.Although the narrators use the vehicle narratives to enhance their narration, in a way, the vehicle narratives are evidence of unreliability of the stories. The vehicle narrative of the complicated Chinese box structure gives a sense of tortuousity in which the originality and certainty of the occurrences cannot be exactly defined.

Subjective narration

The main narrators Lockwood and Nelly Dean present their narratives with narrative authority; they select vehicle narratives to enhance their narration, forming the embedding structure. The issue of **subjectivity** is another aspect which critics find in the narrative of *WH*. Mathison (1956), Anderson (1978) and Haggerty (1988) discuss the power and self-assumption of the Lockwood and Nelly Dean. Haggerty states that the narratives of Lockwood and Nelly Dean are the private account which the narrators "attempt to explore the subjective and personal"[1] Likewise, Anderson states that although the narratives "have a logical structure and a realistic plot"[2], in a way, they are attached by transcendental vision of the narrators. Anderson identifies many weak points in the narratives and criticizes the narrator especially Nelly Dean. He states that Nelly is the narrator who "knows the whole story, but fails to apprehend its implication"[3] and evaluates her performance in narrating as the narrator who can judge only "normal" things [4]. The opinion of Haggerty corresponds to the opinion of the nineteenth century fiction critic Mathison that Nelly Dean has "a lack of

---

[1] Haggerty, G. (1988, Fall). The Gothic Form of Wuthering Heights. *Victorian Newsletter, 74*, 1-6. It is also available at http://www.usfca.edu/library/research/lit.html, in which the page number is not provided.

[2] Anderson, W. (1977-1978). The Lyrical Form of Wuthering Heights. *University of Toronto Quarterly, 47*(2), 112-34. It is also available at http://www.usfca.edu/library/research/lit.html, in which the page number is not provided.

[3] *Ibid*

[4] *Ibid*

understanding of the principles" (Mathison, 1956: p.87-88). Her narrative needs interpretation. Nelly Dean's listener Lockwood has to evaluate what she recounts as she puts both facts and her creativity into the narrative. Moreover, Haggerty sees that Lockwood is the first critic of Wuthering Heights who attempts to "tear it to shreds" [1]. The act of Lockwood's narrating is reporting what he witnesses in Wuthering Heights and trying to substantiate their narration by his own creative details and evaluation.

To complement and capitalize on these formal studies, this research analyzes the language features which the main narrators use to insert their personal attitudes in order to explore subjectivity and cognitive perceptions of Lockwood and Nelly Dean in demonstrating that they are unreliable narrators.

Theme in the *Wuthering Heights*

Another focus of *WH* studies is the analysis of the theme of the sibling relationships. A pattern of characters' relationship involves three periods of time: the First generation of the Lintons and the Earnshaws; the generation of Healthcliff, Linton and Catherine Earnshaw; and the last generation of Linton Heathcliff, Catherine Linton and Hareton Linton. Bell (1962) and Anderson (1978) remark that the complication occurs in the second generation and is resolved by the love and the understanding of the last. People in Wuthering Heights are ruled by discrimination, degradation, humiliation and revenge. The characters in the generation of Healthcliff, Linton, Isabella and Catherine Earnshaw cannot forgive each other. Their hate, malice and their emotional intensity become the underlying cause of the complication in their lives. Bell (1962) notes that Catherine Earnshaw marries Edgar to "preserve her intense sibling affinity with Heathcliff" [2] but Heathcliff cannot forgive her for this

---

[1] Haggerty, G. (1988, Fall). The Gothic Form of Wuthering Heights. *Victorian Newsletter, 74*, 1-6. It is also available at http://www.usfca.edu/library/research/lit.html, in which the page number is not provided.

