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Postmodernism, Psychoanalysis and the Theories of the Text in Nicholas Sparks' *The Notebook*, *A Walk to Remember*, *Safe Haven*, and *The Longest Ride*

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"He whose face gives no light, shall never become a star."

William Blake

In doting memory of my grandmother, my mother, my father, my grandfather.

Honorary Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I have alone and solely authored this thesis, that it has not been submitted to any institution for review, nor has it been published in its entirety or portions, and that it has not been altered in any way, shape, or form in any way. Any phrases, words, or concepts included in the thesis, no matter how little, which are directly quoted from or based on the work of other authors, have been appropriately cited and acknowledged in every instance.

Tlemcen on 10/03/2023

Zakarya Ameur-Said

Dedications

To Samira

For making me believe that I can make it.

To her children Sarra, Nourehene, and Mounir Rayane

For making me laugh when I was holding my tears.

To all those who believe in me.

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This thesis pores over postmodernism's mandate in kinship to American contemporary literature by focusing on one of nowadays most gifted authors, Nicholas C. Sparks. This research draws on the views of deconstruction, existentialism, dialogism, intertextuality and psychoanalysis to inspect the nature of Sparks' fiction in the context of the convoluted postmodern era. Nicholas Sparks is regarded as one of the best novelists of all time. His signature works are emotional dramas centred on love and loss and the bonds between people. Sparks' status as a leading figure in the romance genre has been further solidified by his novels' widespread acclaim. Some may classify Sparks' works as 'popular fiction', but the tag 'romance novelist' is the one most often applied to him. Sparks is also famous for his careful use of star-crossed protagonists who fight hard for love. Certainly, Sparks models the characters in his fiction with existential meaningfulness, which uses a pattern of introspection to explore themes with open ends, such as time and its constraints, death, and the relevance and value of art in the face of up-to-date challenges. The novels selected for this research study are *The Notebook* (1996), *A Walk to Remember* (1999), *Safe Haven* (2010), and *The Longest Ride* (2013). They all share common features that depict the risk characters take to attain their goals. In addition, the novels make use of a variety of narrative strategies that diverge from postclassical tactics. The non-linear narrative, which provides the reader with an immersive experience, is utilised in some capacity by all of them to varying degrees. Sparks also uses North Carolina as the major backdrop for all of the selected novels, which is one of the factors that contribute to the creation of an enchanting conversational environment. A secondary objective of this study is to advance knowledge of Sparks' fiction as both an indicator of the postmodern zeitgeist and a mirror for the author's apprehensions about the postmodern condition and the psychoanalytic world. To conclude, this thesis will embark upon an analysis of imitation and individual talent in Sparks' fiction, where everything discussed above will be taken into consideration.

Content

General Introduction

> "So it's not gonna be easy. It's going to be really hard; we're gonna have to work at this everyday, but I want to do that because I want you. I want all of you, forever, everyday. You and me... everyday."

Nicholas Sparks – *The Notebook*

A new movement evolved in the 20th century to question conventional understandings of philosophy, art, and literature, marking a sea change in the intellectual and cultural climate. Postmodernism is a school of thought that rejects the universal truths and objective reality espoused by modernism. Conversely, postmodernism places excellent value on individual experience and multiple points of view. Postmodernism's roots may be seen in the philosophies and buildings of the late 20th century. David Kolb (1992) depicts postmodernism as a reaction to the modernist ideology that dominated the first part of the twentieth century—the ideals of reason, objectivity, and development defined modernism.

Postmodernism arose as a critical response to the modernist movement that shaped the cultural and intellectual landscape of the West in the first part of the twentieth century. "Skepticism[1] towards grand narratives, metanarratives, and ideologies" (Peters & Lankshear, 2013, p. 11) is a hallmark of the postmodernist cultural movement that arose in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In reaction to what its proponents saw as modernism's inability to deliver on its promises of progress, reason, and universal truths, the postmodernist movement gained traction. Instead of accepting a single, objective reality, postmodernists favoured the idea of multiple, conflicting interpretations. This trend also embraced commercialism, mass media, and a porous distinction between high and poor art. Postmodernism partly reacted to the Cold War, the expansion of mass media, and the cultural globalisation of the period. Therefore, postmodernism may be understood as a critical reaction to the preeminent

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[1] Skepticism is used in the American version with respect to the source of the quote.

artistic and intellectual movements of its day and a product of that era's particular historical moment (Peters & Lankshear, 2013).

Literature, politics, and the social sciences are among the fields where postmodernism has been criticised and debated. Some critics have critiqued postmodernism for its "epistemological relativism"[2] (p. 92), in which Robert Cooper and Gibson Burrell (1988) suggest that there are no objective facts, just subjective interpretations. As a result, postmodernism's credibility has been questioned, especially in areas where complex data is essential. Some academics have also claimed that postmodernism's focus on language and interpretation has led to an excessive focus on discourse at the expense of the real world. Others worry that postmodernism's emphasis on the uniqueness of the individual has resulted in a disinterest in social activism and reform. Despite its detractors, postmodernism has significantly contributed to academic discourse by questioning established paradigms and championing pluralism and sensitivity to marginalised groups. However, it is vital to recognise and confront these issues to prevent postmodernism from being used to excuse the disregard of scientific evidence or the perpetuation of inequities. Postmodernism did challenge not only modernism but also structuralism.

Several intellectuals, including Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Roland Barthes, were among the forerunners of the structuralist movement, which began in the middle of the 20th century. Examining the underlying structures and processes that form meaning is the method of literary analysis utilised by structuralists. They believe a text's purpose is not derived from the text but produced through a network of signals and signifiers. In the view of structuralists, the text is a closed system, and it is the reader's responsibility to decipher the underlying structures to discover the intended meaning (Dickens & Fontana, 2002; Fox, 2014).

In response to structuralism, post-structuralism questioned the validity of the latter's emphasis on immutable truths and unyielding forms. Post-structuralist

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[2] The theory of epistemic relativism asserts that knowledge is a matter of perspective, and that various people and groups can have distinctive views on what constitutes truth and reality.

thinkers like Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Julia Kristeva dispute that texts have a consistent meaning. They claim that language constantly delays, disrupts, and deconstructs meaning, rendering it unstable and disjointed. Post-structuralists challenge the structuralists' suggested binary oppositions and hierarchical structures and instead emphasise the power of words to shape our perception of the world. Although both post-structuralism and postmodernism are sceptical of fixed meaning and place emphasis on language, postmodernism goes beyond literary theory to provide a critical analysis of society at large. On the other hand, post-structuralism focuses on the breakdown of textual meaning and the study of underlying power structures (Dickens & Fontana, 2002; Fox, 2014; Ogino, 2014).

Deconstruction is a school of thought in literature that developed in the 1960s and early 1970s in reaction to structuralism. It "foregrounds the inevitable gaps, contradictions, and ambiguities in language and thought" (Merz & Cetina, 1997, p. 73). This method of textual analysis seeks to unearth the text's latent inconsistencies and assumptions. In contrast, the postmodern philosophical movement known as postmodernism questions the concept of an overarching truth and places a strong emphasis on the significance of context and individual experience. The junction of these two ideas has been discussed among academics, particularly within management communication. Some people believe that deconstruction and postmodernism have a shared purpose in calling contemporary society's prevalent narratives and power systems into question. Deconstruction, for instance, may be utilised to bring to light the covert power relations inside organisations and question the prevailing discourse (Norecliffe et al., 1996).

On the other hand, postmodernism can assist in bringing to light the numerous and varied points of view present within any given context. Many scholars believe that deconstruction and postmodernism are incompatible since the examination is based on a dichotomous opposition between the text and its meaning. However, postmodernism rejects the idea that purpose can never be established and emphasises the fluidity and contingency of language. Despite these controversies, the junction of

postmodernism and deconstruction continues to be a fruitful ground for critical inquiry and study in various academic subjects (Mumby, 1996).

In addition, postmodern literature is distinguished by its use of intricate and frequently confusing subject matter to cast doubt on established ideals and points of view. Existentialism is an excellent example of this type of subject since it investigates the meaning and purpose of human existence. Another topic explored extensively in postmodern writing is religion and spirituality's function in society. Many postmodern writers have investigated religion's influence on the human experience, namely how it has functioned as both a solace and a source of contention for people throughout history. According to Amy Hungerford (2010, p.14), "religion can be a particularly potent source of meaning-making in the face of postmodern doubts about the possibility of objective truth". Thus, postmodern literature can use religion to investigate language and representation limits and challenge the time's dominant cultural and political narratives. In Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988), religion is used to examine the intricate relationships between authority, identity, and belief. Similarly, religion is utilised in *Beloved* (1987) by Toni Morrison to explore the legacy of slavery and how trauma and memory can be transformed into healing and redemption.

According to Jeff Haynes (1997), postmodernism has led to a more diversified and personal approach to faith and spirituality by calling the conventional claims of religious organisations and their authority into question. The postmodern criticism of metanarratives has led to questioning the universal claims of religions, leading to a more flexible and customised approach to spirituality. Postmodernism has also focused not on objective facts and ideologies but on people's unique experiences and perspectives. Haynes adds that this subjectivity and diversity have resulted in a more inclusive approach to faith and spirituality, making room for various beliefs and practices.

Moving on to psychoanalysis, which is a theory that concerns the unconscious mind and how it affects human behaviour and experiences. The psychoanalytic theory,

which Sigmund Freud created, emphasises the unconscious mind's significance in forming the self. It investigates the wants, conflicts, and memories that have been repressed that are thought to impact human behaviour. Psychoanalysis aims to unearth the unspoken drives and unconscious dynamics that are at play in fictional characters' thoughts, deeds, and interactions with one another. Additionally, when doing a psychoanalytic analysis of a piece of literature, the analyst will frequently focus on the narrative structure as a mirror of the human mind. Within the framework of the tale is an investigation of the Oedipus complex, as well as dreams, symbols, and other psychoanalytic notions. Psychoanalytic critics examine the text to determine the characters' unconscious intentions and aspirations, in addition to the symbolism and imagery (Grünbaum, 1988).

Moreover, postmodern literature frequently critiques power structures, raising challenges to prevail beliefs and illuminating these systems' repressive character. It calls into question the authority of institutions and draws attention to the power dynamics at play on several levels, including the social, political, and cultural groups. Postmodernist writers frequently embrace the subversive potential of literature, which may be used to question and dismantle established power systems. The psychoanalytic theory, on the other hand, studies the power dynamics inside the individual psyche, with particular attention paid to the impact of unconscious desires and the expectations of society. This research investigates how power dynamics and social norms influence individuals' sense of self and conduct. Psychoanalytic criticism aims to unearth literary works' underground power structures and unconscious impulses (Teicholz, 2013; Grant, 2013).

The postmodernist perspective considers the 'text' convoluted and multifaceted, with meanings that are not predetermined or innate but are formed and interpreted about particular social, historical, and cultural contexts. The idea of a text in postmodernism draws attention to the interconnectivity of different artistic forms. It emphasises language, symbols, and signs' role in forming our perception of the world (Foster, 1983).

General Introduction

Mikhail Bakhtin is often credited as the conceptual creator of dialogism. The philosophy known as 'dialectics' places a premium on mutual understanding and the contribution of different viewpoints. Bakhtin argues that all speech acts and texts are shaped by a variety of historical, cultural, and societal variables, making them essentially dialogic (De Man, 1983). Dialogism is crucial in the development of postmodern fiction's narrative forms and thematic concerns. Dialogism is congruent with postmodernism because, like postmodernism, it rejects absolute truths and grand narratives in favour of openness to alternative points of view. It rejects the idea that there should be one overarching storyline and instead favours several contrasting ones. Moreover, intertextuality, or the concept that texts are entangled with one another, is connected to dialogism. The goal of postmodern fiction is to blur borders and challenge established interpretations; hence, it commonly alludes to and includes aspects from other works, genres, or cultural sources (Durey, 1991). Not only that, the reader's interaction with the text is also considered part of the dialogic framework. The reader is often encouraged to actively engage with a work of postmodern fiction through the process of interpretation and co-creation of meaning (Miller, 2001).

Non-linear narratives in postmodern fiction are more likely to undermine or disrupt conventional narrative structures than their linear counterparts, which typically follow a chronological and cause-and-effect pattern. This change reflects the postmodern emphasis on rethinking traditional narrative structures and tropes. Fragmented narratives, in which the plot is told in a series of unrelated or disconnected sections, are frequently used in postmodern works. The reader is left to piece together the story from these snippets, which may be delivered in an unconventional sequence or from several points of view. Furthermore, postmodern literature is distinguished by its use of many overlapping narratives rather than a single, linear plot. These stories might be presented side by side or in parallel to draw comparisons and analogies (Gibson, 1996).

Nicholas Sparks is a well-known American novelist whose works centre on relationships, love, and self-discovery. His novels are distinguished by their focus on feelings and the examination of profound, personal ties between individuals. Sparks

writes about love, sorrow, and personal hardships to make his readers feel something authentic. Moreover, Sparks has a knack for writing empathetic protagonists with whom readers may identify. His heroes' everyday problems, hopes, and relationships are universally relatable because they reflect the lives of his readers. Sparks is a master of descriptive detail, and his stories always feel authentic because of it. Details like the setting, the clothing the characters wear, and the food they consume all contribute to the story's credibility and immersion.

By focusing on Sparks' fiction and how it represents postmodernism, this modest thesis seeks to have deconstructive, existential, psychoanalytic, dialogic, and narrative approaches to Sparks' novels. Here, the novel is seen as one of several tools for expressing and reporting on the societal and historical situation. The following questions, which together form the driving force behind this thesis, have been prompted:

1. How does the postmodern condition differ from the movements that came before it?
2. In what ways did psychoanalytic literary criticism revolutionise the field of fiction? And how did the analysis of the characters' psyche affect the reading of the novel?
3. In what ways did postmodernism disrupt the traditional relationship between author and text in Nicholas Sparks' fiction? And how did this affect the reader's experience?
4. Is Sparks' fiction illustrative of the postmodern literary movement, or does it meet other requirements as well?

A critical analysis of four of Nicholas Sparks' novels will be the core of this research study to answer the thesis questions. *The Notebook* (1996) dives into the inner workings of the human heart, exploring such universal concepts as love, sacrifice, and loyalty—a story as old as time is about love, grief, and the strength of memory. *A Walk to Remember* (1999) does a wonderful job of depicting the highs and lows of a first love relationship while showing the emotional fragility and

development that comes with such an experience. Sparks expertly weaves together scenes of compassion, sadness, and optimism, prompting the reader to ponder life's intricacies and the value of holding onto significant relationships. *Safe Haven* (2010) is a compelling work of romance. It is a page-turner because of the way it combines romance, suspense, and self-discovery. While *The Longest Ride* (2013) explores themes like the immortality of love, the relationship between art and reality, and the value of appreciating the small moments that add together to make a life. Sparks' novels brilliantly portray his characters' inner lives and provide a plot that makes his audience feel everything from happiness and sadness to optimism and self-reflection.

Therefore, this research study is divided into two main sections, one theoretical. It comprises two chapters (one and two), and the practical part is constituted as well as two chapters (three and four). In the first chapter, key terms and concepts related to the postmodern condition are defined and explained. structuralism, poststructuralism, deconstruction, existentialism, and the perspective of psychoanalysis in the literary sphere.

 The second chapter will deal with the authority of the text, from 'the death of the author' to the rise of the reader. It shall start with the basic definitions of the text, the author, and the reader. Then, it will shift to probe into dialogism, intertextuality, narration, and the estrangement effect, as the purpose of this thesis is not exclusive to the postmodern condition and psychoanalysis. Still, it encompasses the theories of the text as well.

The third chapter, on the other hand, pertains to the analysis of the four selected novels by sparks by applying the deconstructive method in the psychoanalytic literary theory. It will inspect hysteria, paranoia, trauma, and libido through the wholesome of the novels. Its goal is to show how the psyche of characters affects their fate and the storyline in general. Then this chapter will analyse the presence of existentialism within the novels by taking into consideration authenticity, absurdism, and anxiety.

The fourth and ultimate chapter will be purely literary critical. It will start by depicting the dialogic world of Sparks' novels. Then, it will analyse in detail the

different theories of intertextuality and narration within the selected works. It will then move to study Nicholas Sparks as a postmodern author and the different features of his fiction. To conclude, this chapter will look into imitation and individual talent within sparks' fiction.

Chapter One: From Modernism to Postmodernism and the Rise of Psychoanalysis

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1.1. Introduction

The 20th century was a time that saw numerous revolutionary shifts in social and political philosophy, as well as in the worlds of art and literature. A significant amount of development has occurred from the beginning of the 1900s, with the rise of modernism, until the middle of the 1900s, with the advent of postmodernism. In the context of literature, the term "postmodernism" refers to this literary style. It is characterised by a break from standard forms and conventions of storytelling, questioning the established conceptions of authorship, narrative structure, and the bounds of fiction. This departure from traditional forms and conventions of storytelling is one of its defining characteristics (Lucy, 1997).

Postmodern literature has significantly impacted the literary landscape, helping to broaden the range of narrative possibilities while posing a challenge to more established conventions. It invites readers to take an active role in interacting with the text, challenge previously accepted narratives, and think about a variety of possible readings. It is crucial to note, however, that postmodernism is a diverse and multidimensional movement, and many writers approach it in their own unique ways. Because of this, it is impossible to describe it in a strict manner or include its complete extent (Malpas, 2005). Most of the ideas analysed through Nicholas Sparks' novels in the third chapter will be made clearer in this one. The scope of this investigation necessitates an explanation of not just what postmodernism is but also the many sorts of how to differentiate postmodernism from modernism and all other movements. A brief introduction to how deconstruction and existentialism may have evolved from the postmodern will also be provided in this chapter, along with an introduction to psychoanalysis and a clear description of the key ideas needed in this study, such as anxiety, trauma, hysteria, and libido. To get back to the beginning, though, a thorough examination of the development of the work is necessary.

1.2. From Modernism to Postmodernism

The arrival of postmodernism in the latter half of the 20th century had a considerable influence on the field of literature. Willie Thompson explores the postmodernist movement's impact on the literary world in a book published in 2017, observing that

the movement "rejected the conventions of modernism and embraced the idea of multiple realities and a nonlinear narrative" (Thompson, 2017, p. 18). Postmodern writing frequently centres on the absurd, emphasising the absence of structure and a concentration on the capricious. Consequently, postmodern writing often contains irony, comedy, and an emphasis on the author's self-reflection. In addition, it frequently dismantles conventional aspects of literary conceptions like genre and narrative. This emphasis on the deconstruction of traditional notions has led to the formation of new literary forms, such as metafiction, a style of fiction that frequently incorporates satire and fun.

Other new literary forms have also emerged as a result of this emphasis on the deconstruction of conventional conceptions. Postmodernism has also considerably impacted other literary genres, such as poetry, as poets began adopting fragmentation and juxtaposition tactics to make their work more accessible and relevant to readers. This was one of the ways that postmodernism influenced other literary forms. The birth of postmodernism has had a long-lasting impact on the field of literature, and it continues to influence the many trends that are now prevalent in the field of literature (Thompson, 2017).

Since the mid of the 20th century, when it first appeared, postmodernism has been an essential part of the world of visual art and culture. "Postmodernism has been associated with an array of developments in contemporary visual culture" (Duncum, 2001, p. 104). These changes include a critical re-evaluation of established creative traditions, such as exploring new forms of expression and questioning conventional assumptions. Postmodernism has influenced art education as well. It has pushed practitioners to explore the potential of multidisciplinary approaches to art created outside the boundaries of traditional art genres.

Furthermore, postmodernist principles have enabled students to experiment with new and broader approaches to visual exploration. Therefore, postmodernism has significantly impacted art and visual culture, allowing practitioners to push limits and develop new perspectives on art and the world around them. Since its inception in the

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mid-twentieth century, postmodernism has played an important role in art and visual culture (Duncum, 2001).

Authors such as Stephen K. White (1991) have written extensively about the relationship between modernism and postmodernism in social and political philosophy. Modernism was defined primarily by the belief that everyone should have equal rights and opportunities. Science and reason have the potential to change society and liberate individuals from repressive social institutions. This resulted in the promotion of a wide variety of progressive political changes, such as suffrage, labour reform, and the abolition of racism and sexism.

On the other hand, Postmodernism questioned the premise that science and reason could lead to greater freedom, arguing that modernist optimism was a kind of tyranny. Postmodern thinkers contended that the notion of progress was a weapon employed by the strong to keep their control over society. That genuine freedom could only be attained via a fundamental re-envisioning of social and political institutions rather than striving to better the community through reason. While modernism and postmodernism have very distinct viewpoints on social and political philosophy, both have had an impact on how we interpret the function of social and political ideas in the modern world.

Modernism and postmodernism are separate aesthetic and philosophical approaches that have evolved. Modernism is defined by its simple, logical design, development and invention, and a focus on social redemption and faith in progress. Postmodernism, on the other hand, questions the concept of progress and modernist ideals, emphasising irony, subjectivism, and a sceptical attitude toward great, encompassing ideas. Both schools of thought have had a tremendous impact on our thinking. They shape our world today, and comprehending their contrasts is critical to understanding contemporary culture and art (White, 1991; Duncum, 2001; Thompson, 2017).

Chapter One: From Modernism to Postmodernism and the Rise of Psychoanalysis

1.2.1. The Disjuncture from Modernism

Modernism and postmodernism's conflicting characteristics and aspirations in twentieth-century literature profoundly impacted global literary culture. While there is some overlap between the two movements, there is also a significant difference due to their disjointed nature. By examining the works of prominent authors like William Faulkner and Toni Morrison, as well as absolute classics from both literary periods (such as The Sound and the Fury), it will be shown that this disjunction effectively led to a new generation of noteworthy postmodern literature.

Some theorists have described postmodernism as the disjuncture of modernism in literature. While modernist literature has been characterised by its focus on the individual, postmodernism has shifted the focus to the collective. While modernism represented a period of experimentation and exploration, postmodernism has been seen as a more critical and reflexive approach to literature. P Alonso-González (2011) states that postmodernism is "a critical discourse characterized by pastiche, irony and parody, intertextuality and interdiscursivity, and a questioning of the fixity of identities and the hierarchical structure of language" (p. 87). This shift in focus has been reflected in various genres, including fiction, poetry, drama, and film. Postmodernist writers have explored the deconstruction of narrative structure, the dissolution of boundaries between high and low culture, and the subversion of traditional forms of representation. Postmodernism has allowed a new form of expression to emerge by emphasising hybridity, intertextuality, and the plurality of perspectives. It has provided writers a platform to explore the complexity of the human experience and challenge the traditional conventions of literature.

The separation of postmodernism from modernism in literature is intriguing, as the first mentioned is sometimes viewed as a response to the latter. Postmodernism is sometimes seen as a rejection of the concept of the "great man" of literature, who was generally regarded as the champion of modernism. This "great man" was frequently viewed as untouchable, and postmodernism was utilised to call this into question. Postmodernism was also used to question the concept of the conventional narrative, which was considered as unchanging and unchallengeable. Withal, the

postmodern condition was used to demonstrate that there are several ways to tell a tale and that it is possible to challenge old narratives and create something new. It also rejected the concept of the monolithic author, instead emphasising the idea that everyone can produce something unique and creative. This was a significant departure from the old idea of the "great man" of literature, allowing for a far more open and diversified approach to literature. Thus, postmodernism, in this sense, was a significant departure from modernism, allowing for a more diversified and creative approach to writing (McLaverty-Robinson, 2020).

Postmodernism has been characterised as a 'disjunction' from modernism and seen as a departure from the conventional form of modernist writing. Postmodern writing turned its attention from the individual to society, whereas modernist literature concentrated on the self and the mind's inner workings. Postmodernism frequently employs irony and self-referentiality to examine the consequences of many subjects, such as consumerism, technology, and globalisation. Regarding form and organisation, postmodern writing tended to be more experimental, frequently utilising metafiction, intertextuality, and stream of consciousness. It was also renowned for including more voices from the margins and examining colonial consequences as well as themes of race, class, gender, and identity. In this approach, postmodernism expanded the possibilities for literature and provided an alternate viewpoint to modernist literature (Doyle, 2017).

Mark Currie (2014) investigates this gap, stating that postmodern literature is characterised by its rejection of traditional narrative form and emphasis on metafiction. This metafiction is frequently distinguished by its self-reflexive nature and a proclivity to blur the line between the actual and fictitious worlds. Currie observes that irony and satire are frequently used in postmodern writing to challenge current customs, ideals, and beliefs. Furthermore, postmodern literature is frequently perceived as being more concerned with form than substance, and as such, it is frequently perceived as being more experimental in its approach. Postmodern literature is frequently anchored in the individual experience rather than the universal, and it is frequently concerned with examining the complicated nature of identity rather

than presenting a clear-cut solution. All of these characteristics separate postmodern writing from its modernist forefathers and serve to understand its impact on current literature (Currie, 2014; Gregson, 2004).

The separation between postmodernism and modernism in literature is a strongly disputed issue in the literary world, typically riddled with controversy and misunderstanding regarding the definitions of each word. According to A. Fuat Firat and Alladi Venkatesh (1995), the primary distinction between postmodernism and modernism is a shift in perspective. Whereas modernism is concerned with the individual, postmodernism is concerned with the links between individuals and systems to achieve a more comprehensive understanding. The utilisation of many points of view, the blending of various cultural influences, and the subversion of traditional literary forms all reflects this shift in viewpoint. Simon During (2008) contends that postmodernism is far more self-reflective than modernism, frequently criticising and questioning the legitimacy of its tropes and norms. This self-reflexivity is frequently regarded as a distinguishing quality of postmodern literature since it fosters a more aware and critical reader. Finally, the distinction between postmodernism and modernism in literature is due to the varied views of each method and the ensuing variances in the reader's experience.

Shifts in narrative voice, self-reflexivity, intertextuality, discontinuous storytelling, and the subversion of genre standards are generally defining characteristics of postmodern literature (Durrant, 2001). This presents a striking contrast to the conventional, linear narrative form often linked with modernism and the modernist traditions that rely on realism. Postmodern literature is distinct from modernist writing in a number of other ways, including its rejection of traditional conceptions of reality and certainty, as well as its emphasis on fragmentation and disorder. Postmodern literature is characterised by an approach to narrative that is frequently self-aware as well as humorous. This style frequently draws attention to the manufactured nature of literature itself. Postmodernism may be seen as a pushback against the conventional and realism principles that are associated with modernism.

In its place, it lauds the possible unrestricted artistic expression and the exploratory possibilities of intricate topics and concepts (Durrant, 2001; Hutcheon, 2008).

Modernism, like its forerunner, has ushered in a new period of artistic expression. Finally, postmodernism was a watershed point in literary history, ushering forth a new literary epoch. Shifting the focus of literature away from the "great man" thesis and toward the individual and collective expression of experiences opened up a new universe of possibilities (Doyle, 2017). Postmodernists questioned current traditions by presenting alternative viewpoints on identity and values through irony, satire, and intertextuality. Postmodernism also enabled writers to investigate topics such as consumerism, technology, and colonialism in previously unimaginable ways. This schism between modernist and postmodernist literary approaches has influenced our current view of literature. It has pushed authors to rethink established ideals and means of representation in order to discover alternative perspectives on reality (Eagleton, 1986).

1.2.2. The Occurrence of Postmodernism

In literature, the notion of postmodernism has transformed how readers interpret classic narratives. At its foundation, postmodernism is a drive toward more creative expressions that defy traditional storytelling standards. This departure from traditional literary frameworks has both pleased and disappointed some readers. Nonetheless, there is no disputing that it has left an everlasting imprint on the worldwide literary scene. This upcoming section will highlight how postmodern authors have created important works that remain timeless classics today, ranging from investigating practical applications of language to including reflective meta-commentary.

Since the 1970s, postmodernism has been a multifaceted phenomenon in different realms of culture. Postmodernism, as defined by Andrew Keller Estes (2013), is a wide term that embraces a variety of concepts and approaches to culture, literature, art, architecture, and all other elements of human life. Postmodernism is defined by a number of themes, including the rejection of grand narratives, the embrace of randomness and uncertainty, and the emphasis on the present rather than

the past. It has had an impact on many parts of life, including art, architecture, and literature. Furthermore, it has questioned established notions of truth and reality, bringing new ways of thinking about the world and its intricacies. As a result, postmodernism has emerged as a dominant component of modern life, offering an alternative to conventional forms of knowledge and culture.

Since the end of World War II, postmodernism has had a major impact on literature. Postmodern literature, according to Magali Cornier Michael and Margaret Atwood (1996), is distinguished by an emphasis on the individual and a rejection of established literary rules. This is seen in the writings of numerous post-World War II authors, who frequently emphasise the individual experience and question standard means of communication. Postmodern authors, for example, frequently experiment with fragmented and nonlinear styles of writing, which may provide the reader with a one-of-a-kind experience. They also frequently address issues of alienation, identity, and the search for meaning in a quickly changing society. Other features of postmodern writing include sarcasm, satire, and playfulness, which urge readers to think critically and challenge established notions. As Michael and Atwood (1996) point out, postmodernism has enabled authors to experiment with new modes of expression and has created new literary possibilities.

Since the mid-20th century, many authors have used postmodernist methods in their writing because of the movement's significance. To define postmodernism, one might look at its "collage of fragments" and its "emphasis on the interplay of language and meaning". These postmodernist characteristics have deeply affected the evolution of literary techniques used in literature. For instance, the "metafictional" aspect present in many postmodern works allows the author to make commentary on their own writing and self-reflexively call attention to the structure of their work. In addition, postmodern authors frequently use strategies like fragmentation and intertextuality, which include shifting focus or quoting from sources other than the main story. Finally, the reader may feel tension or uneasiness while interacting with postmodern works because of their ambiguity and sardonic tone. The use of

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postmodernist literary methods in fiction has had far-reaching effects (Smith, 2009: Coulter, 2009).

Postmodernism has had a major effect on the growth of literary subgenres. As a result, literary norms like linearity, closure, and order can no longer be taken at face value. F. R. Ankersmit (1989) explores how postmodernism has influenced literature and how it has given writers the freedom to experiment with new forms of expression. He claims that postmodernism is to blame for the "shattering of the conventional boundaries between genres" (p. 140), which in turn has encouraged writers to play around with techniques like discontinuous narration, shifting point of view, and non-linear storytelling. Ankersmit argues that postmodernism has encouraged authors to experiment with a wide range of hybrid forms, including fusing fantasy and realism and engaging in a dialogue with other works through intertextuality. Ankersmit adds that postmodernism has given writers more leeway to engage in self-reflexivity, in which they reflect on their own writing and the nature of their readership. Overall, the effect of postmodernism on the growth of literary genres is examined in detail in Ankersmit's work *Historiography and Postmodernism* (1989). It is a great example of the freedom of expression afforded by postmodernism to authors who want to try out new ways of telling stories and see what happens when they mix genres.

In recent years, postmodernism has made significant inroads into the world of contemporary literature. Jon Doyle (2017, p.261) "Postmodernism […] is a common theme among authors writing in the 21st century". In this sense, the postmodern condition is distinguished by its rejection of traditional, linear narrative patterns and insertion of varied, frequently non-realistic components. Postmodern literature, for example, can have aspects of intertextuality, metafiction, and pastiche. Furthermore, postmodern fiction frequently questions the traditional definition of the genre, frequently blurring the distinctions between fiction, nonfiction, and fantasy. Furthermore, postmodernism is frequently utilised to challenge established concepts of gender and identity, enabling readers to connect with the book more subversively. To summarise, postmodernism is a pervasive issue in contemporary fiction, and its

impact on how readers perceive literature should not be overlooked (Doyle, 2017; Waugh, 2012).

The rise of postmodernism in the latter half of the 20th century significantly influenced how people viewed the world and where they stood in relation to it. As Larry McCaffery (1991) points out, postmodernism is a complicated idea that may be observed in many different facets of human existence, including but not limited to literature, art, and other fields. It is characterised by a rejection of established values and traditions, stress on the individual, and a focus on the fragmentation of reality. It is regarded as a response to modernism. Postmodernism has been connected to a variety of social and cultural movements, including feminism, multiculturalism, and globalisation, in addition to a number of tendencies in philosophy and the arts. It is a response against the dominating values of the modern era and has been used to criticise and question traditional concepts of power and authority. This movement began as a backlash against the dominant ideals of the modern era. It has resulted in the development of novel[3] modes of expression and comprehension, and it provides one more lens through which one might see the wider world. In a nutshell, Postmodernism expanded artistic freedom, questioned the existing quo, and offered fresh viewpoints on life and society. It allows authors to think abstractly, experiment with form, and challenge standard structures and subjects.

1.2.3. Postmodern Fiction

Postmodern fiction is a subgenre of literary fiction that rose to popularity in the latter half of the 20th century, with the novelist N. Scott Momaday serving as a pioneer in the field. Momaday is best known for his novel *House Made of Dawn,* which was first published in 1968. His works, which frequently include aspects of Native American oral tradition, investigate the difficulties of identification as well as what it is like to be a Native American in today's culture. Momaday provides an immersive experience that conveys the postmodern sensation of alienation and confusion through the use of stream-of-consciousness narrative, fractured timelines, and fragmented characters.

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[3] A novel is a fictional work that lasts longer than a short story and frequently delves deeply into complicated topics and characters.

Additionally, he incorporates magical realism[4] into his writing, which allows him to blur the lines between reality and the fantastic. As a consequence of this, people frequently consider his writings to be ground-breaking in the sense that they push the limits of what is possible in the literary world. Momaday has demonstrated, via the body of work he has produced, that postmodern fiction can be an effective medium through which to investigate topics such as identity and alienation, as well as the power of narrative (Rainwater, 1999; Allen, 1999).

Stephen Copley and Peter Garside (1994) set out with the intention of researching the influence that postmodern literature has had on the current state of the literary landscape. Postmodern fiction has had a significant influence on the landscape of contemporary literature due to the fact that it questions standard interpretations of literary works and frequently presents unorthodox storylines and characters. It has inspired readers to engage in more critical thinking about what they are reading and to take an active part in the process of understanding the book. In addition, it has allowed writers to investigate fresh ideas and subject matter frequently by defying the norms of conventional fiction. This has led to a rise in creative output and experimentation within the genre as authors have attempted to push the bounds of writing in intriguing new ways. As a result, the creative output and experimentation within the genre have increased. As Copley and Garside point out, postmodern fiction has had a major effect on the landscape of the literary world. It has made it possible for writers to investigate novel concepts while simultaneously encouraging readers to think more critically and take an active role in the reading process.

Postmodern authors first appeared during a time when there was an intellectual backlash against the values of conventional literature. Authors that fall within the category of postmodernism, such as Jorge Luis Borges and William S. Burroughs, have contributed a plethora of fresh concepts and novel approaches to pondering the nature of writing and literature. Their works must be studied, as they encourage readers to engage in critical thinking, investigate the multifaceted nature of

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[4] The literary subgenre known as magical realism is characterised by works that combine aspects of the actual world with those of the strange or the supernatural.

communication, and reflect on the complicated functions that language plays in everyday life. Moreover, Postmodern authors have tackled taboo and difficult issues with increased openness and acceptance. Contemporary literature is more open to exploring sexuality, gender, race, and class. Postmodern literature also encourages authors to experiment with narrative structure and form, such as linear chronology (Malpas, 2005; Grenz, 1996).

As postmodern writers aim to challenge and disrupt pre-existing norms, the deconstruction of classic narrative frameworks has become an increasingly prominent literary technique in current literature. Alun Munslow (2006) points out, "deconstruction is a means of exposing the assumptions and power structures that underlie texts, and of destabilising the reader's assumptions about the world" (p. 34). Authors can present different viewpoints and question prevalent ideas because they break down linear narratives and disturb traditional patterns of storytelling. This deconstruction may be accomplished in various ways, such as by splintering the chronological order of the story or employing numerous narrators with opposing points of view. The disruption of standard narrative frameworks allows authors to explore intricate topics and ideas in fresh and original ways, which in turn encourages readers to examine and challenge their own presuppositions and convictions. Munslow contends that "the deconstruction of narrative structures can be seen as an attempt to resist the dominant ideology and to create spaces for alternative voices and perspectives" (p. 45). As a result of this opposition, authors are in a position to question the existing quo and present alternative perspectives on the future.

Postmodern literature is notable for its focus on language and intertextuality. According to Adolphe Haberer (2007), the use of language in literature is for more than just relaying facts; it is also about building meaning through references to other texts. Intertextuality is used to describe the effect of various texts on one reader. The use of allusions, references, and quotes from other works is an example of this in literature. For Haberer (2007), authors use intertextuality to pay tribute to the literary canon and interact with the cultural and historical milieu in which their works are produced. As a result of their shared cultural knowledge, authors and readers can

develop a strong bond through intertextuality. Conversely, language is more than simply a tool for exchanging ideas; it is also how stories get told, and moods are established. Word choice, phrase rhythm and cadence, and the organisation of the text all demonstrate skill with language. Contemporary literature relies heavily on language and intertextuality, enabling writers to construct meaning and interact with their cultural and historical milieu.

