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**RESEARCH PAPER****Fiction and Narrative Theory: A Study on Literature****Ume Hani Sindhu Isani**

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**ABSTRACT**

The paper explores the relationship between narrative theory and fiction in literary history. Narrative theory can provide valuable insights into the construction of fictional worlds by analyzing how different narrative techniques shape readers' understanding and engagement with the text. By examining how narrative theory has evolved over time and its impact on the development of fictional storytelling, this paper aims to highlight the significance of narrative techniques in shaping literary works. Additionally, it seeks to demonstrate how an understanding of narrative theory can enhance readers' appreciation and interpretation of fiction. The content analysis approach was used to investigate themes in narrative theory and fiction. It utilizes data to find themes, patterns, and relationships in a text. The findings of this study may assist us in better comprehending identity-specific narratological categories within classical narratology, perhaps leading to the development of a narratology for fictional narratives. The issue centers on whether a narratology should be formed for stories of fiction or for all forms of narratives across various media.

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**KEYWORDS** Fiction, Fictional Content, Fictional Entities, Narrative Theory

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**Introduction**

The intersection of fiction and narrative theory is a significant area of research interest in German and Swedish literary studies. Scholars in these fields often explore how narrative techniques are utilized in fiction to convey meaning and engage readers on a deeper level. This intersection allows for a better understanding of how storytelling functions within the context of different cultural traditions and literary movements (Martínez & Scheffel, 2003). Käte Hamburger's *Logic of Literature*, written during her exile in Gothenburg, significantly influenced German narrative theory and Swedish research in narrative theory. It was first published in 1957. The work explores the relationship between literature and philosophy. And has had a lasting impact on literary criticism. The work continues to be studied and revered by scholars worldwide. The work's interdisciplinary approach and unique insights have solidified its place as a seminal text in the field of narrative theory. The work's influence can still be felt in contemporary discussions on the nature of storytelling and narrative structure (Bareis, 2008). Käte Hamburger's analysis of literary works reveals that fictional discourse has specific characteristics and is fundamentally different from non-fictional discourse, such as the epic preterit, which can only occur within the fictional domain (Walsh, 2007). Hamburger's theory suggests certain traits often appear in non-fictional discourse, and Dorrit Cohn suggests signs of Fictionality. However, these signs are not proof of Fictionality in certain stylistics. Hamburger's and Cohn's signs of Fictionality are primarily found in fictional texts but can also be found in non-fictional texts (Dawson, 2015). Non-fictional texts often contain discourse similar to fiction, like epic preterit, but

certain narrative techniques are more natural in fiction. This is a core question in the field, determining the type of theory of Fictionality. The distinction between fiction and non-fiction blurs when considering the various narrative techniques involved. The blurring of this distinction challenges traditional notions of truth and reality in storytelling. It opens up new possibilities for exploring the boundaries of imagination and creativity in literature. This challenges readers to consider the complexities of truth and fiction in a new light (Hühn, 2008). Hamburger's distinction between fiction and non-fiction is still used today by literary scholars and narratologists, even fifty years after her thesis. However, today, fiction is often defined solely by its non-real content, highlighting the ongoing debate between fiction and non-fiction. The study aims to explore the role of narrative theory after the narrative turn by examining the role of Fictionality. It explores whether there is a distinction between fiction and non-fiction narratives, if there are exclusive narrative techniques, if a different theoretical frame is needed to explain fictional narratives, and if there are fiction-specific narratological categories. The discussion focuses on the concept of fiction-specific categories, highlighting that the existence or absence of these categories is influenced by the underlying fiction theory, specifically Käte Hamburger's concept of 'real' discourse.

