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A NARRATOLOGICAL APPROACH TO LAURENCE STERNE'S 'THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY GENTLEMAN'

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

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PREFACE

In this study, the narratological approach will be introduced and applied to Laurence Sterne's novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy Gentleman*.

In the Introduction, the reason why Sterne's novel is chosen for the application of narratology will be explained with a brief reference to the period the novel was written and published. Then, narratology, as a recent approach in criticism, will be introduced with its terminology and methodology.

In Chapter 1, the first element of narratology (text) will be introduced in theory in the first part. In the second part, the theory will be applied to the novel. In Chapter 2, the second element of narratology (fabula) will be introduced in theory in the first part. In the second part, the theory will be applied to the novel. In Chapter 3, the third and the last element of narratology (story) will be introduced in theory in the first part. In the second part, the theory will be applied to the novel.

In the Conclusion, the results obtained in three chapters will be evaluated and discussed in order to reach an overall picture (of the novel) resulting from the methodology used in this study.

INTRODUCTION

Laurence Sterne's novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy Gentleman*[1], which was published between 1760-1767, belongs to a period when the contemporary novelists, such as Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding, were involved in straight stories. Their novels, which told stories with a proper beginning and an end, hinted at the content by means of their titles, which bore the name of the main characters such as Pamela, Tom Jones, and Jonathan Andrews. However, although Sterne's novel is also named after a character in the novel promising to tell the life story of this character called Tristram Shandy, this novel by no means follows the codes of the conventional novels of Richardson and Fielding. While the signifiers provided by these novelists end up as explicit signs at the end of the narratives, Sterne's signifiers remain implicit.

Therefore, the canonised theory of 'point of view' in the narration of narratives fall short of bringing out the relationship between the narrator and the narration in the text of *Tristram Shandy*. Mieke Bal's and Rimmon-Kenan's ideas of 'narratology', which stem from a structuralist background, will be adopted in the narrative analysis of Sterne's text with the hope that their conceptualisation of narratives will provide further tools for analysis.

A- NARRATOLOGY

Narratology is a recent theoretical approach, which aims to develop a methodology for the analysis of narrative texts. Narratology has developed as a result of the need for a systematic approach in the analysis of narratives. The term narratology was coined by Tzvetan Todorov in 1969. Before, Russian formalists, Boris Thomashevsky, Victor Shklovsky and Boris Eichenbaum had provided formalist concepts such as fabula, sjuzet, defamiliarization, and motivation; their ideas became influential when their essays were published in 1965 in English in the volume 'Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays'. However, the development of narratology as a theoretical approach emerged with the contribution of the more recent structuralist critics. Among the forerunners, Gérard Genette in his 'Narrative Discourse' (1972) made an

[1] Laurence Sterne. 'The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy Gentleman'. Wordsworth, Kent: 1996. In this study, *Tristram Shandy* will be used instead of the full title.

important contribution to narratology. He especially focused on time, narrative levels, and focalization. He also tried to establish a narratological terminology. Seymour Chatman in 'Story and Discourse' (1978) focused on narrative units such as events, characters, 'point of view' and narration. Gerald Prince followed the course to build up a systematic field of research and application by offering a construction of narrative grammar, and especially by compiling a dictionary of narratology. Among many, Rimmon-Kenan's and Mieke Bal's work on narratology has been chosen as a point of departure in this study, since Mieke Bal in 'Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative', and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan in 'Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics' cover a broad and updated survey of narratology with reference to previous attempts and arguments.

One of the distinguishing aspects of narratology from that of other critical literary approaches to textual analysis (e.g. Marxist, feminist etc.) is that narratology does not begin with predetermined ideological or theoretical assumptions; when compared to such critical approaches it has quite a neutral position. Therefore, it not only operates as a self-sufficient means of textual analysis, but it can also serve as a medium in tackling a text from the point of view of other critical approaches.

The serviceability of narratology lies in the fact that it owes a great deal to the structuralist approach that was fashionable especially during and after the Second World War. Narratological analysis shares common waypoints with the process employed in structuralism, such as determining and classifying the units that make up the surface structure of texts, and like structuralism it serves an important function in the initial reading of a text which later on may be exposed to Marxist, feminist, new historicist, etc. readings.

Therefore, narratology is distinguished from other critical literary approaches because of its practical aspect, rather than the philosophical. However, narratological analysis is not limited to the employment of narratological instruments. The analyst often carries the responsibility of ending up with a verifiable conclusion supported by as much evidence as a scientific work would require. Narratology is not just a set of classifications of narrative elements. It requires insight, understanding, and skill

on the part of the analyst. It is only through the individual contribution of the analyst that the depths and core of narratives can be reached.

B- ELEMENTS OF NARRATOLOGY

Before going into details about Bal's basic concepts of narratives or narrative fiction (for Rimmon-Kenan), it would be useful to start with the major terms of narratology: **Narrative text** and **narrator.**

Narrative is simply 'the oral or written discourse that undertakes to tell of an event or a series of events. To narrow down the definition concerning the narrative we may refer to Rimmon-Kenan. Her argument is that the difference between a narrative and a narrative fiction is the presence of a fictional narrator transmitting a narrative to a fictional **narratee**, meaning an abstract reader. According To Rimmon-Kenan, **narrative fiction** means 'the narration of a success of fictional events' (Rimmon-Kenan, 1989: 2). According to Bal, "a **narrative text** is a text in which an agent relates ('tells') a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or in combination thereof." (Bal, 2002: 5)

The **narrator** of a literary text is, on the other hand, 'the linguistic subject' (Bal, 2002: 16) rather a function than a person, which express itself in the language that constitutes the **narrative text** (or **narrative fiction**). It is necessary to state that what is called a narrator is a being without flesh and bones, but a voice inscribed in the text, acting as a link between various elements of the narrative text (or narrative fiction) and the reader. Therefore, the proper strategy to adopt in approaching a narrative text would be **to avoid identifying the narrator with the author**.

As already mentioned, the most striking aspect of narratology is its systematic nature. Since narratives are rather complex, sometimes entangled and intertwined materials, it is best to have a neatly classified method for the sake of clarity. Decomposing the body of a narrative into components helps us to penetrate into the text, to unveil the core of the text within the complex nature of narratives. After the process of decomposition, there comes the process of evaluation of each segment for the reconstruction of the closely related elements of the narrative (Bal, 2002: 6-7).

In terms of Bal's classification (categories), a fictional narrative can be divided into three parts: **Text**, **story**, and **fabula**.[2]

The aim of this study is to employ the basic approaches of narratological analysis in decoding the narrative structures of Laurence Sterne's novel *Tristram Shandy*, which has remained unique as a narrative construct within the tradition of the English novel. It follows that narratology enters our discussion only in so far as it provides practical tools for our purpose. Therefore, the range of our discussion on narratology will be limited to expounding its application, rather than its theory. Accordingly, the following chapters have been organised to introduce briefly the concepts of text, fabula and story, and to study *Tristram Shandy* in terms of each of these basic categories.

[2] Both Rimmon-Kenan and Bal prefer to divide narratives into three major parts of study. Bal's division is text, story and fabula whereas Rimmon-Kenan prefers story, text and narrative division.

CHAPTER 1. TEXT: TEXTUAL ELEMENTS IN *THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY GENTLEMAN*

This chapter aims at discussing the concept of **text** in terms of 'narratology' and applying this concept to relevant points in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.

A- TEXT: THEORY

Text contains linguistic signs that are assumed to be inscribed by an author, but again assumed to be related by a narrator, which is an abstract being. For the sake of emphasis, it must be stated that the narrator and the author are separate entities, that they must not be treated synonymously. The author who is an actual person in real life does not have to share common points with the narrator appointed in the narrative. The **narrator** is an entity that serves the function of 'telling' the narrative, and beyond this, its functional entity vanishes.

The narrator's act of narration, as a whole in itself, also displays some qualities in relation with the story. There is a **temporal relation** between the events and their being narrated. Rimmon-Kenan lists four possibilities concerning this temporal relation with reference to Gerard Genette's terminology:

1- **Ulterior narration**, in which events are narrated after they have happened and the narration follows the storyline. This kind of narration is found in most cases in conventional storytelling.

2- **Anterior narration**, when the events are mentioned before they have occurred.

3- **Simultaneous narration**, which aim to create the illusion that the act of narration and the occurrence of the events are concurrent.

4- **Intercalated narration**, which indicates that 'telling and acting are not simultaneous, but follow each other in alternation' (Rimmon-Kenan, 1989: 89-90). (For example, ulterior narration alternating with anterior narration.)

Basically, narrators, the performers of the act of narration, are separated into two: **External narrators**, who are regarded, truly or falsely, as third person[3]; and **internal (character bound) narrators** that are involved in the story as an actor and/or character. **External narrators** are often provided with omniscient qualities of, for example, possessing knowledge of all characters' inner worlds, and parallel events. In short external narrators prepossess what the reader would gain only at the end of the narrative, that they are above the story, and are also called **extradiegetic** narrators, meaning that they are not involved in the story. The range of **internal narrators** (**intradiegetic** narrators for Rimmon-Kenan), on the other hand, is restricted to the qualities of the character that also serves the function of narrator. The perspective of such narrators is considered to be limited unless they are given information by external sources, by other characters etc. (Bal, 2002: 22)

Within the text, there are parts in which no events are related; indeed the act of narrating comes to a halt. In such parts, commentary, argumentative or informative passages, in short **non-narrative quality** appears. The emergence of **non-narrative discourse** within the narrative discourse helps 'to measure the difference between the text's overt ideology, […] and its more hidden or naturalized ideology, as embodied in the narrative representations' (Bal, 2002: 31). Among such non-narrative passages, **descriptive texts** are worth noting. For example, in a description, which has a non-narrative quality, features are attributed to objects, and the way descriptions are used gives hints about 'the rhetorical strategy' of the narrator. Speaking, looking, and acting are means of description. Aside from ideological implications, descriptions may also provide hints about the psychological construction of characters.

Within the text, there may also be shifts in the narrative discourse: For example the use of **emotive language**, aims at the subjective attitude of the narrator with regard to what he is narrating (Bal, 2002: 43). The use of emotive language indicates a subjective reflection, reaction, or revelation on the part of a narrator or a character. This shift to emotive language therefore marks a deviation in the narrative discourse.

[3] The long established term 'third person narrator' is problematic. Even if the narrator is a personality not involved in the narrative, the agent cannot possess a third person quality: '(She narrates) He feels tired today' is improbable, since it is the voice of the narrator that speaks to the reader directly. The narrator is always present in the narrative, and speaks about some one else and is disguised. This situation makes the narrative flow like this: '(I say) He feels tired today'. (Bal, 2002: 22)

For example, when an agent exclaims ‘good God! I should have known that’, the phrase ‘good God!’ refers depending on the context to the emotional status of either the character or the narrator.

The use of **declarative verbs** also refers to a change in the narration, marking that somebody is about to speak. The use of verbs like ‘say’, ‘speak’, or ‘quote’ indicates a shift in the mode of the narrative discourse. When the character speaks after a declarative verb ‘it’ becomes a speaker just like the narrator, and it can be deduced that the narrator tries to be realistic. (E.g. ‘Hurry up, we’ll miss the train’ I said, but he didn’t care.)

The use of **indirect speech** also brings about a shift in the narrative discourse. Here, the narrator adopts the language and discourse of the actor in order to create the effect of a precise reflection of the thoughts of the actor. The use of declarative verbs along with the use of indirect speech points to the presence of a narrator, distinguishing ‘it’ from the characters. (E. g. He just waved his hand and said that he would not agree to be a part in this conspiracy.)

If no declarative verbs are used, then **free indirect discourse** appears claiming to present exactly what is going on in the actor’s mind with his/her own words. (E.g. ‘what a horrible day. And how painful it will be to go through the same routine tomorrow.’) Free indirect discourse is a strong means to manipulate the reader’s perception of characters. The use of indirect discourse, but especially free indirect discourse serves to pinpoint the fact that the narrator’s attitude is given priority over the characters.

In a narrative text, there is a **primary narrative text**, and in this text the narrator’s voice is above all the other voices. Besides primary texts, there are **embedded narrative texts**, either voiced by a narrator or another agent. If the narrative also includes embedded narratives that deviate from the primary one, then the primary narrative is called a **frame narrative**. The **embedded narrative** may partly explain the primary one, or it may resemble the primary narrative, in which case it is called a **mirror narrative** or **mise en abyme**.

Apart from embedded narratives, there are also **non-narrative embedded texts**. The most widely known kind of non-narrative embedded text is the **dialogue form** in

which the voices of speakers are performed by the speakers themselves without narrative interference.

B- TEXT: *THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY GENTLEMAN*

Laurence Sterne's novel *Tristram Shandy* is one of the extraordinary examples of a 'writerly text' [4]. This writerly text is fragmentary and episodic and without a proper ending. The time scheme of the novel is complex and the narrative technique used in the narrative makes the text difficult to follow and understand for the reader. Indeed, the reader's difficulty in penetrating into the text is the consequence of the deliberate strategy of the narrator. The whole text can be regarded as a dialogue with the reader, in which the reader has to decode the text by following the hints given by the narrator. The reader, or rather the narratee, of the text is forced to interact with the narrator illusively during the narrator's process of writing.

To decode the text of *Tristram Shandy*, one must pinpoint two major divisions, namely the narrative and non-narrative texts, which almost share equal importance and weight in the whole text. *Tristram Shandy* is not simply a novel; it involves criticism, drama, history, and travel notes. Therefore, the narrative must be examined as a whole with both its narrative and non-narrative aspects. Only after a thorough study of the elements of *Tristram Shandy*, can the reader fully understand the careful design of the narrative, which at first sight entangles him in a cobweb.

(1) The Narrator and the Act of Narration

In *Tristram Shandy*, the narrator of the novel is Tristram Shandy who obviously is one of the characters. The narrator, however, is by no means an ordinary storyteller, who relates the story of himself and the other characters. First of all, although the narrator is one of the characters, we do not see him in action except in two instances in the novel: The accident he has had due to the dropping of the sash-window (Book 5, Chapter 17)

[4] The term 'writerly text' is coined by Roland Barthes, who distinguishes literary texts into two as 'readerly' and 'writerly' texts. 'Readerly' texts offer a work of fiction with established codes and stereotypical literary convention, in which the readers accompany the work to witness the stream of events. The relationship between the signifiers and the signifieds are clear. However, 'writerly' texts do not offer a simple relationship between the signifiers and the signifieds. They upset the accepted values of the readers. The work demands the cooperation and effort from the reader so that the reader can decode what is implicitly presented and make it intelligible. This effort requires creativity of the reader. During and after this process, the reader feels a certain sense of ecstasy. (Barthes, 1975: 9-15)

and his visit to France (Book 7). However, many situations and complications are created through the experiences Tristram has had as a baby and/or child, and therefore Tristram has a central significance in the narrative.

The title of the narrative suggests that the readers are likely to read the life story of a character called Tristram Shandy, who is a gentleman. Being a gentleman connotes maturity and experience. However, the narrator does not narrate anything concerning Tristram's life as a gentleman; instead, he implicitly gives information about his opinions and life by means of non-narrative texts. Therefore, the title of the novel is ironic. Instead of giving an account of Tristram's life, the narrator divides the narrative into two: the life and opinions of the Shandy family and the opinions of the narrator.

Being a character in the narrative, Tristram the narrator is an **intradiegetic** (character bound/internal) narrator. **Intradiegetic** narrators are attributed restricted qualities so that their scope is limited to their personal experiences, what they hear or are informed of.

However, beginning from the day he was born to the age of five, the character bound narrator narrates a story that he could not possibly have remembered. Moreover, the narrator knows exactly what the other characters in the narrative think, and he can even describe his characters with the minutest details (for example, while a character is reading a book or listening behind a door). Besides, he can narrate parallel actions of different characters in different spaces. For all these reasons the narrator also possesses the quality of an **extradiegetic** (external) narrator. For example, in *Tristram Shandy*, the narrator could neither perceive his own birth nor his baptism ceremony. In that sense, the narrator is obliged to narrate the events from another entity's perception, which in the coming chapters we shall call focalization. Except from Book 7, in which the narrator relates what he sees and experiences in France, the events narrated by Tristram are all focalized by the characters of the narrative. At this point, the question of reliability appears. For example in the narrative, Tristram the narrator refers to Uncle Toby as the source of information he uses to narrate the events. Tristram informs the reader that he is indebted to his uncle Toby – a veteran military officer- for the details of the night Tristram was conceived (Sterne, 1996: 7). But all the same, Toby is a peculiar character who has problems in

understanding and interpreting the meaning of certain words; he associates these words with military terms, and causes entertaining situations due to his misunderstanding of certain terms or usages. Therefore, the trustworthiness of Toby's account of events is at stake throughout the narrative. The numerous misunderstandings of Toby (resulting from his compulsion to relate everything to his military experiences) while talking to other characters provide enough evidence[5], but the best example is the narrator's explanation of Toby's problem with words, which proves that Toby is unreliable as a witness or observer:

> Now you must understand that not one of these was the true cause of the confusion in my uncle Toby's discourse; […the true cause] is the unsteady uses of words, which have perplexed the clearest and most exalted understandings. […] When thou considerest this, thou wilt not wonder at my uncle Toby's perplexities. […] 'Twas not by ideas, - by Heaven; his life was put in jeopardy by words. (Sterne, 1996: 61)

The explanation of the narrator about Toby's semiotic problem in relating the signifiers he received to their proper signifieds clearly shows that Toby's account of things are far from being reliable. Thus, from the first page on, the text is rendered unstable, as the opening page of the narrative is based on Toby's account of what passed between Walter and Mrs. Shandy in the bedroom on the night Tristram was conceived. Moreover, Toby's account depends on Walter's perception, so the narrator's account depends on second hand information. Here, we have Walter as the focalizor (whose point of perception is dominating the discourse), Toby as the second level (subordinate) **intradiegetic** narrator (as we do not see Toby narrating the events), and Tristram as the **intradiegetic** (character bound) narrator. Since Tristram the narrator has not had the opportunity to perceive the events that have happened before, during and after his birth, whenever he narrates these events, he narrates them through the focalization of other characters. Then, Tristram is not a witness narrator in the narrative, except in Book 7.

[5] In Book 3, Chapter 18, Walter tries to discuss the idea of duration and eternity with Toby, but Toby confuses the word 'train', which refers to the succession of ideas, with 'a train of artillery'. In Book 5, Chapter 32, when Yorick is about to read the fifth commandment from his catechism book, Toby claims that Trim can repeat the commandments. When he orders Trim to repeat the commandments, it is understood that Toby means the military commandments and not the religious ones. So, Trim begins to act like a soldier before his commander. In Book 9, Chapter 26, Widow Wadman asks Toby in what part of the groin is the wound he received during the siege of Namur. Toby misunderstands the question and orders Trim to bring the map of Namur so that he can mark the exact spot he was wounded on the battlefield.

A narrative, in which there is an intradiegetic narrator and which depends on other characters' testimony of the events and their consequences, causes the reader to doubt the truthfulness of the accounts relating to events taking place in the narrative. Indeed, the question of reliability brings the 'fictionality' of the narrative into view. That is to say, the reader is given hints as to what has been written is not the actual truth, but a creative text moulded with imagination. Therefore, the reader is confronted with not only a story, but also a process of creative writing. The fragmentary storyline of the narrative also enables the narrator to imply to the reader that he is reading a 'fictional text', in which the fragmented narrative involves gaps and omissions which detaches the narratee from the narrative and cuts the bound between the story and the character and the reader. As Victor Shklovsky, the Russian formalist critic, points out '[in] Sterne's novels the usual forms are changed and violated; it is not surprising that he handled the conclusions of his novels in the same way. We seem to stumble upon them, as if we found a trap door on a staircase where we had expected a landing' (1965: 39).

In conventional novels with intradiegetic narrators and stories that proceed in a cause and effect relationship of events, the identification between the reader and the narrative can be established easily, as if they were autobiographies or biographies. However, contrary to the suggestion of the title of the novel, Tristram the narrator does not provide us with an autobiography. Tristram narrates the life story of the Shandy family, particularly one of its members, Uncle Toby, in detailed fragments, and vastly relates the opinions of another character, Walter Shandy. Tristram Shandy's life and opinions are given less weight when compared to the abovementioned characters in terms of narrative quality. The narrative fragment that focuses on Tristram covers only five years - his birth and the following five years. The five-year span is narrated in the form of a few episodes, and the narration in these episodes concentrates on the 'accidents befallen Tristram' and the reactions of characters other than Tristram to those events that have taken place. Therefore, the 'autobiographical quality' is not displayed at all.

In terms of 'narrative quality', *Tristram Shandy* dwells on events that have taken place before the actual moment of narration. Therefore, the dominant style of the act of narration is **ulterior**: An adult narrator tells a story, in which events have happened long before. That is why the narrator uses past tense to narrate the events and the dialogues of the characters. However, in the following example we see that the narrator tries to create

an illusion of the simultaneous narration by interfering with the action of another character:

> Truce! – truce, good Dr. Slop! Stay thy obstetric hand; return it safe into thy bosom to keep it warm; - little dost thou know what hidden causes, retard its operation! […] Thou hast come forth unarmed; thou hast left thy *tire-tête*, thy new-invented forceps, - thy crotchet, - thy squirt, and all thy instruments of salvation and deliverance, behind thee, - By heaven' at this moment they are hanging up in a green baize bag. […] Ring; - call; - send Obadiah back upon the coach-horse to bring them with all speed. (Sterne, 1996: 76)

Indeed there is no narrator in this extract, and therefore there is no act of narration to discuss. However, there is the illusion that the narrator (Tristram) and the character (Dr. Slop) are present at the same time in the same place; yet, the character does not see the narrator. The narrator's apostrophe to warn Dr. Slop is in the present tense, but the operation that Dr. Slop has been prepared to do belongs to the past. At this point of the narrative, it is as if the narrator has stopped the flow of time, and travelled back in time to the day he was born, to remind Dr. Slop that he has forgotten to bring his bag of instruments with him. The chronological distance between Tristram the narrator and Dr. Slop the character is overlooked by the narrator, and the narrator temporarily joins the cast of characters. Apostrophes formed in the abovementioned example are significant in two ways. Firstly, the narrator displays the power of a narrator in the narrative over both the characters and the reader, because he possesses the knowledge of what is to come. Secondly and paradoxically, the narrator appears to interfere with the action, although - as a narrator- he is supposed to be an agent that only relates the flow of the narrative.

At times, on the other hand, the narrator assumes the identity of the implied author and addresses the reader: 'Ask my pen, - it governs me, - I govern not it' (Sterne, 1996: 292). The narrator, similar to the instability of the narrative, is not stable as well. Thus, the narrator of *Tristram Shandy* carries a triple identity – that of the 'narrator' throughout the narrative, and that of a 'character' or an 'implied author' at certain instances in the narrative.

(2) Narrative Quality

The 'narrative quality' of *Tristram Shandy* is established by means of two different kinds of textual operation, which involves the formation of the **primary text** and **embedded narrative texts** that intersect (for different purposes) the primary text.

Designating the primary narrative text in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* is difficult, because of the various interwoven narrative and non-narrative texts that make up the novel. Fortunately, the narrative itself enables us to reach a conclusion by the help of categorising the thematic elements it is composed of.