David Foster Wallace, a well-established postmodernist writer, is known for his ability to defy literary conventions. Wallace, for example, disrupts standard narrative structure in his work *Infinite Jest* (1996) by presenting the plot in a non-linear form. Rather than crafting a straight storyline, Wallace blurs the lines between past and present, allowing the reader to acquire insight into the psyches of the characters. This strategy is further demonstrated by the novel's structure, which swings between different eras and locales, offering a distinct and intricate comprehension of the characters' lives. Wallace's use of non-linear form allows him to criticise the standard, linear framework of the story while also exploring the intricacies of the human condition (Cohen & Konstantinou, 2012; Groenland, 2015).

Existentialism is a significant topic in the analysis of Don DeLillo's body of work, making him one of the most important postmodern writers of the 20th century and garnered much attention. Randy Laist (2010) claims that DeLillo's fiction frequently deals with topics such as identity, alienation, and the meaninglessness of modern existence. In particular, the existential dread is explored in DeLillo's work White Noise through the novel's protagonist Jack Gladney, who is attempting to come to terms with his own death throughout the novel. DeLillo also utilises his characters to depict themes of alienation since they are frequently isolated from one another and detached from their own existence. DeLillo's characters are often alienated from their own existence and from each other. Through examining these topics, DeLillo's work offers valuable insight into the human condition and our ongoing quest for meaning in a world that is becoming more chaotic and disconnected.

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Arthur P.J. Mol and Gert Spaargaren (2000) observe the formation of postmodern fiction in the latter half of the 20th century. This fiction is distinguished by a greater tendency toward fragmentation as well as an enhanced emphasis on the individual. It is a form of fiction that places a focus on the author's own experiences and feelings, as well as the acceptance of a number of different realities. This type of fiction has had a significant impact on the fields of literature, film, and other creative forms because it has inspired the production of works in which fragmentation, individuality, and the centrality of human experience play important roles. Mol and Spaargaren notice that this type of fiction has affected how readers think about and interact with the environment because it has brought to the forefront individualistic viewpoints on the environment. Consequently, postmodern fiction has influenced the way how readers think about and interact with the environment. It has made it possible to create works that not only represent the subtleties of particular points of view but also make it possible to have a more nuanced awareness of environmental problems.

Characterisation, narrative style, and structural conventions are all extremely subject to experimentation in postmodern literature. These experiments in novel writing present a challenge to established narrative conventions and encourage readers to interact with the work in innovative and novelistic ways. Postmodern literature is sometimes seen as a reaction against the norms of classic fiction. However, in many respects, postmodern fiction goes beyond traditional writing to produce a reading experience that is singular and richly gratifying. Postmodern literature has given us access to inventive new methods of reading and comprehending stories by subverting the traditional narrative norms that have been in place for centuries (Fokkema, 1991; Kelly, 2011; Peters & Lankshear, 2013).

1.3. Postmodernism Encounters 20th Century Theories

With its departure from conventional thinking and emphasis on variety and subjectivity, postmodernism has posed a tough challenge to 20th-century ideas, upending the foundational principles of philosophical thought. In the late 20th century, postmodernism evolved as a philosophical movement in opposition to structuralism.

In *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Science*, Michael Peters and Kenneth Wain (2003) describe structuralism as an approach to inquiry that aims to comprehend the fundamental structures that define and organise social activities, organisations, and systems. The structures created by structuralists are challenged by postmodernism, which emphasises the necessity of an open, pluralistic approach to knowledge and the significance of acknowledging the fluidity of these systems. Furthermore, postmodernism criticises structuralism for favouring an objective, factual approach above knowledge's subjective, experiencing component. Postmodernism advocates an approach that considers the multiplicity of viewpoints and experiences in the world rather than aiming to discover universal principles and rules. In the end, postmodernism offers an alternative to structuralism's sometimes strict and limiting approach and works to establish a place for a more inclusive and open discussion.

1.3.1. Structuralism

Structuralism is a critical literary approach that emphasises less on a work's content or author's intentions and more its fundamental structure (Glucksmann, 1972). This approach was created in the middle of the 20th century by scholars like Robert Scholes, whose book *Structuralism in Literature* (1974) examined how a work's key components—such as its story, characters, and setting—come together to form a coherent whole. Traditional literary criticism, which emphasised the author's intentions and the text's meaning, contrasted with this strategy.

According to structuralists, a work's structure—which gives it form and power—is more significant than its message. Scholes' work makes the case that by examining a piece from the standpoint of its structure, one might find patterns and linkages that might not be obvious at first glance. Scholes' work contributed to the development of structuralism as a crucial technique for literary criticism, and their book is still useful for learning about this technique's history (Henderson, 1973; Culler, 2007).

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The structuralist literary theory seeks to understand literature by examining both its underlying structural elements and its relationship to broader cultural systems (Tyson, 2014). Structuralist literary theory is based on the concept of structuralism, which is the idea that all cultural phenomena can be broken down into their fundamental components. This kind of criticism tends to concentrate on the organisational patterns of texts and how those patterns influence the interpretation of the texts. Structuralist literary theorists are able to generate more complex interpretations of literature because they focus on the relationships between works and the greater cultural environment. In addition, structuralist literary theory has played a significant role in the evolution of modern literary criticism. This theory offered literary critics a framework within which they could analyse and interpret literature in many ways. The modern practice of literary criticism has been profoundly influenced by structuralist literary theory, which has resulted in readings of literature that are both more in-depth and more complex (Tyson, 2023).

The influence of structuralist theory on the analysis and interpretation of literary works has been substantial. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon (1983) discusses the effects of Structuralism on literary analysis and interpretation. For her, the structuralist literary theory proposes that texts have linguistic parts and underlying structures that are organised to convey meaning. Syntax[5] and semantics[6], among other linguistic structures, are employed to provide a foundation for a text's comprehension. This theory serves as a basis for deducing the meaning of the text. She adds that structuralism provides a framework for analysing texts as a whole, as opposed to breaking them down into smaller parts, by looking at the underlying patterns of language. Structuralism offers a fresh perspective on the text that might help readers better appreciate its significance.

While both postmodernism and structuralism seek to deconstruct and question conventional ways of thinking, there are some key contrasts between them. Postmodernism is distinguished by its rejection of big narratives and emphasis on

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[5] Syntax is an integral part of language and significantly impacts how we express ourselves.
[6] Semantics is a discipline that investigates how words and phrases are understood in various settings.

subjective experience, whereas structuralism emphasises the significance of language and the structures that support society. According to Alan Colquhoun (1988), "the postmodernist approach is to blur boundaries, to reject the idea of a unified, stable self, and to emphasize[7] the fragmented nature of experience" (p. 20). Structuralism, on the other hand, tries to comprehend the underlying structures that form society and how people think. Structuralists contend that language is the most important factor in comprehending these patterns and that it is via language that humans are able to make sense of the world that surrounds them. Although both movements have had an impact on their respective fields, the ways in which they approach deconstruction and critique are very different from one another. Structuralism tries to understand and critique pre-existing patterns and narratives, whereas postmodernism strives to question pre-existing structures and narratives. In the end, the distinctions between the two movements reflect different ways of seeing the world and language's part in forming our impressions of it (Colquhoun, 1988; Peters and Lankshear, 1996).

Structuralism and postmodernism have had a significant effect on cultural and social movements all over the world. James Petras and Henry Veltmeyer (2001) argue that these two concepts offer a critical perspective on current affairs. Structuralism has helped us comprehend the power dynamics that define our society. At the same time, postmodernism has encouraged us to question canonical accounts of the past and celebrate the rich diversity of our cultural identities. Thus, these ideas have allowed people to look at social and cultural developments more comprehensively. Structuralism, for one, has helped in appreciating the significance of power relations in social movements, while postmodernism has inspired novel forms of resistance that rely on a wide range of identities and life experiences. Ultimately, these theories have allowed to development of a more tolerant and workable strategy for addressing social and cultural shifts.

Contemporary art and literature have been profoundly influenced by structuralist and postmodernist ideas. Postmodernism, as a response to modernism, is

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[7] Emphasize is written with a z as to be faithful to the original source.

centred on the premise that language, culture, and identities are socially produced, while structuralism stresses the link between a whole and its pieces. For example, the formal features of a painting or the structure of a poem have both been the subject of structuralist analysis. It has also been used to decipher the hidden meanings and motifs inside a piece of art. However, postmodernism has been utilised to criticise societal power systems, especially in literary works. Writers have employed postmodernism to delve further into subjects like gender, racism, and class by examining the premise that language, culture, and identities are socially created. These two trends have encouraged more variety in modern art and literature and facilitated a more in-depth examination of social concerns (Sarup, 1993).

1.3.2. Poststructuralism

When considering the significance of language in our reading of literature, poststructuralism provides an invaluable theoretical framework. It acknowledges language as a powerful and authoritative force that affects how we understand literary works rather than as a neutral medium through which individuals express their thoughts and feelings. According to Mark Wolff (1994), poststructuralism rejects the view that information accurately reflects the world and instead argues that our linguistic, cultural, and historical backgrounds mould our perspectives. For instance, the typical modern reader of a 19th century English novel would have a substantially different interpretation of the text than the author had in mind. Poststructuralism provides a useful framework for understanding how language affects literary interpretation and how different cultural settings shape our view of a book.

It was 1980, yet Rosalind Krauss already saw poststructuralism's "growing influence" (p. 37) on literary criticism. Poststructuralism is a philosophical approach that examines how we create meaning through the use of language and other signs. It delves into the ways in which a story's meaning may be constructed and reconstructed through the use of language and images. This viewpoint has substantially impacted literary criticism since it goes beyond the typical means of analysis and interpretation. Instead, it encourages scholars to look at the role of language and imagery in constructing meaning. It gets students to consider how meaning is constructed and

whether or not that construction can be undone. This approach gives literary critics a deeper understanding of the texts they evaluate and a keener awareness of the processes by which meaning is constructed and discarded. Significantly enhanced understanding of literary works has resulted from poststructuralism's introduction to literary criticism (Krauss, 1980).

According to Graham Allen (2021), poststructuralism is a theoretical paradigm that has had a major effect on contemporary literature. The author describes it as a "theory of knowledge that seeks to explore the relationships between language, power, and knowledge" (p. 151). Poststructuralism's ability to shed light on the ways in which language and authority shape ideas and beliefs has made it an invaluable tool for literary critics. For instance, poststructuralism may be utilised to probe how writing can challenge established ideologies and how language can either uphold or overturn authority. Some areas where poststructuralism may be used are the role of narrative in literature and the ways in which authors might question long-standing representational conventions. By illuminating the ways in which language and power influence contemporary literary output, poststructuralism may be used to challenge prevailing ideologies.

Postmodernism and poststructuralism, both of which were popular over the whole of the twentieth century, had a major impact on the development of literary style. According to Michael A. Peters and Nicholas C. Burbules (2004), postmodernism and poststructuralism both threatened traditional views of literature and its form. Because of this, authors were given the freedom to approach familiar subjects in novel ways. Postmodernism is defined by its acceptance of various perspectives and its rejection of the idea of a single, absolute truth. Poststructuralism critiques the traditional understanding of language by offering the concept of fluid meanings that may change over time. Because of this, writers began taking risks with language and structure in order to explore their themes in novel ways. For instance, authors began employing non-linear and fragmented narrative techniques to highlight the complexities of reality (Peters and Burbules, 2004), or they began deconstructing

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the language of power to highlight the oppressive forces in society. Both strategies were deployed to highlight an intricate facet of reality.

Postmodernism and poststructuralism have had a significant impact on how literature is categorised. According to Serpil Oppermann (2006), these two schools of thought on literature want to do away with the distinctions between literary fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Metafiction combines fictional and nonfictional elements and has been studied extensively, especially within the postmodernist literary movement. However, poststructuralism has sought to challenge conventional book classifications by arguing that literary genres are fluid and ever-evolving. These two shifts have made it increasingly common for writers to blur the lines between genres formerly clearly defined. This shift has produced far-reaching impacts on literary interpretation and provided authors with fresh opportunities for innovation (Oppermann, 2006).

Since the 1980s, postmodernism and poststructuralism have been crucial theoretical frameworks for advancing our understanding of literature. Nollaig Frost and Frauke Elichaoff (2014) argue that dismantling current frameworks and reassessing the canonical literature is a central emphasis of postmodernism. It has revolutionised how we interpret literature by allowing readers to approach it from new angles and consider it more deeply. Poststructuralism, on the other hand, places greater emphasis on the study of linguistic structure and its influence on interpretation. It has helped us see literature in a broader context by shedding new light on the interplay between language, culture, and authority. A more complex and all-encompassing approach to literary theory has emerged by bringing together these two schools of thought, allowing readers to delve into literature with considerably greater subtlety.

The poststructuralist approach in literary studies demonstrates that literature is a dynamic tool for assessing the power dynamics of society. Poststructuralism is the study of the ways in which language and established power structures impact people's perceptions of the world. Furthermore, poststructuralism has brought an increased understanding of the constructed structure of the literary canon, demonstrating the

need to take into account the voices and perspectives of marginalised groups while doing research (Williams, 2014).

1.3.3. Deconstruction

Deconstruction, a mode of literary criticism that first emerged in the second half of the 20th century, holds that "words and texts are unstable and subject to many interpretations" (Scheurich, 1997, p. 62). It is widely used in the field of literary studies nowadays. In deconstructive criticism, both words and texts are treated as potentially meaningless. According to Jonathan Culler (2007), deconstruction has become increasingly important in the field of literary criticism. This tactic depends on the idea that meaning is not inherent to language but is arrived at through the individual reader's interpretation of a given text. It is an approach that challenges accepted literary theories and standards by revealing previously unnoticed meanings and themes in a text. Deconstruction can also be used to examine the influence of the author's social, political, and historical context on a text (Critchley, 2014).

In postmodern literature, deconstruction is used to depict the critical study of texts and other kinds of communication. As Jeffrey Thomas Nealon (1993) puts it, "deconstruction is a method of analysing texts in order to reveal their underlying structures and meanings" (p. 78). Postmodern literature relies heavily on deconstruction so that readers may analyse the material from several angles. This kind of study can aid readers in comprehending the text by considering it from the author's, the reader's, and the text's points of view. Deconstruction can be used to analyse the author's use of language and structure to convey meaning and the reader's interpretation of the work. In addition, the author's unstated assumptions about the text and its meaning can be revealed through deconstruction. Furthermore, readers can learn more about the author's meaning and goals for the material by dissecting it. Deconstructing a work may also shed light on how history and diverse readers have influenced its development. To sum up, deconstruction is a crucial method for enhancing the comprehension of postmodern literature.

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Deconstruction, devised by French philosopher Jacques Derrida, has greatly influenced literary criticism. Deconstruction exposes a text's internal contradictions and inconsistencies (Berger, 1997). Patricia Harkin (2005) probed the intersection of deconstruction and reader response theory. For her, deconstruction is a literary criticism strategy that seeks to unearth the text's deeper meanings. It investigates the potential of literature to undermine established authority and ideology. On the other hand, reader-response theory highlights the reader's importance to the text's overall meaning. It posits that each readers' interpretations of a work are influenced by their own backgrounds and life circumstances. Harkin maintains that the two approaches to interpreting texts, deconstruction and reader-response theory, are mutually beneficial. By combining deconstruction with reader-response theory, critics might learn more about how different readers understand a text's hidden meanings. Harkin argues that a reader can obtain a more nuanced comprehension of the text by combining these two methods.

The ideas of deconstruction and postmodernism are inextricably linked. David Knights (1997) makes the case that deconstruction, a postmodern idea, has influenced our worldview in his work. Deconstruction is an approach to textual analysis that "questions the assumption of unity and meaning in texts" (Knights, 1997, p. 541). To achieve a more nuanced understanding of a work, deconstructionists question the assumptions of unity on which conventional interpretations are grounded. Deconstruction as a concept has also been used to disrupt entrenched practices and promote new ways of thinking and doing business within an organisation. Postmodernism, on the other hand, is a notion that does the same thing by questioning established ways of thinking and doing things. "It's a movement that aims to break down the distinctions between high culture and popular culture" (p. 541); hence the label postmodern is apt. Postmodernism encourages an investigation of a work's potential meaning from a variety of angles since it eliminates such boundaries. Organisational structures and methods can benefit greatly from this realisation. Researchers can get insight into how to foster an atmosphere conducive to open dialogue and teamwork by studying the connection between deconstruction and postmodernism.

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In *Postmodernism and Social Inquiry*, written by David R. Dickens and Andrea Fontana (2015), demonstrate the profound effect of deconstruction and postmodernism on contemporary art and literature. According to Dickens and Fontana, a "decentering of the self" (p. 58) may be achieved through postmodernism, paving the way for a new kind of artistic expression predicated on the notion that the "individual self is embedded in a larger, more complex system of meaning" (p. 58). Many postmodern artists have taken this concept as a springboard to investigate the complex relationship between the self and the society in which it exists. As a result, there has been a surge in collaborative and social approaches to the creative process and an explosion of artworks exploring topics like identity, power, and oppression. Contemporary artists are able to question the established order and investigate new vantage points because of postmodernism's questioning of traditional conceptions of truth, reality, and objectivity. Consequently, deconstruction and postmodernism have left an indelible and substantial mark on the visual arts.

Deconstruction is a major philosophical movement of the postmodern age. Christopher Norris (1997) argues that this method of thinking has significantly influenced how postmodernism is understood. By studying and interrogating the commonly held interpretations underlying works of literature, deconstruction has been used to challenge conventional thought. This has helped literary scholars appreciate the wide range of meanings that may be extracted from a single piece of writing. Deconstruction has also permitted a reappraisal of linguistic practises, which has had far-reaching implications for how postmodernism is understood. Deconstruction has helped us learn the meanings of words and symbols by questioning and re-evaluating them. This has greatly influenced postmodern thought since it has posed a serious threat to conventional worldviews and made room for fresh perspectives. Norris (1997) argues that deconstruction had a crucial role in the emergence of postmodernism and continues to do so.

1.3.4. Existentialism

Plenty of literary works deal with existentialist philosophy., Jennifer Whipple and Catherine Tucker (2012) analyse the influence of existentialism on literature; they

define it as a philosophical idea that stresses the importance of the unique person and their free will. This topic is significant because it compels readers to think deeply about the implications of their own actions. Many authors, including Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, have explored existential themes in their writing. Readers of Sartre's texts are urged to make their own decisions, live with the outcomes, and find their own meaning in life. In his writings, Camus delves into the philosophy of existentialism, encouraging readers to reflect on the absurdity of existence and discover acceptance. In addition to Camus' *The Stranger* (1942), another existentialist novel, Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1915) explores the theme of metamorphosis and how it might lead to a new perspective on life.

The philosophical school known as existentialism has gained widespread popularity in recent years. This philosophical perspective has significantly impacted people's lives and their connections with others, as explained by Aric Rindfleisch et al. (2009). For existentialists, free will is paramount, and it's up to each person to decide how they want to conduct their life. This contrasted sharply with more conventional civilisations when people were expected to follow the rules. By encouraging introspective consideration of one's own views and values, existentialism has helped people act in accordance with their highest ideals. This has resulted in a growing sense of autonomy on their part, freed from the shackles of more rigid social norms and customs. People have been more willing to try new things and follow their own interests as a result of the modern value placed on freedom of choice. As a consequence, we live in a more original and forward-thinking culture where people follow their passions and seek to improve themselves. By empowering people to behave according to their ideals and principles rather than those imposed upon them by society at large, existentialism has had far-reaching effects on modern life.

Meaninglessness, absurdity, and alienation are among topics that existentialism has helped postmodern writers explore. Rindfleisch et al. (2009) looked at the impact of existentialism on postmodern writing. They discovered that many works of postmodern literature use existentialism as a framework for questioning the significance of one's existence. Through the lens of existentialism, authors are free to

investigate questions of self-awareness and the absence of guiding principles. Authors frequently employ this idea to portray individuals and their conflicts with societal and cultural norms and their quests for significance in an apparently empty universe. Postmodern literature delves into these topics so that readers may identify with the characters' existential angst. The study also showed that postmodern literature contributes to a greater understanding of the human condition by examining such universal themes as free choice, uncertainty, and mortality. There is no denying the impact that existentialism has had on postmodern writing. What makes postmodern literature so compelling is its depth and complexity, neither of which would exist without existentialism.

1.3.4.1. Authenticity

Existentialism places a significant emphasis on authenticity, defined as the practice of living one's life in a manner that aligns with one's genuine self rather than with society's expectations or norms. According to Jacob Golomb (2012), "authenticity involves the courage to be oneself, to face one's own mortality, and to make choices in a world without inherent meaning" (p. 9). Authenticity also requires the willingness to face one's mortality. To do this, individuals need to accept responsibility for their actions and be open to the unpredictability and ambiguity of life. On the other hand, Authenticity demands individuals to get their subjectivity and actively design their own lives, in contrast to inauthenticity, which includes living one's life according to the norms and ideals of other people. Existentialism and authenticity, as a result, provide a potent critique of modern society, which frequently places a higher priority on conformity, monetary achievement, and external validation than it does on individual freedom and self-discovery.

In the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre, authenticity is defined as the awareness of one's freedom and the acceptance of responsibility for one's own decisions. Living an authentic life, which refers to the concept of living a life that is true to oneself despite being free from external influences and societal conventions, requires authenticity on the part of the individual. Regarding leadership, sincerity is essential for garnering followers' confidence and establishing one's reputation. According to

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John Lawler (2005), "authenticity in leadership is a process of self-discovery and self-expression that requires a deep understanding of one's values, beliefs, and motivations" (p. 147). Furthermore, freedom and authenticity in existentialism have been the subject of many studies in recent years. Wenwen Shang et al. (2020) examine the impact of existential freedom on one's feeling of authenticity. The writers say that they were primarily influenced by the idea of "authenticity as the embodiment of a person's freedom" proposed by philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. They say freedom may be under "a cause and a result of authenticity", making the interaction between the two a two-way street. In addition, they recommend that people keep their independence and let it direct their decisions in life if they want to be genuine.

Paul T.P. Wong (2010) argues that authenticity is not limited to being honest with oneself but also with others. To put it another way, to live an authentic life is to accept one's own humanity, duties, and dependency on others. Facing existential facts like uncertainty, ambiguity, and death is essential for authenticity. According to Wong, being genuine calls for introspection into one's own motivations, values, and principles. This procedure involves bravery, introspection, and the desire to test one's own preconceptions and worldview. Living an authentic life also requires being cognizant of the ways in which one's social and cultural milieu affects one's identity and sense of self. In the end, genuine life necessitates dedication to one's own improvement and the acceptance of personal accountability for one's actions. In conclusion, being one's true self in an existential world is no easy feat; it calls for introspection, bravery, and dedication to one's own development.

The process of defining literary authenticity is intricate and complicated. Torulf Palm (2008) defines authenticity in literature as the extent to which the author's experience, beliefs, values, and emotions are accurately and meaningfully represented in the work. According to this definition, genuine writing successfully transmits the author's sincerity. Nevertheless, authenticity encompasses more than just the author's point of view. The critic's evaluation of the work's historical, social, and cultural context is equally important. A work that properly represents the lived experiences of a particular group, for instance, may be seen as more genuine than one that depends

on generalisations or assumptions about that group. The reader's perspective also plays a role in determining the work's credibility. If the work's ideas resonate with the reader or the reader recognises aspects of their own life, the reader may conclude that the work is genuine. Ultimately, the author's perspective, the historical context, the social background, and the reader's perception all play a role in determining what constitutes authenticity in writing.

With the development of postmodernism, the concept of authenticity has become increasingly important in literary criticism. Since postmodernism introduced a new style of critical analysis to the study of literature in particular, the way authenticity is thought about has shifted; the new method centres on the concept of "perceived authenticity", which is founded on each reader's unique set of beliefs and experiences. This approach has been perceived as a means of better comprehending the interaction between writers and their audiences since a reader's interpretation of a text may be interpreted as a way to determine the author's intended message. Furthermore, this strategy has enhanced our understanding of why and how authenticity matters when evaluating a text. By drawing attention to the fact that the term "authenticity" can be interpreted in several ways, postmodernism has given literary criticism a new viewpoint.

1.3.4.2. Absurdity

Absurdism is a school of thought and a literary genre that gained popularity in the mid-twentieth century. "The conflict between the human tendency to seek meaning in life and the inherent meaninglessness of existence" (Bennett, 2015, p.1). According to Michael. Y. Bennett, absurdism may be traced back to the works of the philosopher Albert Camus, who held that existence is meaningless and ludicrous on its face and that humans are responsible for giving it meaning. The philosophical school known as existentialism significantly impacted Camus's thinking because of its emphasis on the autonomy of the individual in the face of a meaningless universe. However, absurdism contends that life has no intrinsic meaning and that all attempts to discover meaning are fruitless, in contrast to existentialism's view that people may construct their purpose by their choices. The literary genre of the ridiculous is sometimes linked

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to absurdism because of its use of incoherent and illogical settings to emphasise the folly of human existence. Many literary scholars use plays by writers like Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco to illustrate the ridiculous. In general, absurdism rejects conventional understandings of the good life and urges its followers to laugh in the face of the meaninglessness and ambiguity they see daily.

A central tenet of the absurdist aesthetic is the acceptance of the futility of human existence. This is not to deny the existence of purpose in life but rather to point out that any such significance is, by definition, arbitrary. Joanna Gavins writes, "the very notion of a meaning of life' involves the assumption that life is, or at least ought to be, meaningful, and that there is some objective standard by which its meaning can be judged" (Gavins, 2013, p. 41). This presumption is undermined by absurdism, which forces one to face death, the inherent meaninglessness of life, and the limitations of reason. Realising how silly life is can cause worry and depression, but it also has the potential to set one free from the confines of conventional wisdom. An individual who "accepts the absurdity of life without becoming embittered, who lives life to the fullest in spite of its inherent meaninglessness" (Gavins, 2013, p. 42) reflects this idea of the ridiculous hero. By doing so, absurdism questions the validity of preconceived concepts of right and wrong. Instead, it urges people to accept their subjectivity and find significance in the present rather than an idealised future.

Modern and postmodern artists and authors use this concept to question the established order. Leopoldo Arias-Bolzmann et al. (2000) propose using absurdist techniques to convey the muddled nature of the content. They claim that absurdism is utilised in contemporary art to make spectators feel lost and disoriented, testing their beliefs and prompting them to ponder the ultimate purpose of life. A literary style that emphasises the irrationality of daily life and the absurdity of human existence. Absurdism is an approach to art and literature that breaks with convention to question established norms. It frees creatives to question traditional wisdom and probe into unfamiliar territory. In conclusion, absurdism has grown into a significant trend in modern art and literature because it gives creators leeway to subvert canonical conventions and produces works that test the assumptions of their audiences.

1.4. Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud is often credited as one of the founders of contemporary psychology because of his significant advancements in psychoanalytic theory. A central tenet of Freud's psychoanalytic theory is that unconscious thought processes significantly influence behaviour. According to Freud, hidden memories and desires make up the bulk of the unconscious and have the power to influence an individual's actions and feelings (De Board, 2014). Similarly, Freud's psychoanalytic method centred on the trinity of the id, ego, and superego. In Freud's view, the ego acts as a buffer between the id and the world at large, whereas the id is the instinctual, pleasure-seeking element of the unconscious. The conscience or personal rule of conduct resides in the superego. The concepts of repression and defence mechanisms, which are utilised psychologically to deal with internal tensions and concerns, are also a part of Freud's psychoanalytic method (Kingsbury, 2004).

Ever since Freud proposed that the unconscious mind was crucial in shaping behaviour, the question of language's function in psychoanalysis has been a hotly debated one. Psychoanalyst and linguist Sigmund Freud theorised that a person's true wishes might be uncovered via an examination of their linguistic patterns. French psychotherapist Jacques Lacan refined his view of language's function in psychoanalysis in the 1950s and 60s. According to Lacan, language is more than just a means of communicating one's hidden feelings; it also serves to articulate one's place in the social order. He contended that words had the power to both expose and conceal an individual's innermost thoughts and emotions through their symbolic portrayal. Lacan's ideas about the use of language in psychoanalysis have had far-reaching consequences, and his writings are still widely read and debated today. To fully grasp psychoanalysis and its historical evolution, one must examine the function of language within it (Lacan, 1968).

There has been discussion over the significance of the unconscious in psychoanalysis for quite some time. Jessica Leonardi et al. (2022) stress the significance of knowing and considering unconscious processes for successfully applying and practising psychoanalytic methods. They believe that many medical

professionals' over-reliance on rational thought is to blame for subpar outcomes. They claim that understanding the significance of one's unconscious thought processes is crucial for success. They address the importance of the unconscious mind in providing insight into the patient's psychological condition and how this might aid the practitioner in determining the best course of treatment. They stress that to adopt psychoanalysis fully; practitioners must pay attention to both the patient's conscious and unconscious processes. In addition, they imply that clinicians need to be alert to the impact that patients' unconscious processes might have on their development and flexible enough to change their approach accordingly.

Since their origin by Sigmund Freud at the turn of the twentieth century, the ideas of desire and transference have undergone significant development. Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic theories presented a more nuanced explanation of desire than Freud's, viewing it not just as a wish-fulfilling force but also as something profoundly buried within language and the Symbolic order. On the other hand, Lacan's ideas of transference emphasised the significance of the analyst-patient relationship and how the patient may unknowingly project their wishes onto the analyst. This "relationship becomes a charged space in which the patient's personal history, transferences, and resistances are worked through" (Schaverien, 2003, p. 18). According to Lacan, this process allows the patient to confront both their hidden longings and the impediments that stand in the way of their being fulfilled. Therefore, the evolution of the ideas of desire and transference from Freud to Lacan provides a more nuanced view of the psychoanalytic process and the ways in which a patient may come to grips with their own hidden wants.

Over the years, researchers have spent a great deal of time comparing and contrasting various psychoanalytic ideas. Robert S. Wallerstein (1990) provides an in-depth analysis of the many strategies employed in this area. In his paper, Wallerstein traces the development of psychoanalysis and the numerous schools of thought that have developed from it, including Freud's, Jung's, and Adler's. He further details the dissimilarities between these ideas, considering how they deal with various parts of the human mind. In addition to discussing the individual ideas, Wallerstein examines

their interplay to shed light on how they could complement one another in treatment. Moreover, he considers each theory's ramifications, weighing each method's advantages and disadvantages. This paper by Wallerstein is a great resource for anybody who wants to learn more about the many psychoanalytic theories that have been proposed.

1.4.1. Trauma

Trauma is "an event that is experienced as emotionally distressing and that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope" (Green, 1990, p. 126). Literary scholars have paid considerable attention to the complicated and diverse topic of how trauma is depicted in works of fiction. Michelle Balaev (2008) argues that the psychological repercussions of trauma on individuals and society may be studied and conveyed via literature. When discussing an individual's mental and emotional health, 'trauma' describes a highly upsetting or frightening event that leaves an indelible mark. Characters who have seen or witnessed great tragedy are frequently used to illustrate the effects of trauma in literature. Balaev claims that literature is a powerful medium for depicting and analysing trauma, allowing audiences insight into the minds of those who have experienced it. Authors may communicate the complicated and often conflicting feelings that trauma causes, such as dread, anxiety, and numbness, using literary methods like metaphor, imagery, and symbolism. Examining how trauma is portrayed in literature may shed light on its effects on individuals and communities and the power of literature to aid in the healing process.

A traumatic event can irrevocably alter an individual's life. This effect is reflected in fiction, where characters frequently exhibit distress after experiencing trauma. According to Negin Heidarizadeh (2015), literary characters who experience trauma suffer from identity crises and social isolation. Sethe, a character in Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*, exemplifies this idea by being tormented by the memories of slavery and her daughter's murder. Sethe's past has left her feeling isolated and alone, and she has difficulty figuring out where she fits. Like Amir, the protagonist of Khaled Hosseini's The Kite Runner suffers from flashbacks to the anguish of witnessing the rape of his comrade and then betraying him. Amir feels terrible and

alienated from his family and society because of his experiences. Characters' sense of self and their connections with others can be profoundly altered by traumatic experiences, as seen in these examples. Ultimately, the literature's depiction of trauma is a reminder of trauma's long-lasting effects and the necessity of getting treatment and support to recover from it.

Recently, trauma has been examined more frequently in works of postmodern literature. Ronald Granofsky (2012) argues that postmodern literature may be identified by its rejection of canonical narrative patterns and its examination of established conceptions of truth and reality. Since trauma is typically experienced in pieces and out of order, this type of writing is well suited to explore these aspects of the experience. Non-linear storytelling, shattered recollections, and a porous border between fact and fiction are all common ways postmodern fiction depicts pain. These methods let readers identify with the characters going through traumatic experiences by emulating their confusion and helplessness. Postmodern writing has also been lauded for its ability to depict traumatic experiences, particularly wartime experiences, without simplifying or sensationalising them. The depiction of trauma in postmodern literature is a significant and beneficial addition to the literary canon because it allows readers to delve into the complexities and depths of the human experience.

Postmodern fiction has been an important platform for depicting pain because of its ability to experiment with form and embrace a broad variety of narrative styles. Postmodernists, with their use of literary tropes like fragmentation, intertextuality, and nonlinear narratives, provide new ways of presenting pain. Furthermore, postmodern literature has provided a voice for previously silenced groups. Finally, discussing trauma in postmodern literature is an important step in bringing attention to the damaging effects of trauma and contributing to conversations about mental health and rehabilitation (Crosthwaite, 2009).

1.4.2. Anxiety

Many different psychoanalytical thinkers have spent time and energy studying anxiety because of its central role in the psychoanalytic process. Anxiety, from a Freudian point of view, is fundamental to his idea of psychoanalysis. Freud (1977) argues that anxiety develops when the ego is forced to deal with competing needs and wants. He contends that worry is a defensive mechanism the ego employs to ward off the id's more base, instinctual tendencies. According to Freud, "anxiety is a signal of a threat to the integrity of the ego" (p. 85). Anxiety has adaptive value in that it may warn us of impending danger and allow us to take preventative measures. He adds that unresolved psychological conflicts, which may manifest as anxiety, can be treated by psychoanalysis. For instance, a person with excessive anxiety may be working through unresolved issues from their formative years. The severity of the anxiety may be lessened, and a new understanding of the person's current struggles may be gained if these conflicts are explored in psychoanalytic treatment. According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, anxiety serves as a protective mechanism and early warning signal.

Anxiety's place among Jungian archetypes has been the focus of a lot of research and discussion. As R. L. Rosnow (1980) argues, anxiety is crucial to the maturation of the mind. It disrupts psychological organisation and performance because of friction between the rational and irrational parts of the mind. As described by Carl Jung, anxiety has been shown to trigger the emergence of archetypes or the fundamental structures of the psyche. These archetypes form the basis of our identities and are reflected in the roles we play on a daily basis. They set the stage for our subsequent thinking, feeling, and acting, influencing our social interactions. Worry also has the potential to bring out incomplete or even antagonistic archetypes. Depression, anxiety, and even insanity are all possible outcomes of this situation. Because of the potential influence of anxiety on an individual's personality, it is crucial to comprehend the part that anxiety plays in the maturation of the mind.

Anxiety may catalyse change in literature, adding depth to the narrative and individual arcs. There are several methods to examine a character's internal conflict,

such as when they are dealing with worried thoughts or sentiments. Either the positive effects of the character's maturation as they learn to cope with their worry or the negative repercussions of their anxiety might be emphasised. By delving into the myriad ways that anxiety may manifest itself, authors can give their characters more depth and make them more relatable (Borkovec et al., 1983).

Anxiety's influence on the development of different types of literature has been the subject of many studies. Nancy L. Collins and Brooke C. Feeney (2004) set out to learn more about this trend. The authors conclude their study that anxiety substantially affects people's choice of literary genres. Anxiety was discovered to affect both genre preference and the creative process. Anxious people, for example, tend to choose more rigid types of writing like poetry, while others with less anxiety can go towards more fluid styles like short tales. Individuals with greater anxiety levels may also be more prone to self-censor their writing and adopt a careful approach to the process. This implies that worry can significantly alter one's capacity to communicate in writing.

1.4.3. Paranoia

Extreme mistrust and suspicion of others, leading to a sense of persecution and dread of damage or victimisation, characterises the mental condition known as paranoia. Paranoia can develop in response to environmental circumstances, including social isolation, seeing or experiencing violence, or having a string of bad luck. Paranoia has been linked to both environmental and biological variables, such as shifts in brain chemistry. Paranoia has also been linked to mental elements, including negative thought patterns and certain personality features. Those who suffer from paranoia may, thankfully, seek therapy. Because it teaches people to recognise and alter unhelpful thought patterns, cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) has been shown to be effective in treating paranoia. Medication, namely antipsychotics, can be used to mitigate the effects of paranoia and restore emotional equilibrium (Humphrey, 2021).