### **Literature Review**

The literature review thoroughly examined existing research studies, identifying a need for a different theoretical framework to explain fictional narratives and identify fiction-specific narratological categories. It provides a summary, synthesis, and critical evaluation of existing research, highlighting the writer's own work and identifying gaps in the current literature for further research sources, such as books, journal articles, and theses, often written as part of a thesis, dissertation, or research paper. Frank Zipfel's *Fiktion, Fiktionalität, Fiktivität* is a solid monograph on the topic of Fictionality in German literary studies, emphasizing the role of fictitiousness ('Fiktivität' in German) in fiction and highlighting the unreal, made-up, and fictitious elements present in the genre. It offers a comprehensive analysis of the theoretical frameworks surrounding fiction and provides numerous examples to illustrate its key points. Moreover, it delves into the concept of truth and reality within fiction, challenging readers to reconsider their perceptions of what is real (Landa, 2005). Martin Löschnigg and Monika Fludernik suggest that unreliable narration is a genre related to fictional narratives. It is characterized by a narrator whose credibility has been seriously compromised. The narrator may be overtly deceptive or may simply lack the competence or knowledge to interpret events accurately. In either case, the reader is left to question the truthfulness of the story being told, including illusion-breaking devices like metalepsis and *mise en abyme*, and meta-fictional narratives must be fictional to be a meta-version (Walsh, 2003). The function of narratology in fiction theory, providing a more in-depth knowledge of the complex and often contentious topic of Fictionality research. Narratology enables researchers to investigate the structural and stylistic components of fictional writings, resulting in a more sophisticated understanding of narrative approaches. Narratology also allows for a more in-depth analysis of the link between narrative and reality in fictional works. Narratology may also be used in nonfiction literature to examine how reality is formed and portrayed through story. Narratology offers a paradigm for comprehending how tales influence our perception of the world around us (Gallagher, 2006). Kendall Walton's idea of make-believe applies to all visual arts, making no distinction between a novel's Fictionality and its cinematic version. Despite their variations in substance and adaptation, both novels and their cinematic adaptations are works of fiction. This enables the comparison and study of themes, characters, and storytelling strategies across many mediums. This allows for a deeper understanding

and appreciation of both the written and visual forms of storytelling (Walton, 2004). The conversion of a novel into a movie doesn't automatically make it nonfiction, depending on the fiction theory. A speech-act-theory approach may not address media changes, and a theory that classifies a novel as fiction while claiming it's non-fiction is unsuitable for both literary and fiction theorists. Walton's theory of fiction allows for intermedial studies, a significant advantage in narrative theory. Walton's theory of fiction allows for intermedial studies, a significant advantage in narrative theory, as it can accommodate changes in media forms and storytelling (Walton, 1983). According to Aristotle, poets suggest possible occurrences or characters, while historians present the facts. Nonetheless, the majority of fictional stories blend imaginary and real-life characters, settings, and events. Because Baker St. 221B isn't genuine, Sir Arthur Canon Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novels aren't regarded as fiction. They are considered historical accounts. The reality is that many works of fiction are based on a mixture of truth and imagination. The reality is that many works of fiction are based on a mixture of truth and imagination, blurring the lines between the two (Piper, So, & Bamman, 2021).

### **Fictional Entities**

Thomasson (1999) argues that the first question is: what would functional entities be if there were any? Various answers have been proposed, but they all aim to accommodate the intuitive datum that these entities lack existence, or at least existence as ordinary physical objects. Functional entities are typically understood as abstract entities that are not located in space or time. They are said to exist in a different ontological category. Functional entities are said to exist in a different ontological category than ordinary physical objects. They are often seen as existing independently of physical objects and can be understood as the relationships or roles that objects play in systems or processes. This perspective emphasizes the dynamic nature of functional entities and their potential to influence or be influenced by their environment (Mäkelä et al., 2021). The nonexistence datum asserts that paradigmatic fictional objects like Hamlet and Holmes do not exist, as they are unlikely to exist in reality. It also challenges the notion that an alleged historical figure, like King Arthur, is a genuine one, indicating that searching for such a figure is futile. The nonexistence datum ultimately raises questions about the nature of fictional and historical entities. Ultimately, it questions the validity of basing beliefs and actions on potentially fabricated stories. It also prompts a reevaluation of the importance placed on myths and legends in shaping cultural identities (Nordqvist & Gartner, 2020). Walton's theory of fiction posits that works of fiction serve as a game of make-believe, offering a significant advantage over other theories that require every work of fiction to contain some non-reality or fictitious elements. This definition is better suited to literary scholars and reduces questions of epistemological and ontological gravity, making it a more suitable approach for understanding the nature of fiction. This definition allows for a more fluid and inclusive understanding of fiction as a whole. By incorporating various aspects of storytelling, character development, and thematic exploration, it provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing and interpreting fictional works, so readers can gain a deeper appreciation for the artistry and meaning behind the stories they encounter (Baumer, Blythe, & Tanenbaum, 2020). Fiction is not a necessary element, but it can be influenced by fictitiousness, which sets it apart from non-fiction. However, this is a problem for the definition of non-fiction, as truthfulness and referring to reality are demands that non-fiction discourse must address, not a theory of literary fiction. This is a set of demands that non-fiction discourse must address, not a theory of literary fiction. This is because non-fiction is expected to be based on facts and real events, rather than being a work of imagination (Patron, 2021). Fictional characters belong to the category of fictional