Tristram Shandy has a notoriously[6] complex structure, since the narrator is in the habit of jumping forth and leaping back from one point to another in a chaotic manner throughout the narrative. This chaotic looking arrangement in the narration makes the narrative difficult to follow. However, the difficulty of following the text lies in the fact that the narrative is playfully fragmented by the author. Following the narrative closely book-by-book and chapter-by-chapter shows that in fact *Tristram Shandy* is a neatly organised whole on the 'narrative level' of the narration. A thematic categorisation of the elements of the narrative text yields the following general topography:

In Book 1, the dominant theme is the birth of Tristram, beginning by the date of his having been conceived, which is 25th March 1718. The **theme of Tristram's birth** involves the discordant marriage relationship of Walter and Mr. Shandy (especially on the day Tristram was begot), the history of the mid-wife, (who takes her licence by the help of Yorick, the parson of the parish, and who assists Dr. Slop during the process of birth-giving). It also involves the marriage article between Walter and Mrs. Shandy in

[6] 'The difference between a novel by Sterne and the ordinary kind of novel is exactly that between ordinary poetry with its phonetic instrumentation and the poetry of the Futurists, written in obscure language' (Shklovsky, 1965: 27). 'One of [the] problems, which persists even after many readings, concerns the unity of *Tristram Shandy*' (Watt, 1987: 43). '*Tristram Shandy* certainly does not satisfy the usual expectations as to how a novel should be organized, but that is because it is not the usual sort of novel' (Jefferson, 1992: 17). '*Tristram Shandy* incites critical confusion. The plot, refusing to yield a simple, readily describable storyline, is troublesome' (Williams: 1998: 24). 'Commonly recognized as a complex parody of conventional narrative procedures, *Tristram Shandy* is also an analysis of the mortality of our very representations of the mortal' (Zimmerman, 1998: 124). 'In his treatment of structure, Sterne anticipated so many modern experiments that the study of this single book could almost serve as a summary of all the problems involved in the consideration of the time factors and values of the novel' (Mendilow, 1952: 161). 'If Tristram Shandy remains an anachronism for many critics, it is because Sterne is often viewed as a freak, a prophet of modernity, or even post-modernity' (Parnell, 1998: 140). 'As a writer, Tristram sets upon his reader and draws him about, harassing, upbraiding, riding him like a temperamental jockey trying to manage a recalcitrant horse' (Ostovich, 1992: 155).

which another condition was added by Uncle Toby's suggestion; and the consequences of the added clause that Mrs. Shandy is obliged to bear Tristram in the country instead of the town as she caused a financial burden to Walter by urging him to travel to London without a proper reason, and Walter's decision to get a man mid-wife.

The dominant **subordinate theme** in Book 1 is about **Toby's life story** (his character and the wound he received during the siege of Namur; how the wound was treated, and Walter's decision to look after Toby in his house in London).

In Book 2, two different themes share almost equal weight. One of them is related to **Toby's life story,** particularly his experiences in Namur and the consequences caused by his wound, including a three-year confinement for treatment, and Toby's eagerness to study militaristic subjects in order to animate with Trim the siege of Namur in the countryside after Trim takes Toby to Shandy Hall. The theme of Toby's life story (experiences) is the continuation of the theme in Book 1. Another theme, which is rooted in Book 1 and pursued in Book 2, is the **theme of Tristram's birth**. This theme involves Walter's sending for the man mid-wife, namely Dr. Slop; Dr. Slop's arrival at Shandy Hall, the ridicule of Dr. Slop, Obadiah's bringing the bag of instruments that Dr. Slop needs for the operation. In addition, Walter's opinions concerning the theme of Tristram's birth are also given weight in Book 2: that Walter is for the Caesarean birth for the optimum balance of the soul and the body of an offspring.

The subordinate theme in Book 2 is religious orders and inquisition: Catholic and Protestant orders are discussed in the form of a debate on inquisitions, which reminds Trim of the inquisition of his brother Tom, which, further in the novel, will gain significance.

In Book 3, there are two major themes. First, the **theme of Tristram's birth** continues. Dr. Slop's preparation for the birth, his quarrels with both Obadiah and the nurse produce the comic effect. Second, the **theme of nose** is dealt with extensively. The theme of nose covers the accident caused by Dr. Slop whose forceps caught Tristram on the nose. The dialogue between Tristram's great grandfather and great grandmother on the size of Tristram's great grandfather's nose, ending up after the great grandfather's accepting to grant his wife compensation; Walter's opinions on the importance and

impact of the size of a person's nose in life and Walter's interest in everything written on noses.

Walter's opinions are of significance in the whole body of the narrative and can be regarded as an individual theme. In the course of the narrative, Walter displays his opinion on every single topic related to the chain of events. Walter's opinions, which comprise a recurring element throughout the narrative, have not been categorised as a separate theme, because other thematic categories have been related to 'events' rather than 'ideas': In Book 3, Walter expresses his opinions first on the accidents awaiting a newborn baby, secondly on the origin of oaths, and then time, duration, space, and the mechanism of the mind. The significance of Walter's opinions, as a major structural element in the novel, will be displayed on page 19 while pinpointing the formation of the primary text. In Book 3, Toby's love affair with Widow Wadman, which will cover more than a whole book later on, is hinted as well.

In Book 4, the **theme of nose** continues; however the dominant theme is the christening of Tristram. The **theme of christening** involves Walter's opinion on the direct relationship between a person's name and his achievements in the future, the chain of events leading to the christening of Walter's son as Tristram instead of Trismegistus, Yorick's advice to Walter to give a dinner party to the great authorities of ecclesiastics, the dinner scene in which the parody of the authorities are given weight instead of the proposed discussion on the nullification of baptism, and in which the authorities conclude that according to the examples before neither Walter nor Mrs. Shandy bears any blood relationship to Tristram.

In Book 5, there are three major themes. First, the **theme of death** beginning with the news that Tristram's brother Bobby is dead. The **theme of death** involves several incidents: The letter brought by Obadiah; Walter's and Toby's reading the letter about Tristram's brother Bobby's death; Walter's unconventional reaction to his son's death, which results in the expression of his ideas (philosophising) on death (with a recital of maxims and phrases on death); his discussion of the death of historical figures, which ends with the discussion on Socrates and the influence of eastern philosophy over western philosophy; Mrs. Shandy's secretly listening and misunderstanding what Walter says in the course of this discussion; in a parallel scene, Trim's philosophising in the

kitchen on death and his animating a scene (which stands for the period between life and death) for the workers of the house.

Secondly, there is the **theme of circumcision**. The theme involves an accident Tristram had when he was five years old. Trim had collected the metal supporters of the sash-windows and accordingly a window had dropped on the genitals of Tristram, as he was peeing out of the window, the result being an unexpected kind of circumcision. As a reaction, Walter's opinions and investigation on circumcision and great historical figures that were circumcised are related as well.

Thirdly, there is the **theme of education** elaborated by Walter's various opinions that take place in his Tristra-paedia written as a system of education for Tristram: Walter's opinions on the power and jurisdiction over the offspring, health and the road to long life, auxiliary verbs and the link between the human mind and the use of linguistics. Toby's experiences with Trim in the siege of Limerick, which topic is brought about by Toby's misunderstanding of Walter's opinions on education.

In Book 5, Toby's ordering to Trim to manufacture heavy artillery for the animation of the siege of Dunkirk, and Trim's collecting every metal piece in the house is narrated briefly as a part of Toby's and Trim's preparations for the campaigns, which is going to be a part of the **theme of Toby's life story** in Book 6.

In Book 6, three of the themes found in Book 5 are elaborated. The continuing **theme of circumcision** involves Walter's decision to put Tristram into breeches in order to hide the marks of circumcision and his discussing the matter with both Toby and Mrs. Shandy. Walter expands his discussion by referring to Latin sources that list all kinds of outfit.

The **theme of education** continues in the conversation between Walter and Yorick, the parson, in the course of which Walter talks about the great learned of the past, and his decision to employ a private governor to Tristram. In reply, Toby recommends the son of Le Fever to be the governor. The story of Le Fever serves as a link to the theme of Toby's life story, and involves Toby's efforts to help a wounded soldier and his son, his efforts to bring up young Le Fever after his father's death, Le Fever's enlisting in the army, and returning home a short time before the accidental circumcision takes place. The theme of Toby's life story includes his hobby horse (a

hobby he adopted when he got retired), which consists of preparing model representations of historical or currently occurring military operations (the fancy siege of Dunkirk turns out to be another manifestation of his hobby horse). The theme involves Toby's and Trim's preparations for their animation of the campaigns in Europe, the progress they make in establishing in the garden a model of the places where the campaigns have taken place as well as Trim's starting the campaign early, and Toby's disappointment in Trim's disorderly behaviour. The theme continues by an oration written by Toby for the defence of war when a peace treaty is actually signed in Europe. Also, Toby's amours (already hinted in Book 3) as a part of the theme of Toby's life story are briefly touched upon.

In Book 7, we see the single **theme of travel**. The whole book is devoted to the narrator's notes on his visit to France. The theme of travel involves Tristram's impressions on the French towns he visited, the comparison between France and England from the point of view of a traveller, the monuments he visits, the memories of the narrator about his first visit to France with Walter, Toby and Obadiah. Book 7 resembles a travel book rather than a narrative.

In Book 8, the **theme of Toby's life story** covers the whole book. This theme involves once again Toby's and Trim's campaigns, the gossips spreading about Toby's falling in love with Widow Wadman although Toby has not fallen in love with her yet, Wadman's efforts to observe and get close to Toby, Trim's love story which began when Trim - wounded in a battle – was brought to a village where a beguine (nurse) treats Trim's wounded knee, Wadman's efforts to attract Toby, Toby's falling in love with Wadman, Wadman's and her maid Bridget's efforts to learn the actual condition of Toby's wound on the groin in order to understand if Toby is still sexually potent, and Walter's opinions on love and Toby's affair with Wadman.

In Book 9, the **theme of Toby's life story** continues. The theme involves Toby and Trim's preparations to pay a visit to Wadman's house so that Toby can reveal his love and propose to Wadman; Trim's opinions on love and his warning Toby to reconsider his decision; Trim's presenting the story of his brother Tom, in which Tom married a Jewish widow in Spain, for which he was punished by the Inquisition; Wadman's and Toby's conversation on Toby's wound; Wadman's inquiry into whether

Toby was sexually affected by this wound; Trim's affair with Bridget, who actually is trying to get information about Toby's sexual potency; Toby's misjudgement of Wadman, considering her to be a humane person; Trim's revelation of Wadman's actual concern (Toby's sexual potency); Toby's disappointment in Wadman, and Walter's unfavourable opinions on women.

The **themes of Tristram's birth** in Books 1, 2 and 3, **nose** and **christening** in Book 4, and **circumcision** in Book 5 and 6, and **travel** in Book 7 are directly related to **Tristram Shandy's life**. Beginning in Book 1 as a subordinate theme, the story of Toby's wound and experiences in the siege of Namur, and the idea to animate the siege of Namur with Trim in Book 2, Trim's and Toby's preparations for the model of a battlefield in Book 5, Toby's veteran life (the story of Le Fever), and the ongoing preparations for the fancy siege in Book 6, Wadman's efforts to attract Toby, Toby's falling in love with Wadman in Book 8, and finally Toby's love story in Book 9 are directly related to **Uncle Toby's life story**. Walter's ideas on the birth of the offspring, and his criticism of the current state of the empire in Book 2, his ideas on the accidents awaiting a newborn baby, on the origin of oaths, on the importance of nose, and lastly on time, duration, space, and the mechanism of the mind in Book 3, his opinions on the importance of Christian names in Book 4, his opinions on death, on circumcision, and on education in Book 5, his research about the best outfit for his – accidentally circumcised - son, and his opinions on the great learned of the past in Book 6, his impressions about France, particularly about Auxerre in Book 7, his opinion on love and Toby's affair in Book 8, and finally his ideas on women in Book 9 form an individual category that can be labelled as **the opinions of Walter Shandy**.

In the light of the contextual scope of the narrative that makes up the novel, it can be clearly seen that *Tristram Shandy* is based on three major themes:

1. The life of Tristram Shandy

2. The life of Toby Shandy

3. The opinions of Walter Shandy

The final categorisation and the result given above point to the fact that the **primary narrative text** of *Tristram Shandy* in terms of **narrative quality**, including the

brief touches about Aunt Dinah's life story and Tristram's great grandparents, is based on *the life and opinions of the Shandy family*.

(3) The Embedded Narrative Texts

There are six **embedded narrative texts** in *Tristram Shandy*: Slawkenbergius' Tale in Book 4, the anecdote of Francis the First of France in Book 4, Chapter 21; the story of Le Fever in Book 6, Chapter 6; the story of the Abbess and the Novice in Book 7, Chapter 21; the story of the Two Lovers in Book 7, Chapter 31; and the story of (Trim's brother) Tom in Book 9, Chapter 5. The common aspect of all these texts is that none of them is complete in the conventional sense. They hardly have a beginning and an end. These embedded narrative texts in *Tristram Shandy* are either related to the statements of the narrator or the primary narrative text.

Slawkenbergius' Tale is the first of the embedded narrative texts, and is related to the primary narrative text. Slawkenbergius is Walter's favourite writer who concentrates on noses. The tale follows the discussions between Walter and Toby on Tristram's broken nose. Tristram the narrator translates the story from Latin and does not give the reader the end of the tale. But all the same, the story seems to serve the function of drawing the attention of the reader to observe the contrast between *Tristram Shandy* and a conventional narrative text. Slawkenbergius' Tale[7] is embedded with the least interference of Tristram the narrator. Therefore, it stands in contrast with the digressive attitude in *Tristram Shandy*.

The anecdote of Francis the First of France[8] follows Tristram the narrator's answer to the critic, who blames the narrator for insulting high-class people by using vulgar language. The narrator relates this anecdote to prove his claim.

[7] Slawkenbergius's Tale tells the story of two lovers, Diego and Julia, who fell apart. Diego wanders around until he arrives at Strasburg, where everybody notices the extraordinarily big nose of the man. When he leaves the town, common people and scholars speculate upon this reality, associating it with the male genital organ. In the end, the two lovers reunite. Towards the end of the story, the (so called) writer Slawkenbergius makes an analysis of his own story in Aristotelian terminology. He decomposes his story as 'protasis, epitasis, catastasis, and catastrophe or peripetia', and summarises what he told in each section and will tell in the catastrophe.

[8] The narrator relates how the war between France and Switzerland has broken out. The king of France pays Switzerland the honour of standing godfather for his next child. The Swiss offer an absurd name, which is not accepted by the French. Instead of giving a compensation for the cancellation of the deal, the French declare war on the Swiss.

The story of Le Fever can indeed be considered a part of the life story of Toby; however, the narration of the story differs from the narration of *Tristram Shandy*. The narrator of the story of Le Fever is Tristram, but we do not see the characteristics of the narration we have seen in the primary narrative text. The narrator does not interfere with the discourse of the embedded narrative text; instead, he tells it straight ahead. Besides the sad story of Le Fever, the story serves to partly explain Toby's life story – an element of the primary narrative text- and his tender character.

The story of the Abbess and the Novice is a short embedded narrative text related to entertain the reader. The story is about two female members of a convent who cannot swear oaths for fear of committing a sin. Before telling the story, Tristram the narrator discusses the hardships of being a traveller in France. As, in his discussion, he is obliged to mention vulgar words that he does not wish to pronounce himself, in the following chapter, he makes use of this story in order to remain polite. He makes the characters in the story swear the two awful oaths instead of swearing himself. The two women share the syllables of the oaths, which are sworn to horses by coachmen, so that neither of them would commit sin, as none of them would swear fully.

The story of the Two Lovers narrated by Tristram the narrator is a typical love story, in which two lovers fall apart and reunite. The man is taken captive by Turks, and the woman wanders in search of her lover. The fate, which separates them, causes them to meet accidentally, but they both drop dead as a result of excessive joy. The story is summarised and related to give information about the tomb of the Two Lovers in France.

The story of Tom is narrated by Trim. The theme of the story is Tom's misfortunes after marrying a Jewish widow. The story is related by Trim as a bad example to Toby in order to remind him of the dark side of marriage. The story involves fragments from the life of Tom, and criticism of Catholic customs and worldwide injustice involving race discrimination.

The beginning of the story of the King of Bohemia and his seven castles in Book 8, Chapter 19 looks like the beginning of another embedded narrative. However, the story is not told at all. Trim undertakes the task of being the narrator, but in a short time Trim and Toby begin to discuss the exposition of the story, and then the norms and technique

of fiction and storytelling. Every time Trim begins the story, he cannot advance beyond the title and the expository sentence at all.

In case they tell a complete story, embedded narratives, are likely to detach the reader from the primary narrative. However, in *Tristram Shandy*, the embedded narratives are short, and most of the time incomplete. Slawkenbergius' Tale can be considered to be an exception, except the fact that the end of the tale is omitted. Therefore, throughout the narrative, Tristram the narrator maintains his control of the readers, and does not let them get detached from the primary narrative, in which non-narrative texts are given weight as much as the narrative text.

(4) Non-narrative Quality

The survey of *Tristram Shandy* shows that non-narrative quality appears in limited forms. One form consists of **comments**, **arguments** and **descriptions** related to 'general topics', 'characters in the novel', 'the art of fiction' in general with special reference to the very novel in process. (The discussions on the art of fiction include the topics, 'narrative', 'process of writing', 'readers', and 'critics'.) Another form is 'documentation'. Documentation in Tristram Shandy includes letters, notes, inscriptions and graphics. One other form of non-narrative texts is the dialogue form. However, because of its complicated nature we cannot at once determine the non-narrative quality of each and every dialogue in the text.

The category of 'general topics' includes the narrator's opinions, comments, and discussions on various subjects, which are not directly related to the narrative. They are rather derived from the narrative by the narrator's free association of ideas. For example in Book 9, the Toby-Wadman love affair, which dominates the narrative, give way to a discussion of how a female chooses a male partner in Chapter 21:

> As there are fifty different ends (counting all ends in – as well civil as religious) for which a woman takes a husband, she first sets about and carefully weighs, then separates and distinguishes in her mind, which of all that number of ends is hers: then by discourse, enquiry, argumentation, and inference, she investigates and finds out whether she has got hold of the right one – and if she has – then, by pulling it gently this way and that way, she further forms a judgement, whether it will not break in the drawing. (Sterne, 1996: 441)

Although this part of the narrative deals with Wadman's plans to secure Toby as a husband provided that he is capable of begetting a child, the above extract is not directly linked to the narrative. The narrative stops here, and non-narrative quality appears. The subject discussed expands beyond the framework of the narrative, because it consists of a general assessment of the narrator on a certain topic. Throughout the novel, one can find many examples, in which the narrator contemplates on a variety of subjects including 'being born in a wicked world', 'evil', 'friendship', 'learning', 'reading', 'the right to praise oneself', 'hypotheses', 'different parts of the body', 'mind', 'painters', 'the decline of orators', 'the reception of pain and sorrow', 'wishes', 'whiskers', 'the faculty of reasoning', 'sleeping', 'vexations', 'laughing', 'human condition', 'sentimental reactions', 'death', 'different customs in different nations', 'love', 'the beauty of a straight line', 'travelling', 'thinking', 'keyholes', 'the passing time', and 'woman' and 'marriage'. Some of these subjects are dealt with in great length while some of them are briefly touched upon. The important point is that the non-narrative texts break up the narrative sequence in such a way that the non-narrative quality tends to overshadow the story line. Non-narrative statements, comments, or arguments serve a number of functions: To establish a link between two different points in the narration or simply to deviate from the storyline, which shows the reader that the priority of speech and dominance is not in the hands of the character but the narrator.[9]

The non-narrative quality related to 'characters' is also significant. The narrator's comments on his characters help the reader to get acquainted with the characters. However, the significance of the narrator's comments on characters lies in the way they are used to manipulate the reader. One example is the very beginning of *Tristram Shandy*, in which the narrator begins the novel with a reproach to his

[9] In Book 9, Chapter 21, the narrator stops narrating Mrs. Wadman's efforts to understand whether Toby is sexually potent to give her a baby. He begins to discuss how a woman chooses the man she wants to marry with reference to Slawkenbergius' arguments on the subject and states that women try to find out if the candidate meets their needs. Then, in the following chapters, he narrates how Wadman and her maid Bridget have separately 'investigated' the real situation of Toby's wound. This digression links to the conversation between Widow Wadman and Toby, and Wadman's effort to pick the right husband for herself. In Book 1, Chapter 23, the narrator states that he has a great propensity in him to begin the chapter very nonsensically, right after the chapter in which he has discussed the importance of digression. He, then, assumes what could have happened if Momus's glass was fixed in the human breast. The narrator seems to make a digression for the sake of making a digression to deviate from the story.

parents for not paying attention to the importance of their action, which is the sexual intercourse on the night Tristram was conceived.

> I wish either my father or mother, or indeed both of them, as they were in duty both equally bound to it, had minded what they were about when they begot me; had they duly considered how much depended upon what they were then doing; - that not only the production of a rational Being was concerned in it, but that possibly the happy formation and temperature of his body, perhaps his genius and the very cast of his mind; - and, for aught they knew to the contrary, even the fortunes of his whole house might take their turn from the humours and dispositions which were then uppermost; - Had they duly weighed and considered all this, and proceeded accordingly – I am verily persuaded I should have made a quite different figure in the world, from that in which the reader is likely to see me. – Believe me, good folks, this not so inconsiderable a thing as many of you may think it; you have all, I dare say, heard of the animal spirits, how they are transfused from father to son, - etc. etc. and a great deal to that purpose: Well, you take my word, that nine parts in ten of a man's sense and nonsense, his successes and miscarriages in this world depend upon their motions and activity, and the different tracts and trains you put them into, so that when they are once set a-going, whether right or wrong, 'tis not a halfpenny matter, - away they go cluttering like hey-go mad; and by treading the same steps over and over again, they presently make a road of it, as plain and as smooth as a garden-walk, which, when they are once used to, the Devil himself sometimes shall not be able to drive them off it. (Sterne, 1996: 6)

In the above-quoted passage, the narrator both relates his argument on a certain subject (that can be classified as a 'general topic') and his description and comment on his 'characters', Walter and Mrs. Shandy.

The narrator begins with the emotive phrase 'I wish', which openly declares that the intradiegetic narrator is about to begin a personal remark. The narrator's comment is on the recklessness of his parents on the night Tristram was conceived. The comment on the recklessness of the parents gives hints about the disharmonious nature of the relationship between Tristram's father and mother. Tristram the narrator here points out that his parents do not feel passion for each other at all. Then, he assumes an argumentative tone to relate his opinions to the reader (which he directly addresses) on 'the production of a rational Being' to defend the idea that biological and mental conditions of the partners at the moment of begetting a child is the most crucial factor in determining the future of a person. Implicitly, by relating his argument, the narrator blames Walter for being ignorant of this biological 'fact', which determines the 'genius'

and ‘success’ of the offspring. Moreover, in Book 5, Chapter 16, the narrator reminds the reader that because Walter spent more than three years on his book ‘Tristra-paedia’, he missed Tristram’s ‘geniture, nose, and name’, and therefore the effort Walter spent to write the book turned out to be ‘entirely useless [...]’ (Sterne, 19996: 264). Besides, in Book 5, Chapter 26, the narrator informs the reader that it was he (Tristram himself) who added ‘the chapter Upon Sash-Windows and Chamber-Pots’, including the forgetfulness of chambermaids, to complete his father’s book (Sterne, 1996: 270). The narrator’s comments on Walter and his ‘Tristra-paedia’ is significant in determining the relationship between the narrator and Walter, because Walter’s role in the novel is solely restricted to his intellectual activity. The abovementioned examples clearly show that right at the very beginning of the novel the narrator holds a position high above his characters, and thus, conveys the potential to manipulate the readers’ perception of the characters and their positions in the novel.