John Mirowsky and Catherine E. Ross (1983) determined that paranoia is harmful to mental health in a significant way. Anger, fear, and concern can result, which can spiral into deeper mental health problems, including depression, anxiety,

and even substance misuse. Paranoid people often feel alone and alienated, exacerbating their symptoms and worsening their mental health. Furthermore, Mirowsky and Ross discovered that paranoia might hinder an individual's capacity for rational thought, reasoning, and sound decision-making. The mental health consequences of making bad choices are well-documented. In addition, paranoia can drive people to believe in conspiracy theories, which in turn can foster additional paranoia, distrust, and mental health problems. According to Mirowsky and Ross's findings, paranoia has a major effect on mental health and can lead to other psychological problems.

It is easy to dismiss paranoia's impact on culture. However, it may profoundly affect people's perspectives and relationships. CN Thoroughgood et al. (2017) argue that paranoia influences one's perspective of the world and other people. Paranoid people are more likely to be suspicious and mistrusting of others, which can make interpersonal connections challenging. They may also start to worry excessively about being deceived, which might cause them to withdraw from relationships, even with reliable individuals. As a result, individuals may become more isolated and get less support from friends and family. Paranoia also causes people to distrust others' motives, making them feel unsafe even in non-threatening settings. All of these impacts have the potential to affect a person's life negatively and may be challenging to overcome. Therefore, to better understand and help individuals who are struggling, it is vital to be aware of the possible influence of paranoia on the individual and their relationships.

"Paranoia is intrinsic to the field of literary criticism" (Sedgwick, 1997, p. 3). This reflects a common view that paranoia is essential to literary criticism. Paranoia has been utilised to cultivate a heightened awareness and comprehension of the text, allowing for a more thorough and perceptive analysis of the material. A healthy dose of scepticism can help you go deeper into the text and draw more meaningful conclusions about what it means. Adopting this level of paranoia can give a more complete understanding of the material. Paranoia also provides a new lens through which to examine the material, which might shed light on the author's intended

meanings. Furthermore, paranoia may be employed to ascertain the text's connotations and unearth meanings that might not be obvious at first. The importance of paranoia in literary criticism cannot be overstated since it plays a crucial role in the process of deciphering and analysing texts (Sedgwick, 1997).

Ange Drinnan and Tony Lavender (2006) look at the impact of paranoia and literary deconstruction on an individual's mental health. The authors argue that paranoia might cause a type of literary deconstruction in which the reader's preconceived notions strongly colour their understanding of the work at hand. A person's mental health may suffer as a result of this deconstruction, as it might result in a warped view of the world. The authors also argue that paranoia might cause a type of literary reconstruction in which the reader's preconceived notions and biases colour their understanding of the text. Reconstructing events in this way might cause a skewed view of reality, which is harmful to one's psyche. Paranoia and literary deconstruction, according to Drinnan and Lavender's findings, can have a major effect on mental health and should be considered when conducting a mental health evaluation.

RM Kramer (2002) utters that paranoia has been an important factor in countless literary currents going back to the dawn of the written word. Kramer noted that paranoia significantly influenced both the Romantic and Modernist periods, but one that was felt differently by each. Paranoia, for instance, was employed throughout the Romantic era to create a feeling of foreboding and mystery and to shed light on the inner workings of the human mind. However, during the modernist and postmodernist eras, paranoia was utilised to question authority and make people think about the perils of living in a totalitarian state. The repercussions of paranoia on the literary movements of the period were evident in many works from both eras. Paranoia's influence on literary movements is multifaceted since it has been applied in different ways at different times, with repercussions felt all through literature's canon.

1.4.4. Hysteria

The effects of hysteria on society are well-documented and far-reaching throughout history. Duncan Moench (2018) writes that times of political turmoil and uncertainty have historically been times of increased panic. In the late 19th century, when women's positions quickly evolved, the term hysteria was frequently employed to characterise their actions. This resulted in the demonisation of the 'hysterical woman', a term used to undermine the credibility of women who were beginning to assert themselves in public. Fear of and opposition to a new cultural and political landscape were common themes in descriptions of the hysteria of the time. It was the "changing dynamics of power in the public sphere" that "the concept of hysteria was used to explain away and delegitimize" (pp. 88-89). We can still see the effects of people being afraid of the future and using hysteria to discredit the new social and political order. Fear and distrust spread, setting women's advancement in the public sector back by decades. It helped establish a false binary between the sexes, which in turn helped keep women in subordinate roles.

Hysteria is a mental disorder marked by a wide variety of signs and symptoms. Joseph H. Stephens and Martin K. Kamp (1962) describe the complexities of hysteria's psychological elements. People's emotional conditions and painful experiences are thought to be major contributors to hysteria. Hypervigilance, dread, worry, sadness, and physical manifestations of discomfort, including headaches, tachycardia, and dizziness, are just some of the mental and physical symptoms that may emerge. Furthermore, Stephens and Kamp emphasise that interpersonal interactions, culture, and the environment can all play a role in the psychological components of hysteria. Therefore, when trying to comprehend hysteria and create effective remedies, it is vital to consider the disease's psychological components.

In their 2022 book, Sander L. Gilman et al. delve deeply into hysteria's societal and cultural effects. Hysteria is commonly used to explain a wide variety of activities that defy easy definition or categorisation, suggesting that it is a social construct. Hysteria is often used to characterise actions that are considered socially unacceptable or aberrant, such as aggressiveness, impulsivity, or extreme emotionalism. Hysteria

might be seen as a method of societal control and regulation. As a term commonly used to characterise deviant or out-of-the-ordinary activities, it may also be used to rationalise the exclusion of particular persons or groups from mainstream society. In addition, it might be seen as a method of classifying people or communities for the sake of regulation or control. Because of this, hysteria might be viewed as a tool of social control that contributes to discrimination and exclusion. The cultural and social effects of hysteria can shed light on how it is used and how it might be exploited to further the interests of those in positions of authority.

Many postmodern authors have delved into the paranoia that permeates this literary genre. According to Amy Hungerford (2010), paranoia is a key component of postmodern literary criticism. According to Hungerford, postmodern authors frequently express a critical picture of current society by constructing fictional universes propelled by paranoia. He argues that many works of postmodern literature, such as Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow (1973), have this type of paranoia. Pynchon situates his characters in a society rife with paranoia to examine issues of authority, dominance, and vigilance. Hungerford adds that postmodern authors reveal the world's repressive power structures and institutions by delving into paranoia. This is a significant contribution to literary criticism because it brings to light the ways in which paranoia may be employed to question authority and stimulate introspection.

John Cromby and David J. Harper wrote an essay in 2009 discussing how paranoia has influenced the views of theorists such as Foucault and Derrida. They point out that paranoia "plays a major role in the formation of Foucault's concept of power" (p. 339). Foucault proposed that power is all-pervasive and that it is via paranoia that the existence of power is brought to light and maintained. In a similar manner, Derrida's theories of deconstruction are founded on his conviction that there is always already an element of paranoia present, which taints whatever truth that may be discovered. According to Cromby and Harper (2009), on page 740, Derrida believed that "the very condition of the possibility of truth" was paranoia. As a result, it is crystal evident that the concept of paranoia had a significant role in the development of literary theory during the 20th century. The ideas of Foucault and

Derrida, and by extension the entirety of the discipline of literary theory, would not be the same if paranoia had not played a role in their development.

1.4.5. Libido

The idea of libido is extremely multifaceted and has been investigated from a variety of various vantage points, such as biological aspects, psychoanalytic viewpoints, and cultural standards. It may have far-reaching repercussions, and it serves as an indication of both one's physical and emotional state of health. It is essential to pay attention to the changes in one's libido since these shifts are closely related to a person's sense of self-worth, happiness, and overall contentment with themselves (Graziottin, 2000).

Libido can be affected by many different biological variables. In 2000, Graziottin investigated how hormones, medicines, and chronic disease affected libido. He discovered that fluctuations in hormone levels may lead to shifts in sexual arousal and desire, thereby having a major impact on one's libido. Example: low testosterone levels are associated with reduced libido. Testosterone is well-known to play a significant role in desire. Medications, including antidepressants, can also have an impact on a person's sexual desire. Some chronic disease symptoms, such as diminished arousal and desire, can have a negative impact on a person's libido. Further study is required to completely understand the numerous and various biological variables that affect libido (Graziottin, 2000). Thus, it is evident that biological variables may cause alterations in sexual arousal and desire and can substantially influence libido.

When examining gender roles, societal norms, and sexuality, thinking about desire from a psychoanalytical viewpoint is useful. Ethel Spector Person (1980) delves further into this angle. According to Person, desire is a key component in understanding how people, and particularly women, may express their sexuality. They contend that libido is a multifaceted construct that is affected by more than just biological drives. The psychoanalytic concept of libido, as proposed by Person, is said to be an effective means of elucidating the ways in which people negotiate gender

roles, power relations, and societal customs. This viewpoint provides a nuanced analysis of libidinal expression, stressing the importance of both internal and external factors. The research of Person is significant because it allows us to explore gender roles and sexualities by considering the many ways in which people experience desire.

The level of sexual desire, or libido, is significantly impacted by cultural standards. Adriane Martin et al. (2010) attest to the power of cultural norms in shaping individuals' sexual behaviour and outlooks. When it comes to sexuality, desire may be significantly affected by cultural norms and expectations. Some societies view sexuality as something to be celebrated and openly expressed, while others consider it taboo outside of marriage. These divergences in outlook might explain why some societies are more sexually free than others. Cultural standards can also influence sexual enjoyment and fulfilment. Sex, for example, might be perceived as a means of advancing one's social position in some societies while being something to be enjoyed equally by all in others. Some cultures may be more sexually active than others because of their attitudes toward sexuality.

Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism (2022) is an in-depth and nuanced look at how desire is depicted by gender in literary criticism. Sigmund Freud's idea of libido, which describes the psychological energy behind sexual desire, has been used to study gender roles in literature. According to Kahn (2022), feminists have had trouble with the conventional psychoanalytic approach to literature because it emphasises men's sexual desires and perpetuates the stereotype that women are helpless objects. Instead, Kaplan suggests a strategy she terms "libidinal feminism" as a countermeasure. The goal of this strategy is to de-emphasise the libido and put the spotlight instead on women's feelings and wants. Kaplan says that this opens the door for women writers and readers to examine the topic of gender in literature without being constrained by the male-dominated psychoanalytic tradition. This piece contributes significantly to feminist literary criticism by posing new questions about gender in literature and opening up new avenues for female authors to share their work.

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The idea of canonisation in literature has intimate ties to the concept of libido. Paul Lauter (1991) argues that the 'difference between the sexes' is intimately connected to the "psychic energy" (p. 22) of desire. Gender roles are a product of this force, and they influence the canonisation of literature. That is to say; cultural themes influence what is considered literature and the libidinous impulses connected to traditional gender roles. The Western canon of literature, which includes the majority of texts taught at universities, is mostly male-oriented because of the strict adherence to gender norms in our culture. Women authors have also been marginalised since their writings frequently challenge conventional gender norms propagated by society. This omission strengthens the belief that traditional gender roles in society are reflected in and should be upheld by the literary canon. Understanding the societal enforcement of gender norms requires an examination of the function of the libido in determining literary canonisation.

The idea of libido has been the subject of several literary and psychological analyses, with a current uptick in interest in how libido informs our understanding of literary texts. One such study is Marshall W. Alcorn Jr.'s (1994), where he contends that a person's libido strongly affects how they read and understand the material. He argues that the reader's libido determines which parts of the text are emphasised and which are ignored when concluding its meaning. For instance, a reader in a higher libido state may be more interested in the text's sexual overtones. In contrast, a reader in a lower libido state may be more interested in the text's philosophical overtones. The findings of Alcorn's study on the influence of libido on reading comprehension are intriguing. Since libido may shift our attention and cause us to highlight different aspects of a book, it is apparent that it significantly impacts how we understand literature. Therefore, when discussing literature, it is necessary to include libidinal factors.

1.4.6. Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism

When Sigmund Freud's theories and methods are applied to literary interpretation, the result is known as psychoanalytic critique. This school of thought examines works of literature through the lens of the author's and characters' underlying psychological

motives (Brewton, 2005). It is useful for fiction and drama because of the emphasis on identifying the characters' internal mental states and the conflicts that arise from those moods. Psychoanalytic critics can get insight into the characters and the plot's motives by delving into their suppressed needs, worries, and wishes. In addition, the framework offered by psychoanalytic criticism permits the investigation of the unconscious's role in literature and its interpretation. This kind of literary criticism facilitates understanding the dynamics of a text and its characters' motivations. Psychoanalytic criticism may also be used to investigate the author's subconscious drives and the ways in which the author's life influences their writing. Due to its perceptive and comprehensive approach to literary interpretation, psychoanalytic criticism has a significant place in literary theory.

The usage of archetypes in literature dates back to antiquity, and these symbols have universal meanings. They're crucial to grasping the mental states of fictional characters and plots. Psychoanalytic theory is applied to the study of archetypes in literature by Azadkhan Niaz et al. (2019). They discuss how archetypes in literature convey to the reader feelings and concepts shared by all people everywhere. In order to delve further into the character or story's inner workings, the writers recommend using archetypes. They also talk about how authors might employ archetypes to go into the subconscious of their characters. For instance, the reader can learn about the character's thought processes by recognising the archetypes at work in the text. The writers elaborate on how archetypes help us make sense of a book's themes and messages. They argue that using archetypes to comprehend the characters and their goals better might assist the reader in a better grasp of the work's significance. By delving into the function of literary archetypes, readers may better grasp the psychological facets of a work and its characters.

When it comes to investigating the interaction of gender, sexuality, and power in works of literature, psychoanalytic theory is a handy tool. The argument that psychoanalytic theory may be utilised to identify the underlying power relations between characters in literature is presented in the article "Ain't IA Woman? Revisiting intersectionality" (2004). In this article, the author argues that

psychoanalytic theory may be particularly beneficial when reading works featuring queer characters because it enables us to reveal the ways in which gender, sexuality, and power are connected. We may get a deeper understanding of the ways in which gender, sexuality, and power connect with and have an effect on one another by doing a psychoanalytic analysis on the relationships that exist between the characters in a piece of writing. By conducting this analysis, we are able to gain a deeper comprehension of the underlying ideas and messages included within the text (Brah & Phoenix, 2004).

To conclude, readers are given a fresh perspective on how to understand literature via the lens of psychoanalysis in literary criticism. Readers can get a deeper comprehension and appreciation of the meanings included in a work by focusing their attention on the latent intentions, suppressed feelings, and fundamental human impulses that are either directly referenced or referred to in writing (Ruitenbeek, 1964).

1.5. Conclusion

This chapter has served as an introduction to the postmodern literary domain by providing definitions of the ideas of postmodernism, psychoanalysis, deconstruction, and existentialism. Additionally, the chapter has provided examples of each of these concepts. The subjects that will be covered in the following chapter's discussion have also been given some background material here, which can be found in this chapter. This research extensively uses deconstruction and poststructuralism concepts, most of which are drawn from Derrida's body of work. The subsequent chapter will provide a comprehensive analysis of the many interpretations of the text, beginning with the idea of imitation and progressing all the way to intertextuality without overlooking dialogism.

Chapter Two: A Take on the Theories of the Text

Chapter Two: A Take on the Theories of the Text

2.1. Introduction

The kinship between the author and the text they produce has always been a marrow contention among critics. Literary theorists accentuate the value of the author and the text relationship, seeing that it is impossible to grasp the latter's meaning if one lacks the background of the first to be mentioned. With the advent of structuralism and, later on, poststructuralism, the author altered to be the past of the text, while the reader is the present. Structuralists argue that all writings are nothing more than words inscribed on a page. For them, the author departs from the text the moment it is in the hands of the reader since it is the language that utters for itself and not the author. Poststructuralism, on the other hand, pleads that the author is just the person who wrote the text since the reader plays a significant role in constructing meaning.

The present chapter, therefore, puts into words working statements of meaning for both the author and the text. It starts by bringing to the fore the definition of the text and the different theories that studied the text as an independent body, from Aristotle's theory of imitation to Bakhtin's Dialogism, without forgetting Joyce's mythical method. Subsequently, the focus will be on the author as a construct that plays a role in making the text. Withal, the analysis of any text cannot be done comprehensively without studying that inner voice that is extant in the text.

2.2. The Old Theories of the Text

Before burrowing into the early theories of the 'text,' it is incumbent to answer the question, *what is a text?* Seeing as the word 'text' started to supersede any literary work in its conventional terminology. According to Adrian Wilson (2012), the term 'text' took over 'work' in its standard nomenclature in the light of Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes' essays that appeared in the late 1960s and were translated into English in the mid of the 1970s. For Wilson, Derrida initiated the use of 'text' instead of 'work' in his essay *De la Grammatologie*[8] (1967) when he maintained "there is no outside-of-the-text" (Derrida, 1974 Cited in Wilson, 2012, p.341). Not to mention that "Barthes's 'La mort de l'auteur' of 1968 replaced the personal figure of the author

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[8] The English version of *De la Grammatologie* is *Of Grammatology*, which appeared in 1976.

with the impersonal figure of écriture, that is, writing" (p. 341). While the raised question seems to have no clear answer(s), Barthes (1967) allocates the composition of the 'text' to the reader since the author dies, and the reader constructs the text.

Ahead of postmodernism, the sole interpretation of the term 'text' stood for a coalition of words with a particular and understandable meaning. However, this definition became a subject of discussion with the onset of structuralism and poststructuralism. The progress of literary criticism led theorists to use the word 'text' to describe any literary 'work.' Roland Barthes supported this proposal in his essay *From Work to Text* (1977). He related that to the confluence of the varied disciplines, which resulted in what Barthes called a 'mutation' in the overall understanding of language. With this alteration taking place, Barthes differentiated the concept of 'text' from 'work'. At the same time, the first is the incomplete and indefinite message the reader gets after reading; the latter is the precise and utter part of any given writing (Barthes, 1977).

In his essay "What is the 'Text' in Textual Criticism?" (2016), Roland L. Troxel interprets the 'text',

> [It] is written discourse gestated through recursive conceptualization, externalization, and revision that arises from and addresses particular social settings and is recognized as doing so by a community of readers who embrace and reproduce it (p. 621).

In that, Ricoeur considers the 'text' as 'discourse' that is under the 'condition of inscription'. He adds that, albeit the 'text' is written, this does not prevent it from being highly dialogical and full of references (p. 606).

In *What is a Text? Explanation and Understanding* (2016), Paul Ricoeur dubs the 'text' as "any discourse fixed by writing" (p. 107). He explains that every 'text' is akin to a speech, with the reader substituting the interlocutor and writing as an institution taking over speaking. Hence, the first mentioned being written is successive

to the speech being oral, yet this does not deprive the 'text' of its autonomous status. In this light, Ricoeur affirms that,

> each text is free to enter into relation with all the other texts which come to take the place of the circumstantial reality referred to by living speech. This relation of text to text, within the effacement of the world about which we speak, engenders the quasi-world of texts or literature (p. 110).

Here, it is essential to mention that the 'text' is not referenceless since the references are made up through the act of reading. That is to say, reading gives the "text" a world in that the reader decodes the words that compose the 'text'. This could create a bit of subjectivity, seeing as the author is not a direct speaker, and the reader may think he knows the author just because he reads his ideas.

In "The Death of the Author" and "The Birth of the Reader", Barthes dubs the text as "a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture" (Barthes, 1977 cited in Troxel, 2016, p. 605); he throws light on the fact that the reader is the only one able to construct their personal images on the text hinged on their private experience, i.e., the reader is autonomous for Barthes. Umberto Eco delineates the text as "a device conceived to produce its model reader" (Rorty et al., 1992, p. 161). For him, the reader creates the 'model author' through the reader's cultural background.

Barthes (1971) further highlights the nuances between the locutions 'text' and 'work'. As he claimed, the 'work' is a piece of meaning covering some space in a book; it is complete and has a cessation. While the 'text' is the drift a reader fathoms after reading, it is incomplete and unlimited and depends on the reader's private experience. In this respect, Jacques Derrida (1979) questioned the notion of 'text'; for him, a 'text' is "no longer a finished corpus of writing, some content enclosed in a book or its margins, but a differential network, a fabric of trace referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other differential traces" (pp. 83–84).

Chapter Two: A Take on the Theories of the Text

2.2.1. The Theory of Imitation

Through the ages, imitation has served as a potent force in the development of literature. It has been said that "imitation has been a fundamental element of the creative process since ancient times" (p. 5), and this is supported by the work of Gian Biagio Conte (1996). This is due to the fact that imitation acts as a method of passing on expertise in a certain genre from one generation to the next. Writing in the style of other authors is a great way to learn about the genre and contribute to its canon. For instance, Virgil's Aeneid was written in the tradition of epic poetry, like Homer's Iliad and Odyssey. Imitation so facilitates a genre's development and growth throughout time. New literary genres can emerge thanks to imitation, which gives writers something to build upon when venturing into uncharted territory. This shows how imitation is crucial to the evolution of the classical literary genre.

T. S. Eliot writes about the value of tradition and the function of imitation in the development of writing in his essay "Imitation and Individual Talent" (1920). He says, "the progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality" (Cited in Montgomery, 1995, p. 214). What Eliot means is that to be successful, a creative person must be able to put aside their own tastes in favour of honouring the past by recreating the work of their predecessors. The artist may learn from this practice of copying and use it to refine their own unique style. According to Eliot, an artist may "absorb the experience of the past" and "build upon it" by recreating the works of predecessors (RAS Al-Maani, 2012).

In contemporary writing, satire and social critique often utilise imitation as a method. Reading works of literature that use imitation as a technique for social critique can help us better comprehend the social and cultural significance of the works and their messages, as demonstrated by the work of Ellen E. Perry (2002). In addition, authors may effectively criticise society via imitation without being overly clear or blatant. For readers, this kind of literary critique may be a rallying cry to question authority figures and the values they represent.

For instance, the novel *White Teeth* (2000) by Zadie Smith employs several types of imitation to communicate a serious message about the value of cultural appreciation and the necessity of unity among people of diverse origins. Smith can effectively get his audience to question the established power structures and reflect on their own place in society by employing this kind of social critique. It follows that authors can effectively express their message without explicitly addressing difficult themes when they resort to imitation as a weapon for social critique in modern writing.

2.3. The Text amid the Author/Reader Relationship

So, in order to fully grasp the definition of the 'text', one has to be fully aware of both its past, 'the author' and its present, 'the reader'; seeing that it is with no doubt impossible to get what the 'text' implies without getting the affinity that relates this latter to both the 'author' and the 'reader'.

2.3.1. The Author Defined

According to the Oxford Dictionary of English, the 'author' is "someone who writes books as a profession". William Wordsworth depicts the 'author' as "a man speaking to men' (2016, p. 339); he is considered the creator of the 'text', in which he tries to bring his 'readers' to what he presumes to be a more authentic reality (Harker, 1988). Ahead of modern literature, the 'author' was associated with God, i.e., the exclusive prime mover of a 'text'. On the other hand, Michel Foucault links the 'author' to discourse; that is to say, the 'author' is a discourse function (Rezek, 2018).

Right through history, the elucidation of an 'author' shifted from being godlike for Romantics, dead for Barthes, and resurrected for William Irwin (Zhang, 2018). Barthes (1977) argues that the 'author' is

> a modern figure, produced no doubt by our society insofar as, at the end of the middle ages, with English empiricism, French rationalism and the personal faith of the Reformation, it discovered the prestige of the individual, or, to put it more nobly, of the 'human person' (Cited in Di Leo, 2012, pp. 124-125).

For him, the author is the production of capitalism, i.e., the "author" as a construct was not that important ahead of the modern era. Nowadays, the author's definition is less or more precise on account of the fact that it stands for the framer and the holder of any work, i.e., 'text' (Zhang, 2018).

2.3.2. The Death of the Author

In his well-established essay "The Death of the Author" (1977), first published in French under "La mort de l'auteur" (1967), Roland Barthes proceeds by giving an example from Honoré de Balzac's Novella *Sarassine* (1830), where there is a castrato undercover as a woman. From this point, Barthes raises a critical question, who is speaking for Zambinella (the castrato)? Is it the hero of the story acting on behalf of the castrato? Or is it Balzac (the writer[9]) who purports literary thoughts on womanhood? Or is it Balzac (the human) who got an acute knowledge of women's psychology, or simply wisdom? As Barthes claims, the answer to this question is undisclosed simply because 'writing' is neutral. He adds that 'writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin' (p.143) extant within the 'text'.

Barthes clarifies that when narration comes about, the voices leave behind their roots, i.e., an interruption takes lieu. He states that when the deed of narration turns up, the 'author' departs the text, and writing begins. Hence, Barthes drops the Romantic claim of "Author-God[10]" and holds that the language speaks for itself, not the 'author'; this is structuralism's gist principle. For him, language deals with 'subjects,' i.e., the 'readers', and not persons. Hence, the 'author' is nothing more than the body that writes and states because it is the 'subject' that renders the language powerful as a whole, at this moment the 'author' departs and becomes the 'text's' past, i.e., he dies (pp. 142-149). To this proposal, Barthes utters,

> the hand, cut off from any voice, borne by a pure gesture of inscription (and not of expression), traces a field without origin—or which, at least,

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[9] The term writer was used in purpose to define the one who writes, and to avoid the notion of 'author'.
[10] The Author was written by capital A to highlight the importance that was given to the author by Romantics.

> has no other origin than language itself, language which ceaselessly calls into question all origins (1977, p. 146).

Barthes claims that the text loses its origin when the process of narration starts.

In her book, *The Deaths of the Author: Reading and Writing in Time* (2011), Wisconsin's distinguished Professor of English Jane Gallop discussed Barthes' concept of "The Death of the Author". She upholds that Barthes talks about two different authorial deaths in his essay, the 'abstract[11]' and the bodily[12]; the first is the death happening in literary theory, and the second is the actual death that happens to the 'author' as a person. Ergo, Gallop tries to link both deaths and helps make Barthes' famous saying much clear, especially that three years after the first publication of his essay, Barthes came back to say, "as an institution, the author is dead; his person . . . has disappeared . . . but in the text, in a certain way, I desire the author" (Barthes, 1975, p. 31).

Barthes is the one who announced explicitly that the "author" is no more when the 'text' is being read. Nevertheless, he is not the trailblazer of 'the author's death' since that happened in the early 20th century with the rise of New Criticism, where scholarship focuses on the authority of the 'text', being the exclusive determiner of meaning and neglecting any other forms such as authorial intent i.e., the 'author' and reader's response as being legitimate consideration in determining what a 'text' means. They label the 'text' as a stand-alone, self-sufficient object. While Barthes concentrates on the 'reader', New Criticism pinpoints the 'text' with their text-centred approach, where all the ornamental qualities come directly from the 'text' itself and not from the 'author' (Di Leo, 2012).

The tenets of American New Criticism hinge on William K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley's article "The Intentional Fallacy", which appeared first in 1946 and was revised in 1954. In this essay, the two scholars disapprove of the claim about 'the author's intention' upon the critic's 'assessment', seeing that the 'author'

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[11] Polemical death of the slogan.
[12] The death of the person who writes, i.e., a non-fictional death.

intention is neither available nor desirable for evaluating any literary work (the poem[13]). For them, all authors share the same intention, and it is writing a better work. They state that the poem "is detached from the author at birth and goes about the world beyond his power to intend about it or control it" (Wimsatt & Beardsley, 1946, p. 470); that is to say, the poem as literary work does not belong to the critic nor to the author. Instead, it belongs to the public, i.e., the readers (Roma III, 1966).

Wimsatt and Beardsley discern between the meaning the poem imparts and the message the poet wants to disclose through his work. They further note that the meaning of the work can be inferred by way of the words' upshot; that is to say, the poem can be only by virtue of its meaning. So, a critic[14], while judging a poem, should concentrate exclusively on what the language embodies and not on what the author intends to convey, i.e. the vision this latter is trying to reach. In other words, what matters is the 'text' and not the 'author' since his intentions are not valid when judging the work (Eagleton, 1983; Dickie & Wilson, 1995).

German literary scholar Wolfgang Iser forfeits the 'author' from control; instead, he gives the reader the supreme power. For him, reading literature is an 'event', and it is of high importance to know "what literature does not what it means". Deriving their core concept from Iser's reception theory[15], reader-response critics consider the 'reader' as the sole determiner of the 'text's' meaning and the only body capable of assessing its critical worth. For them, 'authors' write what their readers want to read, and they highly consider what their audience says so that they can write accordingly in the future. They add that gender, race, and class play an important role in the act of reading, as backgrounds play a significant role. In other words, the 'author's' role is relinquished (Di Leo, 2016; Tompkins, 1980).

On the other hand, not all scholarship was so enthusiastic about this shift from 'author-god' literature to 'death author' literature. In *Psychoanalysis and Storytelling*

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[13] In their essay, Wimsatt and Beardsley use the poet to refer to the author.
[14] A critic refers to the reader because he is the one that criticises the work, i.e. the text.
[15] Iser's reception theory states that the reader constructs the text, and not the opposite. It goes beyond studying the act of reading itself.

(1994), literary critic and Yale Sterling Professor Emeritus Peter Brooks disapproves of the poststructuralist permutation towards a 'reader-centered' criticism and neglects the 'author'. He upholds that this shift would not at all lessen the work of psychoanalytic literary critics. For him, "psychoanalysis in literary study has over and again mistaken the object of an analysis" (cited in Johnson, 2016, p .2).

Whether the concern is centred on language or the 'reader', the 'author' as an institution[16] is significantly excluded from determining the meaning of the 'text' in 20th-century literary criticism. On the other hand, Michel Foucault did not have that extremist thought when discussing the 'author' in his 1969 lecture *What is an Author[17]*. Instead, he considered the author to be a 'function' of discourse (Wilson, 2004).

2.3.3. The Author-Function

Michel Foucault's *What is an Author* (1969) came as a response to "The Death of the Author", though he did not mention Barthes by name. For Foucault, the 'author' is not an individual; instead, he is a 'function', a function of 'discourse'. He supports this claim by saying that 'authors' are not 'individuals' but, instead, 'characters' found within the 'text', albeit not explicitly portrayed. He adds that the 'author' is made plain when the interaction occurs between the critic[18] and the 'text'; that is to say, the 'text' draws attention to the 'author' as a figure. Foucault maintains that writing enables critics to play on the gap the 'author' leaves after he exits the 'text' (Stygall, 1994).

If the 'author' is not the one who speaks for the 'text' in the view of the structuralist and the poststructuralist theory, so who is speaking then? According to Foucault (1969), the 'author-function' is the 'regulator' of the 'text'. He further explains that the 'author-function' is neither universal nor permanent in all varieties of discourse. He backs this claim with the fact that some types of texts do not even require an 'author', for instance, folk stories, which the audience[19] receives without

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[16] The body that originates voices within the text.
[17] The lecture was given in French under Qu'est ce qu'un auteur.
[18] The critic is an objective reader.
[19] Audience in here does not mean only the readers, but all types of receivers.

even looking to unveil the true identity of their 'author'. Foucault relates this latter to the worth of historicism[20]. Moreover, the author-function is not of high importance in all kinds of 'texts'; for instance, it is significant in literary 'texts', but not in scientific ones.

Foucault deems the 'author-function' as a compound system that involves both the author's 'wisdom' and 'talent', so for him to be original. In both Modern and Postmodern literature, the 'author' manifests his existence in the 'text' by means of the events' progression. Hence, he, id est, the 'author' is the basis of 'unity', the 'neutralizer'[21] subsisting within the text, as maintained by Foucault. By this, Foucault is regarding the 'author' as "the ideological figure by which one marks the manner in which we fear the proliferation of meaning" (Foucault, 1969, cited in Siegle, 1983, p. 127).

Foucault (1969), indeed, drops Barthes' theory of "The Death of the Author", but he also jilts the 'author' as being the centre that originates meaning. He supports this idea by saying that the 'author' is symbolically 'constructed' with the assistance of conventional, social and cultural processes. He includes that the 'author-function' enables 'readers' to experience the multiple selves of the very same 'author' that are developed by dint of of "evolution, maturation, or influence" (p.111).

The 'author-function, according to Foucault, connotes an epitome that outstrips all barriers and borders to give the 'author' an abiding veneer. In this, it is noteworthy to mention that the 'author's' name does not belong to the speech yet has a taxonomical[22] role in differentiating the varieties of 'texts'. In addition, this Foucauldian theory holds that the 'author' should not be restricted to being a taxonomical instrument, part of the 'text's' history, or a trussed criterion in interpretation. Instead, it is a frame conforming to a set of characteristics that can be societal, historical, and historical and are not easy to be disclosed (Fathallah, 2017).

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[20] Historicism means that a story should be criticised in the context of its given time.
[21] Neutralizer is written with z and not s, to keep it as taken from the original text i.e., Foucault's.
[22] Taxonomy deals with the classifications of things.

The instant the 'author' comes into being, according to Foucault, is a worthwhile moment in the history of ideas, knowledge, and literature. Yet, this does not prevent the text from being excluded from yawning emotions placed at the moment of creation. On this matter, one may ask, how is this possible if the text is written using the pronoun 'I'? In the opinion of Foucault, the answer to this question is that the I stands for a second, more complex, and variable self. The 'I' refers to all those who can be in a similar situation and behave the very same way, which means that the first-person narrator is nothing more than a voice extant within the 'text' (Aldouri, 2021).

2.3.3. The Author Returns to Life[23]

In his contended essay "The Death of the Author" (1967[24]), Roland Barthes metaphorically sent the 'author' to the grave. Nevertheless, this latter that is, Barthes gets back to revive the 'author' from his death six years after his essay's original publication. In *The Pleasure of the Text* (1975[25]), Barthes vouches that he is "lost in the midst of a text…, there is always the other, the author" (p.27). Luke Johnson (2016) comments on this by saying that after coming back from death, the 'author' not only returns, yet he hones his status to wit; he is exalted to be " the object of desire *par excellence*" (p. 2). Johnson further reveals that Barthes' desire was taken from a discourse of eroticism; notwithstanding, few are those who commented on the contradiction that witnesses "the return of the author" from 'dead', without repealing the act of 'death' before all else. Here, it is far-reaching to mention the detail that the 'author' stays dead, albeit he has returned, as maintained by Barthes.

Séan Burke opposes Barthes when it comes to the author's death. In his book, *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault, and Derrida* (1992), Burke comes back to Barthes' authorial death and avers that "the concept of the author is never more alive than when pronounced dead" (p.7). In this line, he id est Burke links the Barthesian 'author' to Christ or even the Greek God of fertility and religious madness, Dionysus. Here, Burke unfolds that death does not

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[23] This title is used metaphorically to describe the author's involvement0 within the text after the theory of his death.

[24] The original issue was in 1967 in the United States, 1968 in France.

[25] The French edition appeared in 1973, i.e., six years after the "Death of the Author".

wipe out the 'author'. Instead, it creates a sturdy version of him (the author). Yet, Burke seems to focus on the Barthesian death and does not consider Barthes' aphrodisiac return of the author in his book (Saunders, 1995).

In response to Burke's retrospect of the Barthesian author, Jane Gallop (2011) insists that Burke does not provide a fully dimensional study of "The Death of the Author". Instead, he reviews only the theoretical side of the concept. According to Gallop, Burke disregards all the other facets, such as the erotic one that Barthes sets up in *The Pleasure of the Text*. Gallop redresses this slip by couching the contradiction of the return of the 'author' under cover of a Freudian fetish erection. In explaining Barthes' desire, though he knows that the 'author' is intellectually dead, Gallop says ", fetish represents a solution to the split between what we know intellectually and what we desire" (p. 31).

Gallop (2011) adopts a queer approach in explaining *jouissance*[26], the term that Barthes presents to evoke his desire for the 'author'. To do so, she goes further in psychoanalysing Barthes' intimate life and comes to the conclusion that the desire for the 'author' may be nothing more than a homosexual nuance, seeing that Barthes was gay. In *Precocious Jouissance*[27] (2012), Gallop utters that Barthes' *The Pleasure of the Text* is nothing more than an assertion of the "reader's perversity" since the return of the 'author' takes lieu in a very specific moment of the reader's life — a moment of *jouissance,* i.e., a moment of fully-tasted pleasure (Deveney, 2013).

The American contemporary literary Critic Harold Bloom has a word to say on this matter. Being gripped by the figure of the 'author', Bloom (1990) writes ", as we read any literary work, we necessarily create a fiction or metaphor of its author. That author is perhaps our myth, but the experience of literature partly depends upon that myth" (Cited in Bresnick, 1991, p. 133). In this line, Bloom states that the 'myth' is the begetter of any literary truth. Through this claim, Bloom is resurrecting an 'author' that has for a long time taken for 'dead' (Bresnick, 1991).