[2] Bell, V. (1962, September). Wuthering Heights and the Unforgivable Sin. *Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 17*(2), 188–91. It is also available at http://www.usfca. edu/library/research/lit.html, in which page number is not provided

decision. Heathcliff is a figure of revenge and an unforgivable sin to the eyes of the young Catherine and Hareton. Once Heathcliff or his influence vanishes, both Catherine and Hareton come to love with understanding. The love of the young Catherine and Hareton reflects the love of Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff. Anderson (1978) asserts that the last generation dimly personifies the second and recreates "the structure of the symbolic revelation"[1]

The second and the last generation have a life in common; their lives are under the pressure of loathing and they cannot break strict rules of prohibition and discrimination. Anderson compares the conflict of the second generation to the binaries of life and death, of storm and calm, and of the civilized family and the wild family, whose resolution cannot be achieved. Similar to Bell, Anderson agrees that the unsettled relationship of the second generation becomes a melancholic case that illustrates the dark side of love as perceived by the last generation, who never want to see it reoccur in their lives.

Frameworks

In order to explore the reliability and certainty of the narratives in *WH*, the research employs Genette's (1980) Narrative Levels and Simpson's (1993) Modality theory and Speech Representation.

Narrative Levels Theory

The narrative of *WH* has a sense of self-authority throughout the story. Narrative Level theory by Genette (1980) can help the readers understand the position and status of the narrators. According to Genette, there are many levels of narrators, and the narrative levels demonstrate the distance between the narrator and events he/she recounts.

_____

[1] Anderson, W. (1977-1978). The Lyrical Form of Wuthering Heights. *University of Toronto Quarterly, 47*(2), 112-34. It is also available at http://www.usfca.edu/library/research/lit.html, in which the page number is not provided

The intradiegetic narrative

An intradiegetic narrative is one in which the narrator is situated in the first degree to the story. The narrator has the direct experience of what is told. An intradiegetic narrative is one which is told from a first-person point of view.

The extradiegetic narrative

This kind of narrative has a structure of "a work within a work" (Genette: 1980, p. 230) and can feature in both spoken and written texts. The extradiegetic narrative is one in which narrator reports things he/she witnesses in the second degree. For instance, the narrator may describe stories in a letter he/she reads or may report what he/she hears from others. The narrative is told by the third person.

The heterodiegetic narrator

Genette also defines the status of the narrator by its relationship to the story as "heterodiegetic" and "homodiegetic" narrator. The heterodiegetic narrator is the narrator who is absent from the story he/she tells. Genette gives the classic work *Iliad* as an example of the heterodiegetic narration. The narrator does not participate in all events, but he/she can tell the story as if he/she is a part of those events.

The homodiegetic narrator

The homodiegetic narrator participates in the narrated events. The narrator is also a character in the story. What the narrator does is revealing what happens in the events. The narrator may be involved in only some parts of the occurrences, but they are able to collect each part of the event and mould into the complete narrative. This kind of narrator sees what happens, but they do not know in great details because he/she does not have a direct experience to the happening. Genette also distinguishes the homodiegetic narrator into two types. One is the

homodiegetic type which "the narrator is the hero of his narrative" (Genette, 1980, p. 245) and the other is which the narrator is an observer or a witness to the events. Both types of homodiegetic narrators always use "I" to show their authority in the story.

From these two levels of categorization of Narrative Levels arise four types of Narrators, as shown in Table 1. on page 11.

The levels of the narrators in *Wuthering Heights*

The narrative levels of the main narrators Lockwood and Nelly Dean depend on where they are in the discourse. Both Lockwood and Nelly Dean are the characters in the story and participate in some events. Therefore, stories told in *WH* consist of both first-hand experiences and indirect experiences of Lockwood and Nelly Dean. There are stories belonging to Heathcliff, Isabella, Catherine Earnshaw, and some stories of minor characters such as a maid, a servant and a doctor. Although most of the stories are not accounts of Nelly Dean and Lockwood, they narrate those events as if they participated in all occurrences. In fact, the two main narrators, especially Lockwood, do not have any privilege in accessing the core incidents. Lockwood and Nelly Dean can only witness what occurs in the two families and tell the story by using the vehicle narratives they select at will.

A study of the narrative levels of Lockwood's and Nelly Dean's narrations examines whether their narratives are intra-homodiegetic, intra-heterodiegetic, extra-homodiegetic or extra-heterodiegetic. The Narrative Levels can evaluate the degree of reliability of narrative as it displays the spatial distance between the narrator and the story. A remote narrator is supposed to be less reliable than another narrator who directly experiences the occurrences. The idea of the Narrative Levels demonstrates that the degree of spatial distance is related to the degree of narrator's certainty in recounting.