The impact the narrator makes on the perception of the reader through descriptive non-narrative texts can be examined in further examples. In Book 1, Chapter 21, the narrator introduces Uncle Toby by directly addressing the reader, and comments upon his character:

> My Uncle Toby, Madam, was a gentleman, who, with the virtues which usually constitute the character of a man of honour and rectitude, - possessed one in a very eminent degree […] and that was a most extreme and unparalleled modesty of nature […] and this kind of modesty so possessed him, and it arouse to such a height in him, as almost to equal, if such a thing could be, even the modesty of a woman: That female nicety, Madam, and inward cleanliness of mind and fancy, in your sex, which makes you so much the awe of ours. (Sterne, 1996: 47)

The narrator praises Toby’s outstanding character, especially his modesty. The choice of words is worth noting: ‘gentleman’, ‘virtue’, ‘a man of honour and rectitude’, and ‘extreme and unparalleled modesty of nature’. That much of an appraisal can be enough for the reader to acquire a high impression about the character, especially a character to whom the narrator is indebted for the anecdote on the night Tristram was begot (Chapter 3). In the next paragraph, however, the narrator attributes Toby’s ‘unparalleled modesty of nature’ to the blow that caused the wound in his groin during the siege of Namur: ‘Yes, Madam, it was owing to a blow from a stone, […] which

struck full upon my uncle Toby's groin. – Which way could that affect it?' (Sterne, 1996: 47)

As the reader is not given information about Toby's character before the siege of Namur, the illuminating description of Toby's character, and the argumentative tone, hinted with the words 'extreme' and 'unparalleled', create doubts about the strength of the character of Toby as a veteran 'hero' and his sexual potency. In Book 2, Chapter 4, the narrator relates that the wound Toby received has lead him to study the map of Namur and see the exact spot where he was wounded so that he could talk to people about his wound 'without perplexities'. The narrator describes the extreme devotion of Toby to learning by listing his yearly improvement in military subjects, and in the end cries out to warn Toby:

> [Stop!] My dear uncle Toby – stop! – go not one foot farther into this thorny and bewildered track, - intricate are the steps! intricate are the mazes of this labyrinth! intricate are the troubles which pursuit of this bewitching phantom Knowledge will bring upon thee. (Sterne, 1996: 63)

Here the narrator addresses Toby directly to warn him about a situation that his uncle faced long before Tristram was born. The warning is one of the apostrophes the narrator uses to create humour and parody. Besides, the tone and the elaboration in the apostrophe undercut the effect of Toby's thirst for knowledge. Toby is parodied both physically and intellectually. He is not presented as a typical war hero, who is wounded and retired heroically, but rather an eccentric and childish old man who spends his time playing with his old toys.

By his use of non-narrative elements, the narrator continues to underline the fact that the narrator is the only moulder of the narrative. The narrator's comment on Mrs. Shandy is another example. She is merely commented on as a part of the generalisation the narrator makes about the Shandy family: '[…] for all the Shandy Family were of an original character throughout: - I mean the males, - the females had no character at all' (Sterne, 1996: 46). This comment makes it crystal clear at the very beginning of the novel that Mrs. Shandy is not a character that the reader can expect much from. However, in the following sentence the narrator says that Aunt Dinah, who married and gave birth to a child by the coachman, is left out of this general statement. Mrs. Shandy only appears in the narrative where she keeps on misunderstanding Walter or causes

funny situations. The narrator refers to the confusion caused by Mrs. Shandy's misunderstanding Walter and blaming him for having an illegitimate child in Book 5, Chapter 13 and 14. In Book 5, Chapter 15 he refers to the confusion caused by Mrs. Shandy's misunderstanding of Walter by saying 'had this volume been a farce […] the last chapter, Sir, had finished the first act of it' (Sterne, 1996: 261). In the last analysis, all the characters in the narrative display the same quality implied by the narrator that they are moulded clays through which the narrator constitutes a novel of parody.

The narrator's comments, statements and discussions on 'fiction' consist of remarks on *Tristram Shandy*, and general ideas related to fiction such as the process of writing, readers and critics. As for the text of *Tristram Shandy*, the narrator gives information about the organisation and the content of the chapters and the narrative text in general, underlines the changeable and unpredictable nature of *Tristram Shandy*, praises his own text, displays his technique in writing it, and most significantly tries to prepare and orient both the reader and the critic to his self-reflective narrative.

In Book 1, Chapter 4, the narrator claims that his 'life and opinions are likely to make some noise in the world, [… and] be no less read than the *Pilgrim's Progress* itself', which held the second rank as a bestseller after the Bible during the period it was published (Sterne, 1996: 7). In Book 1 Chapter 6, the narrator repeats his aim to the reader: 'I have undertaken […] to write not only my life, but my opinions also' (Sterne, 19996: 10). Through the end of the same paragraph, he gives hints as to what kind of a narrative he aims at and how he will write it. He says that he is going to begin telling his life story from the day he was born, and he is not going to tell it by obeying anyone's rules on storytelling, but tell it in his own way. Therefore, he wants the reader to be patient with him. In Book 1, Chapter 14, the narrator makes it clear why he asks the reader's patience. He says that digressions in the narrative that delay his story are inevitable and that he is aware of the fact that he could not even tell how he was born, although he makes all the speed he can. In these statements and in many alike, the narrator does not simply write informatively. But, by means of the stress upon the slow progress in the narrative, which follows his repetition of his aim to relate his life and opinions, the narrator implicitly prepares the reader for further complexities in the narrative, which involves the shift between various themes as a result of digressions that are extensively used. In Book 1, Chapter 22, after a digression that breaks the narration

of Toby's character, the narrator points out that the narrative and the digressions follow each other in 'his' text, and this fact does not cause disharmony: 'In a word, my work is digressive, and it is progressive too, - and at the same time' (Sterne, 1996: 50). Then, the narrator furthers his defence of digressions. He claims that digressions are 'the life, the soul of reading! – take them out of this book […] you might as well take the book along with them' (Sterne, 1996: 50). These explanations are directed to the reader in order to prepare him/her for the unusual flow of narration, which prevents and will prevent the narrator from telling his life story. The tone of the narrator's comments and arguments are instructive for the reader. But the narrator narrows down the definition of the reader whom his instructions are meant for:

> I know there are readers in the world, as well as many other good people in it, who are no readers at all, - who find themselves ill at ease, unless they are let into the whole secret from first to last, of everything which concerns you (Sterne, 1996: 7)

The narrator makes it clear that his instructions are not addressed to those whom he does not even classify as readers, but to those who are 'curious and inquisitive'. In Book 1, Chapter 20, the narrator even scolds the reader (a female) for reading inattentively and carelessly, and then punishes her for careless reading, and bids her to read the previous chapter over. Having given utmost importance to the participation of the reader, the narrator states that some of his omissions in the narrative serve to make the reader use his imagination in Book 2, Chapter 11:

> Let the reader imagine then, that Dr. Slop has told his tale […] - Let him suppose, that Obadiah has told his tale also […] – Let him imagine, that my father has stepped upstairs to see my mother. – And, to conclude this work of imagination, - let him imagine the doctor washed […]' (Sterne, 1996: 76)

In the following chapter, the narrator also lets the reader talk right after the pause when the narrator tells the reaction of Toby when Walter insults Toby's hobbyhorse. The reader curiously interferes: 'Pray, Sir, what said he?' (Sterne, 1996: 79). The narrative, then, becomes an interactive one, as if there were an oral communication. In short, the narrator begins, develops, and maintains an illusion of reality in which both the narrator and the narratee are present, listening and asking questions to each other. The process of integrating the reader into the narrative continues throughout the text. In Book 3, Chapter

23, the narrator asks the reader's opinion about the affair between Trim and Bridget. In Book 6, Chapter 29, the narrator asks again the help of the reader to clear the stage, as if the events were taking place in a theatre, so that the narrator can redress and present Toby with a fresh appearance. In Book 6, Chapter 38, the narrator even offers a blank page to the reader so that the reader can fill it according to his own conception of Widow Wadman. After a blank page, the narrator and the reader are seen exchanging their opinions about what the reader has written on the blank page. This is the point the narrator has reached to integrate the reader into the narrative. By means of this playful effort to make the reader contribute to the narrative directly, the line between the narrative and the reader vanishes. The same playful attitude is observed in Book 7, Chapter 37 when the narrator leaves space for the reader so that the reader can 'swear his oaths' along with the narrator. The reader is now transformed into a contributor.

The narrator carries out a dialogue not only with the reader, but also with the critic. However, the dialogue with the critic is different from that with the reader. After the publication of the first book, the narrator is seen to be interested in the opinions of a more qualified reader, which is the critic. Book 2, Chapter 2 displays the narrator's opinions on the critics; in the dialogue between the critic and the narrator about how Toby is treated as a character, the narrator explains his reasons for Toby's peculiar characterisation. The narrator argues that critics can indeed spoil a writer's work, which is 'meant to be' an entertainment, but, in his opinion, that cannot be a reason to ignore critics. Then, the critic speaks and says that Toby is drawn as a 'confused, pudding-headed, muddle-headed fellow', which is contradictory to his military standing. Then the narrator explains that Toby's perplexities stem from his 'unsteady use of words'. In this discussion the narrator puts himself above the critic by providing various examples to support his view and by his references to philosophy, especially John Locke's 'Essay upon the Human Understanding', tries to inform and instruct the critic. The reason why the narrator strives to reorient readers and critics to the narrative lies in the fact that the narrative does not fit in with the conventional idea of fiction. Moreover, in Book 3, Chapter12, the narrator expresses his doubts about the efficiency of critics:

> [The] whole set of [connoisseurs] are so hung round and befetished with the bobs and trinkets of criticism, […] their heads, Sir, are stuck so full of rules and compasses, and have that eternal propensity to apply

> them upon all occasions, that a work of genius had better go to the devil at once, than stand still to be pricked and tortured to death by 'em. (Sterne, 1996: 124)

After expressing his doubts about critics and commenting on the sheer devotion of the critics to rules at the expense of overlooking great talents, the narrator attacks critics once more in his unusually delayed preface. In the preface, which the 'implied author' Tristram has placed in Book 3, the narrator considers the claim that wit and judgement are separate faculties and one does not exist where the other lives, to be a wrong philosophical argument. He points out that those 'thrice able critics' who criticise his book or who are anti-Shandeans have no wit at all, but all the same, they can most self-confidently criticise him, although he is a great wit, and pass judgements on his work. After the preface, the narrator does not spare passages for critics at all, except from calling them 'hypercritics' here and there. Obviously he (as narrator) prefers the 'inquisitive' but 'naive' reader as a better receiver of his explanations concerning the mechanism of the narrative or the process of writing.

By means of his arguments and comments on 'the process of writing', the narrator reveals the technique of his narrative. For example, in Book 1, Chapter 23, he talks about various ways of drawing a character. He begins with the 'Italian style', in which the character is drawn by means of 'wind-instruments'. Then, he mentions the style of drawing a character by means of his evacuations or 'non-naturals'. In the end, he announces that he will not use these 'erroneous ways' to draw Toby's character, but he will draw it by means of 'Toby's hobbyhorse'. These arguments, comments, and dialogues with the reader enable the narrator to introduce his narrative technique to the reader and make him/her an observer of the process of writing so as to transform him/her into an active participant in the narrative.

In Book 2, Chapter 8, the narrator discusses the idea of duration and its simple modes in fiction claiming that the idea of duration is conceived as a result of the train and succession of one's ideas. He discusses the incongruity between 'real time' (time spent to do an action in real life) and 'fictional time' (time spent in the narrative for the same action), and the impossibility of reflecting 'real time' by describing Obadiah's saddling the horse, going to call Dr. Slop, and coming back. The narrator reminds the reader that in the intervals between his narration of Obadiah's abovementioned actions,

Toby was brought from Namur to England, had a four-year treatment and other experiences. Regarding the narrative as a 'drama', the narrator explains that parallel streams of events are used to create the illusion of narrating events in real time. His displaying of his narrative technique to the reader destroys the illusion of reality that could be found in a conventional novel. Now that the reader is aware of the peculiar process of writing the narrator has adopted, he/she can read the narrative not simply as a sequence of events that resembles or imitates reality, but as a work of imagination and skill. In Book 2, Chapter 11, the narrator continues to explain his ideas on fiction. He defines writing as 'writing, when properly managed […] is but a different name for conversation' (Sterne, 1996: 75). Then, he goes back to his discussion of 'his work' and once again claims that he does 'all that lies in [his] power to keep [reader's] imagination as busy as [his] own' (Sterne, 1996: 75).

The examples above serve the narrator's purpose to reorient the reader to his process of writing. Not only the narrative technique or characterisation, but also chapter divisions (Book 4, Chapter 10) and the ever-present position of the narrator in fiction (Book 6, Chapter 20) are in focus. He reminds his presence as a narrator to do away with the prejudices of the readers, who are oriented to conventional narratives. The narrator's main concern is to avoid being received as an ordinary storyteller. He wants to be regarded as an artist and a craftsman who creates, shapes, and presents...

However, although the narrator gives the impression that he has a high regard of his own work and of himself as a narrator, he can assume a parodical attitude towards writers and the art of writing. He makes fun of himself and the narrative form from quite a realistic perspective, by resembling the writer to a salesman and his work to a commodity, since writers have to earn money by their writing. In Book 1, Chapter 9, the narrator declares that the dedication made at the end of the previous chapter is on sale for any one who is willing to pay fifty guineas. In Book 1, Chapter 15, he shares with the reader his plan of writing and publishing his life story and his opinions as long as he lives, if he 'can make a tolerable bargain with his bookseller'. In Book 8, Chapter 6, while talking about the love affair between Widow Wadman and Toby, the narrator breaks up the narrative to express his concern about his situation as an author:

> I do not recollect any one opinion or passage in my life, where my understanding was more at a loss to make ends meet, and torture the chapter I had been writing, to the service of the chapter following it, than in the present case: one would think I took a pleasure in running into difficulties of this kind, merely to make fresh experiments of getting out of 'em – Inconsiderate soul that thou art! What! Are not the unavoidable distresses with which, as an author and a man, thou art hemmed in on every side of thee – are they, Tristram, not sufficient, but thou must entangle thyself still more.
>
> Is it not enough thou art in debt, and that thou hast ten cart-loads of thy fifth and sixth volumes still – still unsold, and art almost at thy wit's ends, how to get them off thy hands? (Sterne, 1996: 383)

In this passage what is significant is the narrator's feeling of obligation to yield his experimental narrative for a neater storyline. Although the humour and self-awareness that dominates the passage undercuts the effect of his serious resolution concerning his writing, a close observation of Book 8 and 9 shows that there is a comparatively tidier organisation of the events in the narrative than the previous books, especially the first three. The obligation to yield to a tidier narrative disturbs the narrator, as he complains about torturing his narrative to resume Toby's love affair, which was related in the previous chapter.

This is not the first time that the narrator feels forced to write as if he were not in control of his pen. In Book 4, Chapter 10, the narrator is heard complaining about the autonomous nature of his characters:

> Is it not a shame to make two chapters of what passed in going down one pair of stairs? for we are got no farther yet than to the first landing, and there are fifteen more steps down to the bottom; and for aught I know, as my father and my Uncle Toby are in a talking humour, there may be as many chapters as steps: let that be as it will, Sir, I can no more help than my destiny: - A sudden impulse comes across me – drop the curtain, Shandy – I drop it – Strike a line here across the paper, Tristram – I strike it - and hey for a new chapter. (Sterne, 1996: 194)

He talks as if he could not control the characters, but they choose which way to go; and to obey the characters is the narrator's destiny. Then, paradoxically, the narrator mentions 'a sudden impulse' that frees him from the characters. The 'instructive' nature of the narrator, who has been in a dialogue with the reader to prepare him/her for the demanding organisation of the narrative, turns himself into a passive figure dominated

by his characters. In fact, many of the non-narrative texts embedded in the narrative text abound in comments concerning the narrator's difficulty in coping with the narrative. For example, in Book 4, Chapter 12, he complains about being unable to advance in his storyline though he is in the middle of his fourth volume:

> [Instead] of advancing, as a common writer, in my work with what I have been doing at it – on the contrary, I am just thrown so many volumes back […] as at this rate I should live 364 times faster than I should write. (Sterne, 1996. 197-198)

At the beginning of this chapter the narrator hires a second rate writer to get Walter and Toby off the stairs (the narration of which has taken originally two chapters) and put them to their bed right away. At the end of the chapter, he pays the second rate writer for his troubles and success. This situation marks the difference between Tristram the narrator and 'a common writer': A common writer would have told us the story of Tristram in a few chapters, since he would be writing on the cause and effect principle; our narrator, on the other hand, twists his narration in so many diverse directions that he steps out of the conventional manner of storytelling. Accordingly, in Book 6, Chapter 6, when he feels that he cannot narrate the story of Le Fever in a straight forward manner, he addresses himself and answers his own question: 'Ask my pen, - it governs me, - I govern not it' (Sterne, 1996: 292). Consequently, the narrative flows on its own accord, not in the direction of the narrator's command. Besides, the narrative is described as a spontaneous flow. This spontaneity is best described in the last extract, which discusses the process of writing. In Book 8 Chapter 2, the narrator gives information about his way of beginning a book:

> That of all the several ways of beginning a book which are now in practice throughout the known world, I am confident my own way of doing it is the best – I'm sure it is the most religious – for I begin with writing the first sentence – and trusting to Almighty God for the second.
>
> 'Twould cure an author for ever of the fuss and folly of opening his street-door, and calling in [… people] only to observe how one sentence of mine follows another, and how the plan follows the whole. (Sterne, 1996: 380)

Once again, the narrator reduces himself to a mechanical hand that follows the external motives such as inspiration, chance, and intuition. Indeed, after all that the narrator has said so far about the process of writing, the information above can sound plausible and

descriptive in terms of the first impression received about the organisation of the narrative on the first reading.

Another form of non-narrative texts is 'documentation'. Documentation is a means to provide texts with a scientific touch that complements the arguments defended in the text so that one can receive the impression that he/she is benefiting from a serious and informative kind of writing. Documentation can be in various forms, such as written text, lists, inscriptions, graphics and tables. Documentation as a non-narrative element in *Tristram Shandy* is seen in the form of notes and letters, inscriptions, and graphics. They are used either to make a parody of certain subjects, to accompany the situations and events in the narrative, or to create the impression that the text is scientific and factual. The narrator of *Tristram Shandy* uses more than thirty footnotes. Most of them are referential or informative – either giving information about which writer's text the narrator is referring or mentioning/explaining the original words in Latin and Greek that the narrator quotes. However, some of the footnotes are given to make a parody of the practice of using footnotes. For example, in Book 9, Chapter 26, the narrator informs the reader that Widow Wadman has read some books to understand the nature of Toby's wound. Here, the narrator uses a footnote in which he finds fault with the information the implied author has provided: 'This must be a mistake in Mr. Shandy; for Graph [the writer of one of the books Wadman read] wrote about the pancreatic juice, and the parts of generation' (Sterne, 1996: 449), which has nothing to do with the nature of Toby's wound. In this footnote there is parody; but moreover, it implies that the narrator's text is checked and corrected by someone other than the narrator himself before it is published.

Other kinds of 'documentation' used in the text of *Tristram Shandy* include the marriage article between Walter and Mrs. Shandy (Book 1, Chapter 15), the letter to the doctors of Sorbonne with a question on baptism and the result of the consultation of the doctors on 'baptism with an injection' in French (Book 1, Chapter 20), Yorick's sermon on conscience (Book 2, Chapter 17), Ernulphus' text on excommunication both in English and Latin (Book 3, Chapter 11), the original version of Slawkenbergius' tale in Latin (Book 4), the list of Rubenius on outfits that Walter makes use of in deciding what kind of outfit Tristram should wear after his accidental circumcision (Book 6, Chapter 19), Toby's apologetical oration (Book 6, Chapter 32), list of the streets of Paris (Book 7, Chapter 18), and Walter's letter to Toby (Book 8, Chapter 34). All of these non-

narrative embedded texts are related to the narrative; they are either a part of the narrative such as the marriage article, Yorick's sermon, Ernulphus' text, Slawkenbergius' tale, Toby's oration, and Walter's letter are, or they are provided for informative purposes such as the extract on baptism and the list of the streets in Paris are.[10]

Another non-narrative element that undercuts the effect of fiction is the pointers and the graphics inscribed by the narrator. The pointers are used for a didactic purpose. In Book 2, Chapter 12, the narrator relates a distant memory concerning his uncle Toby. Toby is so tenderhearted that one day when the narrator is 10 years old, he watches Uncle Toby, who is bothered by a fly but cannot hurt it. Relating that Toby let the fly go away, the narrator expresses the impact of Toby's mercifulness upon his character. Then, by the help of the pointer, the narrator reminds the importance of the experience gained in childhood on the character of a person: '☞ This is to serve for parents and governors instead of a whole volume upon the subject' (Sterne, 1996: 79). Similarly in Book 2, Chapter 17, the narrator uses another pointer, this time to recommend Trim's posture, which is described in detail, to painters and orators. The instructive warnings of the narrator by means of pointers also gives the implication that he states himself above all as 'a great wit'.

The use of graphics also breaks the flow of the narrative and the fictional effect. In Book 1, Chapter 12, the narrator illustrates the epitaph on the gravestone of Yorick ('Alas, poor YORICK'), and then installs a black space that stands for Yorick's death. In Book 3, Chapter 36, the narrator informs the reader that on the following page there is 'a marbled page', which the reader calls 'the motley emblem' of his work. In order to penetrate into the moral of the marbled page (also the meaning of *Tristram Shandy*), the narrator advises the reader to read more and more, because only on the condition that the reader gains more knowledge can he/she make sense of the narrative he/she has been reading. Then, there comes the marbled page without a figure that one can identify so as to deduce a meaning except that it serves to appeal to the imagination of the viewers. Another graphical element is the drawings, in Book 6, Chapter 40, that stand for the different story lines of the first

[10] The non-narrative embedded texts give the effect of precision, learnedness, truthfulness, and systematic research: Precision and learnedness by the installation of original texts and references in various languages, truthfulness by the marriage article and Walter's letter, and systematic research by the list of the streets of France. Some of the texts also produce a certain sense of historicism that blurs the effect of fiction.

five chapters, and a straight line standing for the specific story line the narrator plans to work on. The last graph is in Book 9, Chapter 4, an illustration of the 'flourishing movement' caused by Trim's waving his stick in the air. In all the examples above, the use of graphics replaces communication with words. Visual elements accompany, as in Trim's movement and Yorick's gravestone, or even surpass the written text, as seen by means of the marbled page and the drawings of the storylines.

'Use of dialogue'[11] is considered the major element that provides the dramatic effect in conventional narratives. The more dialogues abound in a narrative the more dramatic quality the narrative gains. The dramatic effect increases when the dialogues are produced in 'direct speech' without the interference of the narrator. The narrator can interfere in the dialogues by means of declarative verbs (i.e. 'say', 'quoth', 'remark', 'shout'), introducing or concluding the quotations. If the narrator relates the speech of the actors in reported speech, then the purity of the dialogue is lost. In *Tristram Shandy*, however, dialogues are all in direct speech.

Thanks to the use of direct speech (rather than reported speech) that enables the characters to dominate the narrative, the dramatic effect gains ground in *Tristram Shandy*. However, the dialogues taking place within the narrative are far from being handled in the conventional sense; for the narrator handles the dialogues in an unprecedented way. In Book 1, Chapter 21, the chapter opens with the dialogue between Walter and Toby:

> I wonder what's all that noise, and running backwards and forwards for, above stairs, quoth my father […] What can they be doing, brother? […] – we can scarce hear ourselves talk.
>
> I think, replied my uncle Toby […] I think, says he:' (Sterne, 1996: 44)

This dialogue continues in Book 2, Chapter 6:

> What can they be doing, brother? said my father. – I think, replied my uncle Toby […] I think, replied he, - it would not be amiss, brother, if we rung the bell.

[11] Dialogues are considered to be a part of non-narrative text because the priority of speech is given to the characters. The narrator only quotes the words of the speakers, as there is no narration of an event, action or such. Contrary to the dialogues that are expanded over many chapters without a proper beginning and an end, through the dialogues above the reader has the opportunity to understand the characters by means of their own speech. The narrator's interference and manipulation is minimum, and the dramatic quality is utmost.