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[26] Jouissance is a French term that means enjoyment, yet it can also signify orgasm.
[27] Jouissance is already italicised in the title.

2.3.4. The Implied Author

In *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961), Wayne C. Booth puts forward his notion of the 'implied author' (IA). According to him, the 'implied author' is the author's form the reader frames after reading the text as a whole. In interpreting this gripping term, scholarship does not seem to agree on a clear stance. Some scholars maintain that the 'implied author' is a requisite element within the text's communication structure, while others consider it "as largely coterminous with the text itself" (Richardson, 2011, p. 11). According to Wolf Schmid (2006), "the implied author refers to the author-image contained in a work and constituted by the stylistic, ideological, and aesthetic properties for which indexical signs can be found in the text" (Cited in Richardson, 2011, p.1), that is to say, the implied author is nothing more than the author's actual image embodied within his 'text'.

Booth's exposition of the 'implied author' as a concept brings about lots of intense debates. According to Ansgar Nünnig, the implied author as a concept has seen a sundry of oppositions, mainly because of the contradictions present within Booth's definition. In this regard, Nünnig features the basic contradiction, and he states how it is possible that the 'implied author' is the text's communication structure and simultaneously "addresser in the communication model of narrative" (Cited in Shen, 2011, p.80). Hans-Harald Müller and Tom Kindt (2011) label Booth's formulation of the concept as inconsistent and raise the question, who is the implied author? Is it a product made by the author, and/or it is a deduction the receiver (the reader) forms on the author based on the work (the text)? (Shen, 2011).

On the other hand, Den Shen (2011) assumes that Booth's definition is rather straightforward and consistent. He adds that these contradictions are created by the critics who distort Booth's phrase 'the author creates the 'implied author''"(p. 81). Shen makes plain the contrast between the real 'author'[28] and the 'implied author' as maintained by Booth. For him id est Shen, the difference lies in the state of mind, where the first is the person in his daily life, while the latter is the same person;

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[28] The real author in this sentence refers to the writer.

nevertheless, he writes with a specific character, mood, and stance; while writing, the 'author' as the person undergoes uncommon and momentous feelings far away from his diurnal ones. In the process of penmanship, the writer —not to say 'author'— creates himself, i.e., he generates a version of himself depending on his temper.

In "Six Ways Not to Save the Implied Author" (2011), Kindt and Müller spurn the proposal of *the implied author as a phenomenon of reception*[29] for the fact that "it ignores the differences between empirical research in reading processes and the nomatively based endeavour of literary interpretation" (p. 68). IA as a *participant in communication* is also discarded in the views of Kindt and Müller, as it leads to a plight where the author, the narrator, and the IA are all mistakenly taken for one another. Instead, they are interested in "hypothetical intentionalism" (HI) (p.70), which stands for "textual evidence" supported by contextual one id est instead of tackling the real author's air and mood derived from the setting's circumstances of the text, it is preferable to "straightforwardly" wade into the air and the mood of IA.

Susan S. Lanser (2011) has a word to say in this dilemma, implying the 'implied author' (IA). For her, "the implied author is not an empirical entity" (p.153), which means that the 'implied author' is not the historical author (the writer), nor the narrator, and not even a discernible assume; thus, the 'implied author' does have any role in communication. In this, she brings Seymour Chatman's contradiction since he assumes that IA has "no voice", yet he adjoins him to his "communication chain" (p.154).

Lanser further expounds that IA is a reading effect to wit, "it is something that happens rather than something that is, and it happens in the wake of reading rather than prior to it" (p.154). That is to say; the IA can only be considered while reading, seeing that it is not a concrete being. Moreover, Lanser utters that IA is not just the reader's construction of the image of the text as an entirety; instead, it is "a

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[29] he italics are used to highlight the propositions as in the main source.

reconstruction" that "provides the only logical rationale for the concept of the implied author to exist" (p.155).

Isabell Klaiber avows the 'implied author' to be "a critical construct, inferred from the text" (Nelles, 1993, cited in Klaiber, 2011, p. 139). At the onset of her essay "Multiple Implied Authors: How Many Can a Single Text Have?" (2011), Klaiber affirms that habitually, critics pay attention to the "implied author" as a notion, but they never deal with how many are there in a text. She then lists the conventional contexts where there is a manifold of 'implied author(s)'. She starts with the societies that are characterised by "censorship", for instance, 'texts' that are produced by 19th-century women in a way that draws a veil over "subversive discourse", or even texts written by gay writers (p.138). Another case scenario is a 'text' by various writers; Klaiber utters that the IA is an "incoherent figure", for instance, a round robin[30] (p.139).

2.4. Dialogism

The study of discourse is central to linguistics and communication studies. Discourse, as described by David Howarth (2000), is "a way of constructing, presenting, and interpreting meaningful content" (p.1). Discourse is the way in which individuals actively generate meaning with one another. Thus, it is a crucial idea to think about while studying communication. Human interactions and cultural reflections are both shaped by the language we use. Its purpose is to facilitate mutual understandings that can shape subsequent interactions. By facilitating the sharing of ideas and points of view, discourse may also help people learn new things. Furthermore, it is crucial to acknowledge that discourse is not fixed but rather dynamic and ever-evolving in response to varying social, political, and cultural circumstances. The ability to successfully study communication and language requires an appreciation for discourse as a useful tool for understanding how people communicate.

His pieces did not get prominence until they were put in plain English in the second half of the twentieth century. Russian linguist and literary critic Mikhail M.

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[30] A round-robin fiction is a fiction written by a manifold of writers in round.

Chapter Two: A Take on the Theories of the Text

Bakhtin considers the genre novel to be exceptionally dialogic. In *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981), a set of essays written yet did not see the light as late as 1975 in Moscow, Bakhtin ascertains the dissimilarities between monologism and dialogism. In the words of Bakhtin (1984), "monologism at its extreme, denies the existence outside itself of another consciousness with equal rights and equal responsibilities, another I with equal rights (thou)" (p. 292).

Contemporary literature owes a great deal to Bakhtin's notion of double-voiced discourse, which he defined as the superimposition of two voices on a single utterance. This has especially facilitated the indirect and direct examination of power dynamics in literature. For instance, in her book *Double-Voicing at Work: Power, Gender, and Linguistic Control* (2014), Judith Baxter investigates how gender inequalities in the workplace might be illustrated through double-voiced discourse. In the book, Baxter discusses how authors might employ double-voices to investigate complicated power relations through literature by challenging and subverting current power systems. Furthermore, authors will be able to include more than one level of meaning in their works through the usage of double-voiced discourse, as the two voices may be employed to produce distinct interpretations of the same statement. Because readers are prompted to go deeper into the works, authors have been able to craft more intricate and subtle pieces. Ultimately, Bakhtin's theory of double-voiced discourse has had a major influence on modern literature by allowing writers to delve into nuanced power dynamics and produce rich, multilayered texts.

In the 21st century, dialogism, a central notion in literary theory, has been the subject of extensive study and advancement. For Mikhail Bakhtin, "language is essentially dialogic" (Chappell & Craft, 2011, p. 364). This idea was initially put out in the 1960s. According to the dialogist perspective, language serves as a medium for mutual understanding and interaction. This idea, which has been used to investigate the connection between language, literature, and culture, has significantly impacted literary theory, especially in the twenty-first century. Intertextuality, the impact of authoritative figures on language and society, and how humans construct meaning via language are all topics explored through dialogism. Furthermore, dialogism has been

utilised to investigate how literature is inherently dialogical and how it may spark discussion and debate among its audience. This idea has been crucial to the growth of modern and postmodern literary theory because it has given academics a framework for dissecting the function of language in literary and cultural production.

Contemporary literature may be examined via the pervasive lens of Mikhail Bakhtin's idea of dialogism. Dialogism, as argued by Maria Shevtsova (1992), is the acknowledgement of the other, including recognition of the other's right to difference, to its own language, to its own purposes, and to its own independent and appropriate use of language. Understanding the value Bakhtin places on the other's presence in literature requires this realisation. The term "dialectic" refers to a type of conversation in which two or more people share ideas and opinions. Through discussion, we may better understand the nuances of the human condition and appreciate the unique viewpoints of those around us. Bakhtin's theory of dialogism may be used to shed light on the hidden meanings and implications of modern and, later on, postmodern fiction through this exchange of ideas. Bakhtin's dialogism is an effective method for studying how writers construct meaning and express ideas via language.

As a method of textual analysis, dialogism has seen a surge in popularity among literary theorists over the course of the last several decades. It considers a text to be a collection of different voices rather than a single, overarching meaning in its entirety. This indicates that a novel should not be understood as a monologue but rather as a dialogue made of a range of distinct and frequently contradictory lines of thinking (Hamza Reguig Mouro, 2014). Dialogism encourages readers to think more thoroughly about the texts they are reading, specifically to analyse the distinct voices of the characters as well as the author's voice. It enables readers to explore the intricacies and potential of the texts they are reading, perceiving them as collections of internally and externally related ideas. In this way, dialogism has significantly enriched the way in which the audience reads literature and other types of narrative as well as the audience's level of engagement with these forms of storytelling (Ameur-Said et al., 2022).

2.4.1. Heteroglossia

Understanding the connection between language and identity requires familiarity with Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia. As Adrian Blackledge and Angela Creese (2014) put it, "heteroglossia is a complex linguistic phenomenon that enables us to understand the interactions between language, power, and identity" (p. 5). Bakhtin argues that language is not a single entity but rather a collection of dialects that are always shifting and interacting with one another. Thanks to this linguistic variety, a wide variety of identities may be formed. A person's unique identity may be formed and expressed through the process of translating between the vocabularies of various social circles. Furthermore, some words and phrases linked with specific social groupings and identities can be employed in language to establish identities. Then, language serves as both an outlet for one's individuality and a driving factor in the formation of that identity. Individuals use language to negotiate and develop their identities, and Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia is central to this process (Blackledge & Creese, 2013).

Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin used the term 'heteroglossia' to convey the notion that language is a living and dynamic thing generated through the interactions of an author and reader (Park-Fuller, 1986). For instance, Bakhtin argued that diverse speakers' voices contribute to the language, reflecting the diversity of human interaction. This theory can provide light on the way in which individuals interact with literary works. Readers who are able to identify the narrators', protagonists', and authors' distinct voices have a richer understanding of the book. The manner that readers engage with one another is likewise affected by Bakhtin's idea. Recognising the viewpoints of others through the voices of others helps readers have a richer grasp of the work and its setting.

The study of the "interaction of socio-ideological language varieties" (Francis, 2012, p. 4) is known as heteroglossia. Multiple authors' voices and viewpoints, each informed by their own cultural, linguistic, and ideological backgrounds, are implied by this idea. Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossia, which includes this principle, has substantially affected the evolution of literary genres. Novels, for instance, have been analysed using this theory since "characters' voices exist in a dialectical relationship"

(p. 6). This idea has also been used to dissect complex narratives like those found in Mikhail Bulgakov's works, which have several narrators and extensive back-and-forths between them. Since the structure of modern literature is so different from the classical one, Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia has proven to be an invaluable tool for analysing and comprehending it.

The effects of Bakhtin's theory on literary character portrayal are discussed by Mary Frances Hopkins (1989). According to Hopkins, "the presence of multiple voices becomes an essential element of characterization[31], as it helps to create a fuller picture of the characters and their beliefs" (1989, p. 204). Furthermore, Hopkins says that authors may create a feeling of richness and variety that would not otherwise be there by enabling characters to represent several voices. Hopkins adds that this might help readers better comprehend the protagonists and antagonists. This is because it's far more challenging to get inside a character's head and into their cultural background with just one voice, but it's much easier to do with numerous voices. Bakhtin's theory has become crucial for comprehending character growth in literature since it permits authors to depict characters through heteroglossia.

2.4.2. Polyphony

The notion of polyphony, first introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin, is central to the study of literature and literary theory. "Polyphony is Bakhtin's term for the presence of multiple voices in a text, dialogically interacting to form an individual, unique whole" (p. 120), according to the work of M. Keith Booker (1995). The term polyphony encompasses a wide range of concepts, including the existence of numerous voices in a single text, the equality of those voices, and the productive interaction between them. Polyphony is a literary theory that has been used in works as diverse as classical Greek poetry and contemporary fiction. As an illustration of Bakhtin's notion of polyphony, consider Homer's Odyssey, in which the narrators Odysseus, Penelope, and the gods all have a part to play in creating a unified story. William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) is another example of polyphony since it combines the voices of four

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[31] The use of characterisation with z and not s is to keep it faithful to the original source.

separate narrators to form a rich and nuanced story. In addition, Bakhtin's idea of polyphony in literature has had tremendous sway and has been used in the analysis of a wide variety of works.

The novel relies heavily on polyphony or the coexistence of many different voices and points of view. Sara K. Day (2010) defines polyphony as a "dynamic interplay between the novel's narrative elements" (p. 69). Multiple narrators or divergent viewpoints within a single story are only two examples of this kind of dynamic interaction. Authors can achieve a level of realism and depth in their writing that is lacking in simpler styles through the use of polyphony. Polyphony can also be used to cast doubt on the status quo or the idea of an unchanging truth. Authors can provide readers with a deeper grasp of the novel's issues by adding numerous perspectives, each of which offers insight into the views and values of a different character.

Literary theorists have embraced this theory to explain better how writing may reflect the intricacies of society and offer a space for discourse and discussion. For instance, polyphony may be utilised to investigate how literature can depict the complexities of social relationships, such as the interplay of power and competing points of view. Additionally, polyphony may be used to investigate how literature can question standard narrative forms and how various voices can critique the current quo or investigate alternative ways of thinking. This line of inquiry can be approached via the lens of how literature can challenge established narrative forms. In general, polyphony has made it possible for literary theorists to investigate the possibilities of literature and get a deeper comprehension of the ways in which writing may reflect and critique the intricacies of social existence (Letiche, 2010).

2.5. Intertextuality

The term intertextuality describes the link between texts and the ways in which each text affects and is affected by others. Michael Stead (2009) states that "intertextuality is a way of understanding how texts refer to and are shaped by other texts, both within and outside of a particular genre or literary tradition" (p. 1). That is because every

piece of writing borrows from others, either in the form of allusions, references, or straight-up theft of concepts. Intertextuality may enrich and complicate writing because it allows the author to draw from a larger range of sources and ideas. Readers can participate more actively in the text when they understand the context of the allusions and connections established. However, readers unfamiliar with the cited texts may be left confused or with the wrong impression if intertextuality is used.

Intertextuality, as defined by its pioneer Julia Kristeva, is the phenomenon through which one text is not independent of other texts but rather the result of their mutual influence. Meaning in a text is typically examined via the lens of intertextuality. This is because one cannot read a text in isolation from the corpus of other writings. The author Julia Kristeva writes that "every text is the absorption and transformation of another" (Kristeva, 1986, cited in Hamza Reguig Mouro, 2014, p. 25). Allusions, parody, and pastiche are only some of the literary elements that have been analysed using the notion of intertextuality. Scholars' knowledge of textual production and the reader's comprehension has been enhanced by dissecting these literary strategies. Additionally, the connection between literature and culture has been investigated via intertextuality. Scholars may learn a lot about a culture's values, beliefs, and attitudes by looking at the connections between literature from different periods and genres.

One of the most important aspects of comprehending postmodern literature is the complex link between intertextuality and postmodern fiction. Self-referentiality is a hallmark of postmodernism, and this is commonly accomplished through allusions to other works of literature. Margarete Landwehr (2002) defines a key feature of postmodern literature, intertextuality, as "the postmodern mode of allusion, quotation, pastiche, parody, and other forms of textual borrowing and appropriation that foreground the interdependence of texts and the instability of their meanings" (p. 4).

Therefore, intertextuality is a central technique in postmodern writing, allowing writers to build a web of allusions that question originality. Postmodern authors blur the lines between fiction and reality, history, and the present, and high

and low culture by using allusions to previous works. Postmodern authors might use intertextuality to expose the manufactured and contingent character of dominant narratives and ideologies, so criticising and subverting them. Therefore, postmodernism's epistemological and ontological problems are reflected in its intertextuality, which is more than just a stylistic decision (Landwehr, 2002).

To conclude, intertextuality is an intriguing idea that sheds light on the ways in which various texts are related to one another and shape one another. A text's meaning and significance can be better grasped when its multiple allusions, references, and borrowings are recognised. The concept of intertextuality also highlights the significance of context and the ways in which writings are influenced by the time and place in which they were written. Intertextuality will likely remain an important method for elucidating texts' rich and subtle meanings as we continue to study and analyse them.

2.6. Narration

According to *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, narration is "the process of relating a sequence of events" in which the narrator, who is the putative voice, reports these events to the narratee, i.e., the audience. Walter R. Fisher (1984) defines narration as "a theory of symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them" (p. 2). To comment on this quote, James W. Chesebro (1989) utters that highlighting the three attributes of narration patent within Fisher's definition is highly important. First of all, narration is not restricted to a specific literary genre or even literacy; that is to say, narration does not entail a theme, being it literary, persuasive, argumentative or even aesthetic. Secondly, narration chronicles the sequence of events the narrative amounts to. Still, it is noteworthy to mention that narration is not linked to any sort of sequence. To explain this, it is important to explain the narrative as a term. A narrative is composed of a series of events, i.e., the story, arranged in a specific order, the plot, and they are conveyed in a "process of narration". So, narration has nothing to do with the way the events are arranged. Thirdly, the audience plays an indispensable role in narration, as it is the audience that determines the story's fate. In other words, the audience

concludes the narrative's meaning based on the type of "social construction" they apply to the story (Baldick, 2008; Chesebro, 1989).

S. D. Ngcongwane (1984) deems narration as a hoary manlike deed that "involves reflecting on possible happenings in words" (p. 91). Monika Fludernik (2009) supports this claim when she utters,

> The act of narration…is to be found wherever someone tells us about something: a newsreader on the radio, a teacher at school…a fellow passenger on a train, a newsagent, one's partner over the evening meal…or the narrator in the novel that we enjoy reading before going to bed. We are all narrators in our daily lives, in our conversations with others, and sometimes we are even professional narrators (should we happen to be, say, teachers, press officers or comedians) (Cited in Hamza Reguig Mouro, 2014, p. 34).

By this, Fludernik wants to convey that narration is not restricted to fictional works only, yet it can be part of the human's everyday experience. The same thing that Ngcongwane enunciates when defining narration: "all of us do it just as much as all of us who are not crippled can walk" (p. 92).

Manie Groenewald (2012) depicts narration as "the process of telling" where "the narrating agent[32]" employs a set of distinct techniques in order to narrate the events of the story to "an implied listener or reader" (p.58). That is to say, the narrating agent or the narrator plays the role of the medium between the narrative and the readers/ listeners. Here, it is essential to stress out that the narrator (narrating agent) is altered from the author and the implied author. "The narrator is the fictional construct the author has created to tell the story through. It"s the point of view the story is coming from" (Bushnell, 2020, para 3). In other words, the narrator is the voice within the narrative. The narrator is prevailing since he decides what the

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[32] Groenewald also referred to the narrating agent as a narrator between parenthesis.

audience should know and what should be cast aside. Sometimes, the narrator is a character within the story (Stephens & Bonn, 2022).

There are sundry types of narrators, yet the most common are the first-person and third-person points of view. The first-person narrator is characterised by the use of the pronoun "I", where the narrator is most often the main character (sometimes the protagonist). Since the main character narrates, he does not know exactly what the other characters are undergoing. In the case of *The Great Gatsby* (1925), the narrator Nick, one of the main characters, is telling perspective, yet since he is not involved in the story's main conflict, he does not provide the audience with that broad view of the events. A third-person point of view is characterised by the use of he, she, they, and gender-neutral pronouns. It is divided into two categories, the third person POV omniscient, who are all-know, all-wise, and he knows everything about everything. An example of this is Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), where the narrator is extremely generous in depicting how each character feels. Then, there is the third person POV limited, where the narrator is extremely limited; he may seem reserved and aloof while he comments from time to time on the events of the storyline of one character (the protagonist). The illustration of this category can be (Wiehardt, 2019; Smith, 2020; Blakeley & Wilson, 2021).

In *Narrative Discourse*[33] (1980), Gérard Genette trashes out the point of view as a narrative technique that superintends the amount and the gush of information the readers receive. In this, Genette puts forward two questions while commenting on the works of Blin, Stendhal, Lubbock, Stanzel and Brooks, and Warren, "who is the character whose point of view orientates the narrative perspective?" and the question "who is the narrator?" (Cited in Tolmie, 1991, p. 276). To avoid this bewilderment, Genette proposes the term focalization[34] to take the place of point of view and limits this latter to when the question "question 'who is the character (if any) whose point of

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[33] Genette's *Narrative Discourse* appeared in French under *Le Discours du Récit* back in 1980, then he issued an edited version in 1988.
[34] It is important to mention that *focalisation* appeared in Genette's *Figure III* (1972).

view orients the narrative perspective?" (p. 276). In this light, Genette (1988) defines focalization as a,

> Selection of narrative information' supplied to the reader The instrument of this possible selection is a situated focus, a sort of information conveying pipe that allows passage only of statement that is authorised by the situation (p. 34).

By introducing this term, Genette put an end to a long-lasting debate on the definition of the narrator as an agent. Celestino Deleyto (1991) notes that Genette cleared up the inconsistency in narration with his concept of focalisation, seeing as the narrator can not be third-person even if he is employing pronouns like he/she/they, simply because he is not referring to himself, but rather to other characters.

Mieke Bal succeeded in developing Genette's concept of focalisation, and she linked it to the 'text' analysis. For her, focalisation is "the relation between the vision and that which is 'seen', perceived" (Bal, 1985, as cited in Deleyto, 1991, p. 160). Bal's definition of focalisation brings to the table two new concepts, the focaliser and the focalised; while the first is the dawning of the vision and/or the agent performing the vision, the latter is the "object of the vision". Deleyto (1991) explicates by uttering that,

> It is the object of the vision, the focalised, that is then «turned into words», narrated at the level of text, by an agent that may or may not coincide with the focaliser. In this sense, the whole of the text is focalised in one way or another, whereas there would be elements of the fabula[35] (story according to Genette and other narratologists) which would be «non focalised» and therefore left out of the text altogether (p. 160).

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[35] Fabula is not capitalised to respect the original source.

In other words, the narrative text is the reader's only source of information, and the focaliser[36] is the character whose point of view is offered within the narrative. On the other hand, both Genette and Booth rejected Bal's proposal of the character focaliser or focalised, as for Genette, the narrative is the focalised and the focaliser can not be any character but the narrator himself (Carter, 1995).

On focalisation, Genette (1980, 1988) identifies three leading types, zero focalisation, internal focalisation and external focalisation. When it comes to zero focalisation or variable focalisation, the narrator is omniscient, and he dominates, and he says and knows more than any other character within the narrative, i.e., the narrative is non-focalised. Internal focalisation is when " the focus coincides with one (or more) of the characters who is used as a subject of perception within the narrative" (Cited in Tolmie, 1991,p. 276). That is to say, the narrator knows more than the character, yet this latter's point of view may still be displayed. The external focalisation, the reader is not introduced to the character's way o thinking; in other words, the characters' thoughts are not at all unveiled within the process of narration (Tolmie, 1991; Muskheli, 2021).

From his side, Jonne Arjoranta (2017) has explored the different types of focalisation in the narrative. For him, focalisation is a tool used by authors to allow readers to gain insight into the thoughts and feelings of a character. "Through focalisation, readers can access the inner workings of a character's mind and understand the characters' motivations more deeply" (p. 697). Four main types of focalisation can be used in the narrative: internal focalisation, external focalisation, omniscient focalisation and zero focalisation. Internal focalisation is when the narrative is told from the perspective of a character, allowing readers to understand their thoughts and feelings in detail. External focalisation is when the narrative is told from an outsider's perspective, and the narrator does not share the thoughts and feelings of any character. Omniscient focalisation is when the narrator is aware of the

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[36] In what it seems A response to Bal's proposal regarding the focaliser and the focalised within the narrative text, Genette (1982) plainly rejects her proposal stating "pour moi, il n'y a pas de personnage focalisant ou focalisé: focalisé ne peut s'appliquer qu'au récit lui-même, et focalisateur, s'il s'appliquait à quelqu'un, ce ne pourrait être qu'à celui qui focalise le récit, c'est-à-dire le narreteur" (p. 48).

thoughts and feelings of all characters in the story. Finally, zero focalisation is when the author does not provide any insight into the thoughts and feelings of the characters. Each type of focalisation has different effects on the narrative and the interpretation of the story. As such, it is crucial for authors to understand the different types of focalisation and choose the one which best suits their narrative.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983) names three facets of focalisation, *perceptual*, *psychological,* and *ideological*. To start with the perceptual facet, it is essential to mention that time and space are must-haves. In the light of the temporal provisos, the focaliser may have everything at hand id est he knows the past, the present, and the future of the characters[37]. Plus, the focaliser may alter from being a bird's eye to an artless, hampered observer regarding the spatial dimension.

According to research by Silke Horstkotte and Nancy Pedri (2011), the use of perceptual focalisation[38] can help authors draw readers deeper into their stories. They contend that this method is integral to the narrative and may make the world of the text more believable. Moreover, they argue that authors might put the reader at a remove from the story's characters or events by employing perceptual focalisation. This is a great tool for building suspense and enhancing the reader's interest and comprehension of the material. To sum up, Horstkotte and Pedri's analysis of perceptual focalisation in literature is illuminating since it shows how writers may employ this device to produce a more vivid and interesting story.

Conversely, psychological focalisation is a storytelling method that uses characters' internal monologues to propel the plot. This method helps the reader empathise with the characters by revealing their inner thoughts and decisions. According to *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (2003) by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, this method invites the reader into the story and helps them better comprehend the characters' inner workings. Using psychological focalisation, the reader is immersed in the story because they see the world through the protagonist's eyes. If the

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[37] Sometimes, he is restricted to the present and the past only.
[38] Focalisation is written with s here, as it is my reduction.

reader can put themselves in the character's shoes, they will have a greater chance of understanding and caring about the character's choices and experiences. In addition, the use of psychological focalisation may heighten suspense and tension by putting the reader in the shoes of the protagonist or antagonist. Insight into the plot and a better grasp of the narrative may be gained by centring attention on the character's thoughts and feelings.

According to David Herman (2007), ideological focalisation occurs when a book focuses on examining a specific ideology. This literary analysis method delves into the deeper meanings and themes of a piece of writing. A "critical examination of the ideological framework within which a novel is written" is how the writers define ideological focalisation. By dissecting the work in this way, the author can learn more about the ideas driving the characters and plot. A novel's characters, plot, and themes can be better understood if the reader delves into the book's ideological framework. In addition, the ideological focalisation of a book may be examined critically to show how the social, cultural, and political climate of its time influenced the creation of the work. Therefore, ideological focalisation is crucial for readers to comprehend the text and its meaning fully.

The idea of focalisation is a handy tool to know how readers take in and make sense of the information presented in tales. Consideration should be given to perceptual, psychological, and ideological focalisation since these are the three most essential components of focalisation. Each of these focalisation offers distinctive insights into the ways in which readers see textual material and engage with it. These insights may be utilised to advance our knowledge of the dynamic interaction that exists between readers and the text, which is always evolving.

2.6.1. Diegesis

Diegesis is a Greek term meaning 'to narrate' and is used in literary criticism to refer to the narrative of a story. Its major function is to delineate between the tale the narrator tells and the story itself. There has been a renaissance in the usage of diegesis by literary critics since the 18th century. Stephen Halliwell (2014) contrasts diegesis

with mimesis by declaring that the former may be understood as "a frame of reference for understanding narrative in its entirety" (p. 141). This means diegesis may be utilised for content and form analysis in a story. Literary critics can get insight into a story by analysing its structure, narrator, point of view, and even the passage of time. Also, diegesis may be used to determine what parts of a tale are essential to understanding the bigger picture. Diegesis is the key to deciphering the story's themes and characters.

Iacovides et al. (2015) address the idea of diegesis as well as its influence on the process of literary analysis. They differentiate between diegetic and non-diegetic worlds, with the former referring to a world that exists both inside and outside of the narrative. They add that diegesis considers the physical, temporal, and geographical dimensions of a tale and how the story works. They further argue that physical diegesis may be used to identify the people and setting of a tale. In contrast, temporal diegesis can be used to discern the order in which events occur in a story, and spatial diegesis can be used to identify the places in a story. In addition, they point out that diegesis may be used to determine the structure of a narrative, how characters and storylines progress, and how the tale itself is delivered. Therefore, diegesis has the potential to be a useful tool for literary analysis since it may assist in elucidating the dynamics of the narrative as well as the numerous components that go into making up the story.

Brian Richardson (1988) states that understanding the function of the author, the plot, and the characters in a narrative requires a firm grasp of the concept of diegesis. It is also vital to have a good understanding of the interaction that exists between the reader and the text. He adds that diegesis is a technique that authors may use to construct character arcs, create an atmosphere of mystery, and build suspense in their stories. Diegesis also investigates the interaction between the text and the reader and the relationship between the characters and the environments they inhabit. It also allows authors to delve into their characters' mental and emotional facets, which may be quite interesting. In addition, diegesis may be utilised to inquire about the ways in which cultural and societal standards influence the characters in a story.

2.6.1.1. Intra- and Extra-Diegesis

In literary criticism, intra-diegesis and extra-diegesis are utilised to distinguish between narrative aspects that are internal to the tale and external to the story. Intra-diegesis refers to any narrative aspects that are included inside the story itself, according to Jeffrey J. Williams (1998). This refers to the story's characters, as well as its environment, its narrative, and any other aspects that are a part of the story's internal reality. On the other hand, extra-diegesis refers to elements that are not directly related to the narrative being told. Wassila Hamza Reguig Mouro (2014) comments on this topic, stating that these aspects are typically referenced or referred to but are not actually part of the story itself. Extra-diegetic material can be found in the form of real-world occurrences, such as wars, natural catastrophes, and news reports, for instance. The term intra-diegesis refers to aspects included in the narrative, and extra-diegesis refers to factors taken from outside the narrative.

When studying how characters are depicted in a work of fiction, extra-diegesis is an essential component. It makes it possible to evaluate how characters are presented to the reader or audience instead of focusing just on what they say or do in the story. Anna Claydon (2007) said that "extra-diegesis can provide insight into how characters are perceived and understood by the writer and how they might be interpreted by the reader/audience" (p. 99). Extra-diegetic commentary gives readers the opportunity to investigate different aspects of a character's presentation, such as their physical appearance, the clothing they choose to wear, and their mannerisms, as well as the responses of other characters, the narrative structure, and the environment in which the action takes place. For instance, if a character is frequently depicted wearing colourful, upbeat apparel, this might be seen as a sign that they have a good attitude in life. In contrast, a figure who is frequently depicted wearing black or melancholy attire may be understood to have a more negative outlook due to the connotations associated with those garments. In the end, extra-diegesis may be a beneficial tool for examining the subtleties of the character development of a fictional character.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in investigating how intra-diegesis might play a part in the development of a narrative. Intra-diegesis is a method of storytelling in which the story's several components, including its storyline, characters, and other aspects, are intertwined to produce a unified whole. Kazumi Nagaike (2007) emphasised the significance of this method and the ways in which it may be utilised to drive the story's progression. She observed that "the capability of the storyteller to create a vivid, internally consistent world is essential for successful plot construction" (Nagaike, 2007, page 61). The use of intra-diegesis enables authors to construct a story that is more realistic and credible, which in turn allows the reader to get completely engrossed in the narrative. Because of this, building suspense may be particularly effective since the reader will become more immersed in the tale and the characters inside it. In addition to this, it may be utilised to generate a feeling of urgency in the tale since if the reader feels linked to the characters in the story, they are more likely to be engaged with the story and the people in it. Authors can craft tales that captivate their audiences and leave them wanting more through the utilisation of intra-diegesis in creating an immersive story world and intriguing characters.

2.6.1.2. Homo - and Hetero – Diegesis

When the narrator is also a character in the tale, this is an example of homo-diegesis. Hetero-diegesis, on the other hand, happens when the narrator does not take part in the events of the story. According to Simone Elisabeth Lang (2014), homo-diegesis is frequently employed in order to "create a sense of immediacy and intimacy between the narrator and the reader" (p. 372). On the other hand, hetero-diegesis is utilised more frequently to "convey information objectively" (p. 373) since the narrator is distanced from the tale and is able to present a more objective point of view. It is possible that the narrator's presence in the story will only be alluded to rather than mentioned clearly at times; this will allow the reader to speculate about the nature of the connection between the narrator and the narrative. It is possible that the narrator's relationship to the tale will shift at various points over the course of some works,

creating a more dynamic approach to narration. The reading experience is altered positively and negatively depending on the narrative used.

James Phelan (2001) offers his observations regarding the benefits and drawbacks of homo- and hetero-diegesis. When telling a story, the narrative style known as homo-diegesis relies on a single narrative source. In contrast, the narrative style known as hetero-diegesis draws from a variety of sources. Phelan claims that homo-diegesis has the benefit of consistency and clarity since the narrative is contained inside a single source throughout the whole process. This makes it simpler for the audience to comprehend the narrative and continue following along. However, this regularity may also be negative since it can cause an audience to feel bored and anticipate what will happen next. On the other hand, hetero-diegesis pulls from a few different sources, which enables the story to be more diverse and open to unexpected twists and turns. The audience needs to keep track of various sources, which can make the tale more interesting and startling but also make it more difficult to follow. As a result, each kind of diegesis has its own set of benefits and drawbacks, and they should be utilised differently depending on the narrative.

The term homo-diegesis was first presented by Jan Alber and Monica Fludernik in 2010, and it serves as a link between the more conventional practice of storytelling and the more contemporary idea of reflexive narratology. It is possible for the reader to acquire insight into the connections between two characters as well as the challenges they encounter by having one character narrate a narrative to another character. The fact that the reader is given the opportunity to piece together the specifics of the story while the characters are discussing it also contributes to the feeling of suspense and mystique that pervades the narration. In addition, homo-diegesis may be utilised to give a story greater depth by allowing the characters to create their own interpretations of what's happening in the story, which in turn gives them the opportunity to investigate their emotions and beliefs. In general, homo-diegesis is an engaging narrative device that adds a layer of complexity to the story and makes it easier for readers to grasp both the characters and the problems they face.

Within the field of narratology, hetero-diegesis is a fundamental notion. It is a form of narrative structure in which the story is told to the audience by a narrator from outside the narrative rather than by the characters within the narrative themselves. According to Eszter Beran and Zsolt Unoka (2005), this particular style of narrative structure has been utilised for several decades by various literary genres. It has been utilised in order to establish a narrative viewpoint that is more objective and to create a sense of distance between the viewer and the characters in the story. In addition, hetero-diegesis can instil a sense of tension and anticipation in the audience by concealing the characters' intentions from them. The Odyssey by Homer is one of the many classic works of literature that makes use of hetero-diegesis since an omniscient narrator tells it. Other classic works of literature also make use of hetero-diegesis. In contemporary writing, hetero-diegesis is still utilised often. One example of this is the *Harry Potter* series, in which the narrator is a shadowy person whose identity is concealed for the majority of the narrative.

2.6.1.3. Meta-Diegesis

Meta-diegesis is used to describe the interaction between the storyteller and the audience, as well as the ways in which the storyteller uses storytelling techniques to draw in and immerse the listener or viewer. Meta-diegesis, as described by Fouzia Janjua and Afshan Abbas (2022), effectively makes the listener feel that they are there in the tale and have a personal connection to the narrator. With the help of meta-diegesis, it is possible to craft a story with a deep emotional effect and a sense of empathy for the reader or viewer. Meta-diegesis may also be utilised to add mystery and intrigue to a story and build tension and suspense. As an added bonus, meta-diegesis may help make the story feel more real and genuine.

A significant instrument for the growth of characters is meta-diegesis, which refers to a narrative communication that takes place apart from the primary tale being told. This kind of storytelling may be used to convey more details about a character's history, expose the character's underlying motives, and shed light on the character's psyche and behaviours. For instance, John Pier (2009) discovered that meta-diegesis has the ability to "reveal the inner and psychological motivations of the characters"

(p. 210). In addition, meta-diegesis may be employed to give the characters a stronger feeling of depth and complexity, which enables the audience to comprehend the characters on a deeper level and develop a deeper respect for their choices and deeds. In addition, the use of this strategy may make the experience more immersive for the audience by allowing them to have a deeper understanding of the characters and the progression of their stories. The audience is able to connect with the characters on a deeper level if the character development is given greater subtlety and significance through the use of meta-diegesis. In this sense, meta-diegesis is an important component in the process of creating characters that are engaging and convincing.