entities, which includes both animate and inanimate objects of action, such as animate persons, animals, and monsters, such as Anthony Trollope's cathedral town of Barchester and Tolkien's home of the elves, Rivendell. The definition of fictional characters can vary depending on the context and medium in which they are created. They can be complex and multidimensional beings that evoke strong emotions and connections from the audience. Or they can be simple archetypes meant to serve a specific purpose in the story (Patron, 2021). Cohn's theory of fiction distinguishes between signs of fictionality and definitive markers of fiction. Signs of fictionality include obvious fictitiousness, such as talking animals or a distant future setting, while definitive markers are necessary and sufficient notions according to a fiction theory. Both types of markers are crucial in defining the nature of fiction. Signs of fictionality include obvious fictitiousness, such as talking animals or a distant future setting, while definitive markers are necessary and sufficient notions according to a fiction theory (Amelia & Daud, 2020).

### **Narrative Fiction**

Walton's theory, applicable to all representational arts, requires adjustments or interrogation in literary studies to understand how narrative fiction functions, as it must be interrogated or adjusted accordingly. Only then can we fully grasp the complexities of the relationship between representation and reality in literature, and appreciate the nuanced ways in which fiction reflects and shapes our perceptions of the world around us. It is essential to critically analyze the ways in which fiction influences our understanding of reality and challenges our preconceived notions. By engaging in a thoughtful analysis of these elements, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between fiction and reality (Mason & Giovanelli, 2021). The author, a discursive narratology, believes that the telling of a story is the defining element of literary narrative, not the telling. They argue that the definition of narrative, which includes causally connected events, downplays the importance of the telling. They argue that the definition of narrative, which includes causally connected events, downplays the importance of the telling. They believe that storytelling is decisive in shaping the way in which events are interpreted and understood by the audience. It is through the telling of events that meaning is created and emotions are expressed (Castano, 2021). In modern and avant-garde texts, classical narratology is insufficient due to curtailed narratives. However, narrative fiction is defined by Ansgar Nünning's concept of the mimesis of narrating. Nünning argues that the central illusion in literary fiction is the illusion of the telling, creating a secondary illusion of a world that draws readers into the narrative. This allows readers to become emotionally invested in the story and characters. By becoming emotionally invested, readers can experience a deeper connection to the narrative and its themes (Semino, 2020). Peter Bichsel's view of mimesis emphasizes the situation of the narrator rather than reality. To combine this with Walton's Mimesis as Make-Believe, a fusion of the two is proposed: In narrative fiction, a narrator is necessary, as their act of narrating is the essential act of imitation and representation. This fusion allows for a deeper exploration of the relationship between narrative and reality. As a result, the reader is able to engage with the text on a more profound level. The reader is able to immerse themselves in the story and connect with the characters and themes in a more meaningful way (Björninen, Hatavara, & Mäkelä, 2020). Scholars like Käte Hamburger and Ann Banfield argue that not all narratives have narrators, even if the term 'narrator' is defined as an obligatory, anthropomorphic teller-figure in the text. However, there is always a narrator, even in cases without a teller-figure, due to the inherent nature of communication and

interpretation. Therefore, Baniield suggests that the concept of a narrator should be expanded to encompass all forms of storytelling. This expansion would allow for a more inclusive understanding of the role of narration in literature. It would also acknowledge the various ways in which stories are told and received by audiences.

### **Material and Methods**

The methodology was selected because it was descriptive and appropriate for the study's objectives, providing a clear framework for data collection and analysis. Narrative theory and fiction in literature have influenced literature logic, leading to the development of computational methods like summarization, commonsense inference, and event detection. These methods have revolutionized the field of natural language processing. Different studies and published papers have explored the impact of literature on computational methods. These studies have shown the significant advancements that have been made in narrative theory and fiction processing through the integration of literature. These methods have revolutionized literature analysis but are often disconnected from larger theoretical work in the humanities and social sciences. Desk researchers and practitioners are working to integrate these advanced methods with traditional theoretical frameworks to enhance understanding of narrative structures. This position paper introduces dominant theoretical frameworks, identifies current research within different narratological traditions and fiction, and suggests linking computational work to theory for practical applications.