> Pray, what's all that racket over our heads Obadiah? – quoth my father; - my brother and I can scarce hear ourselves speak.' (Sterne, 1996: 69)

Then, Obadiah tells Walter that Mrs. Shandy has got worse, and the old mid-wife has been sent for. The significance of the dialogue is in its expansion. The very same dialogue covers ten chapters, and involves only repetitions. Toby's answer beginning with 'I think' in Book 1, Chapter 21 promises tension; however it comes to nothing in Book 2, Chapter 6 as Toby has only been suggesting ringing the bell to call the servant so that they can ask what has been going on upstairs. Another dialogue begins in Book 2, Chapter 18. Dr. Slop tries to tell Toby that doctors have made an astonishing improvement recently in the field of obstetrics; however Toby instantly associates the word 'improvement' with his military days: ' I wish, quoth my uncle Toby, you had seen what prodigious armies we had in Flanders' (Sterne, 1996: 100). Toby once again begins the same dialogue with almost the same words in Book 3 Chapter 1: " 'I wish Dr Slop,' quoth my uncle Toby, […] – 'I wish, Dr. Slop,' quoth my uncle Toby, 'you had seen what prodigious armies we had in Flanders' " (Sterne, 1996: 107). Then, in Chapter 2 of the same book, Walter begins with Toby's words: " '- What prodigious armies you had in Flanders!' – Brother Toby, replied my father […]" In Chapter 6 of the same book, Walter once again exclaims: " 'What prodigious armies you had in Flanders!' – Brother Toby, quoth my father, I do believe thee to be as honest a man, and with as good and upright a heart as ever God created […]" (Sterne, 1996: 111). In the sentences that follow these repetitive remarks, Walter brings the topic to the accidents waylaying the babies during birth giving. The dialogue between Toby and Dr. Slop on obstetrical improvements shifts to the armies in Flanders, only to be taken up by Walter to change the topic to accidents at childbirth. The result is that all three topics that the dialogues contain remain incomplete and under-connected. All this time the narrator constantly interferes with the dialogue and expands it over several chapters without any development to serious effect. The dialogues are rather decorative, and function to hold together many pages and chapters that the narrator uses to make digressions from the main storyline. When we look at the dialogues, we see that the narrator informs the reader of the identity of the speaker by means of declarative verbs, and uses either quotation marks or dashes in quoting the dialogue. In the abovementioned

extracts from *Tristram Shandy*, the narrator does not allow the characters to speak their minds because there is a constant shift in terms of the content.

The text of *Tristram Shandy* also holds dialogues that more or less form an integrated part of the storyline. Most of such dialogues bear significance as they provide humorous hints about the relationships of the characters. In the following example, the narrative interference and comments have been omitted so as to allow full focus on the content of the dialogues.

> 'It is two hours, and ten minutes – and no more […] and I know not how it happens, brother Toby – but to my imagination it seems almost an age.'
>
> 'Tis owing entirely […] to the succession of our ideas.'
>
> 'Do you understand the theory of that affair?'
>
> 'Not I.'
>
> 'But you have some ideas […] of what you talk about?'
>
> 'No more than my horse.'
>
> 'Gracious heaven! There is a worth in thy honest ignorance, brother Toby – 'twere almost a pity to exchange it for a knowledge. – But I'll tell thee - […] 'To understand what time is aright, without which we never can comprehend infinity, insomuch as one is a portion of the other – we ought seriously to sit down and consider what idea it is we have of duration, so as to give a satisfactory account how we came by it.'
>
> 'What is it to anybody?'
>
> 'For if you will turn your eyes inwards upon your mind, […] and observe attentively, you will perceive, brother, that whilst you and I are talking together, and thinking, and smoking our pipes, or whilst we receive successively ideas in our minds, we know that we do exist, and so we estimate the existence, or the continuation of the existence of ourselves, or anything else, commensurate to the succession of any ideas in our minds, the duration of ourselves, or any such other thing co-existing with our thinking – and so according to that preconceived.'
>
> 'You puzzle me to death.'
>
> 'Tis owing to this […] that in our computations of time, we are so used to minutes, hours, weeks, and months – and of clocks […] to measure out their several portions to us, and to those who belong us – that 'twill be well, if in time to come, the succession of our ideas be of any use or service to us all. Now, whether we observe it or no […] in every sound man's head, there is a regular succession of ideas of one sort or other, which follow each other in train just like -'
>
> 'A train of artillery?'
>
> 'A train of fiddle-stick! […] which follow and succeed one another in our minds at certain distances, just like the images in the inside of a lantern turned round by the heat of a candle.'
>
> 'I declare […] mine are more like a smoke-jack.'

> ‘Then brother Toby, I have nothing more to say to you upon the subject.’ (Sterne, 1996: 129-131)

The extract above is significant for various reasons. The dialogue between Toby and Walter displays the impossibility of establishing a proper communication between two incongruous characters and the nature of these characters’ relationship in the narrative, which is based on misunderstanding. The failure of the two characters to communicate with each other can be explained by means of Roman Jakobson’s diagram,[12] which draws attention to the six constituent factors that make up any event speech. In the dialogue, Walter is the ‘addresser’, and Toby is the ‘addressee’; the ‘contact’ they use to relate the ‘message’ is ‘oral’, and the ‘code’ of the message is formulated in speech; the message refers to the ‘context’ and that is philosophy, particularly human existence. In the dialogue above, one of the functions (context) is not working properly, and therefore, the ‘message’ cannot be sent, and accordingly the meaning cannot be produced. Because ‘context’ is a non-operating function, the ‘code’ (speech), which is the medium to send the ‘message’, fails as well. As the ‘addresser’ (Walter) talks through abstractions, the ‘message’ cannot be received by the ‘addressee’ (Toby), because Toby speaks in the emotive mode, which means that his replies to Walter are actually emotional responses centring upon his own self, and instead of discussing the ‘message’ he prefers to speak about his emotional reflection and deduction on Walter’s speech: ‘No more than my horse … What is it to anybody? ...You puzzle me to death… I declare mine are more like a smoke-jack.’ On the other hand, Walter seeks to avoid the emotive stance, and tries to remain on the ‘poetic level’, through which topics are discussed for their own sake, in order to maintain a discussion about the mechanism of the human mind. However, Toby can be communicated with successfully only when the topic is related to military issues. Toby thinks and speaks by the help of ‘connotations’ and ‘association of ideas’ related to the military and his personal hobbies likes horses, artillery, and smoke-jack. Walter can communicate properly only with Yorick the parson and Dr. Slop, as all of them speak on the ‘poetic level’. On the other hand, Toby can only communicate with Trim, as they share common interests and the same ‘context’:

> ‘I am in love, corporal.’

[12] Terence Hawkes. ‘Structuralism and Semiotics’. Routledge. London: 1988, pp. 83-84.

‘In love! […] your honour was very well the day before yesterday, when I was telling your honour the story of the King of Bohemia.’

‘Bohemia! […]’ What became of that story, Trim?!

‘We lost it, an’ please your honour, somewhere betwixt us – but your honour was free from love then, as I am.’

‘Twas just whilst thou went’st off with the wheelbarrow – with Mrs. Wadman […] She has left a ball here [his breast].’

‘She can no more, an’ please your honour, stand a siege, than she can fly.’

‘But as we are neighbours, Trim – the best way I think is to let her know it civilly first.’

‘Now if I might presume […] to differ from your honour.’

‘Why else do I talk to thee, Trim?’

‘Then I would begin, an’ please your honour, with making a good thundering attack upon her, in return – and telling her civilly afterwards – for if she knows anything of your honour’s being in love, before hand’

‘L__d help her! She knows no more at present of it, Trim […] than the child unborn.’

[…]

‘Now, […] if your honour will give me leave to lay down the plan of this attack.’

‘Thou wilt please me by it […] exceedingly – and as I foresee thou must act in it as my *aide de camp*, here’s a crown, corporal, to begin with, to steep thy commission.’

[…]

‘As soon as […] everything is ready for the attack – we’ll march up boldly, as if ’twas to the face of a bastion; and whilst your honour engages Mrs. Wadman in the parlour, to the right – I’ll attack Mrs. Bridget in the kitchen, to the left; and having seized the pass, I’ll answer for it […] that the day is our own.’

‘I wish I may but manage it right […] but I declare, corporal, I had rather march up to the very edge of a trench.’

‘A woman is quite a different thing.’

‘I suppose so.’ (Sterne, 1996: 410-412)

As clearly seen in the above passage, the problem Toby has had with Walter, which prevents communication, does not occur between Toby and Trim, because they share the same mode of communication. The problem in the dialogue between Walter and Toby is that Toby cannot understand the signifiers produced by Walter. In the dialogue between Toby and Trim, however, the signifiers refer to the same signifieds for both characters. Thus, the analogy between a war and an affair with a woman is an acceptable one for both. If we single out and read the plan of Trim, and replace Wadman’s name with that of an army, it will be seen that the content of the

conversation bears no indication of love in it, since Toby's life experience is limited to military affairs.

The above-quoted dialogue also serves to bring out the hierarchical relationship between Toby and Trim. Trim is the servant to Toby. Toby is a military captain, and Trim is a corporal. However in the dialogue we do not see the expected hierarchical discipline between the two. Toby displays the unusual attitude of a military captain by consulting Trim and seems to appreciate the corporal's ideas to the point of putting them into practice. Besides, Trim gives Toby advice about women.

Walter's problem with communication is not restricted to his dialogues with Toby. Walter cannot maintain a successful communication with Mrs. Shandy either, even when he is not in one of his passionately intellectual moods. In Book 6, Chapter 18, Walter and Mrs. Shandy are in bed on a Sunday night talking about Tristram after his accidental circumcision:

> 'We should begin to think, Mrs. Shandy, of putting this boy into breeches.'
> 'We should so.'
> 'We defer it.'
> 'I think we do.'
> 'Not but the child looks extremely well […] in his vests and tunics.'
> 'He does look very well in them.'
> 'And for that reason it would be almost a sin […] to take him out of 'em.'
> 'It would so'
> 'But indeed he is growing a very tall lad.'
> 'He is very tall for his age, indeed.'
> 'I can not […] imagine […] who the deuce he takes after.'
> 'I cannot conceive, for my life.'
> 'Humph! […] I'm very short myself.'
> 'You are very short, Mr. Shandy.'
> 'Humph! […] When he gets these breeches made […] he'll look like a beast in 'em.'
> 'He will be very awkward in them at first.'
> 'And 'twill be lucky, if that's the worst on't'
> 'It will be very lucky.'
> […]
> 'I am resolved, however, […] he shall have no pockets in them.'
> 'There is no occasion for any.'
> 'I mean in his coat and waistcoat.'
> 'I mean so too.'

> Though if he gets a gig or top […] they should have where to secure it.'
>
> 'Order it as you please, Mr. Shandy.'
>
> 'But don't you think it right?'
>
> 'Perfectly, […] if it pleases you, Mr. Shandy'
>
> 'There's for you! […] Pleases me! – You never will distinguish, Mrs. Shandy, nor shall I ever teach you to do it, betwixt a point of pleasure and a point of convenience.' (Sterne, 1996: 307-308)

As seen in the above passage, Walter has assumed an argumentative approach while Mrs. Shandy sticks to an affirmative one, which results in lack of communication since an argument cannot be developed. This dialogue shows that Mrs. Shandy is merely the puppet in the house rather than a wife and a strong personality. Within the dialogue, she is limited to the role of a parrot.

In *Tristram Shandy*, the dialogues function in two ways. Firstly, the narrator makes use of them to elaborate his style and to use them for formal purposes to reinforce his presence and dominance on the narrative text. Secondly, the dialogues are related to the narrative context; they reveal the relationship between the characters, give information about them, and enable the reader to form an opinion on the hierarchy between the characters in order to understand their position and weight in the narrative.

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The study of textual elements shows that the novel is not composed of purely narrative elements, which serve to develop the narration of the novel. Non-narrative texts are as important as narrative texts, and not all the non-narrative texts are closely connected with the subject matter of the novel. There are stories and anecdotes, which tell about totally different stories and events.

The title of the novel is not even reflecting the content of the narrative. The novel is not about the life story of Tristram Shandy the character and his opinions alone. The survey of the themes in the novel proves that the narrator only tells a fragmentary story of the Shandy family and their opinions. This story is not pursued in a straight line. It is crosscut with non-narrative texts.

The total effect created by means of non-narrative texts in *Tristram Shandy* serves to balance the fictional quality, thus undercutting the narrative effect which

depends on a cause-and-effect relationship. It follows that the text we read is not a pure narrative novel, but also a history book, and a memoir as well. The non-narrative texts, which are composed of comments, arguments, discussions on certain subjects, documentation and dialogues, accompany the narrative flow to explain the narrative, and form a 'writerly text' in which the main concern is not to relate a straightforward story concerning a family, but to present the process of creative writing.

CHAPTER II. FABULA: THE ELEMENTS OF THE FABULA IN *THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY GENTLEMAN*

This chapter focuses on the concept of 'fabula' in terms of 'narratology' and applying this concept to relevant points in *Tristram Shandy*.

A- FABULA: THEORY

Fabula only involves the 'narrative' aspect of the 'text'. The term **fabula** means 'events in sequential ordering'. In other words, a **fabula** 'is a series of logically and chronologically related events' (Bal, 2002: 187). However, fabula is mainly related to **events,** which are **functional** in the development of the narrative text. Along with **events**, **actors**, **time** and **location**, which have a functional quality in the narrative text, may also be treated as elements of fabula. An event requires at least an agent who acts. While the agent acts, a certain amount of time passes, and finally the event takes place in a location.

Bal defines **events** as 'the transition from one state to another state, caused or experienced by actors' (Bal, 2002: 182), To distinguish events from the many elements of the fabula, three criteria are offered: **Change**, **choice**, and **confrontation** (Bal, 2002: 182). Here by events we mean **functional events** that are directly related to the fabula of the narrative. Therefore, trying to discover which sentence(s) can be classified as an event is possible only after considering the process as a whole instead of simply searching for verbs indicating an action. To pinpoint a **change** we need to examine verbs in a sequence of sentences so as to find out whether they describe a change experienced by an actor or merely a condition. (For example, in the sentence 'the death rate increased dramatically and the government restricted the individual armament, which caused X to lose his job', the verb 'to increase' points to a change.)

Choice, on the other hand, refers to the decision of the actor between at least two possibilities, which makes an impact on the fabula. For example, if taking one road instead of the other gives way to a change and contributes to the complications in the fabula, this choice brings forth an event.

The last criterion to select events is **confrontation**, and it indicates the confrontation of at least two actors or groups of actors as a result of which there must be a change in the relation between the two parties, and which must bring about a development in the fabula. For example, a married couple meets in a café. They talk about their marriage and understand that they have lost their passion for each other, and decide to get divorced. In a narrative one or all of these criteria can be met depending on the intention of the author to develop events.

After deciding which facts can be selected as events, the relationship between them can be investigated. Within the process of events, there is **possibility** (whether the target is likely to be achieved or not), **realization** (the effort towards achieving the target), and **conclusion** (failure or success in achieving the target).

After investigating the relationships, events can be grouped so as to bring about a structure. According to Bal, there are four principles upon which a structure of events can be formed (Bal, 2002: 193-195):

1- Events based on **characters**. Which characters are involved, the number of characters involved in an event, and the duration of their involvement are investigated. For example, if the events in which the miserable life of actors X and Y in their childhood is narrated in the first half of the fabula, we can suggest that the first part of the fabula is an introduction to the second part, which focuses on the successful adulthood of these actors.

2- Events based on **confrontation**: The success or failure of verbal, mental or physical conduct is investigated. For example, if the conduct is mental and the result is a failure, the deduction can be alienation.

3- Events based on **time**. The occurrence of events in succession or simultaneously is investigated. For example, 'it reminded him of his childhood. When he was a little kid, actor X was forced to earn money while his friends were enjoying the summertime. Now, he feels sick looking at the man who is taking a nap under the warm summer sun'. In this example, the events follow each other with a chronological succession and there is a long period between the first event and the second one.

4- Events based on **location**. The relationship of events with the spaces in which they take place, is investigated. For example: Inside-outside, far-near, city-country, highway-byway, underground-surface.

The second element of the fabula is **actors**. Actors perform the narrative act. To examine the actors one has to make a distinction between **functional** and **non-functional** actors. **Functional actors** are the ones who cause or undergo events; they initiate the events of the narration and carry them out. **Non-functional actors** are used as tools in the fabula. They just appear when needed, and disappear when they are not needed anymore. They do not affect the events and the consequences. For example, if there is a maid in the fabula who just opens the door to the visitors, and then goes off the narrative, she is a non-functional actor. Therefore, such actors are not necessarily subject to analysis. But if seemingly a non-functional actor leads to a complication at one point of the fabula, then the classification of actors must be revised so as to include the seemingly non-functional character as functional.

Actors can be classified in further categories. The **similarities**, **contrasts**, and **repetitions** help us to construct a common ground for a division. For example, actors who aim to reach the same **desired object** can be classified in terms of **similarity**. If, on the other hand, one group have good intentions and the other evil intentions in achieving the desired object, then the division is based on **contrast**. The examination of the similar attitudes and repeated qualities of each actor in the same group can be classified on the basis of **repetition**. Bal calls each of these categories an **actant**. In her terms an actant 'is a class of actors that shares a certain characteristic quality' (Bal, 2002: 197).

Bal further categorises actors as **subjects** and **direct objects** in the fabula. For example, if subject X wants to marry subject Y, then X is the **subject** to which the initiation to perform is attributed. Y is the **direct object**, the focus of desire or achievement. In this example, the 'desire to marry' is the **element of intention of the fabula**. The subject is almost always a person, a community of actors, or a personified being. However the direct object doesn't necessarily have to be a person or such; it may well be values or concepts such as power, richness, virtue, intelligence, or victory.

Bal further categorises actors in terms of **power** and **receiver**, and they are related to the subject's struggle to accomplish the task. **Power** is a class of actors "who support 'the subject' in the realization of its intention, or allow it to be supplied or given" (Bal, 2002: 198). Power can be non-human, such as society, fate, time, cleverness or human self-centeredness and such. For example, if the society prevents X from changing the social order, the society is the **power**, which resists the attempts. **Receiver** is the person whom the object is given to. The receiver is often the same person as the subject. For example if X is revenged on Y, X is the subject and the **receiver** of the outcome of his act. Y is the direct object of X's focus. In this example **power** is hatred through which X is revenged, and achieves the desired object.

When the subject tries to reach the target, it meets with resistance on the way, and receives help from a **helper**, which makes up a new class of actors in Bal's categories of actors. A **helper** can give only incidental aid, and can be a trait such as a good job, fortune, metaphysical means etc, as well as a human being. The category of actors who resist the subject is called the **opponent**. It can be found in the form of an obstacle on the way of the subject on its way to the target, and can be an enemy, or a concept like rage, jealousy, etc.

Events occur in a certain order and with respect to a certain period of time. This period of time is called the **time span** of the events in the fabula. Regarding the time span of the fabula, there is a major distinction in the duration of events in the fabula: **Crisis** and **development**. **Crisis** covers a short period of time. In the moments of crisis, the events are compressed into a short span of time. By using the form of crisis, the narrative is restricted to a selection of events and details. Lengthy depictions are omitted in favour of dynamism and swift changes in the focus of the narrator. Usually the turning points at one moment of the fabula are given in the form of crisis. **Development**, on the other hand, covers a long period of time, and the effects of the events on the form of development may appear in a longer period of time. More details are inserted, and usually the passing of time builds up the consequences rather than the acts of specific actors performed at once. Although the form of development covers a longer period of time than that of crisis, there is always a selection, as it is not technically possible to narrate events in **real time**, the

time period that would be actually covered in daily life. Therefore, **chronology** is distorted in terms of events by the **gaps**, **omissions (ellipsis)**, and **parallelisms** in the fabula.

Rimmon-Kenan regards **time** as consisting of both 'the means of representation (language)' and 'the object represented (the incidents of the story)'. The language has a linear course while the incidents have a multi linear course (Rimmon-Kenan, 1989: 44-45). The relation and dependence between the two make up the **chronological quality of the narrative**. The distortion of the fabula in terms of time sequence by means of certain chronological devices (e.g. **analepsis**, **prolepsis**, **ellipsis**, etc.) forms the story. Changes in the time, jumping back and forth, or undermining the sense of time shape, even modify, all other elements of the narrative, and their significance in the narrative. Eventually the distortion and change in the fabula requires the reassessment of the data acquired from the modified aspects of space, characters, events, and the narrator.

It is almost impossible to avoid giving a certain sense of time in a fabula, even if the narrative does not contain a set of codes to imply the chronological aspects that are necessary to determine the exact dates or time sequence. It is because the acts of the characters and the use of language bring forth the sense of the passing of time. Similarly, the sense of **location** inevitably exists in the fabulas of narratives. In the basic sense, **locations** are **spaces** where events take place, in other words where the narrative occurs. **Spatial elements** that mark locations play more important roles than being merely decorative backgrounds. The grouping of spatial elements, places, etc. can offer links between these elements and the psychological, ideological, or moral assertions of the narrative. **Locations,** which indicate characteristics such as inside-outside, central-peripheral, high-low, safe-unsafe etc. help the reader to identify and analyse the function and the meaning of places. Furthermore, the grouping of places as contrasting, parallel, etc. enable the reader to trace the over all effect of the places. Oppositions as well as similarities deduced through the categorisation of locations can be used to uncover the intention, which is usually hidden in the narrative.

B- FABULA: *THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY GENTLEMAN*

Since *Tristram Shandy* has an episodic quality, it does not present a continuous series of events. Rather, the events form discontinuous chains. Therefore, in order to form the fabula of the narrative in *Tristram Shandy*, it is necessary to single out the functional events for a proper analysis.

The discussion between Tristram's great grandparents on the nose of the great grandfather, which took place in the first half of the 16th century, is the first event that makes up the fabula of *Tristram Shandy*. The great grandmother, who feels that her husband's rather small nose is a shame, asks for compensation. The great grandfather agrees to pay a certain amount of money as compensation. The reason why this event is considered to be a functional element of the fabula is that later in the narrative Walter Shandy comments upon this event and marks this deal between his grandparents as the beginning of the downfall of the Shandy family.

Corporal Trim receives the wound on his knee in the battle of Laden in 1693. He is placed on a cart so as to be taken to a hospital. However, when they have stopped at an old peasant's cottage for a rest, a beguine (a volunteer nurse), who sees Trim' wound, claims that Trim cannot continue his trip to the hospital on a horse cart. She persuades the soldiers to leave Trim with her in the house, and takes care of Trim's wound herself. One day while the beguine is rubbing Trim's knee and leg, Trim realises that he is falling in love with her. He cannot control his emotions and makes advances at her. This event is functional, because while Trim has been narrating this event to Toby so as to inform him about what love is, Wadman, who will later make advances at Toby, has been eavesdropping, and finds out about the importance of physical contact (holding hands) in wooing.

Toby Shandy receives a wound in his groin during the siege of Namur in Flanders in 1695. When he is sent to England for his treatment, Walter decides to take care of his brother Toby, and spares an apartment for Toby in his house in London. Toby stays in confinement in Walter's house from 1695 to 1699. Further in the narrative, this sequence of events leads to complications.

Toby acquires a map of Namur in 1695 in order to mark the exact spot where he received his wound so that he can tell other people how and where he was wounded. He tries to improve his knowledge on various topics during his four-year confinement in Walter's house. Upon Trim's suggestion to go to the countryside and build fortifications there, he leaves his brother's apartment in 1699 and, by the help of Trim, moves to his small country house outside London with his books and maps.

Toby and Trim spend three years building a model city which involves fortifications, bridges, and sentry boxes in order to animate the sieges in Italy and Flanders in the 'bowling green' at the bottom of the garden of Toby's country house. They also manufacture fake artilleries. Having finished the preparations for a siege, they decide to start the attack. Because his country house needs repair, Toby spends three nights in Wadman's (his neighbour's) house in 1702. During Toby's visit, Wadman falls in love with him. However, it will take her eleven years to make Toby love her in return.

While Toby's and Trim's campaign is in progress, the innkeeper of the village comes to Toby in 1706 to beg for charity for Le Fever, a soldier who is an invalid and who stays at the village inn with his son. After talking to Le Fever, Toby invites him to his house, but the man soon dies. Toby takes care of Le Fever's son, and sends him to a public school.