Narrative distance also is conceptually related to an issue of the connection of the related narratives. Simpson (1993) presents the idea of Speech Representation in which a significant transition of embedded narrative is portrayed through a use of speech modes.

Table 1.

Types of narrators

Types of Narrators	Descriptions
intra-homodiegetic	A narrator who recounts a story with the first degree and acts as a character participating in situations in a story; e.g. the adult Pip of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* who tells of his own childhood experience.
intra-heterodiegetic	A narrator who recounts a story with the first degree but he/she is absent from the story he/she tells; e.g. Clarissa in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* recounting a situation outside her house which she does not experience directly.
extra-homodiegetic	A narrator who recounts a story with the second degree and he/she involves in the story as one of characters. This kind of narrator appears in the story and recounts events as if he/she is not in the story. The example is the narrators in scientific fiction in which the mindset of the narrator and the character (the same person) may not be synchronized.
extra-heterodiegetic	A narrator who recounts a story with the second degree and the recounted story does not belong to him/her. This kind of narrator has not a direct relationship to the story he/she tells as he/she does not participate in any event occurred. For instance, when Lady Bradshaw, in *Mrs Dalloway*, informs everyone that her doctor husband is called to a case of Septimus' death. She is not related to any situations she tells.

Speech Representation

    Modes of speech representation

        In general, narratives consist of two types of speech representation. Simpson (1993) defines the first type Direct Speech (DS) as "characterized by the presence of an introductory report*ing* cause and a report*ed* clause enclosed in the quotation mark" (p. 22). The other is Indirect Speech (IS) reporting things in an indirect way. It is an act of telling, reporting and describing in the way which the narrator does not seriously focus on the exact wording or speech of the source. Simpson also states that DS and IS have a free form. The free form of Direct Speech (FDS) is stripping of its reporting clause or its quotation marks, and the free form of Indirect Speech (FIS) "may be constructed simply by removing the reporting clause and the *that* connective, should one be present" (p. 23). Simpson gives examples of various modes of Speech Representation in his work (1993) as the followings:

        DS: "I know these tricks of yours!," she said.

               He said, "I'll be here tomorrow."

        IS: She said that she knew those tricks of his.

               He said that he would be there the following day.

        FDS: I know these tricks of yours!, she said.

               He said, I'll be here tomorrow.

        FIS: She knew those tricks of his.

               He would be there tomorrow. (1993, pp. 22-23)

        From these examples, DS limits a narrator's or a speaker's accountability to what is said. The quotation marks underline the narrator's confidence in his/her accurately reporting what is said. DS is a narrative presenting a directness of a narrator and a story he/she tells. On the other hand, when the quotation marks are removed from the reporting clause, IS signified by *that* employs a sense of distance between the narrator and the story. Moreover, as shown in the instances, verbs "know" "will be there" and an adjective "these" "tomorrow" in DS are changed to be "knew" "would be there" and "those" "the following day" in IS. Changing the verb from the present tense to the past tense suggests different temporal distances: the

present tense has more intimate than the past tense. Similar to the change of tenses, the change of demonstrative adjectives gives a sense of spatial distance; for example, "these" indicates things close to the narrator while "those" indicates things far away.

In addition, FDS gives more sense of flexibility in a narration than DS because the narrator of FDS presents the narrative as if it belongs to him/her. For instance, a FDS: "I know these tricks of yours!, she said" and FIS "She knew those tricks of his" is similar in term of shortening distance between the narrator and the incidents, by removing *that* from the narration, creating a sense of authority in the narrative. FDS and FIS are regarded as the narratives attached with a narrator's effort in making of authority in his/her recounting.

In *WH*, the use of the 'free' forms of speech, especially FIS, can reveal the significance of embedded narration, as they can display the degree of authority of the speaker and "directness depending on how much of the flavor of the original speech [a narrator] wishes to convey" (Simpson, 1993, p. 23). The free direct and free indirect speeches are evidence of the relationship narrators have to what they recount.