### **Results and Discussion**

This paper investigates whether there are fictionality-specific narratological categories in classical narratology, as well as whether a narratology should be specific to individual narratives or a general narratology for all types of narratives across different media. In order to address the question of whether a specific narratology should be developed or if a more general approach is preferable, it is necessary to consider the unique characteristics and conventions of each type of narrative. The findings of this study reveal a relationship between narrative theory and fiction by examining the different ways in which narratives are constructed and interpreted by readers. In doing so, scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between storytelling and meaning-making. The proposed fiction-specific category is not specific to fictionality, and the same structure applies to non-fictional narratives, indicating that this observation is applicable to theories of fiction that demand fictitiousness in their model of fictionality and those that define fiction by its function rather than ontological status. Ultimately, the definition of fictionality is complex and multifaceted. It involves a combination of factors, including authorial intention, reader interpretation, and the cultural context in which the work is produced. It is a concept that continues to be debated and analyzed by scholars and literary critics. The concept of fictionality is essential for understanding the nature of literature and storytelling. It helps to distinguish between what is considered real and what is considered fictional within a text. Understanding the concept of fictionality allows readers to engage more deeply with the themes and messages conveyed by the author. This ultimately enhances the overall reading experience and encourages critical thinking. It also helps readers to analyze the narrative structure and techniques used by the author to create a compelling story. It also encourages readers to form their own interpretations and perspectives on the text. This can lead to deeper engagement with the material and a more enriched understanding of the themes presented. This fosters a richer reading experience. Ultimately, this fosters a richer reading experience that resonates long after the final page is turned. The traditional view that functional objects

possess externally predicated properties, such as being a functional detective or male, is a flawed perspective. Functional objects, like Holmes, are not physical objects but characters based on their stories, and their properties are not merely externally predicated. This approach fails to account for the unique characteristics of functional objects and the stories they represent. They also fail to recognize the importance of these objects in shaping the narrative and contributing to the overall themes of the story. Instead, a deeper analysis of the significance of functional objects in storytelling must be considered. Genette's narrative explores the reliability of fictitious places in the USA, utilizing classical structuralist narratology to describe various concepts within narrative theory. Unreliable narration requires a special fictional narratology, but there are differences between types that require further attention. A coherent theory of fiction considering narrative theory's special needs can help address these differences. Metaleptical narration and ontological metalepsis are related, with certain types linked to narrative fiction. Addressing ontological metalepsis requires applying a coherent theory of fiction to all media, as seen in Escher's pictures. Metaleptical narration involves a disruption of the narrative, often blurring the lines between different levels of reality. This technique questions traditional storytelling conventions and invites audiences to consider the nature of fiction. The English translator's footnote on Genette's work is commendable, as the German translation doesn't mention the fictitiousness of places. This may explain why unreliable narration in German-speaking narratology hasn't been discussed. Nabokov's story of Professor Shade and Kinbote is also unreliable, manipulating the identity of both the narrator and character, highlighting the need for further thought in German-speaking narratology.

## **Conclusion**

This paper seeks to determine whether there are fictionality-specific narratological categories in classical narratology and, if so, whether a narratology of fictional narratives should be established rather than a general narratology for all narratives in various media which are the only fictionality-specific modes of narration, and the same logic applies to this issue. Narratology requires a fiction theory that goes beyond the author-narrator and fictitiousness-reality distinctions, including both reality-filled fiction and nonfiction. This theory should apply to a wide range of media formats, displaying literary narrative theories intended exclusively for literary stories. Met fiction in fictional narratives is commonly regarded as met narration; nevertheless, not all narration is fictitious. This highlights the importance of a different narratology for fiction, but it also demonstrates that narratology has always been attracted by the great possibilities that fiction gives to stories. In this sense, untrustworthy narration is comparable to non-fictional tales, influencing theories of fiction that need fictitiousness and those that define fiction by function rather than ontological state. The latter theories may consider untrustworthiness as an integral element of storytelling, challenging traditional notions of truth and authenticity in literature. Genette's model, despite not explicitly addressing reliability, offers several tools within the framework of classical structuralist narratology, including a poetic commentary on fictitious places in the USA, which serves as a poetic commentary on the question of authenticity in literature.

## **Recommendation**

The difficulties are complicated and numerous, stemming from the intersection of aesthetics, language philosophy, metaphysics, critical theory, and formal semantics. The recommendation is to tackle these challenges from a multidisciplinary standpoint in order to fully understand the intricacy and interconnectivity of the numerous forces at play. This will result in a more complete comprehension of the subject matter. It will

also enable a more nuanced and comprehensive examination of the connections between metaphysics, critical theory, and formal semantics. Future studies should focus on solving the generation problem and discriminating between the main and suggested fictional truths.

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