After having animated a lot of sieges taking place in Italy, now (in 1713) Toby and Trim make preparations to animate one of the most exciting stages of the present war in Spain. On the expected day, Trim begins to fire the fake cannons all by himself. Toby catches Trim firing the cannons beside the sentry box. Resentfully he goes to the sentry box. Widow Wadman follows Toby to the sentry box and tries to attract his attention. Wadman succeeds in courting Toby, and Toby is attracted to Wadman in the sentry box on the bowling green. Because of the peace treaty of Utrecht, which ends the war, Toby's and Trim's animations come to a halt. As the actual peace treaty enforces, they prepare to demolish certain structures in the model city, and retreat to England.

As Toby has nothing to do after the peace treaty, he begins to think about Wadman and realises that he has fallen in love with her. Having decided to make a

marriage proposal to her, Toby asks about Trim's opinions on love and marriage. Trim warns Toby about the different nature of women and the disadvantages of being married.

Before Toby's visiting Wadman, Trim recommends making a military plan as if they were preparing for a siege. Trim suggests that he should make advances to Wadman's maid Bridget while Toby is 'attacking' Wadman. The two put on their best garments for the visit. Meanwhile, with the help of Bridget, Wadman tries to find out about Toby's sexual potency, since she has doubts because of the wound in his groin. This is important for her because she needs to have a child in order to gain the full right upon the house and the land she lives in. Trim, who learns from Bridget why Wadman is so curious about Toby's health, tries to make Bridget believe that there is nothing wrong with Toby. Wadman, however, refers to books and doctors to make sure. Toby goes to see Wadman at her house. Wadman first asks questions about the compensation she shall have after giving birth to a child when they get married. Then, she asks Toby to clarify her doubts about his sexual potency. Toby misunderstands Wadman's interest in his wound, and thinks that her concern is humane. Trim, then, informs Toby of Wadman's actual concern. Toby feels disappointed, and consults his brother Walter. Walter blames women for taking love only as a means to continue the human race, and condemns all women as devilish creatures. Then, Obadiah (Walter's servant) comes in to complain about the sterility of Walter's bull; his cow was mated with Walter's bull but the expected calf was never conceived. (The functionality of this event will be discussed in the next chapter on the 'story', which mainly deals with the perspective of the narrator in narrating the events.)

Walter and Mrs. Shandy travel to London in September 1717. Mrs. Shandy gets pregnant in March 1718. Recalling their visit to London, which was a waste of time and money for him, Walter bids Mrs. Shandy to give birth to her baby in the countryside instead of the city. As Walter and Mrs. Shandy have signed a marriage article with an additional clause, Walter has the right to decide about the place of the baby's birth. Mrs. Shandy is forced to give birth to her baby at home. She asks for a mid-wife, but Walter decides to send for 'a man mid-wife', who is Dr. Slop. Walter is of the opinion that for the well being of the baby, caesarean birth must be

preferred, and he assumes that only Dr. Slop is capable of it. However, Mrs. Shandy's protest upon hearing about caesarean birth makes Walter give up the idea.

Tristram is brought into the world in November 1718. Unfortunately, Dr. Slop's forceps has broken the baby's nose in the process. Dr. Slop tries to make a bridge in the kitchen to treat Tristram's nose. This accident disappoints Walter who believes that big noses bring good fortune. To compensate for this 'misfortune', he decides to give his son a name bearing powerful associations: Trismegistus, which means three times majestic. Susannah (Mrs. Shandy's maid), who was supposed to inform the curate that the baby would be christened as Trismegistus, cannot properly remember the name. The result is that Walter's son is baptised by the curate who decides that the proposed name is 'Tristram'. Tristram means three times sad, a name Walter would especially hate. Walter hates the name 'Tristram' so much that he had written a dissertation to show the abominableness of the name to the world in 1716, two years before his son's birth. As a result, the unfortunate accidents concerning Tristram's birth and baptism have fully disappointed Walter, who believed that big noses bring good fortune and Christian names have a huge impact on the person's success or failure.

After Tristram's baptism, Toby recommends Walter to consult Yorick about the terms and conditions of baptism. In order to learn about the nullification of baptism, Yorick advises Walter to attend Didius' dinner party where the great authorities gather. At the dinner party, it is understood that Christian names cannot be changed even if the parents of the child demand such a change. Therefore, Tristram remains Tristram.

Aunt Dinah, who has begot a child by a coachman and therefore has aroused Walter's anger in 1699, dies in 1718, leaving Walter a good amount of money. Walter decides to use the money to send Tristram's brother Bobby on a grand tour of Europe. Walter calculates the cost of the journey. Obadiah brings a letter to Walter, which reveals the death of Bobby in London where he was studying. Walter contemplates on death, and reveals his opinions on death to Toby while Mrs. Shandy is eavesdropping. Misunderstanding what Walter is talking about, she blames him for having an illegitimate child.

After the death of Bobby, Walter begins to write a book he calls 'Tristra-paedia' in order to make sure that his younger son, who has already suffered two 'misfortunes', will be well educated and prepared for the ups and downs of life. He begins writing the book in 1719, and gives up writing it in 1723, after another 'misfortune' Tristram is confronted with.

This 'misfortune' refers to Tristram's accidental circumcision. As Toby has ordered Trim to collect all the metal pieces in Shandy Hall to manufacture model cannons for the siege of Dunkirk, the windows are left without their metal supporters. One day in 1723, Tristram climbs up one of the windows to pee outside. (Susannah, who was supposed to be in charge of Tristram, aged 5, has not been able to find the pot.) The window falls down upon Tristram's genitals. Upon the accident, Susannah, fearing Walter's anger, seeks refuge in Toby's house. Then, Dr. Slop is called to cure Tristram's injury. Walter hears what has happened, and he desperately refers to his books to learn about the great historical figures who were circumcised.

Dr. Slop spreads the false news that Tristram has lost all of his genitals because of the maid's fault. Upon this rumour, Toby suggests showing Tristram to the people at the market place. Walter rejects this idea, but decides to clad Tristram in breeches in good time so that the marks of circumcision can be hidden. He refers to one of the books on outfits. He discusses the matter over with Mrs. Shandy in bed on the first Sunday of the month, which is the night to make love with Mrs. Shandy. Since she affirms whatever Walter says, he feels angry and drops the subject of outfits. He blames Mrs. Shandy for being submissive and thinks it is impossible to communicate with her.

Up to this point in the fabula, the events concerning Tristram have been based on cause and effect relationship. The other events, which have functional quality, have followed each other between the years 1693 and 1723. The remaining events (between 1728 and 1766), however, are disconnected and do not serve a function as elements of fabula. The only exception is Tristram's completing his father's unfinished 'Tristra-paedia' and beginning to write the novel (*The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy Gentleman*) in 1759 – a task which he will be carrying on until 1766, which marks the end of the novel. These two events are functional in the

fabula as they indicate that contrary to Walter's belief that his son Tristram is unfortunate, the hero succeeds in accomplishing what his father failed in.

(1) Events

The fabula of *Tristram Shandy* gives the impression that it is disorderly, since different chains of events are hardly connected. However, after the categorisation of events, there appears a structure, which attaches the events to each other. This structure is obtained by means of criteria introduced by Bal as **change**, **choice** and **confrontation**. The events in *Tristram Shandy* are generally based on **choice** and **confrontation** rather than **change**. Events based on **choice** indicate that an actor makes a choice between two or more possibilities at the end of which a change (either a development or a deterioration) occurs in the fabula. Events based on **confrontation**, on the other hand, indicate the confrontation of two or more actors for an action, the outcome of which also yields a change in the narrative. 'Confrontation' involves **bodily**, **mental** and/or **verbal** conducts in terms of the relationship between actors in an event. A series of events may include both confrontation and choice.

The discussion on the size of the great grandfather's nose between Tristram's great grandparents is based on a verbal **confrontation**. The great grandmother demands compensation, and presents a written deal to be signed by the great grandfather. In the end, the two reach an agreement when the great grandfather accepts to sign the deal. Similar confrontations are seen between Toby and Wadman, and Walter and Mrs. Shandy as well.

The events which involve Trim and Toby are based on verbal and bodily 'confrontation'. Together they build military and a few civilian structures on the bowling green. However, Trim ignores Toby and begins the most thrilling part of the battle alone. When Toby catches Trim on the (so called) battlefield, he only takes from Trim the equipment which fires the fake cannons. Although the two continue to be close mates, Toby feels 'disappointed'. When the peace treaty stops the war and the structures on the bowling green turn out to be useless, Toby feels even more 'disappointed'. This event is an example for the tantalizing effect of confrontation.

The events which involve Toby, Widow Wadman, Bridget, and Trim are also based on verbal and bodily 'confrontation'. Wadman establishes a communication with Toby by making him answer her questions, and at the same time establishes a bodily contact by touching his hands, legs, and eventually by urging him to look straight into her eyes. Toby falls in love with Wadman to the extent that he decides to marry her. After the second phase of the confrontation, Toby's marriage proposal to Wadman - the 'confrontation' of Toby and Trim is decisive. Toby decides not to marry Wadman, when he learns from Trim, who has learnt from Bridget, the reality about Wadman's inquiries concerning his sexual potency. The confrontation produces disappointment, which, as in the preceding event, affects Toby.

The marriage article signed by Walter and Mrs. Shandy is a legal **confrontation** similar to that of the great grandparents, but with an important difference: Mrs. Shandy does not object to the adding of another clause to the article, which is a **choice**. The burdensome London journey and the marriage article enable Walter to decide where his wife shall give birth, and he 'chooses' the countryside instead of the city. This 'choice' triggers many 'misfortunes' to come.

Walter decides to call Dr. Slop, as the operator for 'the birth', instead of a midwife and a more capable doctor. Walter's decision is a **choice**. This choice leads to a chain of events: Dr. Slop decides to use forceps during the birth; he fails to use the tools successfully, and eventually breaks the nose of the offspring. In order to compensate for the 'misfortune', Walter decides to give his son a powerful name. However, since he is not properly dressed up for the baptism ceremony he fails to articulate the name in his mind for the baby (Trismegistus) directly to the curate, and asks Susannah, who tells him the baby cannot wait much longer, to do it for him. Susannah forgets the name, and ironically, Walter's son is christened as Tristram, a name which Walter detests. Consequently, Walter's choices turn out to be wrong, and against his desires.

When Walter decides to write Tristra-paedia, he leaves Tristram to the care and protection of Mrs. Shandy and Susannah. Eventually, he neglects his son for the sake of his well being in the future. Ironically, his **choice** causes further 'misfortunes'. When the boy is five years old, Susannah asks Tristram to pee out of the window

instead of bringing the pot. Her **choice** (neglecting her duty) results in the dropping of the sash-window on Tristram's genitals, and causing him to be circumcised. This accident and the previous ones lead to Walter's disappointment.

In addition to the events based on **choice** and **confrontation**, the events with the **actors** in *Tristram Shandy* can further be investigated in terms of the triangular process that consists of **possibility**, **realization** and **conclusion**. In order to reach a desirable conclusion, the desires of the actors, the effort they display to fulfil them, and the outcome of the efforts should be examined.

Walter (**subject**) aims at (**function**) raising a powerful and successful son (**object**), who, as a member of the Shandy family, can break the unfortunate 'Shandean' cycle. Walter's means of realizing his aim lies in his way of thinking (**power**, which would support him to realize his desire), which he calls the 'Shandean system'. The importance of physical qualities, the Christian name, and the so called scientific research are parts of this 'system'. In the fabula of *Tristram Shandy*, **power** turns out to be the **opponent**, since Walter overvalues the importance of scientific system, ignoring the crucial paternal care. The outcome of his efforts is failure and his efforts result in 'misfortunes'.

Toby Shandy (**subject**) desires (**function**) to feel the excitement of experiencing battles by means of establishing a model city and fortifications to animate sieges (**object**). Trim (**helper**) works on the bowling green to build the structures. Toby makes use of his military knowledge, the bowling green, and the daily papers (**power**) in realising his aim. However, because he has intended to stick to historical reality, he has to give up his amusement in the end, when actually the peace treaty is signed (the parties who sign it as the **anti-subjects** as they pursue their own road regardless of Toby's aims). Consequently, Toby Shandy feels disappointed. As subject, he cannot fulfil his desire to marry Wadman either.

The events in the fabula of *Tristram Shandy* are all related to domestic matters. We do not see complications, which carry the potential of directly or indirectly effecting large masses. The daily routines, trivial conflicts between men and women, misunderstandings, and old age hobbies make up the core of the narrative. However, these events display a characteristic quality. At the end of almost all these series of

events, we come up with a similar result, which is ‘disappointment’ or ‘failure’. The narrator’s selection of events and the course he follows to resolve them bears a catastrophic quality.

(2) Actors

Actors in the fabula of *Tristram Shandy*, who have functional value, are Walter Shandy, Uncle Toby Shandy, Corporal Trim, Mrs. Shandy, Dr. Slop, Widow Wadman, Bridget the maid, Susannah the maid, Yorick the parson, Yorick’s curate Eugenius, and Tristram Shandy. Among the list of functional actors, Yorick the parson bears an impact on the fabula due to his absence, while others directly play a role in the fabula. These actors are the ones who directly or indirectly cause the events of the fabula or suffer their consequences. Others like Bobby, Obadiah, the cook of the Shandy family, Jonathan the butler, or the people whom Tristram Shandy has met during his journey to France are non-functional actors. They do not affect the course of events that are functional in the fabula. Therefore, although they possess qualities of their own, they do not contribute to the analysis of the fabula.

Toby and Trim pursue similar aims, and therefore they form an **actant** throughout the narrative. In terms of the primary narrative text, Toby and Trim hold a central importance, as they cause many events to happen or they are affected by them. In addition, they create the comic effect in the narrative, especially because of the contrast produced between Toby-Trim as an actant and the other actors, such as Dr. Slop and Walter. The repeated comic effect caused by Toby are his whistling ‘lillabullero’ when he wants to keep away from a hot debate, smoking his pipe in a funny manner, misunderstanding or confusing other actors’ words, and beginning to act all of a sudden as if he were on the battlefield with Trim. On the other hand, Trim gives the impression of a faithful servant, a friend and an advisor to Toby whenever needed. His recurrent aspects are his highly respectful attitude towards the masters, his habit of giving advices, his long recital of his opinions, and his chasing of maids.

Unlike Toby and Trim, Walter is seen as a grave and contemplative actor. He tries to both improve and display his knowledge and opinions on a vast area of science, politics, religion and sociology. Thus, as a (so called) man of knowledge he stands in contrast to Toby, who is devoted to Christian faith. The most recurring

aspect of Walter is his assertive and argumentative attitude towards every actor in the fabula, although he turns out to be a negligent and unsuccessful father.

While Walter and Toby are the major actors, who are at the centre of the fabula, Mrs. Shandy, Tristram Shandy, Dr. Slop, Bridget, Yorick, and Eugenius are minor actors. As the wife of Walter and the mother of Tristram, Mrs. Shandy might be expected to have a more central function in the fabula. However, she is just a complementary actor. She causes few complications, which end up (like Toby's) by raising Walter's temper.

Dr. Slop's function as an actor is to be the object of ridicule as well as causing a major complication in the fabula, as he breaks Tristram's nose during the birth. His description reminds one of a caricature sketch, which highlights his function: '[…] A little squat figure […] of about four feet and a half perpendicular height, with a breadth of back, and a sesquipedality of belly, which might have done honour to a serjeant in the horse-guards' (Sterne, 1996: 73). Besides his appearance, his religious (Catholic) and professional (a clumsy obstetrician) traits are also ridiculed so as to create comic effect as well as developing the fabula.

Tristram Shandy as an actor is surprisingly subordinate to almost all the other actors in the fabula. We hardly see him as an adult actor, except in Book 7. Therefore, Tristram the actor is only the **receiver** of the consequences of the events, which means that he does not create complications in the fabula. Tristram is seen as the victim of circumstances in the events until he becomes an adult. (At the time he begins to write the novel, he is forty-one years old.)

Widow Wadman and Susannah form another **actant** during the period when Toby falls in love with Wadman and decides to marry her. They do not act together; however they act separately for the same end, as they try to learn whether Toby is potent enough to give Wadman a child. Toby's sexual potency is important for Wadman in order to be able to have a child to secure the land she lives on. Therefore, the identity of Wadman and Bridget as an actant is based on the false impression (their curiosity about a man's health) created by them. Although the truth is obvious to the reader, the actors of the fabula are unaware of their true intention until Trim

finally discovers the truth. Eventually, Wadman cannot marry Toby, and loses her chance to gain the rights of the land.

Susannah the maid is the transition between the masters and servants by profession in the conventional sense. Although she belongs to the household staff in Shandy Hall, she is close enough to Mrs. Shandy, Walter and Toby to ask for Mrs. Shandy's green nightgown after Bobby's death, to urge Walter to hurry at the time of the baptism of Tristram, to seek protection in Toby's house after the sash-window accident, and to be made responsible for Tristram's well being as a five year old child. In the events she takes part in, Susannah fails to meet the requirements of her responsibility as she is always neglecting her duties.

Finally, Yorick the parson and Eugenius the curate function interdependently and have limited functions in terms of the development of the fabula. The absence of Yorick at the baptism ceremony and, as a result, Eugenius' undertaking the task of carrying out the ceremony are significant. As the religious authorities of the parish, neither of them fulfils his duty successfully.

One of the common aspects of the actors in *Tristram Shandy* is failure in accomplishing tasks. Another common aspect is that the failure or success of the actors depends upon the other actors' performances (One exception is the peace treaty, which ends Toby's game of preparing sieges). Instead of external effects, the events and the consequences in the fabula are produced by the actors themselves, and their performances eventually cause 'misfortunes' and 'disappointments' for others.

(3) Time

The fabula of *Tristram Shandy* covers a span of approximately two hundred years. It begins during the reign of Henry the eighth in the first half of the 16th century, and ends in 1766, which is Tristram Shandy's present as the adult narrator and the implied author. Despite the long time span, the narrative does not cover all the events that take place within this time span. Since the narrative has an episodic quality, there are huge gaps in time, which we call **ellipsis**. The longest ellipsis covers more than a hundred years, beginning with the discussion between Tristram's great grandparents. This episode is followed by Trim and Toby receiving wounds in the battlefield in 1693 and in 1695 respectively. We do not know what has happened

in the interval between the two episodes. Similarly, there are gaps in the narration between the years 1723 and 1759, when Tristram the narrator begins writing the novel. From 1723 on, the narrator only gives bits and pieces about the lives of the characters: Tristram is sent to Jesus College. He visits France with Walter, Toby, Obadiah and Trim as a part of his grand tour in Europe in the 1730s. He visits Denmark in the course of a tour in Europe as the governor of a man's (Mr. Noddy) son in 1741.

The focus of the narrative in terms of **time span** deals largely with the events that have taken place in the twenty-eight years beginning in 1695 (when Toby received the wound) and ending in 1723 (when Tristram accidentally got circumcised). However, the narrator is highly selective in relating events that take place in this twenty-eight year period.

The events in *Tristram Shandy* consist of two forms as regards **time**: **Crisis** and **development**. By means of 'crisis', we refer to brief periods of time in which the events lead to a development or a complication at once. 'Development', on the other hand, covers a much longer period of time in which the progress in the fabula is slow, and details gain more importance.

The span of approximately two hundred years obviously seems to require a development, as many conventional biographies or autobiographies do. However, the skeleton of the narrative, in other words the most significant events that make up the narrative, is based on 'crisis'. The moments of crisis are linked to one another as the narrative continues, and they form 'development' eventually.

The events in the fabula, which can be defined as 'crisis', can be categorised under two headings: Those related to Tristram, his parents and his grandparents, and those related to Toby and Trim. The first category consists of the discussion on the theme of the nose between the great grandparents of Tristram Shandy (that starts the fabula), Walter and Mrs. Shandy's conceiving Tristram, Dr. Slop's accidentally breaking Tristram's nose in the process of birth, Tristram's baptism, Bobby's death and Tristram's accidental circumcision. The second category includes Toby's and Trim's receiving their wounds, Trim's falling in love with a beguine, Toby's falling

in love with Widow Wadman and his proposal of marriage to her. Each of these events happen in moments of crisis and within a day.

Toby's four-year confinement, Aunt Dinah's affair with the coachman, Walter's dedicating himself to write Tristra-paedia for more than three years, Toby's and Trim's preparations for military campaigns for more than four years, Toby's plan to marry Wadman, and Tristram's journey to France can be considered as 'developments' in the fabula, as they cover a long period of time. However, the events making up the 'development' are not always presented in lengthy passages, as the term 'development' would imply. Aunt Dinah's affair with a coachman whom she marries, and the consequence of this affair are mentioned only in one paragraph in Book 1, Chapter 21 and briefly touched upon later and only function as a recurrent element. Walter's process of writing Tristra-paedia, which lasts more than three years, is only summarised in Book 5, Chapter 16. The progress in Toby's and Trim's efforts to build a model city in the bowling green, and to animate sieges, which last more or less four years, are presented in Book 6, chapters 22 and 23. On the other hand, Toby's game of military campaigns and his love affair with Widow Wadman in 1713 are dealt with elaborately in a lot of chapters in Book 8 and 9.

Whether in the form of crisis or development, the events in *Tristram Shandy* succeed one another in a chronological order with stress on strict time codes, which may give the reader the impression that *Tristram Shandy* is a historical piece. Thematic unity and continuity are maintained throughout the narrative by means of the carefully handled time scheme. In that sense, the selection of the first event, which starts the fabula, is thematically integrated in the narrative, although it took place almost two centuries ago (and therefore seems to have nothing to do with the rest of the narrative). The use of 'ellipsis' in the fabula of *Tristram Shandy* signifies the fact that the narrator does not aim to narrate the life story of the actors in the fabula, but aims to focus thematically on the events with disastrous, unpleasant or sad consequences, which can all be labelled as 'misfortunes'.

(4) Location

In *Tristram Shandy*, the **places** reflect the overall tendency in the fabula to show that they are places where the actors face disappointment. In general, we can

divide the places in the fabula of *Tristram Shandy* into two, as indoor and outdoor places. Indoor places are Walter's house in London, Shandy Hall in the countryside, Toby's country house, the peasant's cottage where Trim's wound is treated, Widow Wadman's house, the inn where Le Fever stayed, and Didius' house. Outdoor places are Namur where Toby got wounded, the bowling green, the avenue to Wadman's house, the fishpond where Walter goes to calm down, and France, where Tristram travels.

Among those places, Shandy Hall is the **meeting place** for the actors. By the meeting place, we mean the central location where important events mostly take place, and where actors of the fabula confront each other. All the other places are peripheral to the meeting place. **Peripheral places** are the locations where actors are comparatively detached from each other to experience separate events, or are just isolated from the rest of the cast.

Shandy Hall is populated by the major actors such as Walter Shandy, Toby Shandy, Corporal Trim, and Tristram Shandy. In addition, subordinate actors such as Mrs. Shandy, Dr. Slop, Susannah the maid, and Yorick's curate Eugenius appear at Shandy Hall. The majority of the events related to the primary narrative text, in other words the 'misfortunes' happen at Shandy Hall. The 'misfortunes' affect Tristram physically, and affect Walter mentally. In that sense, Shandy Hall is not a place of bliss. Rather, it is the place of disappointments.

As for the peripheral places, the bowling green is worth noting. Toby, Trim, and later on Widow Wadman are seen on the bowling green. First of all, the bowling green becomes an imaginary place after the construction of the model city. This place is important for Toby and Trim in order to fulfil their 'dream' project until the peace treaty terminates its function, and accordingly the model city is demolished. However, when Wadman sneaks in as an intruder and Toby falls in love with her, the bowling green turns into a **transitory place**, because Toby is now more a lover than an army captain and is led from the bowling green to another peripheral place, which is Wadman's house. Other peripheral transitory places on the road to Wadman's house are first Toby's house, where Toby and Trim get prepared for their visit to

Wadman's house, and secondly the avenue to Wadman's house, where Toby and Trim discuss women in general as well as the pros and cons of marriage.