Moreover, the use of meta-diegesis is a potent tool that may be used in tales to create suspense and tension. According to Melsew Alemayehu Haregu (2022), the method of meta-diegesis is used by storytellers to offer information to the audience without the characters in the tale being aware of it. This strategy achieves its desired effect by delivering hints and clues to the audience, which they are free to decipher and use to draw their own conclusions about the events that are taking place. The audience is able to feel the same anxiety and tension as the characters in the story through the use of meta-diegesis, which saves them from having to go through the ordeal themselves. A scene's tension may be steadily increased using this method as the audience begins to put together the hints that are being offered. When you do this, you may keep the audience wondering right up to the conclusion of the tale, which is when the tension is at its maximum. Because it allows the audience to become a part of the tale and feel its thrills, meta-diegesis is an excellent method for producing suspense and tension in narratives.

2.6.2. From Linear to Non-Linear Narration

How a tale is organised may have a major effect on how readers interpret it. Non-linear narratives use a more intricate approach than their linear counterparts, with the former being the more common and straightforward method of storytelling. Stories and experiences in popular media frequently combine linear and non-linear narrative forms. Arvind Satyanarayan and Jeffrey Heer (2014) talked about how linear stories have an established beginning, middle, and finish, making them easier to follow. On

the other hand, non-linear stories allow the audience to actively shape the plot through a series of decisions that have far-reaching consequences.

2.6.2.1. Linear Narration

It is critical that we define narratology right off the bat so that we can get started with this part. The study of stories and the art of storytelling is the primary emphasis of the academic discipline of narratology, which is a subfield of literary criticism. It is a very recent field, having just arisen in the latter half of the 20th century, and it is strongly associated with the study of both literature and film (Fludernik, 2009).

One of the most important aspects of narratology is the study of linear narrative, which is also the most prevalent type of narration. Linear narration is a common technique that is used to tell a tale in a way that is basic and simple to understand. It recounts the events in chronological order that is linear. According to Jo Anne Ollerenshaw and John W. Creswell (2002), the linear narration is the most popular kind of narrative structure in cinema and literature. It is also said in the article that linear narration is frequently employed to generate suspense and tension, which demonstrates that it is an efficient method for storytelling. In addition, the authors of the paper contend that linear storytelling is an effective method for communicating complicated topics. The storyteller has the ability to advance the tale by incorporating a variety of side stories and characters.

In novels, linear narration is frequently seen as a useful storytelling strategy because it aids in bringing clarity and organisation to the tale being told. According to Sarah E. Worth (2008), this is especially true when the tale takes place over a significant amount of time since linear narration makes it easier for the reader to maintain track of the timeline as well as the numerous plot aspects that might come from such a broad-reaching story. The use of linear storytelling is one technique that can be helpful in preventing the storyline from becoming overly complicated or hard to follow. The reader can more readily grasp the storyline and the characters' reasons for doing what they do if the author focuses on one chronology and one point of view. A sense of completion may also be achieved by the use of linear storytelling, which

allows readers to follow the development of the tale from its beginning to its conclusion in a straightforward manner. On the other side, a non-linear narrative might give the reader the impression that the story is unfinished since the timeline skips about and does not arrive at a logical conclusion at the end of the story. For these reasons, linear narration may be a fantastic storytelling method for novels, as it enables readers to quickly follow the tale and come away with a comprehension of both the storyline and the characters. This makes linear narration an excellent storytelling strategy for novels.

Silvia Knobloch et al. (2004) discovered that linear narration substantially influences the readers' comprehension of the tale. In particular, they concluded that readers who prefer linear narratives had a deeper comprehension of the story's action, characters, and themes, in addition to other literary components, than readers who preferred nonlinear narratives. This comprehension is a result of the fact that linear narrative makes it possible for readers to follow the tale's events in a logical and chronological manner.

Moreover, they found that readers of linear tales are more able to interact with the characters and identify with their objectives and drives as compared to readers of other types of narratives. In addition, they observed that readers of linear tales could comprehend the plot more completely. The findings of the study led the researchers to the conclusion that linear narration is a powerful tool for storytelling that may assist readers in developing a more comprehensive grasp of the narrative.

The ability to create a unified tale and exert agency over the reader's experience is an important perk of linear storytelling. Carey Jewitt (2005), from her side, defines linear narration as "structured around a linear narrative, which is a series of events that progress in a chronological order" (p. 317). The reader is able to become involved in the story with little difficulty because of the linear framework. Authors may manipulate their readers' emotions and create a more immersive experience by using linear storytelling to develop tension, cause and effect, and suspense. In addition, stories with a linear structure have a more defined peak and resolution, which leaves

the reader with a better sense of closure. Authors can create a memorable work of fiction by manipulating their readers' experiences in this way. This exemplifies the significance of linear narration in the reading experience, as it provides authors with a tool for crafting a compelling and dramatic story.

The age-old method of telling a narrative in chronological order while simultaneously conveying a certain message is known as linear storytelling. It has withstood the test of time due to the fact that it gives the author the ability to manage the conveyance of their message and guarantee that it is sent in a way that is cohesive and easily understood. When employed properly, linear narration is capable of producing major effects, particularly when it is utilised to concentrate on and improve the readers' experience. As a result of this, it is a powerful instrument that novelists and other artists may use to produce works of art that have an effect (Habermas et al., 2009).

2.6.2.2. Non-linear Narration

In recent years, non-linear narration has been investigated for its implications on an audience's engagement. Tineke A. Abma et al. (2017) uttered that conveying a tale in a non-linear fashion boosted the audience's level of involvement with the narrative. According to them, a non-linear narrative framework allows for a greater sense of participation with the tale and its characters than a linear approach. This suggests that the use of non-linear storytelling can be a useful technique for writing stories that are more interesting to the reader. In addition, the research concluded that the non-linear strategy gave players a greater sense of influence over the storyline than the linear technique did. It was believed that giving the player a sense of control would boost their level of involvement with the video game and the story it told. According to the results of this research, using non-linear storytelling can be an effective method for developing narratives that are more interesting to readers and for boosting the involvement of an audience.

In her unpublished book from 1990, Amy Bruckman devotes a significant amount of time and energy to dissecting the potency of non-linear narrative in literary

works. The telling of a narrative by an author in a manner that does not adhere to a linear order of events is an example of the novelistic approach known as non-linear narration. This creative method allows the reader to investigate the tale from a variety of perspectives and interpret it in a manner that would not have been attainable through a more traditional, linear narrative. This kind of story also gives the author the opportunity to add depth to the tale by supplying the reader with extra information and focusing on the inner thoughts and motives of the characters in the story.

For instance, the case of a character who is portrayed as the antagonist in a tale told in a linear fashion. If this is the case, using a non-linear narrative structure can provide the reader with more details about the character's history and the motivations behind their actions. A basic linear narrative may not be as interesting as a story that is more complicated and has more layers if it is created as a result of this. The use of non-linear storytelling is a strong technique that authors may use, and Bruckman's work offers insightful guidance on how it can be exploited most effectively in their writing (Bruckman, 1990).

Diana Laurillard et al. (2000), one of the primary advantages of using this method is that it paves the way for greater creative expression. When telling a tale in a non-linear fashion, there is greater leeway to investigate various topics and concepts as the narrative develops in an atypical manner. In addition, using narrative in this manner allows for a deeper and more meaningful examination of complicated concepts. This may be accomplished by constructing a narrative that jumps around in time and place, avoiding linearity and chronological order as much as possible. Moreover, readers are allowed to explore the tale in a less linear manner when presented in a non-linear format, which can result in a more immersive experience for the spectator. Because of this, viewers are able to establish connections and come to their own inferences, which may lead to a more interesting and engaging viewing experience. In the end, a story that is non linear may give viewers an experience that is both engaging and interesting while also enabling filmmakers to investigate more complicated topics and issues unconventionally.

Novels frequently use the non-linear narration style, which allows for creating an unorthodox and frequently convoluted narrative framework. Authors have the ability to modify the chronology of events by utilising this approach, which results in a unique plot that keeps readers interested and actively involved in the story. Charles Ramirez Berg (2006) utters that the power of non-linear narrative to manage time and generate a sense of foreboding in the reader makes it capable of eliciting a more profound emotional reaction from the reader. Berg also argues that non-linear narration may help establish a deeper knowledge of the characters by presenting backstories and characters who may not have been covered in a regular linear narrative. This is something that would have been impossible with a traditional linear narrative. Moreover, Berg gives insight into the possible applications of this method in novels because of his investigation of the effects of a non-linear narrative on readers.

2.6.2.2.1. Types of Non-linear Narration

Postmodern literature has grown to rely more and more on non-linear storytelling to communicate difficult concepts and liberate itself from the constraints of traditional narrative frameworks. According to Frank Serafini (2005), non-linear storytelling may be used to "create a dynamic, open-ended, and non-hierarchical relationship between author, text, and reader" (p. 52). This can be accomplished by presenting information in a non-linear fashion. This narrative style provides a more open-ended reading experience because it frequently blurs the borders between the author, the text, and the reader, providing a more collaborative reading experience. This, in turn, enables a more open-ended reading experience. Traditional linear modes of storytelling make it more challenging to investigate certain topics and characters, while non-linear tales allow writers to do so anyhow.

For instance, postmodern literature frequently uses non-linear narratives to investigate the complexities of human interactions as well as the subtleties of the motives and behaviours of each character. Postmodern authors can produce one-of-a-kind and fascinating stories that challenge the conventional expectations placed on the structure of narratives because they use non-linear narrative frameworks. In this sense,

non-linear storytelling is a useful tool for postmodern authors since it allows them to investigate intricate topics and characters while simultaneously involving the reader in a reading experience that is both more meaningful and participatory.

Since the dawn of storytelling, including flashbacks into narratives that are otherwise told in a non-linear fashion has been an essential component. Rasagy Sharma and Venkatesh Rajamanickam (2013) contend that although flashbacks might help an audience have a more in-depth understanding of the characters, they can also be utilised to "create suspense and excitement" (p. 3). In addition, the writers propose that flashbacks might give "clues to the resolution of a story" (p. 4) by demonstrating to the audience the events that occurred before the beginning of the story. This may be observed in works such as the movie *Memento* (2000), which makes use of flashbacks to provide the spectator with an insight into the motives and actions of the protagonist.

In addition, the writers emphasise how flashbacks may "create a sense of irony" (Sharma & Rajamanickam, 2013, p. 4), allowing the reader to acquire insight into the actions made by the characters and how the past might impact the present. It is possible to observe this literary device in the work *The Great Gatsby*, which uses flashbacks to investigate the reasons behind the characters' actions and the ways in which their pasts have influenced their present lives. Through their analysis, Sharma and Rajamanickam show the potential of flashbacks in non-linear narration as a narrative tool that can be utilised to generate a better knowledge of people and their motives. This may be accomplished by using flashbacks to show events that occurred before a certain point in the tale.

The literary device known as a flashforward is frequently employed to give readers a glimpse into a character's future and how that character's future may affect the scenario in which they now find themselves. This is in contrast to a flashback, which is a glance into the past and can explain how the character arrived at where they are right now in the present. Authors have a great weapon at their disposal called flashforward, which can be used to give their stories more complexity and enhance

tension. William Faulkner is most recognised for his use of the Southern Gothic and Modernist writing styles in his works (Wagner-Martin, 2021). In order to produce exciting and intriguing narratives, he frequently makes use of a variety of literary methods, such as flashforwards, in his short stories. The reader is given the opportunity to get insight into the thoughts and feelings of a character before the tale reveals what has happened to that character through flashforwards.

William Nelles and Linda Williams (2021) write that this causes the reader to feel like they are part of the tale and generates a sense of anticipation about what will occur in the plot later on. In several of his works, Faulkner uses this literary device to illustrate the concept of fate, namely how it operates in the characters' lives, as well as to generate a feeling of mystique and suspense. Faulkner utilises a flashforward in his short story *A Rose for Emily* (1930) to show the gruesome contents of Emily's bedroom. This occurs before the events of the story, even before the events of the novel disclose what brought Emily to this point. This strategy provides the reader with an understanding of Emily's mental state. It generates a sensation of dread that stays with the reader all the way up until the story's dramatic climax is disclosed.

2.6.2.2.2. The Unreliable Narrator

Using Edgar Allan Poe's short tale *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1843) as an example, Ni Wang (2022) examines the narrator's interpretation of reality. Wang contends that the narrator's insanity is to blame for his confusion between truth and fiction. He demonstrates how the narrator's dread and paranoia warp his vision of reality by describing the elderly man's eyes. Wang notes that the narrator's opinion that the elderly man's vision is "evil" exemplifies his skewed understanding of the world and the effects of his mental illness. Wang elaborates on how the narrator's inflated sense of self-importance clouds his ability to assess the story's events fairly. He implies that the narrator is crazy, whose delusions have him believing he is an invincible and powerful man.

Authors' use of unreliable narrators, who provide readers an incomplete and frequently biased version of the tale, has increased in recent years. Authors can

surprise the reader's interpretation of the tale by having the protagonist be an unreliable narrator. Greta Olson (2003) utters that this kind of narration might cause the reader to doubt both the veracity of the narrative and the narrator's integrity. An unreliable narrator can do this by drawing attention to the reader's own prejudices and assumptions. In addition, this kind of storytelling can highlight the impact of the power dynamics at play in the circumstance on the narrator's point of view. *Pride and Prejudice*'s unreliable narrator, Mr Bennet, is an illustration of how this era's patriarchal culture is reflected in literature. Austen gains insight into how gender roles affect a narrator's perspective on the world in this way. In the end, authors may use an unreliable narrator as a strong tool to test the reader's assumptions and investigate intricate topics.

Unreliable narrators are a tool for building tension and mystery, as discussed by Michael D. Thomas (2002). He claims that these narrators can stir up the reader's emotions and get them to doubt what is happening. They may be utilised to increase the tension and intrigue of a story by introducing an element of mystery or doubt into the telling. Thomas adds that stories with unreliable narrators may be made more engaging since the reader must always wonder if the narrator is being truthful. He says that this might make the tale more interesting by leaving the reader to draw their own assumptions about what happened. The story becomes more compelling and suspenseful because the reader must use their own sleuthing talents to determine the truth. He then argues that this strategy draws in readers and makes them feel invested in the story's mystery.

Unreliable narrators may add a lot of tension to a tale. Having a narrator who isn't entirely reliable alerts readers to the possibility of bias in the tale. It's a great tool for author manipulation that would be impossible with a credible narrator. Kathleen Wall (1994) argues that this method results in a more authentic story than one delivered by a single, unbiased narrator. This can be interpreted as an attempt to show events as they really happened and to offer a new angle on stories. Truth, trust, and the repercussions of lying are just a few of the subjects that may be explored in more depth with the help of an unreliable narrator. Suspense may be built with the help of

unreliable narrators, and the reader's assumptions about the characters and their motivations can be tested. This allows writers to craft more engaging narratives and deeper, more complicated stories.

When studying literature, one should be sure not to gloss over the use of the unreliable narrator as a literary device. This one-of-a-kind method of storytelling gives the audience a one-of-a-kind opportunity to draw their own conclusions about a particular story and the people who are the focus of that story. When analysing a piece of writing, it is important to take into account and investigate not only the obvious meaning conveyed by the narration but also the latent meanings that may be brought to light by the unconventional point of view of a particular character (Hansen, 2007).

2.7. Estrangement Effect[39]

Many theatre theorists have examined, dissected, and argued over Bertolt Brecht's thesis of the 'alienation effect' in the theatre. According to Min Tian (1997), Brecht's notion of the 'alienation effect' is based on the idea that the audience should be removed from the performance so that they may become more conscious of its social and political implications. This is because Brecht believed that the audience would be more aware of the social and political connotations of the performance if they were physically separated from the performance. In order to do this, the "fourth wall", which is the fictitious barrier that separates the audience from the players on stage, must be broken. According to Brecht's notion, when the "fourth wall" is breached, the audience is compelled to evaluate the performance from an active rather than a passive vantage point, forcing them to think critically about what they see on stage. The audience is provoked into having a more in-depth contemplation on the performance's significance and the repercussions it may have for society.

According to Weihua HE (2019), Brecht was the first person to employ the Alienation Effect, also known as the *Verfremdungseffekt*[40], to establish a distance between the actors and the audience in order to provide the public with the opportunity

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[39] In some translations, it is labelled alienation effect.
[40] The German nomenclature.

to consider the performance in an objective manner. This idea has now been extended to the field of literature, where an author will often make an effort to put some distance between the reader and the literary content they are presenting. This typically happens as a result of a variety of different approaches, including the use of abstract or unusual language, a lack of character development, and the exclusion of emotion. Instead of being emotionally invested in the narrative, the reader is encouraged to think about the text and the topics it presents when this is done. Consequently, the writing produced throughout the 20th century is frequently distinguished by a sense of detachment, which enables a more impartial study of the work. Because of this, the Alienation Effect has developed into a potent instrument that authors may use, and it has contributed to the formation of the literature of the 20th century.

Alienation effect is a theatrical method that, according to Branislav Jakovljevic (2016), "distances the audience from emotional involvement in the play, thus allowing them to view the action objectively" (p. 5). Estrangement effect functions in this way to break the fourth wall and inspire critical thought on the part of the audience on the behaviour they are watching. It is not difficult to understand how this thought might be related to postmodern theory; nevertheless, postmodernism is frequently associated with a broad spectrum of concepts, particularly concerned with breaking down barriers and questioning current systems of power. In this sense, the alienation effect can be interpreted as a device that can be used to challenge the conventional norms of theatre as well as the authority of the playwright. The alienation effect involves physically removing the audience from the action onstage. This allows the audience to more objectively evaluate the play, its themes, and the power dynamics implicit in the text. Because of this, it is an invaluable weapon for postmodern theatre since it inspires audience members to think creatively and challenge the established order.

2.7. Conclusion

As a response to the shifting intellectual and cultural milieu, the theories of the text in postmodern literature have progressed from the theory of imitation to dialogism and intertextuality. Not to forget that postmodern writers adopted a non-linear narration in telling their stories instead of these developments came about due to the evolution of

postmodern literary theory. These theories allowed authors to question conventional ideas of representation, acknowledge the existence of a diverse range of voices and points of view, and investigate the intertextual nature of language and meaning. Postmodern literature muddled the lines between reality and fiction, called into question the writer's authority, and encouraged readers to take an active role in the meaning-making process through dialogic and intertextual interactions.

The objective of this chapter has been to introduce the theories of the text, including explanations of crucial concepts such as dialogism, intertextuality, narration, and estrangement effect. A succinct analysis of the transformation of postmodernism into literary thought is also presented here. The upcoming third chapter will analyse four of Nicholas Sparks, the case study of research work. It will first start with the psychoanalytic literary criticism of the novels. Then, it will shift to discussing existentialism and its components within the selected novels.

Chapter Three: Deconstructing the Self Through Nicholas Sparks' Selected Novels

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3.1. Introduction

Language, literature, and society all contain intrinsic contradictions, hierarchies, and binary oppositions, and deconstruction aims to bring these to light. It displays the texts' fluidity and instability, which destroys the concept of a meaning that is unchanging and unchanging across time. Deconstruction can take many forms and present itself in many ways in postmodern fiction. The idea of a work having a single, unchanging meaning is contested. It frequently displays ambiguity, contradiction, and choppy storytelling. This perversion of meaning throws off the reader and causes them to re-evaluate their ideas. Moreover, good and evil, men and women, nature and society, and so on all have their definitions questioned and undermined in postmodern literature. By doing so, postmodern texts dismantle the hierarchical systems that support canonical narratives and provide room for new readings and views (Zima, 2002).

On the other hand, Existentialism is a school of thought that places significance on one's life, autonomy, and the need to provide meaning to an otherwise empty universe. It delves into human difficulties, the search for meaning, and the inevitable meeting with one's true self. A common characteristic of existentialist writing is an introspective, first-person perspective (Warnock, 1970). Like postmodern fiction, existentialism stresses the importance of the individual's ability to construct their own meaning and path in life. Characters in existentialist literature frequently struggle with issues such as free will, sincerity, and taking full responsibility for their actions.

Similarly, postmodern fiction refuses to accept predetermined readings and invites the reader to develop his or her own meanings and stories based on the text. Moreover, both movements acknowledge and celebrate the limits of human knowledge and the presence of ambiguity and paradox. The existential anxiety and the unpredictability of life are directly addressed in existentialist writing. In postmodern literature, the fractured and unclear qualities of language and representation are celebrated.

Chapter Three: Deconstructing the Self through Nicholas Sparks' Selected Novels

The current chapter, thus, will deconstruct four of Nicholas Sparks' novels, *The Notebook* (1996), *A Walk to Remember* (1999), *Safe Haven* (2010), and *The Longest Ride* (2013), using the psychoanalytic literary criticism technique. Then, it will shift to analyse existentialism and its different themes through the aforementioned novels. But before engaging in the analysis, it is imperative to start with a small presentation of the author, as his background may affect his writings in one way or another. Plus, the summaries of the novels are also essential to put the reader of this humble work in the overall atmosphere of the study.

3.2. Nicholas Sparks and The Genre Fiction

Nicholas Sparks is a well-known American author born in Omaha, Nebraska, on December 31, 1965. Sparks received the highest possible grade point average at the Christian Brothers High School in Sacramento, California, and graduated as valedictorian in 1983. After that, he attended the University of Notre Dame to earn a degree in Business Finance, from which he emerged with a diploma in 1988. After graduating from college, Sparks pursued a career in various fields, including real estate appraisal, waitressing, and the sale of dentistry supplies. Sparks authored his first novel, The Passing, in 1990, but the book was never released. The release of Sparks' debut novel, The Notebook, in 1995 marked the beginning of a prosperous period in his professional life. Since then, he has written an additional eighteen novels, all of which have gone on to become top sellers all over the world. Sparks has amassed millions and millions of fans worldwide due to his achievements in the writing field, making him a renowned figure in the world of literature (Dewi et al., 2021; Pratiwi, 2019).

There is no denying Nicholas Sparks' influence on modern culture. Since the early 2000s, his novels have been widely read and adapted into movies. More than 100 million copies of his books have been sold worldwide. His works frequently centre on a tragic love tale between two characters from vastly different origins and explore ideas of redemption. His works, which often deal with family and faith issues, are typically situated in rural areas of the American South. Characters in Sparks' novels frequently face hardships like poverty and disease, and his stories usually have

a clear takeaway. His stories have struck a chord with readers worldwide, earning him a large and varied following. His works have been adapted into films in many nations and translated into over 50 languages. The 'Nicholas Sparks Romance' subgenre of Hollywood movies was created mainly due to his writing. Nicholas Sparks' novels have become cultural touchstones and cinematic mainstays (Casal, 2018).

3.2.1. Sparks as a Postmodern Novelist

Postmodernist ideas, including the denial of grand narratives and the celebration of individuality, heavily influence the plots of Nicholas Sparks' novels. Characters in Sparks' novels typically have difficulty understanding their place in the world and the consequences of their actions. Furthermore, the characters' experiences are frequently portrayed in a non-linear narrative, giving readers many perspectives on the same tales. In addition, the moral lessons in Sparks' novels generally focus on the value of the individual's journey and the decisions that might lead to a fulfilled life (Paudel, 2011).

Zakarya Ameur-Said and Wassila Hamza Reguig Mouro discuss how Sparks' novels often feature "anthropological structures of imagined societies and family structures" (p.744). His works often contain a "reflection on the nostalgia and the memory of the past" (p. 744). This can be seen in how his novels often feature the protagonist's journey as they seek to reconcile the past and the present. Furthermore, his works often employ "narrative techniques such as fragmentation, intertextuality, and metafiction" (p. 745). Because of this, reading his works is like being transported into the protagonist's head and seeing the world as they do. Overall, Nicholas Sparks' use of postmodernist motifs in his novels has been crucial to his success since it has allowed him to provide readers with a fresh and exciting perspective.

Non-linear narrative frameworks and different point-of-view characters are hallmarks of Nicholas Sparks' novels. Charles Ramirez Berg (2006) notes that such a story structure generates tension and suspense. This gives the reader a deeper look into the characters' minds and an appreciation for what drives them. By showing how different people may see the same event differently, Sparks gives the reader a deeper

insight into the tale. In *The Notebook*, for instance, Allie and Noah's divergent interpretations of the same events shed light on the protagonists' goals. By having many narrators tell the narrative from different points of view, Sparks allows the reader to conclude what happened. By switching between characters' points of view and switching around the order of events, Sparks manages to make the story more interesting and exciting.

The novels of Nicholas Sparks are well-known for their use of love storylines. On the other hand, a postmodern point of view is frequently reflected in the framework of these stories. Gudmundsdóttir (2016) utters that the "narrative structure of Nicholas Sparks' novels is often seen to have a postmodern influence" (p. 264). Sparks' novels frequently feature a disjointed framework with no clear resolution. His works, like *The Notebook*, reflect this nonlinear approach to storytelling by regularly switching perspectives and periods. This emphasis on fragmentation and discontinuity is central to the postmodern movement, characterised by its lack of linearity. Another hallmark of postmodernism is the unfinished nature of many of the stories in Sparks' novels. That is because postmodernism frowns upon conventional storytelling that ends neatly and in a straight line. Nicholas Sparks' works resemble romantic and postmodern narratives by emphasising the concept of fragmentation and lack of closure.

The postmodernist ideas of individuality and interdependence are reflected in Nicholas Sparks' writings. Sparks' paintings represent this philosophy since they centre on the unique person and how their identity relates to the greater community. For instance, Sparks examines in The Notebook how the central romance's impact on the world grows over time. Sparks emphasises the importance of one's ties to others and the greater community in examining these themes. Thus, Sparks' works mirror postmodernist principles, which stress the interdependence of parts and the whole.

3.2.2. Sparks and the Genre Fiction

According to Joyce G. Saricks' 2001 definition, genre fiction may be broken down into distinct subgenres determined by the story's subject matter and presentation. Most works of genre fiction are produced with a specific target audience and topic in mind.

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Its sole purpose is to amuse its readers; it does not pretend to be a philosophical work. The storyline, setting, and characters of a piece of genre fiction tend to conform to specific norms. The focus of a horror story is generally on the existence of supernatural happenings. In contrast, a romance story is about developing a love relationship between two people. Subgenres of genre fiction allow for even more nuanced classification of narratives. Both writers and readers can profit from fiction broken down into genres since this makes it easier for writers to discover their ideal audience and for readers to find stories that suit their interests.

Nicholas Sparks is a well-known genre-fiction figure because of his extensive work and storytelling skill. By emphasising universal themes like love, sorrow, and forgiveness and creating likeable protagonists, Sparks has built a winning formula in the romance genre. Because of his skill at making his readers empathise with his protagonists and antagonists, his works are selling like hotcakes. By delving into the subtleties of relationships and the complexity of the human experience, Sparks has won over the hearts of his readers. His novels have expanded the audience for romance novels and influenced other writers to explore similar territory. Readers are drawn to Nicholas Sparks' books because of the drama and suspense he weaves into each of his storylines. Sparks has had a tangible impact on genre literature, and his novels are still read and enjoyed by people of all ages (Keles et al., 2022).

As a famous American author, screenwriter, and producer whose works often deal with tragic love stories, Nicholas Sparks' fiction is one of the most popular genre fiction, characterised by sentimentality and melodrama (Archer & Jockers, 2016). Compared to other authors in his genre, Sparks' writing is significantly more theatrical and fuller of pathos to create a grand love story that his audience can get behind. His novels often have a moral centre, a joyful finish, and a romantic tone. Common themes in his work include the value of family, religion, and forgiveness.

In contrast, the works of other writers in the genre may place less emphasis on morality while focusing more on action, suspense, and thrills. In contrast to Sparks, who focuses on building a love tale, other genre fiction authors may aim for suspense

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and unexpected turns of events. Ultimately, Sparks' story is emotionally compelling and relevant since his writing style differs from other genre fiction authors.

3.3. The Novels' Summaries

Before analysing the four novels *The Notebook, A Walk to Remember, Safe Haven, and The Longest Ride,* it is necessary to start with their summaries.

3.3.1. *The Notebook*

Nicholas Sparks' novel *The Notebook* is a moving love story in the coastal North Carolina area. The older man, Noah Calhoun, is the work's narrator. He is reading a heartfelt description of their love story to his wife, Allie Nelson, who has Alzheimer's disease and is unable to remember the details of their romance. The novel's events take place in the 1940s, when Noah, a young guy who is sincere and passionate, falls profoundly in love with Allie, a lady from a wealthy family who is vivacious and full of life. During their summer romance, Noah and Allie develop a profound connection even though they come from distinct backgrounds and are held to varying standards by society.

Their romantic relationship is challenged by a few factors, including Allie's family's rejection and the imminence of World War II's impact on their lives. In due time, certain events lead to the partnership's breakup, followed by Allie's departure and the beginning of a new life. On the other hand, Noah does not waver in his devotion to her and continues to write her ignored letters. Many years later, when Noah grows old and lives in a nursing facility, he is adamant about rekindling Allie's memories of him and rekindling their love for one another. He narrates their love story out loud from a notepad, hoping that it may jog her memory of the times they have spent together in the past. Throughout his narration, Noah reflects on the good times and the difficult times they went through together, the sacrifices they made and the unwavering strength of their love.

While Noah is telling their narrative, Allie's eyes may periodically light up with a flash of familiarity, which gives the impression that she may be remembering something. The intense emotional connection the couple shares, their unflinching

dedication to one another, and the lasting power of love ultimately become the narrative's motivating factors. Overall, the novel addresses universal topics like love, destiny, and the unchanging dynamics of relationships. It captures the passion of adolescent love, the difficulties of societal expectations, and the sacrifices made for love's sake. In addition to this, *The Notebook* investigates the influence of memory as well as the emotional connection that is unaffected by the passage of time.

3.3.2. *A Walk to Remember*

Nicholas Sparks is able to craft a sensitive and genuine narrative that manages to capture the essence of adolescent love as well as the everlasting fortitude of the human spirit. *A Walk to Remember* serves to impress upon its readers the significance of leading a life marked by kindness, compassion, and a readiness to accept the unpredictability of life. Throughout the story, the readers get to know the love story of Landon and Jamie. After a practical joke backfire on him, Landon, a popular high school student with a history of getting into mischief, finds himself in the position of having no choice but to participate in the school's annual spring play. On the other hand, Jamie is a shy and very pious young lady who is frequently ignored by her contemporaries due to her tendency to keep to herself.

The more time Landon spends with Jamie, the more he can look behind her restrained façade and see her kind heart, steadfast faith, and fervent passion for life. Although they are very different, they manage to cultivate an actual relationship, which ultimately leads to the development of a profound and significant love. On the other hand, their newly discovered joy is tested when Jamie comes clean with a heart-breaking secret: she has leukaemia, a disease with no known cure. Landon is confronted with the devastating reality of Jamie's situation, and the two of them, as they negotiate the challenges of her sickness together, are pushed to the ultimate test of their love.

All along the narrative, Landon goes through a metamorphosis as he gains a deeper understanding of concepts such as love, compassion, and selflessness. He overcomes his independent streak and takes on the attributes Jamie instilled in him

because of their friendship. Landon resolves to make Jamie's last days as memorable and satisfying as possible, even though her health deteriorates. To make the most of the time they still have together, they collaborate on creating a wish list and set off on several exciting journeys. By the end of the story, the love that Jamie has for Landon and her persistent faith influence Landon and everyone else in their immediate environment. Her death serves as a sombre and poignant reminder of the transformative power of love and the critical necessity of savouring every moment.

3.3.3. *Safe Haven*

Safe Haven is a novel that delves into the intricacies of relationships, the effects of trauma, and the transformational power of love. It is a riveting read that is also emotionally intense. Nicholas Sparks constructs a tale that enthrals readers and causes them to ruminate on the power of the human spirit by deftly combining aspects of romance, suspense, and personal development in a way that is uniquely his own. Troubled by her history and wanting to start over, Katie moves to Southport and leads a low-key existence there. She gets a job as a waitress and, over time, gets to know her neighbours, Jo and Alex, along with other people who live in the tight-knit town, and eventually establishes connections with all of them.

Katie is beginning the process of healing and rebuilding her life when she attracts the attention of Alex, the owner of the local business. Alex is a widower and the father of two young children. Katie is surprised that she is developing feelings for Alex and his kids, even though she has avoided engaging in a new romantic relationship. Katie's complex history, however, catches up with her when her violent ex-partner, Kevin, begins a hunt for her to locate her. Kevin had been abusing Katie in the past. Katie must face her anxieties head-on and accept that she must make tough choices to safeguard herself and the happiness she has just discovered for herself and the others she loves.

When Katie's history and her present conflict, the narrative turns exciting, adding to the mounting tension throughout the book. The plot explores concepts such as love, forgiveness, redemption, and the remarkable capacity of humans to bounce

back from adversity. By the end of the novel, Katie realises that she possesses a level of strength that she was previously unaware she had, as well as the bravery to confront her past and accept the potential of a future filled with love and happiness.

3.3.4. *The Longest Ride*

Nicholas Sparks spins a moving and inspiring story that celebrates love, friendship, and the power of the human spirit. Readers of *The Longest Ride* are encouraged to contemplate the breadth and depth of love and the far-reaching effects it may have on individuals and society. The narrative switches perspectives between the elderly protagonist Ira Levinson and the youthful protagonist Sophia Danko. As the story progresses, readers are reminded to relive Ira's fondest recollections of Ruth from their early marriage.

After an automobile accident, Ira finds himself confined and begins to think about his history with Ruth. He recalls their everlasting love for one another, the difficulties they overcame, and the things they gave up for each other. As Sophia progresses through her romantic adventure, she may look to their narrative for guidance and use it as inspiration.

Sophia, a gifted and driven art student, crosses paths with Luke Collins, a professional bull rider with a profound devotion to the sport he competes in. Although they come from different places, they are attracted to one another and embark on an intense romance. As their love for one another deepens, they are forced to contend with various challenges, such as the dangers of Luke's line of work and Sophia's aspirations of landing a prestigious internship in New York. In the meantime, Ira's past experiences continue to enlighten him on the breadth of love and the strength of commitment. His recollections act as a compass for Sophia as she struggles with the implications of her decisions and attempts to understand love.

The journeys of the two different couples become intricately intertwined beautifully and surprisingly. This leads to a tragic and emotional conclusion that illustrates the fundamental ties between the past and the present and how love is unaffected by the passage of time. *The Longest Ride* addresses topics such as love,

sacrifice, the role of fate, and the search for happiness. It digs into the nuances of relationships and our decisions in the name of love, which may often be tricky. The story probes the persistent power of love to motivate and alter people's lives while reminding readers of the significance of embracing chances and appreciating the moments that define our existence.

3.4. Deconstructing *Safe Haven*

The love novel *Safe Haven* (2010) by Nicholas Sparks contains exciting and thought-provoking topics, symbolism, and ideas. Sparks tackles several interesting topics in this work, like atonement, love, and family. Michael Lienesch (1993) states that within the narrative, "the reader is asked to consider the power of family and the healing potential of love and redemption" (p.3). Katie, the novel's protagonist, is a woman on the run who longs for a permanent place to call her own. The kindness and forgiveness she experiences in Southport inspire her on her path to self-discovery and atonement. Sparks shows his readers the value of family and the effectiveness of love in mending broken hearts throughout the story. Katie's sense of comfort and belonging is exemplified by the characters Jo, Alex, and Josh, who represent the restorative power of family via their love and acceptance. The tale concludes by implying that hope and safety may be discovered in the unlikeliest places and that love can conquer all.

The ideas of foresight and predestination play a crucial part in the progression of the storyline and the characters in this story. This is shown to be the case when the main character, Katie, is presented with the difficult decision to pick between her recently discovered sense of safety in Southport and the mysteries of her past. Katie is faced with several choices during the book, each of which has the potential to affect how the rest of her life unfolds. For instance, when she decides to continue living in Southport and pursue a romantic connection with Alex, she realises she will be forced to deal with her past. In this manner, Sparks expresses that one's fate and destiny are not preset, but rather, one's fate is shaped by the decisions that one makes in life. Katie's grasp that fate and destiny are intricately linked ultimately propels the story. It enables her to accept that the two are intertwined irrevocably—Katie's path of self-discovery and her desire to forgive her past.

Safe Haven is seen as symbolic of an extensive quest for self-awareness. The lighthouse symbolises hope and a point of navigation for the protagonists as they seek to learn more about themselves. Seeing Katie, the heroine, struggling to find her place in the world highlights this. She finds solace and guidance in the lighthouse, representing hope and comfort. In addition, the ocean's waves symbolise the ebb and flow of life, illustrating its perpetual transformation. This emblem helps to remind the protagonists that life will go on, no matter how challenging the road ahead may be. Finally, the dove symbolises hope, peace, and freedom. This serves as a reminder to the protagonists that they can find hope and tranquillity in any situation. *Safe Haven*, by Nicholas Sparks, is an intense and profound story because of the path of self-discovery it represents.