Modality in Narrative

Other than the use of the vehicle narrative which becomes the evidence of unreliability in Lockwood's and Nelly Dean's embedded narratives, both narrators also insert their own opinions into the narrative and put biased judgments in it. To investigate the bias and personal opinions attached to these narratives, Simpson's (1993) Modality is used. According to Simpson, "The term modality has been used rather loosely to refer to 'attitudinal' features of language" (1993, p. 47). Simpson then expands upon Fowler's (1993) modality process to identify a variety of grammatical means to present modal commitment, modal auxiliaries, modal adverbs, evaluative adjectives and adverbs, and verbs of knowledge, prediction and even evaluation.

According to Simpson, modality broadly concerns "a speaker's attitude towards, or opinion about, the truth of proposition expressed by a sentence. It also extends to their attitude towards the situation or event described by a sentence.

Modality is therefore a major component of the interpersonal function of language…" (1993, p. 47). Moreover, Simpson presents the idea of modality in his later work that "Modality is language which expresses a speaker's or writer's opinion about the validity of what they say and which indicates whether they are certain or doubtful about the truth of the claim they make" (1997, p.124).

According to the fundamental idea of modality, Simpson categorizes the linguistic aspects of modality into four modules to display that different verbs convey different meanings. The different meanings, therefore, can suggest several opinions and thoughts of the speaker or the narrator.

The first type of modality is "deontic modality" or the modal system of responsibility, duty and commitment. For instance, "I **should never love** anybody better than papa" (*WH,* p. 173). The second is "boulomaic modality" or the modal expression of the speaker's or the narrator's desire, wish, and need e.g. "I **desired** Mrs Dean, when she brought in supper, to sit down while I ate it; **hoping** sincerely she would prove a regular gossip…" (*WH,* p. 22). The third is "epistemic modality". It is the system which Simpson evaluates as the most important component in a case of analysis of the point of view in fiction. He states that epistemic modality is "concerned with the speaker's confidence or lack of confidence in the truth of a proposition expressed" (1993, p. 48). This definition matches Stockwell's notion of "epistemic world" (2002, p.94) which is a world of knowledge or what the characters in the fictional world believe to be true about their world. For instance:

> I overheard no further distinguishable talk, but on looking round again, I **perceived** two such radiant countenances bent over the page of the accepted book, that I **did not doubt** the treaty had been ratified, on both sides, and the enemies were, thenceforth, sworn allies (*WH*, p. 229).

The last modality is "perception". It is regarded as a sub-category of epistemic modality because the perception is slightly distinguished from a notion of knowledge, belief and cognition as expressed in epistemic mode; e.g. "'An unfeeling child'. I **thought** to myself; 'how lightly she dismisses her old playmate's troubles. I **could not have imagined** her to be so selfish" (*WH*, p. 41). The epistemic and perception modality from the text will be demonstrated and discussed in greater detail in the next chapter as they the main modalities found in *WH*.

Epistemic and Perception Modals in *Wuthering Heights*

In *WH*, the narratives feature all modality systems; they contain a sense of commitment, desire, confidence in the story telling, and the narrator's personal cognition. But one of the most outstanding aspects of the narratives is that the narrator shows confidence in creating their stories, which reveals their subjectivity. Therefore, this research will study the act of narrating with personal cognition–the epistemic modality and the sub-perception modality–of both Lockwood and Nelly Dean. The study of epistemic and perception modalities will show that Lockwood and Nelly Dean are not reliable because their narratives are decorated with their subjectivity, attitude and opinions in too greater degree to accept.

These frameworks–the theories of Narrative Levels, Speech Representation and Modality System–are helpful in exploring a narrator's certainty in narration. The study of Narrative Levels and Speech Representation employ a narrative structure in which the status of narrator in the story and the distance between the narrator and the reported things are revealed. The Narrative Levels is the main framework determining the degrees of reliability of the narrators, with Speech Representation reinforcing the idea that the two main narrators are far away from the events, and Modality comes to emphasize the narrators' subjectivity conveyed through their use of language.