Widow Wadman's house is another peripheral place, which has significance in the fabula. For Wadman, the house signified her fidelity to her ex-husband until Toby's showing up in the house and staying for a couple of nights. With Toby's intrusion, the house is no longer a place for widowhood; it now holds matrimonial aspirations. For Toby and Trim, the house signifies a 'town, which must be captured so that Toby can achieve his aim of marrying Wadman. However, the final meeting between Toby and Wadman takes place in the house, and the result is failure for both sides, as the desired marriage is not realized.

Battlefields are peripheral places significant for both Toby and Trim. The two battlefields in the narrative are functionally identical, as Toby is seen on the battlefield in Namur whereas Trim is seen on the battlefield in Laden. After they are wounded on the battlefield, Toby and Trim are taken to identically functioning peripheral places. Toby has recovered in Walter's house in London whereas Trim is taken to the peasant's cottage. The battlefields have caused them to receive wounds, which have a permanent effect in their lives. On the other hand, they stay in Walter's house and the peasant's cottage respectively only for temporary relief. Therefore, these spaces are transitory peripheral places.

The places Tristram visits during his journey in France can hardly be regarded as a part of the elements of the fabula, because they are not introduced and presented in order to develop the narrative. France as a location helps the narrator to make a comparison between the French and English cultures – a non-narrative quality, which concerns the 'text', not the 'fabula'. Therefore, the places, which Tristram visits in France, are far from being functional in the analysis of places.

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Throughout the fabula of *Tristram Shandy*, we do not see a central course of action, but various minor directions through which the fabula is developed. Although the events are not always based on a strict cause and effect relationship, they are not fully detached from one another. Dates and locations, in which events take place, are clearly stated so as to establish a link between events, which may not logically follow

each other. Therefore, all elements of the fabula – events, actors, time and location – are strictly consistent with each other. They serve to maintain the thematic unity of the narrative, which may be formulated as *the unfortunate experiences of the Shandy family*.

The subject matter of the fabula of *Tristram Shandy* is quite gloomy and has almost a tragic quality, because almost all the events are about accidents, injuries, disappointments, and deceptions, which have led to both mental and physical damage. However, the narrative involves a strong sense of humour (a highly comical perspective) as a 'finished product', which is the 'story', and which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III. STORY: THE ELEMENTS OF THE STORY IN *THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY GENTLEMAN*

This chapter aims at discussing the concept of **story** in terms of 'narratology' and applying this concept to relevant points in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*.

A- STORY: THEORY

Story is the ordered form of **text** and **fabula** in accord with the author's intention and style; it is the latest version of the fabula. It can also be defined as 'events arranged by the narrator'. In forming the story, fabula is treated in a certain way, and the reader is guided, or even manipulated by this treatment. The actors of the fabula turn into characters only after this treatment. The way characters are presented determine the way they are perceived. The story shares the same fundamental elements as fabula and text. However, in the story, every single element or unit gains a differentiating aspect when they are perceived by the character and/or the narrator. The units such as actor, space, and time in fabula are not raw materials or simply functional elements of the text any more. Actors transform into **characters**, spaces turn into **places**, and time stops to become a matter of **chronology**, and becomes the object of order and arrangement.

All these changes occur by the arrangement (deployment) of focalizors in the story, who see, interpret or/and view the objects, situations, and events; in short, the fictional quality of the text and the fabula is constructed through the shaping of the story.

The intelligibility of the story lies in the fact that all the elements are related to each other in various degrees. The agent, which acts as a link between the story and the narratee, is usually the narrator(s) outside the story, but it can also be a character in the story. Actors of the fabula (now characters) are placed in spaces, in which they interact, and consequently actors and spaces bring out a mutual relationship. If this relationship is a close one, when the meaning is produced by the gathering of these two elements, symbolic implications can be achieved. Actors, places, and other elements in the fabula are perceived from the point of view of one or more

characters, and these perceiving entities resulting from the treatment and arrangement of the fabula by the narrator help the reader to understand the text, and relate the narrative units to one another. Then, after 'fabula' is transformed into 'story', the 'text' is no more a linguistic medium, and consequently all three parts (text, fabula, story) of the narrative attain narrative integration.

One of the methods to transform fabula into story is to rearrange the chronological sequence of the fabula. By means of this treatment, the chronology of the fabula is distorted by the insertion of **deviations** from the mainstream, **gaps**, or **anachronies**. Deviations in chronological sequence directly affect the reader's interaction with the story, and by means of deviations the author creates effects, such as constantly reminding the reader of the presence of a narrator signifying the illusion of reality, using for example the gaps of the fabula to stress the need for an intense reading, or urging the reader to become involved so as to reshape the story due to the organization of the order by the narrator. The psychological effects, differences between expectations and realizations on the reader's side, and aesthetic effects on the author's side are also related to sequential ordering. When the order of events (sequence) does not follow the natural chronology, the difference between these two elements of the narrative is called **anachrony**. To determine anachronies, one has to decide about the **primary story time** to understand the present time of the story so as to determine the chronological movement of the story backward or forward. Anachrony is seen in two forms: **Retroversion** (analepsis) meaning that the anachrony lies in the past, and **anticipation** (prolepsis) meaning it lies in the future and serves to announce (foreshadow) a development or to give a hint about the fabula.

Anachronies can cover a long period of time, between the narrative moment of the fabula and that of the anachrony that takes place: This is called **distance**. Anachronies can be external, meaning outside the time span of the fabula; or internal, meaning within the time span of the fabula. If anachrony begins outside the time span of the fabula and ends within, then it is called **mixed anachrony**. Anachronies can be used to give information about the past or future to interpret events, to fill a gap, or elaborate the information given before by means of repetition. There are different types of anachrony. It can be punctual, and points to completed action; or it can be durative, and point to a continuing action that has its effects to come in the

long run. In cases where there is an omission in the chronology of the fabula, which cannot be determined in terms of time span and distance values specifically, we have an **achrony**.

The pinpointing of anachronies in the narrative sequence enables the analyst to see the pattern of the focus of the author. By understanding how much attention is paid to specific elements, one can draw 'a picture of the vision on the fabula which is being communicated to the reader' (Bal, 2002: 101).

Rhythm is the speed with which various events are presented. Chapters, pages, lines etc. are surveyed to see the emphasis on events, and compare the proportions. Bal's division of a narrative into five segments as **ellipsis**, **summary**, **scene**, **slow-down**, and **pause** is serviceable to discover the rhythm of a narrative. **Ellipsis** means the omission of certain information about the fabula. The presence of ellipsis is deducible. For example, if a person is seen alive in one scene, and buried in the next, the death scene, which must have been placed in between the two, is omitted, and is an ellipsis. The omissions may be useful and important in analysing texts, as they signify the author's or a character's attitude, for example, when it comes after an important but opaque event. **Summary** helps the reader to understand the aim of the narrative by comparing parts that are summarised, and parts that are narrated in detail. In a **scene**, there is the implication that the events are narrated as if they were happening in real life, and 'the duration of the fabula and that of the story are roughly the same' (Bal, 2002: 105). However, the impossibility of narrating 'real time' emerges during the narration of a scene. By **slow-down**, little time spans a great deal of narrative. An action that should cover a few minutes can be treated in many pages. During a **pause**, no movement of the fabula time is implied. No time passes.

In the story, recurring of events and their numerical relationship with each other is called **frequency**. 'Repetition' occurs when an event happens only once, and is presented a number of times. 'Iterative presentation' means a whole series of identical events presented at once. 'The most recurrent frequency is the singular presentation of a singular event'. Here, it is not the same event which is recurrent, but similar events, since two expressions of an event do not serve the same end with the same construction.

The durational and formal elements so far discusses, and the relationship between them help to examine the weight given to each in the over all text so that the author's narrative intentions can be deduced. The emphasis given to each element is a means of communication between the narrative and the narratee in the narratee's decoding of the encoded meaning in the text. The narrative provides hints (a kind of anticipation) to be followed up backwardly and forwardly throughout the text. The realization of hints or their being ineffective in the narrative proves to be profitable for the sufficient categorisation and hierarchical organization acquired by the narratee temporally, spatially, or representatively.

As for the representational quality of the narrative, the actor in the fabula becomes a **character**, and the character in the story is endowed with distinctive human characteristics. In the story, the character is no more a functional element. The persona of the character is given psychological and ideological dimensions, and therefore is visualised as a human being. Profession, age, sex, marital status, personal history, society he/she lives in give hints and information about the nature of the character. Due to the qualities attributed and information given, the possibilities of a character for action are limited. The limits are provided by the character's relationship with others, similarities, contrasts, repeated qualities, transformations, and alterations in the character in the course of the narrative. The information given by the narrator or another character about a character is **explicit qualification** or **direct definition**, yet the information given may or may not be true. On the other hand, characteristics can be deduced by means of the character's actions, and this is called **implicit qualification** or **indirect presentation**, and in this case the task of discovering the character's quality is left to the reader.

According to Rimmon-Kenan, a character's trait can be implied by either **one-time action** or **habitual action** (Rimmon-Kenan, 1989: 61). While the habitual action is restricted with recurrent habits, actions out of static aspects (e.g. stereotypical acts), the one-time action has a more unexpected (to a certain degree since the over-all impression may lead to an accurate deduction) nature for not being displayed in the course of events as openly as habitual action. One-time action possesses the potential of turning the course of the events upside down with its

dynamic quality, and is likely to cause fundamental breaking points. Both categories of action are fit for one of the three types:

1. Act of commission (realization of action).

2. Act of omission (unrealised action which should have been performed).

3. Contemplated act (unrealised action though it was intended to be performed) (Rimmon-Kenan, 1989: 61-62).

Regarding the outcome of the act of the character, it is possible to reach conclusions and labels to define characters, basically as capable or incapable, challenging or passive, hero or anti-hero, etc.

The characters in the story are placed in spaces. Bal defines **place** as 'the topological position in which the actors are situated and where the events take place' (Bal, 2002: 133). The way places are perceived and the relation between perception and place form the **space**. Spaces are described either by the narrator or in the way characters perceive. The attributed qualities of spaces, such as safe, unsafe, gloomy, aspiring etc. and the objects in spaces are all considered for the outcoming effect. Spaces themselves can become objects of presentation, and eventually be thematized. Or, they can be frames, just places of action. Between two types of space identified by Bal **steady space** refers to a fixed frame, such as indoor spaces. Such spaces can be places of action as well as a thematic element of a narrative that implies, for example, a certain sense of security, or on the contrary a sense of imprisonment. On the other hand **dynamically functioning space** is a factor, which allows for the movement of characters, such as roads, which may signify freedom, a chance for a change, experience, or disillusionment. Spaces can have relation with events, characters, and time, and their interaction results in the total effect of the narrative. (Bal, 2002: 136)

However, in the last analysis, all the elements of narratives are generally presented from a standing point. Although shifts may occur between one standing point to another, and the standing point is at least an abstract mediator between the one who sees and who relates what is seen. The distinction between those who see and those who speak puts a distance between focalization and narration so that the two are not identical. **Focalization** "is the relationship between the 'vision', the

agent that sees, and that which is seen", and the focalizor is 'the point from which the elements are viewed' (Bal, 2002: 146). If that point is a character of the story, then it is an **internal focalizor**; if it is outside the fabula, it is called an **external focalizor**. The reader sees and follows the story through the eyes of the focalizor; therefore, it is important to study the position of the focalizor in order to discover the message implied in the narrative. Due to the changes in the focalizor, the focalized objects will change, and the nature of the perception presented to the reader will in turn change. Even if the narration is carried out by a first person **retrospective narrator** (internal focalizor), the distinction will remain, as there would be a remarkable difference between the perception of the character going through an experience at that moment, and that of the present speaker. At all variations, the way the focalizor perceives the environment, physical as well as temporal, and the way it is related by the narrator founds the basis through which the psychological and/or ideological aspects of either of the focalizor or the narrator, or both, can be analysed.

Rimmon-Kenan's concept of the story can be regarded as complementary to that of Bal's. Rimmon-Kenan likens the construction of the story to the construction of linguistic forms. The emergence of diverse narrative works (each having a surface structure called **story**) out of relatively determinable deep structures resembles the production of infinite sentences out of limited linguistic deep structures by selecting different identically functioning linguistic items from paradigmatic axes. Moreover a sentence is a syntagmatic unit; so is a story based on temporal and logical principles. (Rimmon-Kenan: 1989: 9-10) This analogy was made use of by structuralist critics like Tzvetan Todorov, Vladimir Propp, and Claude Bremond in reaching a grammar of narrative texts.

B- STORY: *THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY GENTLEMAN*

Story is the ordered form of **text** and **fabula** – the finished product. In *Tristram Shandy*, the story is made up of the narrative and non-narrative elements discussed in the previous chapters. Non-narrative elements, which involve the narrator's descriptions, comments, arguments related to the novel in progress and to various topics, and dialogues and documentation, are blended with the events, which are

based on an exact time scheme and thematic unity. In the end, the events are arranged and characters are presented from one or more certain points of perception (**focalization**), and some of them are stressed while others are briefly touched upon.

The examination of the events in the fabula of *Tristram Shandy* has displayed the fact that the narrated experiences of the Shandy family result in disappointment and sadness; hopes remain unfulfilled, desires are unaccomplished, opinions fail to be delivered, tasks are unfinished, and two characters die. However, on the whole, the narrative is entertaining and funny, and this quality is maintained by means of the narrator's treatment.

The narrator's treatment of the text and the fabula so as to build up the story is based on four operations:

- He distorts the chronology of the events in the fabula.

- He interferes with the flow of events by means of digressions. (Digressions include personal remarks of the narrator on various topics that are derived from the narrative - as a result of the free association of ideas),

- He employs witty language throughout the process of narration.

- He assumes a playful attitude towards the subject matter.

This kind of treatment in *Tristram Shandy* serves to bring out the 'comic' in characters and events.

The significance of *Tristram Shandy* as an outstanding literary product does not stem from the events, which present the ordinary domestic life of a family. What produces significance is the way this ordinary domestic life is presented. This kind of presentation is a decisive factor in shaping the readers' perception of the narrative and the characters.

(1) Sequential Ordering

The complexity of *Tristram Shandy* derives from the peculiar manner in which the events have been organised. Therefore, the sequential ordering of events in the novel requires special attention.

In *Tristram Shandy*, there are two separate chronological lines. The first one is the **primary story time**, which begins in March 1718 (when Tristram is conceived) and ends in 1766 (when the novel ends) covering a span of forty-eight years. The **secondary story time** begins in 1699 (when Toby moved to the country house) and ends in March 1714 (when Toby breaks up with Widow Wadman) covering a span of fifteen years. The events between the 16th century-1699 and 1714-1718 serve mostly for **retroversions** as a background in the story. In order to decide about these primary and secondary story times, we take the continuity of the narration as criterion. The events in each of these time lines follow each other in a cause and effect relationship and with a chronological succession. Besides, the events in each story time tell different stories including different themes. Between the two different courses, the group of events that have taken place between 1718-1766 is selected as the primary story time, because it involves the events which are related to Tristram Shandy the character and other members of the Shandy family and, more significantly, to the process and progress of the narration of *Tristram Shandy*, which begins in 1759 and ends in 1766 (Tristram the narrator's present).

Since the narrator is a **character-bound** (**intradiegetic**) narrator, all the events narrated by him actually belong to the past, and therefore, they are indeed narrated in the form of **retroversion**. The arrangement of the events brings out further retroversions and anticipations within a general process of retroversion, which we call **chronological deviations/ digressions** or **anachronies**. In *Tristram Shandy*, there are passages, which do not have a clear chronological relation with the events. These passages are non-narrative texts and include the narrator's comments on various topics. Therefore, for the sake of clarity, the anticipations and retroversions, which are directly related to the fabula, are labelled as **anachronies**. On the other hand, the passages, in which the narrator's opinions are given weight in the form of non-narrative texts, are referred to as **digressions**. This peculiar separation derives from the peculiar aspect of the novel. For example, the discussion between the great grandparents of Tristram is an **anachrony** (**retroversion**) in the primary story time, as it provides background information for Walter's obsessive belief in long noses. However, when the narrator discusses the function of the critics, he is making a **digression**. *Tristram Shandy* as a novel is largely based on numerous digressions and

anachronies accompanying the storyline, and the impression that the novel is like a labyrinth is the result of this characteristic aspect of the novel. In order to penetrate into the complex nature of *Tristram Shandy*, we have to take a look at the chronological organisation of the story in order to understand the purpose of this organisation.

The story of *Tristram Shandy* (also the primary story time) begins in March 1718 on the night Tristram was conceived. Walter blames Mrs. Shandy for disturbing him with a silly question. Then, we jump forth to a scene in which Walter complains that his son Tristram's misfortunes had begun nine months before he was born. Then, we go back to the year 1693, when the story of the midwife of the parish and how Yorick helped her as well as the rest of Yorick's life, until he dies in 1749, are briefly narrated. When the narrator informs the reader that the origins of Yorick go back to Denmark, we learn that Tristram Shandy, as a grown up man, has visited Denmark in 1741. After Yorick's story, in the narrator's present in 1759, the narrator finds the marriage article signed between Walter and Mrs. Shandy, and gives full account of the content of the article. We return to September 1717 in order to see the consequences of the marriage article, namely Walter's and Mrs. Shandy's travel to London and back to Shandy Hall. On their return, Walter insists that according to their marriage article Mrs. Shandy is obliged to give birth to her next baby in the countryside. From that point we move forth to March 1718, to the day before Tristram was born. Mrs. Shandy decides to call the midwife of the parish for the birth whereas Walter decides to call Dr. Slop. At this point, we go back to 1716, a time when Walter has finished writing a dissertation on the name Tristram, as a part of the Shandean system concerning the importance of Christian names, in order to show his great hatred for the name. After this anachrony, we move to November 1718 in Book 1, Chapter 21 to the day Tristram was born. Walter and Toby, sitting by the fire, wonder why there is so much noise upstairs, which process is represented as a retroversion expanding over four books and seventy-eight chapters. Within this process, Aunt Dinah's affair with a coachman in 1699 is narrated in the form of retroversion, which underlines the differences in Toby's and Walter's character. Then, we go back to 1695; during the siege of Namur, Toby receives the wound in his groin, which causes his character to be mild and modest from then on. Then,

Toby's life between 1696-1699 is summarised. He is sent to England. He stays in Walter's apartment in London and acquires a map of Namur so that he can talk easily about his experiences in Namur. He improves his knowledge on various topics related to the military. In 1699 (also the beginning of the secondary story time), Toby leaves Walter's house in order to move to his country house upon Trim's suggestion to build military structures and to animate sieges on the bowling green of the country house.

We go back to the primary story time in November 1718 to the day Tristram was born. The narrator narrates what has happened on this day beginning with Walter's sending Obadiah to call Dr. Slop and Mrs. Shandy's sending Susannah to call the midwife, and ending in Walter's decision to give his son the name Trismegistus. These events and the other ones in between are narrated in detail. However, the birth of Tristram is not narrated, but only implied later on when Trim informs Walter that the baby's nose is broken by Dr. Slop while he was using his forceps. There are only three anachronies in the form of retroversion. The first one is narrated in order to give an example of Toby's peaceful nature, by means of which the narrator obtains a moral lesson in terms of humanity: In 1728, the narrator had witnessed that Toby, instead of killing the fly which bothers him, gently catches it and frees it out of the window. The second one is the anecdote from the 16th century: Tristram's great grandmother, who feels that her husband's rather small nose is a shame, asks for compensation. The great grandfather agrees to pay her a certain amount of money as compensation - an event Walter considers to be the beginning of the downfall of the Shandy family. The third one is the anecdote about the events which have taken place a few weeks before the day Tristram was born: Trim and Bridget broke the drawbridge on the bowling green, while Trim was courting her. Because Toby's mind was busy with this broken drawbridge, he misunderstood Trim when he said that Dr. Slop was busy making a bridge in the kitchen, mistaking the word 'bridge' for the 'drawbridge'.

A good many events are narrated within the narration of the day Tristram was born. To begin with, Yorick's sermon on conscience, which also criticises some Catholic conventions including the Inquisition, is read by Trim in Shandy Hall. Then, Trim expresses his grief for his brother Tom, who is in prison by the order of the

Inquisition in Portugal, because he is married to a Jew. Soon, the midwife, who was supposed to be in charge during the birth, falls down and is unable to function during the birth. Dr. Slop takes over her duty. Since Mrs. Shandy is against Caesarean birth (the method Walter prefers), Dr. Slop decides to use his forceps in the conventional birth-giving process to extract the baby. Trim informs Walter that the baby's nose is broken. Upon this news, Walter goes straight to his chamber upstairs and Toby follows him. After a while, Walter states that in order to balance the misfortune of the broken nose, he will give his son the name Trismegistus. He explains that this name will have a positive effect on the baby's future life as it belongs to a great historical figure. This scene, which takes place while they were going downstairs in Book 4, Chapter 13, is the end of the retroversion, which has started in Book 1 Chapter 21. This retroversion is expanded over approximately 150 pages out of 450. It covers a span of only a few hours; it begins a few hours before Mrs. Shandy gives birth to Tristram and ends a few hours after the accident caused by Dr. Slop takes place.

The primary story time continues the day after Tristram was born. Walter misses the baptism ceremony. His son is baptised as Tristram by Eugenius, the curate, against Walter's wish, because Susannah forgets the last syllables of the name Trismegistus, which Walter has instructed her to tell the curate. When Walter understands the mistake, he goes out to the fishpond in order to calm down and contemplate. When he returns to the room from the fishpond, he complains that despite all his precautions, his son has experienced misfortunes, which have ruined his Shandean system. Toby recommends him to consult Yorick, the parson, so that he can receive information about a possible solution. Yorick advises Walter to attend Didius' party, where great authorities on religious subjects are invited. At the end of the party, the discussions on the nullification of baptism have not reached a positive conclusion; accordingly, Tristram has to remain as Tristram. Some time later, Walter learns that Aunt Dinah died leaving him a thousand pounds. He immediately begins to think about what he can do with the money. He wavers between enclosing the great ox-moor and sending his elder son Bobby abroad as a part of his education. In 1719, Walter learns that Bobby, who was a slow child, died in London. Taking his son's death as the result of the natural order, he displays, instead of grieving, his

opinions on death with reference to various historical figures. Mrs. Shandy, who has been eavesdropping, misunderstands Walter's speech on Socrates' pledge before his jury, and blames Walter for having an illegitimate child. Then, Walter decides to write a book, which he calls Tristra-paedia, in order to prevent further misfortunes in Tristram's future life and contribute to his education. The narrator summarises Walter's efforts to write his book, which lasts three years. Then we move to the year 1723. The sash-window of the nursery drops upon Tristram's genitals, accidentally circumcising him. The narrator explains how the window came to drop down by a shift to a retroversion of Toby's and Trim's preparations for another siege.[13] (The metal supporters of the windows of the nursery had been taken by Trim in order to manufacture artilleries.) Then, we return to the day of accidental circumcision. Walter learns what has happened to Tristram. He remains calm and immediately refers to his folios in order to learn about the historical figures who were circumcised. He feels relieved when he sees that circumcision has been very popular throughout the history. Yet, the fact that he has not been able to finish his book, Tristra-paedia, troubles his mind. He tries to make up for his failure by reading chapters from his book to Toby and the others. He reads passages from the chapters on 'the origin of society', 'health', and 'education'. During the intervals of his reading, he discusses these subjects with Yorick, Toby, and Dr. Slop, who was supposed to have come to Shandy Hall to heal Tristram's wounded genitals. During the course of the heated discussion on Walter's ideas on education, Walter states that he has decided to hire a private governor for Tristram. Toby recommends him the son of Le Fever. Then, the narrator briefly narrates, in retroversion, the story of Le Fever and his son, which takes place between 1706-1723. The story involves Toby's eagerness to help Le Fever, who was a sick soldier staying at the village inn. When Le Fever dies, Toby tries to help his son Billy and sends him to a public school. Then, we return to 1723. Upon the false rumours spread by Dr. Slop that Tristram's genitals were completely cut off during the accident, Walter decides to clad his son in breeches so as to hide the marks of the accident.