3.4.1. Paranoia as a Main Theme in *Safe Haven*

Paranoia, defined as irrational and unfounded suspicion of an individual or group (Mirowsky, 1983), is a recurrent motif in postmodern literature. Paranoia plays a significant role in the novel's storyline, influencing the key characters' actions and adding tension. This feeling permeates the whole book as Katie, the protagonist, lives in continual terror of her past coming to light. Because of her paranoia, she often lies to herself and makes hasty choices without thinking them through. She changes her name when she goes to Southport because she does not want her new acquaintances to discover the truth about her identity. In addition, her paranoia hurts her interactions with Alex, a romantic prospect. She is afraid he will find out her secrets. Thus she does not trust him enough to be open with him. This causes tension between them, and they cannot get closer to one another. Paranoia devastates *Safe* Haven's core protagonists, ruining their relationships and forcing them to behave hastily.

Safe Haven focuses heavily on protagonist Katie Feldman's paranoia. It evolves throughout the story as Katie discovers her background and deals with its fallout. Appadurai (1998) suggests that "the development of new forms of security and insecurity has become more and more integrated with the development of new technologies" (p. 10). This is especially important in understanding how Katie's paranoia evolved. The more she uncovers her background and the secrets she is

keeping, the more paranoid and afraid of being found she gets. The prospect of being found out and the repercussions it may have on her life only serve to heighten her paranoia. As a result, she becomes even more suspicious of others and anxious that her secrets may be revealed.

An element of paranoia is brought into the story by introducing Alex, a strange and seemingly faultless man. After developing scepticism over the man's motivations, Katie doubts her ability to trust him. Katie's paranoia is heightened, and the plot's overall tension is increased due to the uncertainty over Alex's genuine identity and the reasons behind his actions. In addition, many examples of unexplained phenomena, unusual happenings, and spooky coincidences are spread across the tale. These occurrences add to the protagonists' paranoia and heighten their sense of uneasiness, both heightened by the story. Because of the random nature of these occurrences, it is difficult to differentiate between truth and fantasy, which contributes to the protagonists' increasingly paranoid worldview.

Paranoia among the characters is fuelled by a potentially dangerous figure, which is generally Katie's violent ex-husband or someone related to Katie's history. They continually question one another's trustworthiness and suspect each other of having hidden motivations. The pervasive sense of unease stems mainly from the pervasive climate of mistrust and the ongoing imperative to safeguard one's safety. Sparks investigates the internalisation of paranoia, illustrating how it influences the characters' ideas, feelings, and behaviours in his work. The plot frequently digs into the mental anguish of the protagonists, highlighting their obsessive thoughts, the worry that they are being pursued, and the ongoing struggle to differentiate between actual and imagined dangers.

The bond between Alex and Katie, the protagonists, serves as the narrative's focal point, and it exemplifies the resilience that families possess in the face of adversity and suffering. The portrayal of Alex and Katie's connection as a loving and safe link that can only be formed by a strong family unit contrast with the reality of their situation. Their connection is characterised by mutual respect and

comprehension, which is a tribute to the family's function in serving as a secure refuge during times of need. The fact that Alex can show love and concern for Katie, although his challenges and the horrible event of his past serves as a poignant illustration of the significance of family. The resilience of families and the efficacy of love that is not conditional on the return are brought to light by Alex's unwavering commitment to Katie's safety and care, even if it means sacrificing his contentment and health. In times of difficulty and suffering, the bond between Alex and Katie serves as a valuable reminder of the significance of the family as a source of protection and stability for those in need.

3.4.2. Kevin Tierney's Hysteria as a Turning Point

Safe Haven by Nicholas Sparks deals with hysteria on many occasions. Characters like Katie, who is running away from her former life and the emotions driving her to do so are examples of how this is manifested. It is also acted out in the community when unwarranted dread and excessive panic are brought on by rumours and suppositions that have no basis. Hysteria is a significant component of the narrative and serves as a means for the protagonists to conceal their history and embark on a new course in life. This makes hysteria an essential aspect of the plot. The author spins a complicated tale that the readers find interesting and captivating by employing hysteria as a tool in the writing process.

At the story's beginning, Kevin Tierney is depicted as a pleasant and loving neighbour who quickly earns Katie's confidence and establishes a sense of camaraderie between them. The story gradually drops cryptic clues about Kevin's problematic mental health. These clues include his erratic conduct and sudden shifts in his mood that cannot be explained. The turning point comes when Kevin's panic reaches its zenith, culminating in a scenario that exposes the depths of his crazy conduct. This scene is the climax moment in the story. This pivotal moment is marked by a dramatic incident or revelation that shatters the illusions surrounding Kevin's stability and poses a direct danger to the characters' safety. This event shatters the illusions surrounding Kevin's strength and directly threatens the characters' safety. This turning moment is frequently accompanied by confrontations, acts of violence,

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or significant disclosures, all of which contribute to a major shift in how the story is structured.

As a direct consequence of Kevin's frenzy, Katie is subjected to considerably altering her character. She must reconsider her earlier impressions about Kevin and the society surrounding her due to being forced to confront her anxieties and make crucial decisions. The story continues to move forward because of this turning point, which also results in the introduction of new conflicts and the movement of the characters into unexplored territory. The sense of immediacy and tension generated due to Kevin's actions elevates the level of involvement and investment that the readers have in the narrative. The resolution of the disputes and pressures built throughout the story is brought about because of the aftermath of Kevin's hysteria. Relationships between the characters go through substantial changes as trust is broken and new alliances are forged during the story. The significance of the turning moment continues beyond the instant resolution of the conflict, leaving a long-lasting impression on the development of the characters and the more considerable thematic investigation of trust, betrayal, and the fragility of appearances.

In conclusion, Kevin Tierney's hysteria is shown to be present by his erratic conduct, mental instability, and its effect on the characters and the entire environment of *Safe Haven*. The unpredictability of his behaviours, the ebb and flow of his moods, and the intensity of his emotional responses all contribute to discomfort and tension. These manifestations affect the characters' perceptions, relationships, and the atmosphere of the narrative, which contributes to the overall tension of the story and the psychological depth of the narrative.

3.4.3. Libido in *Safe Haven*

Safe Haven looks into the psychological ramifications of desire in an exciting way. Katie, the main character, has been avoiding a story that she does not fully comprehend and has been repressing her libido in trying to deal with the anxiety she feels. However, as the story unfolds, the reader will become more familiar with the psychological ramifications of a libido that has been repressed. Readers can see how

repression may lead to emotions of loneliness, perplexity, and guilt via Katie's path since she chose to hide her feelings. In addition, the story depicts how suppression may lead to a lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem in a person, as well as how it can drive a person to become plagued by dread and worry.

Both love and sexuality are examined throughout the story. These two motifs are connected in the story because of how the heroine, Katie, is portrayed. Katie has difficulty dealing with her traumatic story while attempting to find love. The story represents the significance of locating a safe haven, not just physically but also emotionally, to begin the healing process. In addition to this, the novel stresses the significance of knowing one's sexuality and developing it in a setting that is comfortable and risk-free. This is made very clear in the connection between Katie and Alex, in which she is free to investigate her sexuality without worrying about being mistreated or judged.

Moreover, Katie's inclinations in the sexual realm contribute to the growth of her character. Katie is a character that goes through the experience of having a "strong sexual desire", which is a significant component of her growth throughout the story. Katie is initially timid and reticent, but as her connection with Alex grows, she begins to experience changes in her emotional state, including increased sexual cravings. Katie's identity starts to take shape as she begins to investigate her femininity and sexuality in a manner that she was previously unable to do because of her newly discovered self-assurance and desire. Her freshly discovered sexual independence has given her the self-assurance to take care of her own life and make choices to her advantage. In addition, the fact that she has a sexual attraction to Alex motivates her to move on from the negative things that have happened in the past and build a better future for herself. As a result, it is abundantly evident that her powerful sexual impulses play a significant part in the evolution of her character. These wants give her the confidence and fortitude to seize control of her life and build a brighter future, demonstrating that they are essential to her growth.

Furthermore, when analysing how desire and intimacy are depicted throughout the story, the reader will see that the interaction between Katie and Alex, the object of her romantic interest, is defined as an investigation into their sentiments and a trip of self-discovery for both. The novel portrays sexual behaviours not as a purely physical act but as a method for two individuals to communicate their desire and connection. The story captures the tangled web of feelings accompanying closeness to another person. The reader is provided with a view into the complexities of relationships, ranging from the physical to the emotional aspects of such connections. The depiction of libido and intimacy that Sparks provides readers with assists them in comprehending the complication of feelings that come with being in a relationship as well as the need to understand and respect limits. The novel is a vital and timely reminder that interpersonal connections may be both satisfying and challenging. Sparks uses this investigation of libido to urge readers to think about their relationships and to see the significance of understanding and communication.

In a nutshell, the novel exemplifies libido and desire in several different ways. The main heroine, Katie, relocates to a quiet community in North Carolina, which she sees as a sanctuary from the outside world. In many of Sparks' works, the primary protagonists are 'star-crossed lovers' who cannot be together because of circumstances beyond their control. In *Safe Haven*, the protagonist, Katie, is married to a guy who is violent toward her, and as a result, she cannot have an intimate connection. Because of this, her desire for a spouse is portrayed as an aspiration that she will never be able to fulfil. In addition, throughout the story, Katie is shown to struggle with her sexuality as well as her want for a romantic companion. Before being with someone, she realises that she needs to work on accepting others and regaining her faith in others. This demonstrates that emotion and trust are the primary foundations upon which sexuality and desire are built.

3.5. Deconstructing *A Walk to Remember*

Love is a strong feeling that can connect characters and keep them linked in sometimes inexplicable ways. One of love's many defining characteristics is the potential to bring and keep people together. The love between Jamie and Landon in *A Walk to Remember*

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(1999) is so powerful that it can overcome any obstacle, including their differences in faith and social status. Even though Jamie and Landon come from different families, their love for one another is vital.

According to Antonio Ferro (2009), "Psychoanalysis provides a valuable tool for exploring how identity is constructed and how it changes over time" (p. 564). In *A Walk to Remember*, the identities of the two main characters, Landon, and Jamie, become entwined as they grow to better understand and appreciate the contrasts between one another. At first, Landon is a popular but immature high school student, and Jamie is a devout young woman who lives her life separately from the rest of her contemporaries. Landon evolves into a more mature and sensitive person as their relationship flourishes. He also gains a more global perspective.

In a similar manner, Jamie reveals her innermost thoughts and feelings to Landon. As a result of going through this procedure, their identities will eventually merge to form a new one. This is seen when they both decide to join the same church, which marks a massive change in the trajectory of their relationship. Because of this, *A Walk to Remember* offers a fresh perspective on identity creation as seen through the lens of psychology. Landon and Jamie can create a new identity for themselves via the growth of their relationship, which is built on their shared capacity for understanding and accepting.

Throughout the novel, Landon goes on a voyage of self-discovery, which helps shape his character. The reader is given the impression that he is a typical adolescent full of pride and does not take the seriousness of his relationships very seriously. As the narrative unfolds, he comes to understand the significance of his connections with others and develops a deeper appreciation for the people he has in his life. Landon can better comprehend who he is and his role in the world because of his interactions with family members, friends, and Jamie Sullivan, the object of his devotion. His life experiences teach him to appreciate the people around him and give him a fresh perspective on life in general, both of which contribute to the formation of his character. All along the story, Landon grows up and realises that he must accept

responsibility for his acts. The nature of Landon exemplifies how a person may mature and change throughout their life with the help and support of others in their immediate environment.

3.5.1. Trauma

The novel explores trauma in many ways, including the characters and the storyline. The storyline of *A Walk to Remember* is driven by trauma, depicted as physical and emotional wounds throughout the novel. The physical wounds, such as the young protagonist Landon's broken arm, are shown as a symbol of the past and serve as a reminder of the unresolved pain in the story. The lingering effects of unresolved trauma may be seen in the emotional wounds that the characters carry with them, such as Landon's dread of committing and Jamie's fear of being abandoned. The work is a profound and nuanced examination of the repercussions of unresolved trauma on the characters and how it affects their lives. Sparks sheds attention on the complexities of unresolved trauma and the long-term impact of such experiences by investigating both physical and emotional scars throughout its narrative.

The traumatic experiences that Landon went through are shown via his personal development and salvation. As a result of being forced to deal with the consequences of his previous acts, he starts to think about his behaviour and how it has affected the people around him. Because of this journey of self-discovery, he can cultivate empathy and gain a more excellent knowledge of his decisions' effects on others. Another significant facet of trauma is the character of Jamie Sullivan, Landon's love interest and guide. Jamie plays a dual function in the story. As Jamie fights a fatal disease, she has her own experience with traumatic events. Because of her illness, Landon is forced to learn to savour every moment and develop a deeper appreciation for the significance of life. This acts as the impetus for Landon's metamorphosis. At this point, Landon can recover and grow as a person as a result of the unique viewpoint that is afforded to him by Jamie's resiliency in the face of her traumatic experience.

In addition, the story investigates how traumatic experiences might affect the relationships between people. Landon is forced to reconsider his connections and

question his identity due to the horrible incident he went through. In the beginning, his connections with his friends and family are strained. Still, as he gains the skills to face his trauma, he reconstructs those connections on a foundation of honesty, forgiveness, and acceptance. Moreover, Sparks does a masterful job of depicting the long-term repercussions of traumatic experiences on the characters' emotional well-being. The story illustrates the several coping techniques that individuals deal with traumatic experiences by employing, such as self-isolation, rage, or denial. It also highlights the need for support networks, as it shows how Landon finds peace in the love and direction of Jamie and in his loved ones' ability to forgive and understand him in his time of need.

Ultimately, *A Walk to Remember* delves into traumatic experiences as formative event. It sheds light on the possibility of personal development and redemption and the curative power of love and forgiveness. The journey that Landon takes throughout the novel invites readers to contemplate their choices in the past and the possibilities of achieving forgiveness and healing despite traumatic experiences.

3.5.2. Libido

In *A Walk to Remember*, libido is deftly explored via the interaction between the main characters, Landon Carter and Jamie Sullivan. Libido may be interpreted as the basic human urge for love, intimacy, and sexual expression. In the beginning, Landon is shown as a popular and carefree adolescent; nevertheless, with time, Landon goes on a journey of self-discovery and falls in love. His interaction with Jamie, a young lady who is kind and religious, reawakens his senses and reawakens his desire for sexual activity. Landon's attraction to Jamie is not just sexual but also emotional and intellectual, indicating a more profound connection that goes beyond a simple desire for one another.

The development of their connection coincides with an increased display of desire in both parts. Sparks depicts the rising sexual tension and need for a love connection between Landon and Jamie. The presence of desire and passion is delicately highlighted by their stolen glances, innocent touches, and moments of

shared closeness between them. These expressions of libido help to increase the emotional depth of their connection and reflect the normal human need to be physically and emotionally close to other people. In addition, the portrayal of Landon and Jamie's relationship questions conventional ideas of desire and the expression of sexuality. Their kinship places a greater emphasis on the importance of emotional connection and companionship than it does on the relevance of physical closeness alone. Sparks demonstrates how the power of love can overcome the body's demands and foster a more profound relationship between two people.

The expressions of libido within Landon and Jamie's love relationship lend depth and authenticity to their bond, even though *A Walk to Remember* primarily showcases love's emotional and spiritual components. The nuanced representation of desire, yearning, and shared moments of intimacy adds to the broader examination of the intricacies of human relationships and the tremendous influence that love has on personal development and transformation. The novel provides a more comprehensive and multi-dimensional representation of human relationships and the transformational power of love because of its complex investigation of libido.

3.6. Deconstructing *The Notebook*

The dichotomy of genuine love vs the obligations imposed by society is one of the themes that might be unpacked from *The Notebook* (1996). The novel tells the narrative of Noah and Allie, two people from entirely different socioeconomic backgrounds who eventually fall profoundly in love. Although, at first glance, the story seems to laud their relationship as a model of genuine love, a deconstruction of the text raises the question of whether or not their connection is, in fact, authentic or only the result of conforming to the standards of society. Readers can challenge the concept that there is such a perfect love tale and investigate the intricacies of human relationships that go beyond standard ideas by dissecting the societal constraints, gender norms, and cultural influences embedded within the novel.

The novel follows the present-day narrative of an older man recounting their love story from a notebook to a woman with dementia. The previous events illustrate

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Noah and Allie's teenage passion in alternating chapters. Memory, the art of storytelling, and the very structure of narratives within the novel are all subject to deconstruction, which may call their veracity into doubt. The concept of an objective and consistent narrative may be questioned if the gaps, inconsistencies, and viewpoints shifts are investigated. In addition, *The Notebook* portrays a sentimental and romanticised view of young love, which is frequently juxtaposed with the modern-day reality of growing old and suffering from sickness. The belief that the past possesses higher worth or authenticity may be called into question by deconstruction, which also calls into question the creation of nostalgia and the privileging of experiences over others.

Furthermore, by deconstructing the novel, the reader may investigate the novel's depiction of different socioeconomic classes and hierarchies. *The Notebook* showcases the connection between Allie, who is from a more affluent home, and Noah, from a working-class one. The underlying power inequalities and cultural expectations resulting from these class divisions may be questioned through deconstruction. We may defy the binary of social rank and explore the complexity of love and relationships across socioeconomic divides if we interrogate the assumptions and hierarchies regarding the social class in the story. Not only that, but the novel also describes a standard heterosexual love story in which Noah pursues Allie, and she eventually returns his affection. Gender norms and societal expectations may be questioned through deconstruction, drawing attention to how gender is built and enacted within the story. Alternative readings of power relations and standard concepts of romance and gendered roles might be explored by questioning these assumptions and binaries.

To summarise, a deconstructive reading of Nicholas Sparks' *The Notebook* requires questioning the text's inherent assumptions, binaries, and hierarchies. Readers may see the novel's intricacies and paradoxes by dissecting its primary themes—love, memory, nostalgia, romanticising the past, gender roles, power relations, and social stratification. Deconstruction paves the way for in-depth text analysis, providing new insights and questioning long-held assumptions.

3.6.1. Libido

The story opens with Noah's overwhelming desire for Allie, a clear manifestation of libido. Their love affair has its roots in his first attraction to and gratification from her body. Noah is driven to pursue Allie by his libido, looking for ways to connect with and get intimate with her. As the plot develops, desire plays a vital role in shaping the narrative. The intense exchanges and close encounters help the growth of Noah and Allie's relationship they have with one another. The story investigates their sexual yearnings, in addition to their physical attraction to one another and their want to be with one another. These expressions of desire increase the protagonists' emotional connection with one another and constitute important turning moments in the trajectory of their love story.

In addition, libido contributes to the tension and conflicts that emerge throughout the narrative. The difficulties that Noah and Allie are experiencing in their relationship are putting their desire for one another to test. The fact that they have libido adds another layer of difficulty to the decisions they must make, which are already complicated by the intricacies of their personal lives, the demands of society, and their inner battles. Thus, libido contributes to the story's forward momentum by establishing an emotional stake for the characters and increasing the level of involvement for the readers. The readers experience a sentiment of anticipation and emotional engagement in the story because of the great yearning, passion, and desire that the protagonists are experiencing. Their intense desire for one another and the challenges they have to overcome generate an engrossing narrative arc that keeps the audience captivated and engaged in the resolution of their romantic romance.

Additionally, libido in *The Notebook* is not restricted to the physical characteristics of attraction and want in any way, shape, or form. It involves a deeper level of the characters' emotional and spiritual connection to one another. The story delves into the personal and vulnerable moments that the characters share, their profound emotional connections, and the sense of fulfilment they derive from being with one another. This more profound awareness of libido helps to the richness of the narrative's emotional resonance and adds complexity to their love tale. In a nutshell,

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Noah and Allie's love story is given more depth and complexity by the expressions of want, passion, and closeness brought about by libido. This helps shape the narrative and evokes emotional engagement from the audience.

3.6.2. Trauma

The novel examines trauma, depicting the long-term impact of past events and how people traverse and manage their emotional scars. The character of Noah Calhoun is one vehicle through which the novel conveys the effects of trauma on its readers. The atrocities of war, which Noah saw and experienced first-hand during his service in World War II, left him with emotional wounds that he carries with him to this day. The traumatic experience that he goes through leaves an indelible mark on his psyche, which results in emotional distance, a sense of isolation, and difficulties with intimate relationships. His recurrent nightmares, periods of emotional distancing, and an overall sense of restlessness and discomfort are all manifestations of the trauma he has experienced.

In a similar fashion, Allie Hamilton, the second main character, goes through her own unique experience of the traumatic event. Her history involves a tight connection with her parents and the cultural expectations that come with her wealthy upbringing. The emotional scars she suffered in the past contribute to her fear of committing to something and being vulnerable, which drives her to make decisions that shield her from experiencing more pain. Her guardedness, her dread of being abandoned, and the emotional barriers that she constructs as a protective strategy all serve to illustrate the trauma that she has experienced.

The characters' paths toward recovery and personal development provide another lens through which the expression of traumatic experiences might be examined. Both Noah and Allie have experienced traumatic events, and as they work through their mental scars, they are beginning to find comfort and healing in one another. The story illustrates the transformational power of love and the opportunity for healing that may come from proper connections with other people and an understanding of different perspectives. Their path exemplifies the human spirit's

resiliency and the possibility of seeking forgiveness and healing despite having suffered severe emotional wounds.

In addition, traumatic experiences are made evident in the story through its tense relationships. Because of their own traumatic experiences in the past, Noah and Allie both have difficulty opening up to others and putting their absolute faith in them. Since of this, they have trouble developing and sustaining healthy relationships since the emotional scars they carry to make it difficult for them to connect with people on an intimate level ultimately. This leads to relationship problems. The book depicts how traumatic experiences may change the dynamic of relationships, presenting obstacles and issues that need to be conquered before healing and development can occur.

In *The Notebook*, the manifestation of trauma occurs as a result of the events that the characters go through and the long-term effects of these experiences on their lives and relationships. The narrative delves into the psychological scars, the challenges of developing and sustaining relationships, and the process of maturation and healing. The story illustrates trauma symptoms, the intricacies of human emotions, and the opportunity for atonement and healing through love and understanding.

3.7. Deconstructing *The Longest Ride*

The dichotomy of love and self-sacrifice is one facet of *The Longest Ride* (2013) that may be dissected. The novel tells two different love tales simultaneously, one in the past and the other in the present. Characters in these tales are shown to give up something important to them to be with the one they love, whether it be their wants, dreams, or even their health. Readers may challenge the supposed relationship between love and selflessness by investigating the power dynamics, gender roles, and cultural expectations that influence the sacrifices made by the characters. This will open the door to new interpretations of love as a more equitable and empowering force.

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Examining how gender roles and power distribution are portrayed in the novel is yet another deconstructive method that might be taken. The male heroes in *The Longest Ride* are depicted as courageous figures of strength, whereas the female characters are frequently used as objects of desire and emotional support. These gendered roles may be called into question by deconstruction, which also challenges the binary of masculine power and feminine weakness. Readers may question established power relations and investigate alternative readings by deconstructing the gender-based assumptions and prejudices embedded within the story.

Moreover, deconstruction encourages readers to probe into the cultural and social settings that contributed to the formation of the book. The story's events take place in the realm of professional bull riding, a sport that is both stereotypically and hyper-typically associated with masculinity. The values, standards, and expectations linked with this universe may be questioned through deconstruction, as well as how they influence the characters and the interactions between them. By doing an in-depth analysis of the cultural setting, we can cast doubt on the presupposed meanings and hierarchies embedded within the story and investigate alternative readings that question conventional gender roles and societal expectations.

In addition, the novel's narrative structure and the many storytelling methods may be the focus of the deconstruction process. *The Longest Ride* weaves two distinct love tales, uniting thematically via related ideals and ideas. Deconstruction may call into question the consistency and coherence of these narratives, therefore illuminating the subjective character of the act of telling stories and the processes through which meaning is formed. Readers challenge standard conceptions of storytelling and narrative structure by questioning the supposed coherence and objectivity of the narrative.

3.7.1. Trauma

The Longest Ride depicts trauma in the form of the events that its protagonists go through. It is expressed through a variety of difficulties, including those of a physical and emotional nature, fear, worry, and the long-term consequences of traumatic

experiences from the past. The individuals' paths to recovery, maturation, and the discovery of love and oneself are investigated throughout the book's narrative. The novel demonstrates the strength of the human spirit, the capacity for healing, and the possibility of personal development via its depiction of traumatic experiences.

As the narrative progresses, the reader learns of Ira's harrowing experiences as a young soldier during World War II and the heart-breaking loss of his cherished wife, Ruth. Both events had a profound impact on Ira. Ira's past experiences have left him with various symptoms, including emotional distance, recurrent nightmares, and an overwhelming feeling of isolation that permeates every aspect of his existence. The author presents the experience of trauma as a very personal and internal conflict that has an impact not just on the individual but also on their capacity to interact with other people.

Following a terrifying vehicle accident, Sophia is plagued with anxiety and tries to rediscover the joy she once had in creating art. Sparks investigates how traumatic experiences may obliterate a person's sense of identity and purpose, leaving them to struggle with emotions of guilt and worry as well as a lack of focus. Throughout the book, Sophia's journey centres on her efforts to mend and find consolation in her artwork. Sparks illustrates the universality of traumatic experiences using the parallel plotlines of the characters Ira and Sophia. Regardless of age or origin, traumatic experiences leave an enduring mark on individuals' lives and affect their interactions with others. The story indicates that traumatic experiences are not limited to a single instant or occurrence but can last for years and influence every facet of a person's life.

In addition, Sparks explores the ideas of recovery and bouncing back after experiencing a traumatic event. The protagonists in *The Longest Ride* are forced to face the traumatic experiences from their pasts and figure out how to move on with their lives. Ira feels consolation in the love he shared with Ruth and finds peace in his recollections of his time with her. As time passes, Sophia gradually rediscovers her enthusiasm for the arts and learns to face her anxieties. Sparks argues that although

traumatic experiences might permanently alter a person, it is still possible for them to find healing and develop a new sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. Furthermore, the story investigates the issue of trauma passed down via families. Sparks examines how a traumatic event may affect not just the person who lived through it but also their family and friends by delving into this concept via the narrative of Ira. The traumas that Ira endured during World War II had a long-lasting impact on his bond with his son, causing them to grow emotionally distant and emotionally distant.

3.7.2. Hysteria

The concept of hysteria is presented in *The Longest Ride* as a complicated and multi-dimensional part of the human experience. This topic arises throughout the narrative. Sparks offers readers a broader knowledge of this psychiatric phenomenon by examining hysteria's signs, causes, and repercussions via the representation of various characters and their problems. Ira Levinson's nature contributes significantly to the expansion of the hysteria theme, notably through his conversations with Ruth, his late wife. After Ruth passed away, Ira had times of deep desire and hallucination episodes in which he imagined discussing with her. These hallucinating episodes occur more frequently than before. Sparks probes the idea that hysteria might develop because of a profound sense of loss and an unwillingness to let go of the past. Ira's fits of hysteria express his grief and the trouble he is having in coming to terms with Ruth's passing.

Another factor that contributes to the atmosphere of hysteria in the book is society's pressure and expectations of Sophia. She struggles with the pressure to adhere to society's standards and to achieve the expectations placed upon her as a college student. Sparks shows hysteria as a response to the crushing load of societal obligations, stressing the harmful implications of this on an individual's mental and emotional well-being. In addition, Sparks goes on the topic of self-discovery and personal development by investigating hysteria as a vehicle for this research. As the characters address their inner challenges, they eventually acquire insight into their goals, anxieties, and aspirations. This occurs because the characters are experiencing the same emotions. The hysteria serves as a driving force behind the characters'

introspection, leading them to examine not just their behaviours and feelings but also the reasons that lie behind them.

Sparks contends that hysteria has the potential to act as a medium through which one might undergo change and advance in their personal growth. To arrive at a more profound comprehension of themselves and the connections between them, the characters in *The Longest Ride* are finally forced to go through the comedic high points of the story. Hysteria ends up being a tool via which characters can address their weaknesses, discover ways to articulate their requirements and make more significant relationships.

3.7.3. Paranoia

Paranoia is a psychological component that plays a role in the characters' lives and propels the story forward. Sparks examines the repercussions of paranoia, its origins, and its influence on interpersonal relationships and individual development via the presentation of various individuals and their respective experiences. Luke Collins is the novel's most notable example of a character who exemplifies paranoia. Luke's chosen line of work as a professional bull rider puts him in continual danger of severe injury or death. This ongoing contact with peril contributes to his paranoia, which in turn causes him to be hypervigilant and to have a great fear of the possibility of suffering an injury. Sparks highlights how Luke's paranoia impacts his decision-making and his capacity to trust others, as he is always on guard and suspicious of people's motives.

Paranoia is also reflected in the personality of Ira Levinson, most notably in the conversations he had with Ruth, his late wife. Ira is growing older, and with that comes a growing fear that he may forget things and become disconnected from the world. He is continually concerned that he may fail to remember his life with Ruth and the stories they held dear. Because of this anxiety, he needs to connect with Ruth and write down their recollections in a notebook. The journal is an anchor for him against the anxieties that are creeping in. According to Sparks, one of the possible causes of paranoia is a history of traumatic events or a generalised feeling of

vulnerability. Luke and Ira have been exposed to enormous tragedies and painful experiences, which have played a part in developing their paranoid inclinations. Ira's paranoia is a reaction to his worry that he may forget the important things he has experienced in the past. In contrast, Luke's anxiety about getting hurt stems from his past mishaps. The paranoia the characters exhibit serves as a protection mechanism for them, enabling them to attempt to re-establish a sense of control, although they believe their vulnerabilities have increased.

In addition, Sparks examines how paranoia may put a burden on relationships and slow down personal development. Luke's paranoia influences his relationship with Sophia, prompting him to doubt her motivations and resulting in a breach of trust between them. On the other hand, Ira becomes increasingly reclusive and reluctant to make new relationships because of his paranoia, which causes him to withdraw farther into his past and exacerbates the problem. The novel demonstrates the negative consequences of paranoia on intimate relationships and the barriers it can erect between individuals. Despite this, Sparks also shows the possibility of recovery and self-improvement in the face of paranoia. As the characters face their phobias and vulnerabilities, they gradually conquer their paranoia and become more aware of themselves and the people around them. Luke eventually gains the ability to put his faith in Sophia and opens himself up to the prospect of loving and connecting with another person. Despite his anxiety, Ira can find comfort and a feeling of continuity through the recordings of his experiences.

3.7.4. Libido

The Longest Ride explores the many facets of desire, love, and human connections via the lens of the concept of libido throughout the novel. Sparks provides a comprehensive representation of libido as an essential component of the human experience by depicting people whose actions are motivated by their most fundamental needs and by having them navigate the difficulties of sexual attraction. The novel looks into the transformational power of libido, the development of wants, and the significance of emotional closeness in cultivating meaningful relationships via its protagonists' journeys.

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The character of Luke Collins is an excellent example of the libido topic. An embodiment of Luke's primitive urges and a sign of his vigorous libido. Luke is portrayed by Sparks as a young guy who is virile, charming, and who radiates sexual energy. Luke's pursuit of his passion represents his need to satisfy his deep-seated wants, and Sparks portrays Luke in these ways. In addition, as the story progresses, the other protagonist, Sophia Danko, has her knowledge of libido evolve throughout the story. In the beginning, Sophia was attracted to her college lover because of his physical appearance and sexual appeal. Now, her quest focuses on investigating and comprehending the intricacies of her wants that go beyond the surface. Sparks emphasises the significance of emotional connection and intimacy in addition to physical attraction, highlighting the transition from a more surface-level expression of libido to a more profound, meaningful knowledge of love and want. He does this by exhibiting the move from a more superficial expression of libido to a deeper, more meaningful understanding of love and desire.

In addition to this, Ira Levinson presents a viewpoint that is in direct opposition to that of libido. Ira's libido takes on a new shape as an older man when he thinks about his life in the past. This new form is an everlasting emotional connection and loyalty to Ruth, his late wife. Sparks portrays Ira's continuing love for Ruth as a mirror of his profound emotional and spiritual needs beyond sexual closeness. This interpretation of Ira's love transcends the physical. The fact that Ira remained faithful to Ruth throughout his life is evidence of the enduring strength of libido, which may endure despite the normal decline of urges to engage in sexual activity.

In a nutshell, the investigation of libido in The Longest Ride goes beyond the scope of the characters' own experiences and dives into the intricacies of the connections between the characters. Sparks depicts romantic relationships as a precarious balancing act between a person's physical attraction to another and their ability to form an emotional connection with that person. He stresses the significance of both factors in developing a satisfying and long-lasting partnership. The events that take place in this book lead the reader to conclude that a balanced expression of libido

necessitates the emotional and physical components of desire to coexist in perfect harmony.

3.8. Existentialism through Sparks Fiction

As a school of thought in philosophy, existentialism utters the relevance of individual existence and the freedom to make decisions that influence one's life. It investigates the most fundamental concerns that can be asked about the human condition, such as the purpose of life, the nature of personal identity, and the experience of coming to terms with one's death (Flynn, 2009). Sparks' literature, which challenges readers to think about their own life and decisions, frequently deals with the topics and themes.

Investigating one's authenticity and coming to terms with oneself may be a significant component of Sparks' existentialism. Many of his heroes go on quests of self-discovery, during which they challenge the norms of society and look for ways to satisfy their sense of personal fulfilment. They struggle with their identities, looking for ways to live an authentic life and bring their behaviours in line with who they are. Examples of this may be observed in characters like Noah Calhoun from *The Notebook* and Travis Parker from *The Choice* (2007), who defy the standards of their worlds and attempt to live according to their beliefs. These characters are shown to have a strong desire to live their lives by their principles.

Existentialism may also be seen in Nicholas Sparks' literature in the form of recurring ideas about individual accountability and responsibility. Existentialism strongly emphasises the individual's freedom of choice and the idea that each person is accountable for their own acts and the consequences of those actions. Characters in Sparks' works frequently find themselves in precarious situations and face the ethical repercussions of their conduct. This concept is apparent in fiction such as *Message in a Bottle* (1998) and *A Bend in the Road* (2001), in which the protagonists struggle with remorse, forgiveness, and the fallout from their previous choices and deeds.

In Sparks' writings, existentialist notions cross with the investigation of meaning and the hunt for purpose, both central themes. The fleeting quality of existence, the inevitability of death, and the need to discover meaning in the face of

ambiguity are all themes that frequently arise in fictional works. Sparks' novels underscore the need to establish personal meaning in an uncertain world, and they do so in various ways, including the pursuit of a passion, the formation of profound connections with other people, and the discovery of consolation in love and human relationships.

In addition, Sparks' fiction often deals with the ridiculous, which is another idea associated with the existentialist school of thought. The idea that life does not have an intrinsic meaning and that individuals are forced to confront the folly of existence and devise their purpose to give their lives significance is ridiculous. The protagonists of Sparks' novels are frequently forced to confront the underlying unpredictability of life when they find themselves dealing with unanticipated situations, the death of loved ones, or other calamities. They are forced to discover methods to make sense of the absurdity of life and search for their purpose and happiness as they go through these experiences.

Even though most of Nicholas Sparks' fictional works likely relate to romance, existentialism can be woven throughout many of his tales. Sparks urges readers to think about their own lives as well as the fundamental concerns that pertain to the existence of human beings by having them investigate themes such as personal authenticity, accountability, and purpose, as well as the confrontation with the ludicrous. His novels provide insights into the human condition and how individuals struggle with existential issues. Ultimately, they invite readers to reflect on their quests for self-discovery and pursuing a meaningful existence.

3.8.1. Existentialism in *The Notebook*

Examining free will and the responsibility that comes with it is an essential part of the existentialist perspective that can be found in *The Notebook*. Throughout the story, the main protagonists, Noah and Allie, must make challenging decisions, and the outcomes of those decisions determine the paths their lives will take. The philosophical school known as existentialism strongly emphasises personal agency and the repercussions that stem from a person's decisions. The existentialist concept

of personal accountability is brought to light by the fact that both Noah and Allie struggle with the repercussions of their actions and ultimately accept responsibility for how their lives have developed.

In addition, existentialist ideas become apparent via the investigation of romantic love and the search for meaning in interpersonal connections. The story explores the concept that human connection and close personal ties may give one a feeling of purpose and fulfilment. The everlasting love story of Noah and Allie concentrate on the quest for meaning and authenticity within the context of romantic relationships. The novel's depiction of death and the reader's coming face-to-face with the ephemeral quality of existence both contain elements reflective of existentialist philosophy. The characters struggle with the reality that death is unavoidable, and life is short despite their best efforts. The novel investigates how people deal with the existential anguish of being aware of their impending death. As Noah and Allie come to terms with the transience of life and work hard to make the most of their time together, the love story they are writing takes on a new sense of urgency.