After the narration of the effects of the sash-window accident, we go back to 1708-1712 to the secondary story time. The narrator summarises what has been

[13] The date of the siege is unknown.

narrated in Book 2 about Toby's campaigns on the bowling green. The military preparations and improvements made by Toby and Trim within the four-year period and how they captured the (so called) town in parallel with the progress of the king's armies are narrated. Then, the story moves to 1713. Toby's and Trim's game comes to a halt because of the peace treaty that ends the war. Toby writes an 'apologetical oration' in order to justify his wish to continue the war. The two men now make preparations to demolish the military structures they have built in accordance with the articles of the treaty in November 1713. Meanwhile, as Bridget and Susannah have spread the rumour that Toby and Wadman will get married, Walter and Mrs. Shandy discuss the possibility of such a marriage and its possible effects.

At this point, the novel proceeds in the primary story time and we go forward to the years 1762 and 1763. The narrator, who has been having ailments, decides to travel to southern France to improve his health. He complains that his poor health affects his skills as a writer and therefore he needs a rest. He travels all the way from England to Calais and then from Calais to Montpellier and then to Carcasson, where he continues to write the novel. On his way, he narrates the impression he has received while travelling through French towns. He compares the facilities and the social aspects of France with those in England and praises England for being a more civilised country. During his visit to Auxerre, he remembers his first visit to the city with Walter, Toby, Trim and Obadiah in the 1730s. He relates, in retroversion, their enjoyable visit to the Abbey of Saint-German.

We, next, return to the year 1702 to the secondary story time. The narrator summarises what has happened until 1713. Toby spends three nights in Wadman's house as a guest. While Toby is in her house, Wadman falls in love with him, but for eleven years she fails to attract Toby's attention. One day in 1713, Wadman overhears Trim's account of how he fell in love with a volunteer nurse (beguine) who took care of him after he was wounded on his knee in 1693. Upon learning the importance of physical contact, she woos Toby by forcing him to look in her eye and this time Toby falls in love with Wadman. He decides to make a marriage proposal to Wadman. Toby and Trim prepare for their visit to Wadman. Walter writes a letter of instructions to Toby in order to inform him about women's nature. On their way to Wadman's house, Trim tells the story of his brother Tom in order to warn Toby that

marriage takes away liberty and means confinement. When the two are received in Wadman's house, Toby instantly reveals his love for Wadman. Then, Wadman covertly interrogates Toby about the effects of his wound in his groin. Meanwhile, Bridget interrogates Trim in the kitchen. Trim understands that Wadman was concerned about Toby's health only to find out whether he can give her a baby, by which means Wadman can pass on her property to her offspring. After the visit, Trim explains to Toby why Wadman has been so curious about his health. Upon hearing this, Toby breaks up with Wadman in disappointment and goes to Shandy Hall. Walter, who knows the real motivation of Wadman, condemns all women as devilish creatures. Then, Obadiah comes in and complains about the sterility of Walter's bull. Walter says that if his bull were a man, he would be sent to Doctors Commons, and would lose his character, which is the same thing for a bull to lose its life. Then, Mrs. Shandy asks 'what is all this story about?' Yorick replies: 'A Cock and a Bull […] and one of the best of its kind, I ever heard' (Sterne, 1996: 457). Yorick means that the story of the bull is an absurd story. These are the last words in the novel, and can also be considered as a comment about the novel itself. The implied absurdity of the novel can be traced in the use of time in the writer's sequential ordering. First of all, the sequential ordering in the story, especially at the beginning of the novel, goes in confusing zigzags. There are retroversions-within-retroversion, which changes the focus of the narrative constantly. It is almost impossible to follow the events in terms of their chronological order in Book 1 (March 1718, unclear date after September 1718, 1690s, 1717, 1718, etc.) through a linear reading. The reader reads, in general, about Walter and Mrs. Shandy, then, he/she is directed to the story of the midwife and Yorick. After long accounts of these characters, the reader returns to the narrator's present to read about the marriage article, then returning to the past, Walter's and Mrs. Shandy's journey to London, discussions about the midwife and a male doctor, Walter's opinions on Christian names, and then events related to Uncle Toby. Although the narration of the story goes more or less in a chronological succession after Book 1, the barriers set against a comfortable reading of the story always keep the reader alert so that he/she will not lose track of the narrative. These barriers are retroversions and digressions.

The longest retroversion in *Tristram Shandy*, which covers a span of a few hours but expands over approximately 150 pages out of 450, is constantly interrupted by digressions and retroversions within this retroversion. Between the scene, which begins with Walter's asking Toby what is happening upstairs in Book 1, Chapter 21, and the continuation of this scene in Book 2, Chapter 6 there are almost 50 pages. Similarly, Toby's campaigns are introduced between Book 1/Chapter 21-Book 2/Chapter 5, and resumed in Book 6, Chapter 21. At the intervals, the story focuses on Tristram's misfortunes in his childhood and, in return, Walter's disappointments. The above-mentioned organisation gives the impression that the events are scattered carelessly over the novel. However, the chronological arrangement of the story enables the narrator to control the readers' relationship and interaction (identification with the characters and involvement in the events) with the story. While the events in the fabula carry a potential to involve the emotions of the reader, such emotional impact has been undercut by the writer's sequential ordering of the storyline. This kind of sequential ordering has enabled the writer to produce an entertaining reading experience fully controlled by the narrator, who has been able to manipulate the reader's perception and response throughout the novel.

The gap between the events, the fragmentary structure of the novel and its episodic quality, however, would bring in the risk of readers' getting lost in the narrative. In order to prevent this, the narrator makes excessive use of anticipations so that he can constantly lead the reader on by mentioning future complications in the narrative, so as to maintain the readers' curiosity and interest in the storyline.

The first **anticipation** in *Tristram Shandy* is at the beginning of novel. With reference to his parents' inconsiderate attitude on the night he was conceived, Tristram, the character-bound narrator, states that this attitude had a huge negative impact on his future life. This anticipation is repeated many times throughout the narrative. For example, in Book 1, Chapter 3, Walter complains that 'Tristram's misfortunes began nine months before ever he came into the world' (Sterne, 1996: 7). In Chapter 15 of the same book, Tristram comments on the marriage article between Walter and Mrs. Shandy in order to anticipate once again that he had a misfortune because of this marriage article and the other misfortunes that followed the first one:

> But I was begot and born to misfortunes […] I was doomed, by marriage-articles, to have my nose squeezed as flat to my face, as if destinies had actually spun me without one […] How this event came about, - and for what train of vexatious disappointments, in one stage or other of my life, have pursued me from the mere loss, or rather compression, of this one single member, - shall be laid before the reader all in due time. (Sterne, 1996: 30)

The narrator narrates how Tristram's nose is broken in Book 3, Chapter 27. For more than two books, the narrator pursues the anticipation of this event with repetitions. At the end of Book 2, in Chapter 19, the anticipation about Tristram's misfortunes is elaborated and repeated: The narrator first repeats that he will narrate how he has lost his nose due to the marriage article and then, he states that he had the misfortune to be called 'Tristram' despite his father's wish. The first anticipation of the baptism ceremony, though implicitly, is found in Book 1, Chapter 19. The narrator says that an event has happened during his baptism ceremony, which is worth narrating. However, the baptism ceremony is narrated much later in Book 4, Chapter 14, two books and 81 chapters after the first anticipation of this event. In Book 3, Chapter 8, the narrator Tristram states that after the narration of his birth, he will narrate more misfortunes, including their effects on Walter.

The narrator uses recurrent anticipations also before the narration of Toby's campaigns and his love affair with Widow Wadman. While talking about Toby's character in Book 1, Chapter 21, the narrator states that Uncle Toby's character is largely determined by means of 'a blow' he received during the siege of Namur. Then, he anticipates that details of this 'long and interesting' story will later be narrated. The anticipations continue in the following books. In Book 2, in chapters 1 and 5, the narrator anticipates during Toby's confinement in Walter's house in London that the map of Namur will be important in the course of his life. First, the very map will lead him to animate sieges with Trim in the country. Secondly, as anticipated in Book 2, Chapter 7, it leads him to have an affair with Widow Wadman. These two experiences are further anticipated in Book 3, Chapter 23. The same anticipation is also repeated in Book 4, Chapter 32. Then, the narrator narrates Toby's campaigns on the bowling green in Book 6, Chapter 21. What has been introduced in Book 1 and Book 2 is resumed almost after the readers' going through five more books. In Book 6/Chapter 36 and Book 7/Chapter 43, the anticipations are

only about Toby's love affair with Wadman. This love affair is finally narrated in Book 8 and Book 9.

As seen above, the events related to the primary and secondary story time are pursued in every chapter in the form of anticipations. These recurrent anticipations (about the accidents and 'misfortunes' Tristram has experienced and Toby's so-called campaigns and love affair) and the funny way they are related help the narrator maintain the attachment of the reader to the story. These anticipations are not only necessary to link events with one another, but they are also used to create spaces for the narrator to make digressions.

The narrator anticipates not only the events to come, but also the non-narrative passages in the form of digressions. In Book 3, Chapter 1, when Toby says that he wished Dr. Slop had seen the armies in Flanders, the narrator anticipates his future chapter on 'wishes'. In Book 4, the narrator lists the topics on which he will write chapters: 'Wishes', 'whiskers', 'chapters', chambermaids', 'pishes', 'buttonholes', 'sleep', and his friend Jenny are the topics he is going to write about. The anticipations concerning non-narrative passages also point to the fact that the narrator is underlining the strict organisation of the novel.

In this organisation, **digressions** are used for various purposes and share an equal weight with retroversions and anticipations. Sometimes they are weightier than all the other elements of *Tristram Shandy*. The narrator also underlines this fact and the necessity of making digressions in every opportunity.

> Digression, incontestably, are the sunshine; - they are the life, the soul of reading! – take them out of this book, for instance, - you might as well take the book along with them; - one cold eternal winter would reign in every page of it; restore them to the writer; - he steps forth like a bridegroom, - bids All-hail; brings in variety, and forbids the appetite to fail. (Sterne, 1996: 50)

The narrator uses digressions before and after the narration of the events in the story in order to present his opinions, to introduce and describe his characters, to comment on certain topics including the novel and the characters[14]. Such digressions

[14] The digressions, in which characters are described and introduced, will be examined in this chapter under the title of 'characters'.

are almost all the time related to at least one aspect of the story even if it is only a 'word' chosen from an utterance by a character.

For example, in Book 3, Chapter 1, Toby says he wishes that Dr: Slop had seen what prodigious armies they had in Flanders. Upon this unexpected wish, Dr. Slop forgets what he was saying. Then, addressing the female reader (madam), the narrator instantly comments on 'wish':

> In all disputes, - male or female, - whether for honour, for profit, or for love, - it makes no difference in the case; nothing is more dangerous, Madam, than a wish coming sideways in this unexpected manner upon a man: the safest way in general to take off the force of the wish; is for the party wished at, instantly to get upon his legs – and wish the wisher in return, of pretty near the same value […] Dr. Slop did not understand the nature of this defence; - he was puzzled with it, and it put an entire stop to the dispute for four minutes and a half; - five had been fatal to it: - my father saw the danger […] (Sterne, 1996: 107)

This digression breaks the action and blends it with the narrator's opinion under a funnier light. The same passage is also an example of the comic effect produced by means of the playful attitude and the witty language of the narrator, and shows us how the writer has interwoven the narrative and non-narrative texts with a deep sense of humour.

A similar digression is made in Book 1, Chapter 21. Walter wonders what is going on upstairs. Just as Toby begins his answer, the narrator makes a digression saying that the reader must be made to enter first into Toby's character. He refers to a statement on the climate of England, which 'has furnished [the English] with such a variety of odd and whimsical characters'. Then, he links this observation to literature:

> [This] copious store-house of original materials, is the true and natural cause that [English] Comedies are so much better than those of France, or any others that either have, or can be wrote upon the Continent […] But I forget my uncle Toby, whom all this while we have left knocking the ashes out of his tobacco-pipe. (Sterne, 1996: 45-46)

By means of this digression, the narration of the story stops and the narrator carries the subject to a comparison of the contemporary situation of European and English dramas. Then, he resumes his description of Toby's peculiar character by relating it

to the peculiar climate of England. Throughout the novel, the narrator compares England and France. In the end, he praises England in terms of governmental, literary, and social achievements. However, as seen above, the comparisons are based on entertaining observations. The narrator avoids straightforward discussions on different cultures and only briefly introduces his contemporary opinions in a playful manner.

The narrator also uses digressions to explain his style, his work and intentions in writing his work – by parodying himself as well. In Book 1, Chapter 6, the narrator asks the readers to be patient with him while he is narrating his story:

> [My] dear friend and companion, if you should think me somewhat sparing of my narrative on my first setting out – bear with me, - and let me go on, and tell my story my own way: - Or, if I should seem now and then trifle upon road, - or should sometimes put on a fool's cap with a bell to it, for a moment or two as we pass along, - don't fly off, - but rather courteously give me credit for a little more wisdom than appears upon my outside; - and as we jog on, either laugh with me, or at me, or in short, do anything, - only keep your temper. (Sterne, 1996: 10)

This digression summarises what the reader will be face to face in the course of the narrative. The reader loses the track of the story, which has been already delayed. He/she is constantly introduced with new topics, some of which are hardly intelligible as they are loaded with Latin, French and Greek words. He cannot decide about the identity of the narrator –whether the narrator is playing the clown (wearing the fool's cap and a bell) or the pensive (wisdom). The phrase 'my own way' refers to all the subtleties involved in storytelling. An example of the narrator's peculiar 'own way' is directly expressed in Book 1, Chapter 22: 'In a word, my work is digressive, and it is progressive too, - and at the same time' (Sterne, 1996: 50). The function of the digressions is to balance the story. The narrator uses them in order to move beyond the limitations of a straightforward story. While narrating the story, the narrator discusses his opinions, makes observations and explains his process of writing all at the same time.

The general rhythm of *Tristram Shandy* is established by these digressions, retroversions, and anticipations. Since digressions put an end to the narrative course, the focus of attention changes. Although during the time spent for a digression no

time passes regarding the story times of the story, digressions change the overall speed of the narration. The shift from the narrative level (narration of the story) to the non-narrative level (digressions), and vice versa, is rapid and the continuity is broken; this detaches the readers from the story. Retroversions and anticipations also affect the speed of narration as they change the order of the events leading to a chronological deviation.

In *Tristram Shandy*, by means of pause, ellipsis, summary (the narrator summarising the past events) and scene (narration of the events almost in real time), the narrator determines the general rhythm of the story. For example, in Book 2, Chapter 17, the narrator stops narrating Trim's reading of Yorick's sermon on conscience in order to give an exact description of Trim's posture, which covers the whole chapter. This digression causes a **pause**. The narrator stops the story time, and begins his digression. Then, he continues to narrate the story when the digression is over.

Another example can be found regarding the fragmentary quality of the narrative. The narrator skips the events that must have taken place between two events which are narrated in the novel. After the baptism ceremony, which takes place in 1718, the narrator omits the events concerning Tristram Shandy the character between 1718 and 1723 (the year Tristram was accidentally circumcised). This omission is **ellipsis** and it is used repeatedly throughout the novel in order to skip the events, which the narrator does not consider worth narrating. Similar to ellipsis, **summary** is a means to skip the events, which may be summed up. The narrator summarises Toby's life and his efforts to improve his knowledge on topics related to military issues during his confinement in Walter's house between 1696 and 1699. This summary serves as the background for Toby's campaigns on the bowling green. In *Tristram Shandy*, by means of ellipsis and summary the narrator increases the speed of the narration by skipping the events concerning both the primary and the secondary 'story time', because they do not serve his aim of presenting the entertaining but unfortunate experiences of the Shandy family.

Scenes are usually seen when the narrator gives almost an exact account of the events. In a scene, the duration of the narration and the time that elapses in the fabula

are roughly the same. In Book 3, Chapter 6, Walter tries to explain Toby that there are a lot of dangers awaiting children and the new-born babies. The narrator narrates Toby's reply and the rest of the scene almost in real time:

> - Are these dangers, quoth my uncle Toby, laying his hand upon my father's knee, and looking up seriously in his face for an answer, -are these dangers greater now o'days, brother, than in times past? Brother Toby, answered my father, if a child was but fairly begot, and born alive, and healthy, and the mother did well after it, - our forefathers never looked farther. – My uncle Toby instantly withdrew his hand from off my father's knee, reclined his body gently back in his chair, raised his head till he could just see the cornice of the room, and then directing the buccinatory muscles along his cheeks, and the orbicular muscles around his lips to do their duty – he whistled *Lillabullero*. (Sterne, 1996: 111)

The use of scenes in such passages shows the narrator's intention in selecting the events, which deserves to be fully narrated. For example, the discussions between Walter and Mrs. Shandy, confrontations between Toby and Wadman, Walter's and Trim's orations and recitals, the dinner party at Didius' house, the conversations in which most of the characters participate are given in the form of scenes. Contrary to ellipsis and summary, the use of scene enables the narrator to put an emphasis on the comic situations, which stem from the confrontation of the characters.

The narrator arranges the events in order to convert the fabula into the story. He presents the events related to Tristram's misfortunes and the events related to Toby as the main courses in the story. All other events are given as the background for these events. The general rhythm of the story is determined in parallel to the narrator's selection of the events. The two main courses of the story involve long scenes. Therefore, the events, which happen within a short time span, can be expanded over many pages. Summaries, on the other hand, help the narrator to narrate the events briefly so that the starting point of the events in the main course of the story can be related without slowing the narrative tempo of the main focus. It is the digressions that slow down the narrative tempo. By means of digressions the narrator does what he cannot do in the story. He guides the readers to explore the unconventional aspects of *Tristram Shandy* and directs their attention to a miscellaneous collection of opinions, through which he explores the world and history from the antiquity to contemporary times.

(2) Characters

In *Tristram Shandy*, characterization endows each character with qualities and creates the illusion that they are human beings rather than elements of a work of fiction. Besides, by means of characterization and the relationship between the characters provided on the basis of differences, the narrator creates comic effect. All the characters in *Tristram Shandy* have peculiar qualities, which distinguish them from the rest of the cast. Characterization also determines the characters' perception of the events, which affects the readers' perception of the novel.

Walter is a 50-60 year-old retired merchant at the beginning of the novel. He is a Protestant and believes in absolutism, particularly monarchy. Although he was a merchant, Walter is presented as a man of knowledge and intellect with a firm belief in science. However, when he cannot explain the 'misfortunes' the family experiences in the novel, he comes to believe in astrology and supernatural evil powers. He yearns to restore the prestige of the Shandy family, which was once ranked highly in the king's court. He is interested in various subjects and tries to build a systematic approach, which the narrator calls the Shandean system, in order to examine and understand them and form his opinions from a scientific perspective. He likes to discuss his opinions with everyone with the aim of trying to prove their validity. Involved in his peculiar intellectual activity, Walter considers women and sexuality to be troublesome burdens.

Uncle Toby is almost the opposite of his brother. He is mild, peaceful, affectionate and considerate. He believes in religious truth and has a tendency to evaluate events or situations from a religious perspective. Military issues are at the centre of his life. Except from military subjects, almost everything else is unintelligible to him. Therefore, he always misunderstands others' arguments and mistakes them for military issues. Toby's life is made up of military duties, battles, and sieges both in his active life as a soldier and his life in his veteran days. Compared to his brother Walter, he has a lesser command of language. When he cannot follow a conversation or is unable to make sense of the words that have no connection to the military, he begins to whistle lillabullero. He remains ignorant of the opposite sex, although he has had an affair with Widow Wadman. If love and

marriage are considered to be integrated parts of the social system, Toby is obviously outside the norms.

Unlike Toby, Trim is very fond of women. However, he has objections to the institute of marriage, as he thinks marriage destroys a man's liberty. He likes to give advices. He talks in a stylish manner and, like Walter, enjoys making speeches fit for any occasion like Walter. Contrary to Walter, Trim relies on life experiences rather than books. He is bound to Toby with infinite affection and fidelity.

Mrs. Shandy is rather an insignificant character. The scenes she takes part in show that her presence in the novel is restricted to those in which sexual intercourse, marriage, birth giving, peeping and eavesdropping are the focus of narration. Her attitude towards Walter is highly submissive and affirmative – an attitude which annoys Walter. Although her needs are not fulfilled by Walter, she mildly endures the situation. She hopes for the better for the next opportunity and hints at Walter's marital duties recurrently.

Widow Wadman is a patient woman who chases Toby for eleven years. She regards her interests in the first place. Like Mrs. Shandy, her character is limited to the scenes, which focus on marriage, sexual potency, birth giving, peeping and eavesdropping. Unlike Mrs. Shandy, she speaks to the point rather interrogatively.

Both Mrs. Shandy's and Widow Wadman's characters are related to the continuation of the human race and monetary protection. Marriage is a way to achieve the sense of security that money brings. Giving birth to a child secures a greater profit in marriage. The great grandmother of Tristram can be included in this group as well. The deals these three women make with their husbands or lovers for a compensation show that marriage has turned out to be based on personal interest, which is measured by means of their obtaining financial tools. When Uncle Toby decides to get married, another version of a diseased marriage is hinted at. Wadman negotiates with Toby about the compensation she would take as a mother, if she gives birth to a child. This unsettled deal follows the line of marriage contracts, which has started with the deal between Tristram's great grandparents and continued with that between Walter and Mrs. Shandy.

In the novel, characterization is based on two different techniques. The narrator introduces the characters by means of **direct presentation** and **indirect representation**. Direct presentation is seen in the form of digression. The narrator lists the aspect of the characters. Since, the reader is provided with the characters' traits beforehand, they can predict the way these characters will act in the story.

In the novel, the narrator uses **direct presentation** more than **indirect representation** so that he can introduce his characters explicitly to the readers. The characters' traits are in a way verified and reinforced by means of indirect representation, in which the characters are seen within a series of events displaying the qualities the narrator has attributed to them. Among the characters, the narrator mainly focuses on Walter's and Toby's characters by means of recurrent direct presentation.

The narrator begins to shape Walter's character at the beginning of the novel in the form of digression and continues to describe him throughout the novel with relation to the events that take place in the story. In Book 1, Chapter 4, in which Walter's age, profession and his peculiarities are presented, the narrator introduces Walter's whim for regularity through his habit of winding up the large house clock and having sexual intercourse with his wife Mrs. Shandy on the first Sunday of the month. In Book 1, Chapter 19, Walter is further introduced as a systematic personality, as a man of science who would 'twist and torture everything in nature, to support his hypothesis' (Sterne, 1996: 39). In Book 2, Chapter 7, he is described as 'a good natural and a moral philosopher' who believes in science. Further in the novel, different aspects of Walter's character are presented with relation to different events. For example, in Book 8, Chapter 34, the narrator talks about Walter's fierce way of discussing matters with others. This digression on Walter's character follows the discussion Walter, Yorick, Dr. Slop, and Toby carry out on the subject of love.

Uncle Toby's character is introduced at the beginning of the novel when he first appears. In Book 1, Chapter 21, his mildness, modesty and habit of replying to Walter's arguments with his whistling are related. Throughout the novel, when the narrative focuses on the events in which Toby is at the centre, his characteristic aspects are further described and restated. In Book 6, Chapter 29, Toby's delicate

nature and his naivety are related with reference to Wadman's strategy to win Toby's heart. The description of Toby's modesty, ignorance of women and the way he carries on his love affairs continues in Book 9, chapters 3 and 22.