The love between Noah and Allie is shown to be genuine and authentic since both characters strive to live and love truthfully. Existentialism focuses on the individual's quest for authenticity, emphasising the significance of being true to oneself and leading a life by one's genuine aspirations and values. This is a central tenet of existential philosophy. To sum up, the story addresses some of the most fundamental questions that can be asked about human life, and it invites readers to consider their own lives, relationships, and the quest for purpose and satisfaction in their own lives.

3.8.1.1. Authenticity

The Notebook focuses heavily on authenticity as a primary topic of discussion. The narrative dives into the idea of living an honest life and the enormous effect of doing so on personal relationships and the sense of contentment an individual might have. The story highlights the significance of being genuine in one's love life, expression of oneself, and the quest for happiness via the characters of Noah and Allie. Their love

is shown to be genuine, profound, and sincere. Their commitment to one another remains unshaken despite the challenges they have faced together, demonstrating the importance of being genuine while forming bonds of affection. The work stresses that true love expresses one's innermost feelings and thoughts.

The story delves into topics such as self-expression and individual authenticity, in addition to the issue of romantic love. As a character, Noah exemplifies the quest for authenticity via the fiery essence of his personality and the unyielding dedication he maintains to his genuine self. He decides to use his creative ability to self-express by devoting himself to renovating the house he had vowed to construct for Allie. The search for authenticity by Noah contrasts society's standards and expectations, stressing the value of remaining true to oneself despite the pressures that come from the outside world.

The concept of genuineness also extends to the investigation of personal development and introspection. Throughout the course of the narrative, both Noah and Allie go through enormous changes as they work toward being the best versions of themselves. As Noah comes to terms with his identity as a loving and committed partner, we see him mature as he realises that his love for Allie provides him with both consolation and purpose. On the other side, Allie goes on a journey of self-discovery as she navigates her aspirations and ideals while confronting society's demands. The story presents the concept of authenticity as a driving force behind human development and the unveiling of one's potential.

In addition, the novel brings to light the repercussions that might result from ignoring one's authenticity. The fact that Allie is about to marry Lon symbolises a life that will take her away from the things she truly wants, which will inevitably cause her to experience inner turmoil and a sense of unhappiness. The story makes the point that surrendering one's integrity to live up to social standards or to satisfy the demands of others can be detrimental to one's satisfaction and result in a false sense of contentment.

To conclude, the basic message of *The Notebook* is that being oneself is crucial to making and keeping good friendships and finding fulfilment in life. The work extols the virtues of genuineness in relationships, creative endeavours, and maturation. Using Noah and Allie as role models, the book urges its readers to be themselves, to follow their emotions, and to build relationships based on truth and compassion.

3.8.1.2. Absurdism

The unexpected and disorderly quality of life is shown in *The Notebook*, which contributes to the absurdism inherent in the novel. In the story, the protagonists, Noah and Allie, are confronted with unanticipated events and challenges that put their love to test. These unforeseeable occurrences bring to light the absurdity of life, which is that unforeseen circumstances can quickly derail one's intentions and aspirations. The story presents a sense of the nonsense in the face of uncontrolled situations, suggesting that the unpredictability of life might drive individuals to question the rationale and order they desire.

In addition, *The Notebook* investigates the quest for meaning and purpose within the ambiguity that characterises everyday existence. The protagonists grapple with existential issues such as the significance of their decisions, the meaning of love, and their effect on those around them. The search for meaningful connections and the need for personal satisfaction can be regarded as a response to the basic premise of absurdism, which is that existence does not naturally have any meaning. To make sense of the absurdity of existence, the characters rely on their relationships with one another to guide them through developing their sense of purpose and value.

Additionally, the novel's existential and farcical undertones may be traced back to its central topic of the passing of time. The story spans decades, and over that time, Noah and Allie think back on their lives and discuss how they've changed. Existential questions and a head-on collision with the folly of human life are sparked when one is made aware of the transience of time and the inevitability of growing old and passing away. The protagonists struggle with the absurdity of time's unrelenting march, looking for meaning and trying to make the most of their time together.

3.8.1.3. Anxiety and the Quest for Meaningfulness

Anxiety takes several forms throughout the narrative. Allie's anxiousness stems from her internal struggle to reconcile her wants with the external constraints of her family and cultural norms. Her inner conflict is emblematic of the stress that might arise while making a pivotal decision and the worry that one will choose the incorrect option. In a similar vein, Noah worries about losing Allie and questions whether he and Allie can keep their bond going. Because of their shared anxiety about the future, they have trouble relaxing and enjoying one another's company.

The protagonists' lives are propelled forward by an innate need to discover what gives their existence significance. Allie, Noah, and the other characters in the novel all have a strong need for more meaningful connections and a feeling of purpose. As the characters search for consolation, contentment, and a sense of belonging, cultivating meaningful relationships rises to the top of the priority list. The characters' onward momentum is driven by their desire for meaning, influencing their choices, behaviours, and feelings. Moreover, the protagonists' existential angst and pursuit of meaning are fuelled partly by the transience of existence and the inevitable march of time. Realising how short one's time on Earth is, characters reflect on their lives and motivate them to make the most of the time they have. The reality of their mortality gives Noah and Allie new motivation to treasure their relationship and seek purpose.

Love, connection, and the quest for authenticity are presented as how the novel's protagonist and narrator, Noah, finds meaning. The capacity to connect with others and act according to one's deepest values and motivations is emphasised. The characters find relief from their worries and a renewed feeling of purpose because of the meaningful interactions they have with one another. The novel suggests worry is a normal human response to new situations and searching for deeper meaning in life. The characters' quest for meaning echoes our existential need for meaning and satisfaction. The work challenges readers to examine their fears and paths to find fulfilment in their personal and interpersonal relationships.

3.8.2. Existentialism in *A Walk to Remember*

Existentialism is represented in *A Walk to* Remember, and one of its aspects is the focus placed on personal authenticity. Both Landon and Jamie, the story's protagonists, go on adventures that force them to confront the expectations placed on them by society and bring them closer to understanding who they are. Landon first gives in to the peer pressure and preconceptions of his high school environment, but through his friendship with Jamie, he learns to accept and appreciate his uniqueness and live genuinely. On the other hand, Jamie can preserve her authenticity from the beginning by adhering to the standards and principles she was raised with despite being an outsider. The novel emphasises the significance of accepting one's authentic identity and acting in line with one's ideals, two aspects that are fundamental to the philosophical school of thought known as existentialism.

The quest for meaning is yet another existentialist subject that can be found throughout the book. Both Landon and Jamie struggle to understand the meaning of their acts and how they fit into their lives grand scheme of things. Landon is forced to contemplate the meaning of life, love, and the decisions he takes as a direct result of Jamie's fatal illness. He wants to make atonement for his past mistakes and discover a new purpose in his connection with Jamie. The book argues that feelings of love, compassion, and connection may give one a sense of purpose and fulfilment, consistent with the existentialist belief that people are responsible for discovering their meaning in what could otherwise be a pointless existence.

In addition, an essential component of existentialism in *A Walk to Remember* is the character's struggle to come to terms with their death. Due to Jamie's illness, Landon is forced to confront his own mortality and the fleeting essence of human existence, which brings to a profound realisation of the limited nature of life. The protagonists struggle with the worry and uncertainty resulting from the awareness that they have a finite amount of time together, which compels them to treasure the present moment and put their love and connection at the forefront of their priorities.

3.8.2.1. Authenticity through *A Walk to Remember*

Landon and Jamie's journey through life and love in *A Walk to Remember* hinges heavily on their ability to be true to themselves and the people they care about. At the novel's outset, Landon is presented as a typical adolescent: popular, rebellious, and living on his terms. He frequently puts on an act to keep up appearances among his pals and preserve his standing. However, as he spends more time with Jamie, he lets down his guard and becomes more genuine and open about his ideals and convictions.

On the other hand, Jamie is presented as an authentic character from the very beginning of the show. She has a generous spirit and a sympathetic nature and does not shy away from being herself. Jamie continues to be loyal to who she is and her convictions, despite her classmates judging and mocking her because of her religious beliefs and conservative values. Despite this, Jamie has not wavered in her commitment to her ideas and has remained honest. Landon is motivated to look at his life and make constructive adjustments because of her genuineness and unyielding energy. Furthermore, Landon understands the significance of being genuine to oneself and welcoming authenticity due to their encounters. He has concluded that maintaining integrity with his principles and convictions is more essential than seeking the acceptance and favour of others. Jamie's genuineness acts as a driving force behind Landon's personal development and change.

In addition, the relationship between Landon and Jamie is another example of how the notion of honesty is portrayed throughout the story. Their love story unfolds subtly and profoundly because of the genuine connection they share and the experiences they have had together. Understanding, accepting, and being honest with one another are the cornerstones of their relationship, rather than superficiality or outward appearance. Generally, *A Walk to Remember* highlights authenticity's relevance in various contexts, including personal development and relationships. It encourages individuals to accept their genuine selves, despite cultural expectations or constraints. The narrative illustrates the transformational power of authenticity. It demonstrates that being true to oneself can lead to meaningful connections with others and a sense of personal fulfilment for the individual.

3.8.2.2. Absurdism

Though it touches on absurdist ideas, *A Walk to Remember* is concerned primarily with more conventional topics like love, development, and honesty. Absurdism is the philosophical position that life itself is ridiculous and that humans have no choice but to face this fact. As she fights a losing battle against terminal cancer, Jamie Sullivan, the protagonist presented as gentle, caring, and unselfish, is doomed to an unfortunate ending. Within the framework of the narrative, both her illness and her final passing away might be interpreted as absurdities. It pushes the protagonists to confront the fundamental randomness and unpredictability that is a part of existence, undermining their perspective of the universe.

In addition, a response to the absurdity of life can be observed in Landon's shift from an initially rebellious and carefree existence to one that is more mature and responsible. This may be viewed as a contrast to Landon's early carefree lifestyle. Landon is forced to confront the unpredictability and randomness of life due to the abrupt and unexpected nature of Jamie's sickness. This causes the world that Landon is accustomed to, which is predictable and organised, to be disrupted. Moreover, the tragic components of *A Walk to Remember* might, according to particular readings, be understood as representing the absurdity of life, in which the characters are put in situations that contradict their expectations and test their knowledge of the world, rather than digging deeper into the philosophical concept of absurdism. This is something that should be noticed.

3.8.2.3. Anxiety and the Quest for the Meaningfulness

The characters show signs of anxiety as Landon and Jamie work through the problems and ambiguities unique to their situations. At the beginning of the narrative, Landon is introduced as a defiant young man who is unclear about his future and without a sense of purpose. He frequently participates in risky behaviour to escape his worries and fears, which worsens his problems. However, as Landon spends more time with Jamie and develops affection for her, he begins to confront his concerns and anxieties. This is a significant turning point in the story. Seeing that Jamie is a part of his life, he is forced to examine his choices, rethink the order in which he places his values,

and work towards leading a more purposeful lifestyle. Landon gains a sense of purpose and the ability to address his worries as a direct result of their friendship, which in turn leads to Landon's overall personal development.

In *A Walk to Remember*, there is also an exploration of the search for meaningfulness. Even though they are pretty different people, Landon and Jamie have the same overarching goal: to discover their purpose in life and have a positive impact on the lives of others. Landon derives motivation from Jamie's steadfast faith and dedication to helping others, both of which serve as an inspiration to Landon. As the two of them get closer, Landon becomes more committed to fostering experiences rich in meaning and having a constructive influence on the lives of others. Furthermore, the sad events surrounding Jamie's sickness that ultimately led to his passing raise fundamental issues about the meaning of life and purpose. Landon is inspired to lead a life that is more meaningful and purposeful because of the journey that he takes with Jamie. This adventure causes Landon to rethink the point of his existence.

Although its primary focus is on the power of love and the process of human development, *A Walk to Remember* also touches on the themes of anxiety and the search for meaningfulness along its course. The narrative highlights how individuals may overcome their concerns and find meaning and fulfilment by connecting with others, performing acts of selflessness, and accepting who they are.

3.8.3. Existentialism through *Safe Haven*

The character of Katie Feldman functions as a symbol of existentialist ideas throughout the story. Katie, who is escaping an abusive relationship, ends herself in the quaint community of Southport, North Carolina, hoping to find safety there. As she attempts to reconstruct her life and locate its purpose, she struggles with anxiety, guilt, and a sensation of being amid an existential crisis. Katie's path, in which she faces her history, seizes control of her destiny and works towards defining who she is as an individual, is consistent with existentialist notions. She is put in a position where she must make choices that put her beliefs to the test, compel her to make tough choices, and eventually drive her to accept responsibility for her happiness. By doing

so, she displays the existentialist idea of individual freedom and the necessity of giving one's life meaning and purpose.

Alex Wheatley, a divorced parent who is romantically interested in Katie and a character in the story, is another one of the characters who adds to the query of existential topics. Alex, too, is struggling with his existential issues, notably those revolving around the death of his wife and the difficulties of raising their son as a single father. Through his encounters with Katie, he can find peace and a revitalised sense of purpose. This highlights the significance of connection and relationships in the pursuit of meaning. Although *Safe Haven* is mostly about love, healing, and second chances, it touches upon existentialist notions via the characters' challenges, choices, and quest for personal growth and meaning. *Safe Haven* generally focuses on existentialist principles through the characters' struggles, options, and pursuit of personal growth and meaning. The narrative demonstrates how individuals may face their history, accept their freedom, and develop their purpose and authenticity despite life's obstacles by showing how to address their past.

3.8.3.1. From Authenticity to Absurdism

The main character, Katie Feldman, is a lady who has escaped an abusive relationship and is now living on her own. She decides to make a new life for herself, giving herself a new name and moving to the sleepy little town of Southport. Because of the anxiety and traumatic experiences, she had in the past, she initially has a hard time letting her guard down and being honest about who she is as she integrates into the community. On the other hand, as she gets to know the people around her better and develops relationships with them, she progressively becomes more trusting and opens up more. Katie's interactions with the individuals she encounters, notably Alex Wheatley, a widowed parent with whom she develops affection, illustrate her path towards honesty. Alex is the person for whom Katie develops feelings. Katie can relinquish her protective exterior due to her bond with Alex and his children. As a result, she can allow herself to be vulnerable and honest. She spurs about her history, anxieties, and dreams; as a result, she finally discovers acceptance and love.

Chapter Three: Deconstructing the Self through Nicholas Sparks' Selected Novels

After his wife's death, Alex deals with his challenges and feelings, and he exemplifies genuineness in the process. He does not hide his feelings of loss and is not afraid to exhibit his vulnerabilities in front of others. Katie can feel more at ease while showing her actual self-due to his honest and sincere attitude to interpersonal connections. This is because he generates an atmosphere that is trusting and authentic. In addition, the story investigates the difference between genuineness and the appearance of flawlessness. The behaviour of Katie's ex-husband, who puts on a false front to the outside world while secretly engaging in violent behaviour behind closed doors, is the antithesis of authenticity. This juxtaposition highlights the significance of being authentic to oneself and the possible peril that may result from concealing one's actual identity behind a facade.

Moving on to absurdism, at the beginning of *Safe Haven*, the protagonist, Katie Feldman, is stuck in an abusive relationship, which may be perceived as illogical and ludicrous. She gets away and ends up in Southport, a little town where she hopes to start over. The absurdity arises from her situation being entirely beyond her control, and she has ended herself somewhere she could never have imagined. In addition, an absurdist perspective might be taken on the story's central topic of second chances and the individuals' paths to recovery. The belief that people can start again, forget their mistakes, and achieve redemption is one way of reacting to the absurdity of life. This attitude can be understood as a response to the idea that people can escape their pasts. Considering the inherent incoherence of existence, it brings to light the human urge to construct meaning and discover one's place in the world.

Moreover, the idea of love and connection presented in *Safe Haven* might be interpreted as a response to the existential issues brought up by absurdism. In a world without sense, the characters' pursuit of love and desire for meaningful relationships might be viewed as an attempt to confront the absurdity and find consolation and purpose in human ties. In a nutshell, although *Safe Haven* does not directly interact with the philosophical tradition of absurdism, some aspects of the novel might be seen as reflecting both the absurdity of existence and the characters' search for meaning in the context of that absurdity. The text encourages readers to reflect on the

unpredictability and, at times, the irrationality of life, as well as the capability of humans to discover meaning and purpose in the face of ambiguity.

3.8.3.2. Anxiety and the Quest for the Meaningfulness

Throughout the narrative, Katie struggles with the aftereffects of the horrible experiences she has been through, which has led to increased anxiety and a reluctance to trust other people. She lives in continual anxiety out of the concern that her past may catch up with her. Her guardedness and reluctance to participate entirely in relationships are both outward manifestations of the worry she experiences. In contrast, the village of Southport, with its tight-knit community and hospitable individuals, symbolises a safe haven where one may find healing and meaningful connections with those who share similar experiences. Katie's path towards finding peace and conquering her anxiety is catalysed by her encounters with the people in the town, particularly her relationships with Alex Wheatley and his children.

Moreover, Katie's journey to wellness is inextricably linked to her search for a deeper purpose in life. Katie is starting over and looking for a purpose in life and a place where she belongs. She longs for life about more than just keeping her head above water and surviving each day. She progressively gains a refreshed sense of purpose and a deeper awareness of herself because of the connections that she cultivates. Katie and Alex face their fears and set a path towards recovery and self-discovery together as they travel the world. As their friendship develops, it becomes a source of support and understanding, and they embark on a journey together to find out what gives their lives value. They finally achieve personal development and a sense of purpose by confronting their fears and anxieties, and they find consolation and strength in one another in the process.

To conclude, *Safe Haven* demonstrates how the transformational power of love, trust, and genuine connections may help alleviate anxiety and provide a road towards finding purpose in one's life. Amid worry and existential issues, the novel scrutinises the idea that authentic human relationships may be a source of solace and healing for oneself and one's community.

3.8.4. Existentialism through *The Longest Ride*

Existentialist ideas are explored in several different ways throughout *The Longest Ride*, which has a cast of individuals whose travels reflect those ideas. Ira Levinson, one of the main characters, embodies the existentialist philosophy of looking for a purpose in one's life. Ira finds himself thinking about his life in the past and the decisions that he has made that have led to his current situation. While he waits to be rescued, he thinks back on his life with his late wife, Ruth and the things he did out of love for her, including the sacrifices he made for their love. Ira grapples with issues of love, connection, and legacy as he ponders the purpose of his existence via his recollections and reflection.

The other plot thread focuses on the connection between Sophia Danko and Luke Collins. Sophia, who aspires to work in the art industry, is at a crossroads and must choose whether to pursue her desires or adapt to society's expectations. Her path exemplifies the existentialist idea of individual liberty and the duty of making genuine decisions following one's deepest, most honest yearnings. As Luke, a professional bull rider, grapples with the prospect of suffering an accident that may end his career, he, too, is plagued with existential angst. He comes face to face with his death and struggles to understand his identity and purpose outside of the context of his chosen vocation. His quest for significance is evident in his drive to triumph over hardship and find meaning in his life beyond his vocation as a rodeo rider.

In addition, both narrative trajectories emphasise the value of human connection and the search for genuine connections. The characters manage the intricacies of love and sacrifice and the desire for true relationships that go beyond society's expectations or the outside world's demands. These relationships give people a feeling that their lives have significance and purpose. The existentialist principles of *The Longest Ride* are reflected in the story's focus on love and sacrifice. Existentialist ideas of individual life and the obligation to create meaning in an uncertain environment are reflected in the protagonists' and antagonists' respective searches for meaning, considerations of choice and authenticity, and emphasis on the necessity of human connections.

3.8.4.1. From Authenticity to Absurdism

Sophia is an ambitious artist, and she longs for a life that allows her artistic pursuits to be fulfilled while also allowing her to pursue her passions. Despite the temptations to take a more traditional career, she eventually realises that she should accept herself and follow her creative dreams during the novel. Her experience demonstrates the significance of being faithful to one's passions and working towards achieving a genuine and personally satisfying life. In a similar vein, Luke Collins has the issue of keeping his authenticity while participating in a physically demanding vocation that is sometimes deadly. He grapples with the expectations that others have for him, as well as the tension between his passion for bull riding and the possible concessions that it demands from him. Finding a middle ground between Luke's ardour for the game he plays and his progress as a person is the central theme of Luke's trip. His perseverance, devotion to his principles, and ability to negotiate the rigours of his chosen career while being true to himself demonstrate his authenticity. His perseverance exhibits his authenticity.

The love tale between Sophia and Luke is another example that illustrates the concept of genuineness. They are forced to confront their vulnerabilities, worries, and insecurities as they work through the dynamics of their relationship. Their relationship is genuine because they can communicate openly and honestly, recognise each other's shortcomings and appreciate who they are. Their experience inspires readers to place a higher priority on genuineness and honesty in the relationships they have in their own lives. Additionally, the parallel plotline concerning the elderly character Ira Levinson examines the concept of authenticity via his recollections of his past and his unwavering love for his late wife, Ruth. Ira's sincerity is demonstrated by his everlasting commitment to their love and the care he has shown to preserve their memories. His narrative highlights the enduring power of genuine love and the significance of cherishing and honouring one's real emotions to live life to the fullest.

The ludicrous theme may be perceived to be aligned with The Longest Ride because of how the characters' lives are interwoven, as well as the coincidences that bring them together. The book incorporates two parallel love tales that occur over

different times. The improbable confluence of these stories and the deep relationships between the individuals might be understood as reflecting life's unpredictable and illogical nature. The text supports both ideas.

Moreover, the idea of sacrifice plays a significant role in the narrative and can be analysed using an absurdist perspective. The characters are forced to make challenging decisions and are frequently prepared to give up a great deal for their love for one another. The absurdity of human life may be reflected in these sacrifices, even though they are selfless and come from the heart. The fact that the characters are prepared to sacrifice some facets of their life or take risks to find love highlights the illogical nature of human behaviour and the search for meaning.

In addition, the novel examines topics such as death and the ephemeral quality of existence, both of which are critical components of the ridiculous. Ira Levinson, who gets involved in an automobile accident, thinks back on his life and his love for his late wife as he is in the hospital recovering from the accident. His musings on the passage of time and the certainty of death can potentially provoke existential anguish and the realisation of the ephemeral nature of existence that are signatures of absurdism. To conclude, albeit *The Longest Ride* does not directly address the philosophical concept of absurdism, many of the story's themes might be seen as echoing absurdism's emphasis on human existence's inherent irrationality, lack of meaning, and unpredictability. These features encourage readers to think about the randomness and coincidences of life, the decisions we make in the face of the ludicrous, and the struggle to find meaning and community in a complex and uncertain universe.

3.8.4.2. Anxiety and the Quest for the Meaningfulness

Throughout the narrative, anxiety is portrayed, most prominently, via Sophia Danko. Sophia worries about whether she will make the "right" decisions in her life due to the unpredictability of her future and the pressure to conform to society's expectations. She is terrified of making choices that can steer her in the wrong direction or prevent her from pursuing the things she is truly passionate about. Her worry originates from

the idea that she would fail to live a meaningful and rewarding life. Furthermore, searching for anything with a purpose is a central thread throughout Sophia's adventure. She longs for a life that has a greater meaning and one in which she may feel fulfilled. Sophia starts to question her aspirations and the sacrifices she is prepared to make for love and personal fulfilment when she falls in love with Luke Collins, a professional bull rider, and sees the sacrifices he makes for his passion.

On the other side, Luke is a bull rider, a perilous career that causes him to suffer his unique worry. The persistent fear that he would get hurt or possibly die weighs heavily on him, which in turn causes him to experience anxiety and force him to reflect on the purpose of his life outside of the rodeo arena. He starts looking for more depth and significance to find fulfilment in his life, as he doubts the point of endangering his life for a fleeting moment of achievement. Additionally, the romance between Sophia and Luke is an impetus for their distinct searches for the meaning of life. Together, they work through their worries and discuss the significance of personal development, self-exploration, and the search for genuine relationships. They discover that love can be a source of support and direction in the face of fear and bring a feeling of purpose and fulfilment, all while in their relationship.

Moreover, the parallel plotline with the elderly character Ira Levinson highlights the need for anything to have a purpose in one's life. Ira thinks back on his life, specifically his choices in the name of love and how those decisions have affected his overall satisfaction. The novel examines the fears and issues in old age about the importance of one's life and the legacy one leaves behind through the narrator's recollections of his younger years. The conclusion of *The Longest Ride* supposes that the search for meaning is intrinsically linked to the investigation of one's fears, anxieties, and decisions made in the face of ambiguity and unpredictability. It emphasises the significance of embracing personal growth, seeking out authentic relationships, and being willing to make sacrifices for the sake of love and personal fulfilment. The reader is encouraged to reflect on their worries and look for meaning in their life while also being encouraged to tackle their fears, take chances, and build relationships that will give their lives purpose and fulfilment.

3.9. Conclusion

After a deconstructive analysis of four of Nicholas Sparks' novels, it is possible to say that his fiction is, in one or another, postmodern. The characters' complexity gives the reader a mesmerising experience while reading the stories, especially since the characters are all looking for transcending love. Throughout the different novels, the reader can conclude that Sparks' fiction is reality-like, where the other characters depict situations that can happen to any normal human being. This makes the readers feel for them and believe in their pain and happiness. The upcoming chapter will focus more on the stylistics of Nicholas Sparks as a novelist and the main features his texts entail.

Chapter Four: From North Carolina with Literature

4.1. Introduction

This ultimate chapter prospects the different theories of the text, already mentioned in the second chapter, on Nicholas Sparks' *The Notebook* (1996), *A Walk to Remember* (2010), *Safe Haven* (2010), and *The Longest Ride* (2013). *The Notebook* is widely acknowledged as an essential work in the canon of contemporary romance fiction. Even though it may not be considered a literary classic in the same vein as George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871), Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) or Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), it has unquestionably acquired popularity. It has been identified as a contemporary love story with an enduring appeal (Dean, 2016). The readability and universality of *The Notebook* make it stand out among conventional works of literature considered classics. The novel's plot is about the romance between Noah Calhoun and Allie Nelson, two young people living in the 1940s who come from entirely different social backgrounds but eventually fall in love with one another. Their relationship will have to overcome several challenges, such as cultural expectations, gaps in social status, and the mayhem caused by World War II. Despite the obstacles, they can keep their love alive through the years.

A Walk to Remember is well-known for its profound effect on the audience's emotions, the sincerity with which it tells its stories and the depth with which it examines topics like the value of living a life with meaning. The work has struck a chord with readers worldwide, and it has been lauded for its moving portrayal of adolescent love and its capacity to make readers laugh and cry simultaneously. Similar to all of Sparks' fictional works, *Safe Haven* delves into topics such as love, recovery, second chances, and the significance of trusting others. It explores the intricacies of human connections and the potential of discovering consolation and support in areas where one would not expect to find either of those things. The storyline of the book is both captivating and moving because of the novel's incorporation of aspects such as romance, suspense, and human development.

The Longest Ride, on the other hand, shifts back and forth between the perspectives of two different couples, the elderly Ira and Ruth, who have been married

for a very long time, and the younger Luke and Sophia, who are just starting on their romantic adventure together. The juxtaposition of these two storylines contrasts the hardships and discoveries encountered by Luke and Sophia and the knowledge and experience that Ira and Ruth possess due to their life experiences. The novel's dual narrative format allows for an in-depth examination of the interconnected themes of love, sacrifice, and the passage of time. The narrative of Ira and Ruth delves into the intricacies and subtleties of a lifetime commitment. At the same time, the story of Luke and Sophia explores the difficulties and alternatives faced by a young couple in the contemporary world. These two stories are intertwined, creating thematic resonance as one couple's experiences and lessons educate and apply to the other (Ameur-Said & Hamza Reguig Mouro, 2021).

Furthermore, the role of North Carolina in Sparks' works will be put into words. Withal, an analysis of how Sparks employs narrative fragmentation as a storytelling strategy to captivate his audience, build tension, strengthen ties to the characters, and delve deeper into their psyches. To sum up, this chapter draws to a close with a section devoted to analysing the entirety of Sparks' novels and his style. In this part, T.S. Eliot's "Tradition and Individual Talent" (1919) will be applied to analyse Sparks' works and style. Withal, by the end of the section, there will be a clear answer to the research question raised at the beginning: Why Sparks' novels are considered a revival of the classics?

4.2. Characterisation in Sparks' Fiction

Nicholas Sparks' fiction is notable for its importance on characterisation, which serves as the groundwork upon which the author builds his engaging novels. The importance that Sparks places on character development enables readers to feel as though they know the people in his novels on a personal level, heightening the emotional resonance and overall impact of his works. One thing is for sure, Sparks is skilled at creating complex and multidimensional characters, and each has unique characteristics, histories, and reasons for doing what they do. By painstakingly describing their pasts, aspirations, and failings, he develops believable and genuine characters whose stories strike a chord with the reader on a profound level. This

relatability is essential because it encourages readers to invest emotionally in the characters, building a solid link that accompanies them throughout the narrative.

In his stories and novels, sparks uses character arcs as the primary vehicle for forward movement. His protagonists frequently go on life-altering trips, where they must contend with personal development issues, emotional upheaval, and significant life shifts. Sparks delves into topics such as love, grief, forgiveness, and self-discovery across these arcs to investigate the nuances of the human condition he observes. The readers are amused and motivated to reflect on their lives and relationships because of how the characters develop during the story. In addition, Sparks utilises the interactions between characters as a method for investigating and questioning the norms and expectations of society. In a manner that mirrors the complexity of real-life connections, his characters manage the complexities of their relationships, which are distinguished by obstacles, misunderstanding, and societal boundaries. Sparks sheds light on the power of empathy, tolerance, and acceptance in forging authentic connections by contrasting people who come from various origins and adhere to various belief systems. This investigation of human connections highlights the significance of compassion. It encourages readers to reflect on their prejudices and assumptions through the lens of their ties with other people.

In conclusion, Sparks is known for his vivid and evocative descriptions, which he uses to bring his characters and the world around them to life. Through his thorough attention to detail, he builds sensory experiences that transport readers into the setting of the novel, so giving them the impression that they are active players in the events that are taking place. Sparks heightens the emotional effect of his narratives by immersing readers in his characters' sights, sounds, and emotions. This elicits feelings of empathy, joy, and sadness in the reader and catharsis.

4.2.1. Characterisation in *The Notebook*

In Nicholas Sparks' *The Notebook*, the characters are elaborately created to explore the depths of human emotions, the power of love, and the intricacies of relationships.

Chapter Four: From North Carolina with Literature

Sparks deftly portrays the essence of love, memory, and the unyielding strength of the human spirit via the story's protagonists, Noah Calhoun and Allie Nelson.

The character of Noah Calhoun is shown as having an intense level of passion and tenacity. As the story's narrator, he allows readers to see his persistent dedication to love, despite his many challenges. Noah's character was formed by his upbringing in a simple family and his experiences in World War II, both of which gave him a feeling of humility and a profound awareness of life's worth. His upbringing in a simple family and his service in the war contributed to his character. Despite his humble beginnings, Noah has an unshakeable faith in the transformative potential of love and a remarkable capacity for perseverance in his pursuit of Allie. His persona exemplifies that genuine love is unaffected by external constraints and prevails despite overwhelming adversity.

On the other side, Allie Nelson is shown as a lady who is self-sufficient and unrestricted in her spirit. She first embodies the appeal of societal expectations and the draw of conformity. However, in the end, she discovers that she is split between her commitments to society and what her heart truly craves. Throughout the book, Allie struggles to reconcile the conflicting demands of her love for Noah and the obligations imposed upon her by her family and social class. This internal struggle drives an important development in her character. Sparks explores the themes of self-discovery and the significance of following one's heart, even if doing so requires going against the grain of cultural standards, via the character of Allie.

In addition, the tertiary characters in *The Notebook* make substantial contributions to the story's overarching plot. Lon Hammond, Allie's fiancé, is a figure of contrast to Noah. He stands for the safe and secure road that Allie is expected to take, and he acts as a representation of that path. The decisions humans must make between a love motivated by passion and one motivated by practicality are brought to light by the character of Lon. Similarly, the character of Allie's mother is a representation of the external constraints and cultural expectations that can impact personal actions. This adds complexity to the analysis of relationships in the story.

The characters that Nicholas Sparks created in *The Notebook* play an essential role in moving the story along and act as vehicles through which the novel's topics are investigated. The relationships between the characters, their decisions, and their personal development serve as a lens through which we view themes of love, sacrifice, and the transformative power of the past. Empathy and reflection are evoked in the reader because Sparks' presentation of complex characters inspires readers to reflect on their own experiences and relationships.

4.2.2. Characterisation in *A Walk to Remember*

At first, the novel's narrator, Landon Carter, gives the impression that he is a famous and defiant adolescent. On the other hand, Landon is seen to go through a tremendous change as the narrative develops. He understands the importance of compassion, altruism, and empathy because of his interactions with Jamie. The development of Landon's character includes a progression from haughtiness and self-centeredness to humility and genuine compassion for others. His development defies cultural norms and pushes readers to examine their assumptions about individuals' ability to evolve due to their exposure to his story.

On the other side, Jamie Sullivan exemplifies all that is good, pure, and unshakeable within the Christian faith. Due to her deeply held religious views and humble origins, she is regarded as an outsider in popular culture. Jamie possesses an unflappable attitude and exemplifies the power of forgiveness and acceptance despite the difficulties she is forced to overcome in her life. Her persona subverts traditional ideas of popularity and attractiveness, focusing instead on the significance of an individual's internal traits and the value of real connections with others. Sparks examines, via the character of Jamie, the transformational power of love and the role that faith plays in prevailing over hardship.

Landon's inner development and salvation are fuelled, in large part, by the influence of his friends, particularly Eric and Landon's father. They put Landon's preconceptions to the test, inspire him to venture outside his comfort zone, and ultimately lend their support to Landon's romantic partnership with Jamie. These

individuals provide an exciting contrast to Landon's first circle of friends and bring attention to the adaptability and development potential possessed by others. In addition, the little town of Beaufort, North Carolina, which serves as the story's primary setting, serves as a backdrop that plays a role in the characters' growth. The tight-knit society helps cultivate a feeling of connectivity and is a significant factor in the characters' development of their morals and behaviours. The location also highlights the contrast between the surface-level social order and the profound depth of human interactions. The environment brings out this contrast.

Sparks plunges into fundamental ideas in *A Walk to Remember*, such as love, redemption, and the transformational force of personal growth, via the well-developed characters in the story. The transition that Landon goes through prompts readers to consider their own potential for growth and the significance of digging deeper than their initial impressions when making judgements. Readers are encouraged to embrace compassion, faith, and acceptance of others by the example set by Jamie's character. The ways in which the characters engage with one another and the relationships they develop provide light on the opportunities for human growth and the influence that true connections can have.

4.2.1. Characterisation in *Safe Haven*

At the novel's beginning, the protagonist, Katie Feldman, is shown as a troubled woman who is anxious to get away from an abusive relationship and is tormented by events from her troubled past. Katie's character develops during the narrative into a metaphor for resiliency and strength. Sparks delves deeply into her history, illuminating the circumstances that led to her reserved demeanour and her will to start again and build a new life for herself. Katie's journey delves into topics such as mending wounds and gaining the strength to trust others once more. Her story arc illustrates the transformational power of love and the opportunity for individual development and atonement.

Katie's romantic and love interest, Alex Wheatley, is shown as a kind and sympathetic widower caring for his two children. Katie relies on him as a rock and for

emotional support. As a result, he has been instrumental in slowly dismantling her defences and restoring her capacity to trust. The character of Alex exemplifies the efficacy of compassion and comprehension in facilitating healing and providing a secure sanctuary for those who need it. Through the lens of his relationship with Katie, Sparks probes into the themes of forgiveness and acceptance and the capacity to find love and happiness after suffering a loss.

The ancillary characters in *Safe Haven* each have a vital part in the narrative, contributing to the novel's overall depth and complexity. Katie's next-door neighbour and good friend, Jo, lends her a sense of community and support while also serving as a source of direction and inspiration on the path to being her best self. In addition, Kevin, Katie's abusive ex-husband[41], represents the dark past that she is trying to escape, which contributes to the tension and suspense of the story. The relationships between these people shed light on the significance of human connection and friendship, as well as the influence of others in one's development and recovery.

In addition, the novel's character development and general vibe are influenced by its location, the sleepy seaside community of Southport in North Carolina. The tight-knit community is a background for the characters' experience, offering a sense of safety, belonging, and potential for new beginnings. The contrast between the individuals' emotional troubles and the picturesque scenery along the seaside produces a one-of-a-kind sense of optimism and rejuvenation. In the story, Sparks addresses themes of healing, trust, and the redeeming power of love via the well-developed individuals who populate the story. Katie's development from an injured and guarded person into someone who can now accept love and locate a safe haven illustrates the human ability for growth and resilience. The interactions between the characters shed light on the significance of compassion, forgiveness, and the assistance of others in the community in the recovery process.