Most of these traits attributed to the characters refer to **habitual action**. Walter's assertiveness, his dislike of women and sexuality, and his scientific attitude, Toby's modesty, ignorance and naivety are recurrent qualities which are stressed within the course of events. These characteristic traits determine the characters' reactions and responses to events and other characters. For example, Walter refers to books for an explanation every time an accident happens; Toby begins to whistle his favourite tune whenever an argument, which he knows nothing about, begins and develops; Mrs. Shandy always affirms Walter's statements on every subject; Trim begins an oration on every occasion; Dr. Slop objects to Trim's arguments on ever subject; Widow Wadman persistently woos Toby; Susannah and Bridget spread gossips about the Shandy family. All these characteristic actions remind the reader that the characters have fixed qualities. However, in order to break this monotony, the narrator tricks the reader by making the characters occasionally show unpredictable reactions to events which they previously reacted differently. For example, in Book 3, Chapter 18, Walter begins to explain to Toby that although it has been a few hours since Dr. Slop's arrival to Shandy Hall, he felt as if a century has passed. When he is about to state that the succession of ideas have created this illusion, Toby makes the same comment before Walter can. This surprises Walter as well as the readers. However, this quick and correct comment does not alter Toby's overall ignorance of other kind of philosophical subjects. Such exceptions do not change the narrator's (implied author's) attitude to his characterization or the readers' perception of the characters on the whole. Besides, the narrator consciously blurs the characterization of Walter. In Book 5, Chapter 24, the narrator claims that although he has talked about Walter's character a lot of times, the reader cannot guess Walter's reaction to 'any untried occasion or occurrence of life'. The emphasis on the unpredictable nature of Walter, or any other character, is a means to maintain the attention and curiosity of the reader. It also serves to form the illusive impression that the characters are like everyday people in real life, despite all their stereotypical qualities, peculiarities and eccentricities.

Characterization is important in order to bring out the comedy in the novel. Walter's constant reference to science and history, his assertive and stylish manners, and dislike of women; Toby's modesty and ignorance of women and subjects other than military; Trim's tender-heartedness and love of the military and women; Mrs. Shandy's submissiveness to Walter's desire; and Tristram as a victimized baby and child help the narrator to present the gloomy subject matter under a fresh and entertaining light. When the events are narrated, the narrator underlines the difference in the reactions of the characters who due to their peculiarities usually have nothing in common.

(3) Spaces

In parallel with two different story times and two different stories, which makes up the subject matter of *Tristram Shandy*, there are two main spaces in the novel. The first one is Shandy Hall, which is the meeting place of the characters. The second one is the bowling green, which is a peripheral space where the events related to Toby and Trim take place. The events in the primary narrative text either happen in these spaces or they are somewhat in relation to those spaces.

Walter has been living and working in London. He gets retired in order to move to Shandy Hall, which is a 'paternal estate'. Similarly, when he is wounded, Toby is sent to England as a veteran soldier and stayed for a while in London, and then moved to his country-house in the village where Shandy Hall was also situated.

Although the environment in the novel is the countryside, most of the events in the primary story time take place in Shandy Hall, which is an indoor space. Tristram was conceived in the bedroom of Walter and Mrs. Shandy. Tristram was born with a broken nose in the same bedroom. He was baptised in the dressing room and circumcised in the nursery. Unpleasant events, which make Walter feel disappointed, also take place in these parts of the house. Especially the bedroom of Shandy Hall is a distressing place for Walter and Mrs. Shandy, because Walter involuntarily tries to satisfy Mrs. Shandy's needs on the first Sunday night of each month. The fireside, fishpond and Walter's chamber are spaces for Walter to contemplate and discuss his opinions and problems with others. However, as his opinions are of no use for

Tristram or his book further in the novel, these spaces do not stand for a place of great relief, which can balance the constant disappointments he has been through.

Contrary to the events in the primary story time, the events in the secondary story time mostly take place in outdoor spaces. Significantly enough, Toby and Trim are not fond of indoor spaces. After having been obliged to leave the battlefields, Toby runs away from Walter's house in London to the countryside, but not particularly to his own country-house. He does not care to have his house repaired. Trim undertakes the task of repairing the house when Toby refuses to stay there before beginning his campaigns, noticing that the house is in a mess. The bowling green, which stands for the battlefields of different countries, is where Toby and Trim actually make themselves home. Even if they are in Shandy Hall, they are carried away to the battlefields by their imagination and they act as if they were on the battlefields riding their horses or fighting with the enemies. On the day they have visited Widow Wadman in her house, they spend more time on 'the avenue' than they have spent in the house. Toby is deprived of his military duties on the battlefield and his amusements on the bowling green by means of 'unfortunate' events caused by outer forces. On the battlefield, he is wounded by a stone, which was broken off by a cannon ball. On the bowling green, Toby's campaigns come to an end when both parties of the war actually sign a peace treaty.

The events in both the primary story time and the secondary story time take place in **steady spaces**. Shandy Hall, the bowling green, Widow Wadman's house, battlefields, Didius' house, Walter's house in London and the peasant's cottage are all **fixed frames of action**. They are functional spaces that separate and determine different fields of action. Therefore, although they fit in with the traits of the characters and events, they are not thematized. Besides, unlike the precise description of the characters throughout the novel, these spaces are not described in detail. We are left with only a general impression of these spaces. Instead of giving an explicit description, the narrator wants each reader to form his/her own idea about these spaces. In Book 6, Chapter 21, before continuing the story of Toby's campaigns, the narrator states that he has already given the reader 'so minute a description [of the bowling green that] he was almost ashamed of it' and therefore if the reader cannot visualise the space, it is his (the reader's) fault. When this attitude

is compared with his attitude towards other elements of the novel, it can be seen that the narrator refrains from repetitive elaborate descriptions of the spaces in the novel. For, a detailed description of a setting may create an illusion of reality and involve the reader in the conventional sense. This is exactly what the narrator tries to avoid.

On the other hand, when the narrator is giving information about historical events that actually took place, he does not refrain from detailed descriptions of space. In Book 2, at the beginning of Chapter 1, for example, the narrator allows detailed information about one of the most remarkable stages in 'the history of King William's wars':

> [One] of the most memorable attacks in [the siege of] Namur, was that which was made by the English and Dutch upon the point of the advanced counterscarp, between the gate of St Nicolas, which enclosed the great sluice or water-stop, where the English were terribly exposed to the shot of the counter-guard and demi-bastion of St Roch: The issue of which hot dispute, in three words, was this; That the Dutch lodged themselves upon the counter-guard, - and that the English made themselves masters of the covered-way before St Nicolas gate, notwithstanding the gallantry of the French officers, who exposed themselves upon the glacis sword in hand.

This passage refers to a specific historical event and this elaborate description creates the effect of reality. The descriptions of the narrator during his journey to France are also quite realistic, since in this part of the novel the narrator is functioning as writer of travel literature and is relating to us what he actually observed.

In the story, however, even Shandy Hall appears in fragments like the pieces of a puzzle. The house is not described as a whole. In order to create a general impression, the narrator only states in which part of the house the characters are sitting or talking so that the readers can use their imagination to fill the gaps. In that sense, the spaces are used in order to maintain the readers' particular kind of involvement in the story by forcing them to contribute to the novel in their own way. This imaginative contribution blurs the borderline between reality and fiction, but more specifically, frees the novel from the geographical restrictions that certainty of setting may provide. The events in the novel and the characters placed in these spaces can be perceived to take place and exist in any location in England.

(4) Focalization

Tristram Shandy is a retrospective novel in which the story is narrated by one of the characters - Tristram Shandy. The story involves different events that have happened at different times and they are experienced by a variety of characters. In conventional novels with a retrospective story, the character bound narrator is also the focalizor of the events. He/she narrates what he has focalized years ago. However, in *Tristram Shandy*, most of the events have taken place before Tristram the narrator appears as a grown up person. Therefore, the events in the story must be perceived by a different agent or agents. Throughout the novel, we see that the point of focalization shifts from one agent to another.

At the beginning of the novel in Book 1, Chapter 3, the narrator states that he is indebted to Uncle Toby for the anecdote, in which the dialogue between Walter and Mrs. Shandy on the night Tristram was conceived is related. Provided that this statement is reliable, then it is significant, as the narrator says that he is narrating what Toby has heard from Walter (as an **internal focalizor**) what happened in the past. As Mrs. Shandy's perception of this event is omitted, the narration is one-sided and, therefore, is not objective. Following Walter's complaint, which refers to the night Tristram was conceived, that his son's misfortunes had started nine months before he was born, the narrator states that Mrs. Shandy, as she was listening, 'knew no more than her backside what [Walter] meant' (Sterne, 1996: 7). In this quotation, the comment on Mrs. Shandy's ignorance of what Walter means belongs to a speaker other than the characters involved in the scene. This agent is the narrator as an **external focalizor**, who is outside the fabula regarding the story time. The comment shows that the narrator as a focalizor aims to reflect the comedy derived from the two characters rather than to examine a situation from the perspective of both parties.

At certain points in the novel, there is a **double focalization**. The characters and the narrator focalize the same event (which the narrator cannot be possibly aware of when they happen) at the same time, which means that Tristram, the **character-bound narrator**, claims the power of an **external narrator**. For example, in Book 5, chapters 12, 13 and 14, the external narrator relates Walter's speech on death (on account of his elder son Bobby's death). At the same time, he relates Mrs. Shandy's

eavesdropping and misunderstanding of what Walter is talking about. Then, he presents the events the way he interprets them. This brings out the comedy in *Tristram Shandy*. The narrator regards these events as entertaining and even farcical in Book 5, Chapter 15: 'Had this volume been a farce, which unless everyone's life and opinions are to be looked upon as a farce as well as mine, I see no reason to suppose – the last chapter, Sir, had finished the first act of it' (Sterne, 1996: 261). Moreover, the narrator's selection of events, which have been labelled as 'the unfortunate experiences', depends upon the way he focalizes them. He chooses to narrate the events, which carry the potential to be presented in an entertaining way, as the characterization also serves to maintain the comedy in these events because the peculiar reactions and attitudes of the characters are presented as entertaining.

How the narrator treats the story and his manner of focalization manipulate the readers' perception of events. The narrator of *Tristram Shandy* tells the story from the perspective of the most suitable focalizor for comic effect. For example, when Walter learns that Tristram was accidentally circumcised, the narrator narrates his attitude through both Mrs. Shandy's and Walter's perception in Book 5, Chapter 27:

> My father put on his spectacles – looked, - took them off – put them into the case – all in less than a statutable minute; and without opening his lips, turned about and walked precipitately downstairs; my mother imagined he had stepped down for lint and basilicon; but seeing him return with a couple of folios under his arm, and Obadiah following him with a large reading-desk, she took it for granted 'twas an herbal and so drew him a chair to the bedside, that he might consult upon the case at his ease.
>
> - If it be but right done – said my father, turning to the Section – *de sede vel subjecto circumcisionis*, - for he had brought up *Spencer* de *Legibus Hebraeorum Ritualibus* – and Maimonides, in order to confront and examine us altogether. –
>
> - If it be but right done, quoth he: - only tell us, cried my mother, interrupting him, what herbs? – For that, replied my father, you must send for Dr. Slop. (Sterne, 1996: 271)

At the beginning of the passage, Walter is the focalizor. Then, the narrator, as an external focalizor, describes how Walter walked downstairs. The narrator switches to Mrs. Shandy's focalization and misinterpretation of Walter's hurry. In the end, we return to Walter, who is coolly meditating on circumcision with reference to the cultural history of circumcision instead of trying to do something to cure the injury.

Upon reading about the rituals and history of circumcision, he reaches a conclusion: 'if [a lot of great historical figures] submitted [to circumcision], - What is Tristram? – Who am I, that I should fret or fume one moment about the matter?' (Sterne, 1996: 271). The 'misfortune' Tristram has had becomes a subordinate theme. Thus, owing to the manner focalization is employed by the narrator, the scene is constructed on two contrasting reactions of two different characters, which produces the comedy. As the readers are well informed of Walter's habit of (so called) systematically scientific contemplation and his habit of referring to his books on every occasion and Mrs. Shandy's ignorance of Walter's interests and aspirations, they also read the story the way the narrator reads and relates it. The accidents, the unfortunate events and disappointments are all presented to the readers from this perspective, which diminishes the depressing side of the story and highlights the humour they possess.

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The combining of the 'text' and the 'fabula' by means of the arrangement of events and the way they are focalized serves to bring out the comedy in *Tristram Shandy*. The finished product is no longer perceived in two separate narrative and non-narrative spheres. The treatment of the narrator, in other words the presentation of the narrative, blends all the elements of the 'text' and the 'fabula' together. The intricate and playful chronological arrangement of events based on the thematic unity in the fabula, the witty non-narrative digressions constantly breaking up the narration of the story, the characterization underlining the peculiarities of the characters, and multi-focalization of the events from a comic stance which excludes the depressing side of the 'unfortunate experiences of the Shandy family' maintain the comedy throughout the novel.

The narrator also informs the reader of the mechanism worked out to compose the narrative. The narrator tries to involve the reader in the narrative so that the reader can be a part of the story as well, by translating the implications, pinpointing the connections between different parts of the narrative and reproducing the text every time he/she reads it. Although the novel is not the readers' product, they function as witnesses to the process of the narrator's organization and moulding. This situation breaks the identification of the reader with the narrative as it breaks the

emotional bound between the characters and the reader. Therefore, the more the reader is aware of the fictionality of the novel, the more he/she is situated outside the novel as a distant viewer of the story, and, eventually, he/she is given the role of a co-writer.

CONCLUSION

Narratology is placed within the category of formalist criticism. By means of narratology, the critic is able to study all the elements that form the narratives and the narrative technique, which the writer employs in order to deliver the desired effect on the reader. However, different from other formalist approaches, narratology is not packed up in formalist boundaries. The narratological study of texts aims to understand how formalist aspects of a text are used to what end and how the reader is tried to be guided or manipulated by the writers. The narratological approach can be employed in order to understand what a work of fiction is about and how the message is delivered by means of decoding the deep structure. On the other hand, even if they only refer to formal aspects of a work, the results obtained by means of narratology can be eventually used so as to provide answers to questions that would possibly be asked by non-formalist theories as well.

The narratological approach enables us to draw the topology of the subject, which is the object of criticism. When the subject is thoroughly examined, results with solid proof can be reached. Then, the critic can apply any literary theory to the subject equipped with a huge database provided by the narratological approach. One of the most advantageous aspects of narratology is that the researcher or the critic can first and foremost concentrate on the work itself –a poem, novel, drama or any other narrative form- without the interference of other sources such as various literary theories, annotations, and/or biographies. It is important to understand what the work itself presents as a criticism-free body by examining the various elements it is composed of and the relations between these elements.

Narratology is especially beneficial in the criticism of literary works that stand as milestones in literary and cultural history because of their pioneering, complex and innovating structures. Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* is one of the earliest examples of this kind. It is one of the most confusing and interesting novels in literature, because of its unconventional non-linear storytelling. Throughout the novel, the reader constantly hears the voice of the narrator talking about his opinions on a variety of subjects and the novel itself. The story of the novel is given in fragments, yet the novel manages to tell a story, although it does not have a proper ending. The reading process is split into two between the narrative and the non-

narrative passages. In the intervals, the narrator inserts pieces of totally different stories and anecdotes, which do not have a direct attachment to the main focus of the narrative. There are allusions to past and contemporary literature and humanitarian sciences with references to lots of real and imaginary figures. It would not be surprising to feel at a loss while reading the novel for the first time after all these seemingly non-relevant barrier-like sidetracks. Indeed, all these materials, which cross cut the narrative, are parts of a design in the carefully managed organisation of the novel.

Tristram Shandy is not satisfied with being a novel that tells a straightforward story. It combines the two essential elements of fiction – the narrator and the narrative – with equal significance in a single body. This historically early innovation shows that the narrator is not only a voice, which is heard in the background helping the reader to understand the whole story, but the maker of the narrative and an independent entity just like the characters of the novel. Besides formal aspects, the novel also presents topics, which surely interest many fields of critical theories such as feminism, new historicism, social realism, and reader response. This study focuses on the novel from a narratological perspective, leaving other possible points of view to other further studies, which would provide interesting results.

From the narratological point of view, *Tristram Shandy* is a work of fiction that unveils itself through three operations at three different levels.

The first operation has been carried out in Chapter 1, which focuses on 'text'. It displays what kind of text the reader will be presented with in general within the novel. We see two main parts that the novel is made up of: narrative and non-narrative texts. It is seen that these two parts share equal weight in the whole body of novel. This quality alone shows that we are not dealing with a conventional novel. Moreover, when the narrative texts are examined, we see that the unifying element of the narrative is thematic unity and it is seen that the novel is not about the life story of the character called Tristram Shandy as the title suggests, but the story of the Shandy family.

The second operation has been carried out in Chapter 2, which concerns the 'fabula'. The fabula provides the raw material of the novel, which is purified from the narrator's treatment. The events, actors, time and location are categorised so that

we can see the elements of the narrative text from an objective perspective in order to cast out the narrator's guidance or manipulation. The events, which are linked to one another with thematic bounds, cover a time span of approximately two hundred years. The common point in all these events is that they do not draw a picture of people who are struggling through the ups and downs of life. Rather, the narrative focuses only on the failures and disappointments in these people's lives. Therefore, the fabula of *Tristram Shandy* has a sad subject matter. Except for Tristram Shandy the narrator, all the members of the Shandy family are seen as figures who have been unable to realize their aspirations in full.

The third operation has been carried out in Chapter 3, which deals with the 'story'. The story is the combination of the 'text' and the 'fabula'. Here, we examine how the raw material has been changed into the finished product. The non-narrative and narrative texts are brought together so as to form the composition of the novel. The sad subject matter is moulded into a comic story. This fact proves that the narrator is displaying the power of both storytelling and the narrator as the creator. The humour is created as a result of the narrator's treatment in combining the elements of the novel.

On the whole, the story presents the readers with two separate courses of events: One deals with the group of events in which Uncle Toby is at the centre. The other one deals with the events in which Tristram Shandy and his parents are at the centre. These two courses are narrated mostly in parallel to one another. In the intervals, whilst these two themes are narrated, Tristram Shandy as an adult narrator interferes in the story making subtle and humorous remarks about the characters and the events. He also continues to talk about his present situation as a writer. Thus, the reader has to follow three narrative focuses and numerous non-narrative details throughout the novel.

The simple domestic life story of the Shandy family is intentionally converted into a complex arrangement of events, which resembles a labyrinth-like structure. This structure - with the rearrangement of the time scheme in the novel - requires an intense reading, because retroversions within retroversion jump back and forth in a chronological disorder. In addition to that the deviations from the story line, which sometimes resemble stream of consciousness, cause shifts from the narrative text to

the non-narrative texts. All these factors bring about a novel, which tells a simple story of a more or less ordinary family, but the way the story is told points to the fact that no life story is simple enough to be told simply, and story telling itself is as complex and demanding as life itself. The keystone of the novel, which unites both narrative and non-narrative directions, is its thematic unity. However, the links within this thematic unity are sometimes so weak that it is not easy to pinpoint them all at first reading. This is the reason why *Tristram Shandy* is a tough nut to crack.

Since the narration of the lives of the characters and the process of story telling go hand in hand, the self-reflective quality of the novel is as important as the story told. The narrator not only discusses the art of fiction in general but also explains how the story he is narrating is constructed. While doing this, he underlines the fact that he is employing unconventional techniques in narrating the story. As a comparison between his way of storytelling and a mainstream story, he also gives passages from different stories. Consequently, the reader should be alert all the time while reading the novel. He/she should trace down the story, notice the links between the story and the non-narrative arguments and commentary, and then return safely to the story only to repeat the same process many times till the end of the novel. This demanding process of reading befits the definition of the 'writerly text' and *Tristram Shandy* is one of the perfect examples of this kind of literary composition. We can aptly name this novel a project for the reorientation of the reader, since Sterne eagerly pursues his aim of altering and reorienting the perception of the conventional reader. He achieves his aim by giving the reader the role of a co-writer.

In this project, 'narration' is the essential tool to bring out the finished project. Sterne employs a narrative technique, which relentlessly destroys the conventional fiction and established narrative techniques. The narrator does not altogether reject the traditional rules of novel writing; he exploits them by constant repetitions and references to the extent that they lose their functional value. There is constant emphasis on the process of writing, the elements of the novel, and the chain of elements that make up the world of fiction (literary theories, reader response, publishing issues etc.). By exposing the rules of novel writing, the narrator shows the methods of characterisation, emphasises the importance of time scheme in narratives, draws his own story line including the deviations he has made, and his intention of

uncovering what is usually hidden in conventional novels behind the surface structure. This technique destroys the illusion of reality by delivering the message that the readers are reading imaginative events, not passages copied from everyday reality, and these events are further shaped and arranged to create the story. The narrator emphasises that the craft of novel writing is as important as artistic talent. The narrator over-emphasises the importance of hard labour in novel writing and accordingly the novel becomes self-conscious to the extent that the fictional elements lose their functionality and even become the essence of the novel like the story. In the end, the novel becomes a parade of elements, which would help to write a 'Shandean' novel.

Sterne's novel *Tristram Shandy* is composed of layers which function for different ends. In the first layer, there is the story of the Shandy family. In the second layer, there is the discussion of universal human thinking and intellectual journey of men. In the third layer, there is the presentation of the process of novel writing. In the forth layer, there is an overview of contemporary state of affairs. In the final layer, there is the joyful contemplation of the writer on everything he has been writing and will write. *Tristram Shandy* presents all these layers at once and in the form of an ever-spinning spiral narration. The novel is therefore a paradigm of simplicity behind complexity.

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SUMMARY

Narratological approach is a recent literary theory, which aims at studying narratives with a systematic approach. By means of narratological approach the critics and researches analyse the elements of the narratives in order to study the relationship between the part and the whole. This systematic approach is necessary in order to evaluate and understand the narratives by presenting proof for the statements regarding the narratives. Having derived from structuralism, narratology deals with concrete signs rather than mere commentary.

The systematic basis of narratology is convenient for the analysis of complex narratives, which are constructed on different layers, such as Laurence Sterne's **The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy Gentleman.** ***Although the number of the segments varies from one researcher or critic to another, the narratives are decomposed into many segments within the narratological approach. In this thesis, the narrative is analysed in three main segments: Text, fabula and story.***

The application of narratological approach to **Tristram Shandy** ***proves that the complexity of*** **Tristram Shandy** ***derives from the fact that the novel is made up of different layers. Each layer is consistently related to one another and therefore the relations between each layer are examined. This procedure is necessary before trying to support conclusions, since the results should be verified for the sake of reliability and consistence by means of data obtained from the narrative.***

ÖZET

Anlatıbilimsel yaklaşım, anlatıları sistematik bir yaklaşımla inceleme amacını güden ve son yıllarda geliştirilmiş olan bir yazın kuramıdır. Anlatıbilimsel yaklaşım yoluyla eleştirmenler ve araştırmacılar, anlatıların ögelerini, parça bütün ilişkisini incelemek amacıyla analiz ederler. Sözü edilen sistematik yaklaşım, öne sürülen görüşlerle ilgili kanıtlar sunarak anlatıları incelemek ve değerlendirmek için bir gerekliliktir. Kökü yapısalcılığa dayanan anlatıbilim, salt yorumdan öte somut göstergelerle ilgilenmektedir.

Laurence Sterne'ün* Tristram Shandy Beyefendi'nin Hayatı ve Görüşleri *isimli romanı gibi pekçok katmandan oluşan, karmaşık anlatıların çözümlenmesi için anlatıbilimin sistematik yapısı uygun bir temeldir. Anlatıbilimsel yaklaşımda, sayısı araştırmacı ya da eleştirmene göre farklılık gösterse de anlatılar bölümlere ayrılarak incelenmektedir. Bu tezde söz konusu anlatı, üç ana bölüme ayrılarak incelenmiştir: Metin (text), olay dizini (fabula) ve öykü (story).

Anlatıbilimin* Tristram Shandy *romanına uygulanması, karşı karşıya kalınan karmaşık yapının, romanın pekçok farklı katmandan oluşmasından kaynaklandığını ortaya koymaktadır. Her bir katman tutarlı bir şekilde bir diğeriyle ilişkilidir. Bu nedenle de katmanlar arasındaki ilişki incelenmektedir. Herhangi bir sonuca ulaşılmadan önce bu sürecin geçilmesi bir gerekliliktir, çünkü anlatıdan elde edilen veriler kullanılarak sonuçların doğruluğunun onaylanması, güvenilirlik ve tutarlılık açısından bir zorunluluktur.