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[41] It is only an assumption.

4.2.4. Characterisation in *The Longest Ride*

The characters in Nicholas Sparks' *The Longest Ride* have been painstakingly developed to delve into ideas like love, selflessness, and the interdependence of human lives. Sparks dives at the complexity of relationships, personal fulfilment, and the decisions that define our destinies via the storylines of Ira, Sophia, and Luke. The investigation of these issues is given greater breadth and coherence by the presence of other characters and by the storylines that weave in and out of one another. Characterisations created by Sparks urge readers to reflect on the lasting power of love and the influence of our actions on our own lives and those around us.

Ira Levinson, an older man who is involved in an automobile accident, acts as a conduit for narrative and introspection throughout the novel. Ira's character displays the maturity and insight that comes from having lived a whole life via the recollections and talks he has with Ruth, who has since passed away. Ira's story gives some historical background while delving into topics such as everlasting love and sacrifices for the people we care about. By his character, the reader is prompted to reflect on the breadth, depth, and duration of relationships and the influence these connections may have on our lives.

Sophia Danko, who is now a college student and aspires to work in the field of art conservation someday, is symbolic of youth, ambition, and the search for personal satisfaction. Despite appearing on opposite tracks in life, she feels immediately attracted to Luke Collins, a professional bull rider. The development of Sophia's character entails her negotiating the complexity of relationships and the trade-offs that must be made between pursuing personal goals and falling in love. Sparks explores the impact that topics like self-discovery, following one's passions, and the difficulties of making sacrifices for love may have on our lives via the character of Sophia.

Luke Collins, a charismatic and dogged bull rider, exemplifies the importance of never giving up and working hard to achieve one's goals. His character investigates the challenges of pursuing one's ambitions, including the dangers and sacrifices required, and the tensions that might occur when those aims conflict with love

relationships. The story told by Luke offers new perspectives on resoluteness, bravery, and the delicate balancing act that must be maintained between the pursuit of one's own happiness and love commitment.

The connectivity of the characters' lives throughout generations is brought to light in *The Longest Ride* via parallel storylines told from the perspectives of Ira and Sophia/Luke. These narratives also demonstrate how love and experiences are unaffected by the passage of time. Sparks investigates the concept that the decisions made by one generation might have repercussions on the lives of the generations who come after them. The overlapping narratives foster a feeling of continuity and highlight how critical it is to honour our history and consider lessons while planning for the future. In addition, supporting characters like Ruth Levinson, Luke's family, and Sophia's friends contribute significantly to the story by offering advice, counsel, and conflicting perspectives. These characters provide an additional layer of depth to the investigation of topics and function as a driving force in the protagonists' growth and development.

In *The Longest Ride*, Nicholas Sparks explores concepts of love, sacrifice, and the highly well-developed connectivity of characters. While Sophia and Luke's characters investigate the complexity of relationships and the quest for personal satisfaction, Ira's character embodies the experience and maturity that comes with age and the unwavering strength of love. The intertwined storylines highlight the significance of previous events in determining present-day decisions and relationships.

4.3. From Dialogism to Estrangement Effect and Intertextuality

As a literary theory, dialogism emphasises the significance of conversation within a piece of fictional writing. It gives the impression that the author, the characters, and the reader have dialogue throughout the work (Lodge, 1985). Dialogism is an essential component that contributes to the development of the characters and the environment in the novels *The Longest Ride* (2013) and *The Notebook* (1996) by Nicholas Sparks. The conversations that the story's two central protagonists, Sophia and Luke, have

with one another in The *Longest Ride* are utilised to illustrate the individuals' distinct personalities and the varied contexts of their lives. In contrast to Luke, who is a bull rider and hails from a less affluent family, Sophia is a student of art history and comes from a financially secure family. Their discussions illuminate the disparity between their goals and ideals, and the fact that they are forced to engage with one another enables them to pick up new perspectives from one another.

Likewise, the dialogues between the two central characters in *The Notebook*, Noah, and Allie, are plied to illustrate the characters' personalities and depict how their love develops throughout the story. Their banter is intelligent and light-hearted, which reflects both their developing fondness for one another as well as the sense of humour they both have. The tone of their interactions gets increasingly severe as the story unfolds, which reflects the depth of the sentiments they are experiencing. Dialogism is one of Sparks' signature literary devices. He employs it in most of his fictional works, mainly in *The Notebook* and *The Longest Ride,* to bring the reader and the characters closer together; seeing as he lets the characters talk for themselves, the reader has the impression that they are participating in the dialogue and that they are gaining a more in-depth understanding of the characters as a result. This brings about a reading experience that is more immersive and helps to engage the reader on an ardent level.

4.3.1. North Carolina in Sparks' Fiction

Nicholas Sparks frequently incorporates the state of North Carolina into his stories and characters' lives. Sparks place many of his stories in the rural and coastal sections of North Carolina, using the state's natural beauty and quaint culture as a background for his storytelling. Many of Sparks' stories are set in North Carolina. The following are a few examples of how the state of North Carolina is portrayed in Sparks' works. The tale of *The Notebook* centres around the love story of Noah Calhoun and Allie Nelson and is set in the fictional town of New Bern, which is based on a city in North Carolina of the same name. The novel succeeds in capturing the spirit of the coastal beauty of North Carolina because it follows the development of Noah and Allie's relationship against the backdrop of the town's riverbank and the natural surroundings

in the adjacent area. Nicholas Sparks paints a realistic picture of the appeal of New Bern, North Carolina, bringing to life the city's ancient plantation mansions, charming streets, and the draw of the river that lies nearby. The town's ambience lends the protagonists' internal journey a sense of depth and richness, which helps establish it as an essential plot component.

A Walk to Remember is the story of Landon Carter and Jamie Sullivan, set in the made-up town of Beaufort, North Carolina. The coastal environment of Beaufort acts as a metaphor for the protagonists' personal development and progression throughout the story. An intimate and romantic setting for the narrative is provided by the picturesque beaches and shoreline of the town, as well as the general atmosphere of a small town. Nicholas Sparks does an excellent job of encapsulating the spirit of Beaufort by offering detailed descriptions of the area's natural beauty and generating feelings of sentimentality and childhood innocence. At a similar pace, Katie Feldman and Alex Wheatley are introduced in *Safe Haven*, which takes place in the fictitious town of Southport, North Carolina, in the state of North Carolina. Katie finds refuge in the quaint seaside hamlet of Southport as she flees her rough past and moves away from her hometown of Southport. Nicholas Sparks has a way of capturing the spirit of a place, and he does so brilliantly in this North Carolina town by evoking its friendly and open vibe, scenic waterfront, and strong sense of community. The city plays a significant role in the narrative and represents optimism, healing, and fresh start opportunities.

Albeit *The Longest Ride* does not take place entirely in North Carolina, the state is represented in several significant ways throughout the story. The work explores two different but intertwined love stories: one is about the love that Ira Levinson had for his late wife Ruth, and the other is about the love that is developing between Sophia Danko and Luke Collins (Ameur-Said & Hamza Reguig Mouro, 2021). The beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina are the backdrop for Ira and Ruth's love tale, which takes place in this state region. The gorgeous surroundings of the state, especially its mountains and farmland, serve as a

background for the emotional journeys of the characters and the investigation of topics such as resilience, sacrifice, and the transformative power of love.

In the literary works written by the American novelist Nicholas Sparks, North Carolina frequently takes on the role of a dialogic character. In selected novels and others, North Carolina is integral to the story's progression and contributes to the overarching themes and feelings portrayed. The varied topography, coastal cities, and rural communities of North Carolina are all integral to the novels' worldbuilding. The state's beaches, rivers, mountains, and quaint little towns are all discussed in the dialogues between the novels' characters and their stories. The distinctive features of North Carolina's landscape serve as a backdrop against which the characters' feelings and relationships may shine through and become more fully realised. Furthermore, North Carolina often serves as a metaphor for something else. For the characters, it is a haven of safety; for instance, in the case of Katie in *Safe Haven*, restoration and metamorphosis. For example, the state's seaside communities might represent a haven, a second chance, or a place to forget the past. By participating in this dialogue, North Carolina adds to the discussion of love, atonement, second chances, and personal development.

The communities that make up the state of North Carolina, be they quaint little villages or tightly knit coastal districts, generate a unique cultural environment that plays a role in the characters' lives. In many cases, the characters' decisions and actions are heavily influenced by the tight-knit communities and the values, customs, and interpersonal dynamics of such communities. The depiction of communal life in North Carolina provides a dialogic interaction that emphasises the significance of relationships, support networks, and the ability to feel as though one belongs. The tone and atmosphere of the stories are determined by the ambience of North Carolina, which is shaped by the state's scenery and inhabitants. The state's environment lends greater depth and dimension to the characters' emotional experiences, whether it is the peace of a seaside town or the natural splendour of the countryside. Reading the book becomes a more immersive experience thanks to the conversational link between North Carolina and the character's feelings, which also helps to improve the storyline.

Dialogism is pivotal in forming the story's plot, characters, and overarching ideas in Sparks' *The Notebook*. In this story, dialogism can be perceived through characters taking part in a significant amount of dialogue, as it is blatant in the dialogues and arguments that they have with one another. Noah and Allie are known to have impassioned conversations during which they share their feelings, goals, anxieties, and ambitions. These dialogues strengthen the bond between the characters and deliver messages about love, dedication, sacrifice, and the intricacies of interpersonal relationships. Their love story is given more nuance and drama because of their struggles and arguments, which form a conversation between the many viewpoints and beliefs each of them holds.

The novel goes deep into the emotions, ideas, and musings of its protagonists and antagonists, establishing a conversational link between their internal conflicts and the world around them. The reader can acquire insight into the characters' motives, doubts, and personal progress through reflective periods throughout the story. The internal monologues serve as a counterpoint to the discussions outside the character's head and contribute to the investigation of topics such as the nature of love, personal decisions, and self-discovery. Besides, the natural environment of the coastal region of North Carolina, which is the setting for the novel, carries on a conversation with the feelings and experiences of the protagonists. The description of the riverfront, the changing seasons, and the exquisite environment develop a conversation with the amorous encounters of the characters, creating a sense of harmony and enhancing the emotional depth of their connection. The majesty of nature acts as a setting for their love story, echoing and amplifying the feelings they already feel for one another.

4.3.2. Estrangement-Effect in *The Notebook* and *The Longest Ride*

The beliefs of Bertolt Brecht, a German dramatist and thinker, are sometimes linked to the idea of an estrangement-effect (alienation effect), which has been increasingly popular in recent years. It is a term that refers to a method employed in theatre and literature to create a feeling of distance or separation between the spectator and the events or people being represented onstage or on the page. The alienation effect spurs critical thinking and a more thoughtful engagement with the text being produced by

preventing the audience from getting emotionally absorbed or unduly associated with the story. This method prevents the audience from becoming emotionally absorbed or overly involved with the narrative (Buchanan, 2006).

It is vital to remember that Nicholas Sparks' writing style generally tries to generate robust emotional responses from readers, and this is the case with the novel *The Notebook*. Sparks' works frequently centre on topics relating to love, romance, and tenderness, and he uses strategies that inspire emotional engagement in the characters and the connections between them. *The Notebook* does not use the estrangement effect because it is defined by Bertolt Brecht, even though some moments in the story may cause a degree of critical distance or introspection. Instead, Sparks' goal is to pull readers into the narrative and completely submerge them in the emotional journey of the characters and the love story they are experiencing.

It is possible to make the case that Sparks' writing style is intended to evoke emotional engagement from readers instead of producing a sense of alienation in the reader. To accomplish this, he makes use of the following strategies. Firstly, the protagonists, Noah and Allie, are crafted by Sparks to be approachable and sympathetic, which enables readers to identify with the characters' aspirations, desires, and challenges. It is much simpler for readers to empathise with the situations that characters go through if the characters themselves are shown to have rounded personalities and a range of feelings. Besides, Sparks makes a point of highlighting the emotional depth of the protagonists' love for one another over the entirety of the story. He captures their profound connection, yearning, and desire to be with one another. He tries to provoke powerful emotions in readers by clearly expressing the emotional highs and lows in the story to bring them further into the narrative.

Furthermore, Sparks makes a point of highlighting the emotional depth of the protagonists' love for one another over the entirety of the story. He captures their profound connection, yearning, and desire to be with one another. Hence, Sparks tries to provoke powerful emotions in readers by clearly expressing the emotional highs and lows in the story to bring them further into the narrative. The novel's narratives

jump back and forth between the present day, when an older Noah is reminiscing about his and Allie's romance, and the past, when Noah and Allie were in the beginning stages of their relationship. This dual narrative provides an additional layer of depth and complexity to the story, generating suspense and emotional resonance as the reader learns how the couple's love has withstood the test of time.

Moving on to the second case study, which is the *Longest Ride*. Similarly, to *The Notebook*, *The Longest Ride* has certain aspects of self-reflection and introspection. However, Brecht's definition of the estrangement-effect is not utilised in the novel in any way. The reader is never meant to feel distant or detached from the story in the book since the author does not attempt to do so on purpose. Instead, it encourages the reader to get emotionally invested in the characters, their connections, and the emotional conundrums they must solve. Sparks creates multi-dimensional characters with characteristics, weaknesses, and goals relevant to the reader. He generates opportunities for readers to sympathise with the experiences of his characters by providing them with insight into the characters' thoughts, feelings, and personal histories of the characters.

The fluctuating love story between Sophia and Luke and Ira's reminiscences of a former love contrasts viewpoints and experiences. This framework for the story heightens the readers' emotional involvement by allowing them to observe the links between the generations and the lasting quality of love. In that sense, Sparks is skilled at creating characters with whom the audience may identify and feel compassion. Readers will be able to empathise with Sophia and Luke and the older couple Ira and Ruth because each of these couples has goals, objectives, and challenges that they face. Sparks urge readers to emotionally invest in their novels by providing multi-dimensional characters that can be identified with by the reader.

Considering this, neither of these novels consciously tries to give the readers a feeling of alienation or disconnection, even though they may provoke readers to think about love, loss, and the passing of time. Instead, they try to elicit robust emotional responses and build a profound connection between the readers and the characters,

letting the readers experience the highs and lows of the tale along with the protagonists. They do not make use of the alienation effect in any intentional way. Instead, the book's purpose is to encourage readers to become emotionally invested in the story by asking them to experience the emotional ups and downs of the characters alongside them and to sympathise with the paths they travel.

4.3.3. Intertextuality

Within the context of a single literary work, referencing, referring to, or drawing links to other literary works is an example of the literary technique known as intertextuality (Bensahla Tani et al., 2021). Before engaging in the intertextual analysis, it is worth mentioning that all of Sparks' novels analysed in this section serve as T1[42] and T2[43] (Hamza Reguig Mouro, 2014); mentioning that Nicholas Sparks' *A Walk to Remember* and *The Fault in Our* Stars (2012) by John Green covers themes of love, grief, and the intricacies of relationships, making them possible sources for intertextual linkages. To boot, the characters from both novels are adolescents who are coping with significant mental or physical challenges. In *A Walk to Remember*, the main character, Landon Carter, falls in love with Jamie Sullivan, a young lady fighting a life-threatening illness. While in *The Fault in Our Stars*, the characters Hazel Grace Lancaster and Augustus Waters face their struggles with cancer while simultaneously falling in love with one another. The common theme of young protagonists coming to terms with their mortality opens the door to intertextual affinity about investigating love and loss in hardship. That is to say, the two stories dive into the subject of young adults' experiences with their first love and the transformational influence that love may have on young people. The relationship that Landon has with Jamie in Sparks' novel and the one in Green's novel between Hazel has with Augustus show the intricacies and the emotional growth that may turn out to have a profound romantic connection with another person. The two novels' scrutiny of love's influence on an individual's maturation and the characters' coming-of-age journeys is another aspect of intertextuality.

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[42] T1 refers to the original text.
[43] T2 refers to the receiving text.

From love to faith, the notions of religion and religious belief are brought into A *Walk to Remember*, most prominently via the character of Jamie. Landon is profoundly influenced by her unshakable commitment to God and her high moral standards. On a similar level, religion is also broached in *The Fault in Our Stars*, but to a far more superficial degree. An intertextual point of reference is provided through the role of faith and its impact on the protagonists' lives. Furthermore, the two stories intend to make readers feel something when they finish them. They delve into concepts such as love, betrayal, and the precariousness of existence. Readers can draw similarities between the effect of the narratives and the cathartic experiences they are evoked to have because of the emotional depth and poignant moments within the stories. This provides the potential for intertextual references.

From John Green to Jojo Moyes, in different ways, Sparks' *The Notebook* can be seen serving as an intertextual reference for Moyes' *Me Before You* (2012). The concepts, narrative structure, and character development in *The Notebook* are used in *Me Before You*, and these elements influence the novel. Firstly, the theme of love is depicted in-depth in the two narratives. In *Me Before You*, the writer focuses on the developing bond between Louisa Clark, a young woman who takes on the role of carer, and Will Traynor, a paraplegic man. The story explores love, human development, and the complexity of relationships, much like Sparks' novels, specifically *The Notebook*. In this latter, Noah and Allie, the protagonists, fall in love despite their very different upbringings. Despite their disparate backgrounds and dispositions, the same story repeats differently in Me Before You; Louisa and Will embark on a significant and life-altering love affair.

The two storylines feature protagonists who undergo significant changes due to their romantic relationships. Through their relationship, Noah and Allie grow and change in *The Notebook*, each learning valuable lessons and uncovering previously unknown facets of themselves. Just as Louisa in *Me Before You* develops a new outlook on life and her potential as she negotiates her relationship with Will, so does she endure substantial personal growth in her own life. The two novels examine the power of love to motivate growth and self-awareness. Moreover, it is worth noting

that both novels, *The Notebook* and *Me Before You* use a parallel storyline. In the first, readers hear Allie, now aged and suffering from dementia, and Noah, now in his 70s, recall their adolescent love affair. Likewise, in *Me Before You*, the narrative is told from both Louisa and Will's points of view. Switching between two perspectives gives the reader a richer grasp of the connections and motivations among the many characters.

Both novels present a catastrophe[44], seeing as the two stories have tragic endings that delve into the nuances of love and the lengths people would go for it. In "The Notebook," Allie's sad separation from her husband, Noah, is precipitated by her inability to identify him due to her advanced age. In "Me Before You," Louisa tries to convince Will to reconsider his plan to terminate his life because of his infirmity. Despite her undying devotion, she was unable to sway his decision. *The Notebook*, *Me Before* You borrows from its themes, structure, and characters to create an intertextual link with Sparks' novel. Readers will gain a greater understanding of the nuances of love and the human experience thanks to the intertextual themes of *Me Before You*.

The Notebook is an intertextual background to Me Before You and The Light Between Oceans (2012), written by M.L. Stedman. Even though this latter and *The Notebook* are two separate in terms of storyline and characterisation, several parallels in both the novels' themes and structures may be studied. The setting of both stories takes place in nearshore regions and lends an air of seclusion and calmness to the reading experience. *The Light Between Oceans* and *The Notebook* are set in tiny coastal towns; however, the first to be mentioned is set on an isolated island off the coast of Australia, whereas the latter is set in a coastal community in North Carolina. The stories are told against the backdrop of the seaside landscapes, contributing to the overall ambience and acting as a backdrop for the storylines as they develop. The Notebook is well-acclaimed for its frame narrative method, in which an older man narrates his previous love story to an aged woman with Alzheimer's. Memory and

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[44] the tragic ending, sometimes called the "denouement," occurs when the protagonist's beloved dies.

narrative are also featured in *The Light Between Oceans* through diary entries and letters that reflect the protagonists' inner thoughts and emotions. Both novels use storytelling strategies to explore the power of memory and its influence on relationships.

The two works revolve around the themes of love and sacrifice. In *The Notebook*, Noah and Allie's love story spans decades and is distinguished by selflessness and enduring dedication. Similarly, in *The Light Between Oceans*, Tom and Isabel's love is tested by their moral quandary about the infant they discover on their lonely island. The two stories examine the depths to which individuals will go for love and their sacrifices to safeguard their relationships. Furthermore, the novels deal with ethical quandaries that test the protagonists' moral compass. When Allie reunites with Noah in *The Notebook*, she is engaged to another man, forcing her to make a tough decision regarding her future. In *The Light Between Oceans*, Tom and Isabel's discovery of a washed-up infant creates ethical dilemmas, and the ramifications of their actions have far-reaching effects. Ultimately, *The Notebook* can be seen as an intertextual reference to *The Light Between Oceans* since both stories explore themes of love, grief, and the moral quandaries that emerge in relationships in one way or another.

Even though Nicholas Sparks is not explicitly mentioned in *Something Borrowed* (2005) by Emily Giffin, the story deals with complicated love relationships and moral conundrums, comparable to how Sparks' novels handle these topics. The subtleties of love, friendship, and one's development as a person are explored here. Even while David Nicholls' *One Day* (2009) does not directly relate to any of Nicholas Sparks' stories, it does make several intertextual connections to Sparks' other works, most notably *The Notebook*. These are only some examples of how Nicholas Sparks' novels have impacted other literary works and functioned as a source of intertextuality. Sparks' focus on love, relationships, and emotional journeys often strikes a chord with readers and writers, which can lead to connections and references in other writers' works.

4.4. Narrative Fragmentation

Nicholas Sparks' novels have common characteristics, such as a focus on romance and drama and, to a certain degree, narrative fragmentation. Within his works, this fragmentation may be seen manifesting itself in a variety of various ways. Firstly, Sparks frequently uses parallel narratives as a storytelling device. In several of his works, he alternates between present-day and historical perspectives. Despite having various protagonists and antagonists, these plots all have something in common, be it a central setting or an important event. The reader is left guessing about the relationship between the two storylines because they are generally intermingled. The plot is made more intricate and exciting using fragmentation. Secondly, Sparks uses a non-chronological presentation of events to add drama. He may begin the story at the narrative's climax, then flashback to early scenes or advance to later ones. He piques the readers' interest and makes them want to determine what is happening. As the reader learns more about the story's background and significance, the emotional impact of pivotal moments might grow.

Moreover, employing several different points of view is yet another example of fragmentation in the narrative style Sparks employs in his books. Throughout the story, instead of relating the events from the perspective of a single character, Sparks frequently switches to relating the events from other characters' views. Through this strategy, the reader can obtain insights into various characters' thoughts, emotions, and experiences, ultimately leading to a more thorough comprehension of the tale. This section will plunge into the different narrative fragments used by Nicholas Sparks, mainly in *The Longest Ride* and *The Notebook*.

4.4.1. Non-linearity in *The Longest Ride*

Nicholas Sparks' *The Longest Ride* is an excellent example of the author's signature non-linear approach to narrative telling, and it is highly recommended. Sparks examines concepts like love, sacrifice, and the interdependence of life via this method of story construction. An in-depth literary examination of the non-linearity in *The Longest Ride* exposes its influence on the reader's engagement, emotional resonance, and thematic exploration of the story's overarching themes. The narrative of *The*

Longest Ride is split into two halves, one in the current day and focusing on Sophia and Luke, and the other in the past and focusing on Ira and Ruth. The novel's non-linear structure generates an air of mystique and anticipation, which helps to keep the reader interested in what happens next. The reader is aware of the links between the two tales from the beginning, and they are fascinated to find out how the two storylines overlap. This disjointed form provokes the reader's active participation in the process of putting together the narrative puzzle, which heightens the reader's interest in the tale and their sense of involvement in it.

The non-linear structure of *The Longest Ride* serves a thematic purpose by examining the parallels and echoes between the two-love tales. This is accomplished with the story's non-linear format. The tale of Ira and Ruth's history, which takes place in the 1940s, focuses on lasting love, the value of sacrifice, and the transformative potential of art. The modern-day narrative of Sophia and Luke delves into topics such as nowadays relationships, the pursuit of professional goals, and the conflict between pursuing one's own goals and one's romantic interests. Sparks investigates how the past may shape the present and how love can be timeless by weaving the two stories together and showing how they are intertwined. Plus, the non-linear structure carefully reveals crucial events and the significance of those moments, which boosts the story's emotional resonance. Sparks establishes a contrast that amplifies the reader's emotional experience by showing moments of both joy and grief from the past and the present. The expectation built up because of the non-linear structure amplifies the effect of critical moments. These pivotal moments expose the links between the two tales, which results in moments of revelation and emotional catharsis.

In *The Longest Ride*, the story's non-linear structure enables a more in-depth examination of how characters grow over time. The reader is allowed to observe the development, decisions, and changes in personality that the characters go through as the story progresses through the many periods of their life. The alternate narratives give insight into the characters' motives, anxieties, and wants, resulting in a more comprehensive and nuanced comprehension of their travels. Sparks encourages readers to sympathise with the characters in the story and to ruminate on the timeless

themes of love, sacrifice, and the search for happiness through this fragmentation in the narrative. Withal, the non-linear structure of *The Longest Ride* helps to contribute to the overall feeling of structural symmetry and balance that the story conveys. The chapters go back and forth between the past and the present, creating a rhythm that mirrors the ups and downs that occur in the lives of the characters and the connectivity between them. This symmetry highlights not only the cyclical aspect of life but also the universal themes consistent over a wide range of ages, and it helps to drive home the point that love and human connection are not bound by the passage of time or generations.

The novel's non-linear form adds weight to examining love and self-sacrifice as a central theme by weaving together two different love tales. The narrative of Ira and Ruth is told against the backdrop of World War II, and it delves into topics such as sacrifice, duty, and the strength of love that lasts. Meanwhile, the narrative of Sophia and Luke examines current difficulties in relationships, career goals, and the effort to combine personal dreams with the commitment to love. The non-linear form adds to the thematic depth by illuminating how the ideas reverberate throughout various historical periods, which helps the reader better understand the story. Furthermore, the non-linear structure creates narrative tension, which requires the readers to go back and forth between the two different tales while anxiously awaiting how the two will eventually converge or cross. As the links become apparent, this tension progressively alleviates, bringing a sense of fulfilment and closure. Because of this, the non-linear technique provides an additional element of suspense to the storytelling, which helps maintain the reader's interest in the narrative and how it is ultimately resolved.

In a nutshell, the non-linear structure of *The Longest Ride* increases reader engagement, allows for the exploration of parallel love stories, delves deeper into the themes of love and sacrifice, heightens the emotional impact, prompts reflection on choices and connections, and generates narrative tension and resolution. Combining these components results in an engrossing reading experience that delves into the universality of love and the connectivity of characters' lives throughout many eras.

4.4.2. The Unreliable Narrator as a Feature in Sparks' Fiction

The unreliable narrator is a literary device in which the trustworthiness and integrity of the story's narrator are called into doubt. This can occur when the narrator's viewpoint, knowledge, or mental condition is damaged, resulting in a skewed or prejudiced account of the events. It is common practice to employ unreliable narrators on purpose to deliberately generate ambiguity, provide a challenge to the reader's interpretation, or increase the level of complexity in the tale (Hansen, 2007). Even though he is not generally considered to be a good example of the use of the unreliable narrator, there are times when Sparks employs specific components in his works that have the potential to produce an unreliable narrative. Nevertheless, it is essential to emphasise that this is not a defining feature of his literature, as it is sometimes misunderstood.

There are a few Sparks' novels in which the reader may doubt the narrator's authenticity. One such illustration may be found in his book *The Notebook*, which was reworked into a successful movie. The narrative is structured around an old guy named Noah, who is speaking to an unnamed listener about a love story from his past. Throughout the book, both Noah's recollections and the stories he tells are capable of being interpreted in a variety of ways. They may be influenced by sentimentality or the passage of time. This provides the reader with additional levels of interpretation and adds an element of doubt over the veracity of his recollections.

Sparks tells the story of *Message in a Bottle* (1999) by using the device of letters found in a bottle as a narrative device. Theresa, a journalist, stumbles across the letters, and after reading them, she becomes fascinated by the author's remarks and decides to investigate the matter more. The letters themselves are personal accounts written by an unnamed figure. Therefore, they might be interpreted as untrustworthy. This ambiguity lends a feeling of mystery and excitement to the tale, prompting readers to speculate about the reality behind the letters and why the author wrote them. Thus, the following subtitles examine the narrator's unreliability in *The Notebook* and *Safe Haven*.

4.4.2.1. The Unreliable Narrator in *The Notebook*

Even though this is not a typical example of a novel with an unreliable narrator, some aspects of the story lead the reader to wonder about the veracity and dependability of Noah's recollections. At the story's beginning, an old Noah tells the story to an anonymous listener staying in the same nursing facility. Because Noah's recollections are filtered via the prism of time and his subjective vision, this narrative style instantly inserts a degree of unreliability into the story. It is essential to distinguish between this and an intentional attempt to deceive or manipulate the reader, which is typically connected with the idea of an unreliable narrator. In other words, this is different.

The fact that Noah is now so old and that so much time has passed casts doubt on the reliability of his recollections. Memory is fundamentally unreliable, and the human mind is susceptible to being swayed by one's preconceived notions, feelings, and the natural process of losing or distorting data as time passes. The reader is aware that Noah's recollections while he is telling his love story with Allie may be tinged by nostalgia, desire, and the inevitable gaps that arise in long-term memory because of the natural ageing process. In addition, Noah's viewpoint is restricted to the events and details he has personally experienced and observed. Allie's voice is missing from the story, which makes her an absent narrator, and the readers are forced to depend entirely on Noah's understanding of what took place. Because the reader is solely privy to one character's viewpoint, the lack of numerous points of view might give the impression that the story's events are not to be trusted.

The emotional gravity of the events recounted in the narrative is another factor that contributes to the likelihood that Noah's account is unreliable. *The Notebook* is famous for the highly sentimental and emotionally charged scenes that it contains. These scenes are known to elicit robust responses from readers. Even if this emotional depth adds to the novel's overall appeal, it raises the question of whether Noah's recollections may be impacted by his emotions, leading to embellishment or idealisation of events, contributing to the book's popularity. Despite this, it is essential to stress that Noah does not come across as intentionally manipulative or dishonest in *The Notebook*, even though the unreliability is portrayed in the story. Instead, this is

because of the inherently subjective character of narrative and the nature of memory itself. Nicholas Sparks takes advantage of this potential unreliability to give depth to the characters and explore issues of love, commitment, and the staying power of memories in his novels.

In conclusion, although *The Notebook* does not have a typical illustration of an unreliable narrator, Nicholas Sparks utilises factors that prompt readers to doubt the trustworthiness and correctness of Noah's recollections. This impression of possible unreliability is contributed to by the fact that the story is emotionally weighty, the framing of the narrative is done via the perspective of an elderly narrator, and no alternative perspectives are presented. Ultimately, this makes the novel more exciting and gives readers a more significant opportunity to connect with the story's themes and characters.

4.4.2.2. The Unreliable Narrator in *Safe Haven*

Using a narrator who cannot be trusted provides an additional layer of depth and complexity to the tale that is told in Sparks' *Safe Haven*. Katie, the main character, is the unreliable narrator in this scenario because both her narration and her view of the events might be skewed owing to the painful experiences she has had in the past and her current emotional state. Sparks develops a tale that keeps readers wondering about the truth via this literary method, addressing themes of trust, self-discovery, and the force of resilience. Katie is a character whose history was marred by toxic relationships and traumatic experiences. Her background is disturbed. Her past has left her with emotional scars, so she is wary of forging new ties with other people. Katie's anxieties, paranoia, and aftereffects of the trauma she experienced in the past continue to cloud her judgment, which might cause her to misinterpret situations and people she encounters. The reader is challenged to question the correctness and dependability of Katie's perspective because of her faulty perception, which adds a layer of confusion and doubt to the tale.

By having Katie give an incorrect account of events, Sparks deftly manipulates the reader's expectations. Throughout the narrative, she delivers the facts in a manner

that, at various moments, encourages readers to create assumptions and draw conclusions based on her biased point of view. Because of this, Sparks can build tension and suspense for his readers since they are unaware of the actual nature of the events and the people. By playing with the reader's expectations, the author may add a layer of mystery to the story and keep the audience interested in discovering the truth. In addition, Sparks can go further into the concepts of trust and self-discovery in *Safe Haven* because of the story's unreliable narrator. When readers question the truth of Katie's views, they are compelled to investigate the prejudices and preconceptions they, too, have. This provokes thought on the nature of trust and the challenges involved in making genuine connections, particularly for those who have been through traumatic experiences. The reader experiences Katie's progressive metamorphosis alongside her as she travels through the novel, learning to trust people, facing her history, and uncovering her inner strength and resiliency.

Furthermore, Sparks uses the unreliable narrator technique to generate narrative diversions and deliver unexpected disclosures in his novels. When the reader is given reason to doubt the veracity of Katie's narration, they are kept on their toes as they seek to determine the gist of the narrative from the provided fragments. The reader is led astray, which increases the story's tension since they are unsure of the characters' motivations and objectives throughout the story. The unreliable narrator ultimately acts as a tool for delivering startling disclosures, testing the readers' ideas, and developing their emotional connection with the tale as it progresses. This occurs when the truth becomes more apparent.

Moreover, the story has several morally ambiguous situations and ethical conundrums due to the existence of an unreliable narrator. Readers must examine their preconceived notions and prejudices as they struggle to trust Katie. The hazy boundaries between fact and fiction provoke thoughtfulness about the intricacy of human nature and the difficulties inherent in making moral judgments in the face of gaps in knowledge. This moral ambiguity lends complexity and philosophical overtones to the novel, and it invites readers to consider the nature of truth and the intricacies of human conduct. In a nutshell, *Safe Haven* uses a narrator who cannot be

trusted to expand the story by injecting uncertainty, manipulating reader expectations, and addressing trust, self-discovery, moral ambiguity, and resiliency as themes. Sparks engages readers in a thought-provoking investigation of the truth, human nature, and the potential of personal development by telling the narrative via Katie's warped point of view.

4.4.3. The Implied Author in Sparks' Fiction

The implied author (IA) is a literary term that refers to the authorial presence or voice that readers infer from a text, as opposed to the work's actual author (Schmid, 2009). This is a different concept from the author of the actual work. The novels by Nicholas Sparks have an implied author who plays a large part in the narrative and substantially impacts the readers' perceptions of the story. Love, fate, second chances, and the significance of personal relationships are only a few of the topics that Sparks' implied author investigates in his works. These ideas, emphasising the value of emotional links and relationships, represent the author's faith in love's rehabilitative and reformative powers. The indicated author's focus on these subjects determines the works' tone and direction, instilling a feeling of optimism and hope despite the protagonists' difficulties.

In Sparks' novels, the implied author tends to create characters with relatable human qualities and frailties. The characters frequently experience personal tribulations, conflicts, and emotional odysseys that resonate with readers. The implied author explores their characters' motivations, anxieties, and development throughout the narrative. The implied author elicits empathy and encourages readers to reflect on their experiences and relationships. Furthermore, the implied author of Sparks' novels attempts to elicit an emotional response from readers. The implied author establishes a strong emotional connection between the characters and the readers using evocative descriptions, genuine dialogue, and poignant moments. Often, the implied intention of the author is to evoke a range of emotions, from happiness and optimism to melancholy and introspection. This emotional resonance is central to Sparks' writing style and contributes to his novels' overall appeal.

In Sparks' novels, the author's implied narrative choices reflect a deliberate effort to engage and maintain the readership's interest. As highlighted previously, the implied author created narrative fragmentation and was intrigued by employing dual storylines, non-linear structures, and multiple perspectives. These techniques are frequently employed to heighten suspense, develop characters, and investigate thematic connections. By employing these narrative choices, the implied author creates a narrative experience that captivates readers and keeps them invested in the unfolding story. Creating a sense of escape is another aspect of the implied author in Nicholas Sparks' novels. Sparks' stories frequently convey readers to pastoral settings and depict idealised romances, providing an escape from the mundane. The implied author's depiction of picturesque landscapes, small-town charm, and impassioned relationships contributes to a sense of escape, allowing readers to escape into a world of romance and emotional fulfilment.

4.4.3.1. The Implied Author in *The Notebook*

When reading *The Notebook*, the reader's experience is profoundly affected and shaped by the presence of an implied author. The reader is led toward an interpretation of the tale consistent with the voice and perspective created by the implied author via various literary devices and thematic decisions. The implied author of *The Notebook* imbues the entire work with a sentimental and mushy air, especially at the novel's conclusion. Sparks has built a reputation as a storyteller who can evoke strong feelings in his audience, and this quality is evident in how the supposed author tells the love tale between Noah and Allie. To illustrate the depth of their connection, the implied author uses metaphors, descriptive language, and emotive imagery. This emphasis on romanticism helps the tale's emotional effect and demonstrates the author's implied goal to evoke a passionate response from the reader. Also contributing to the emotional impact through the use of romanticism as a metaphor for life.

The implied author in *The Notebook* also highlights the significance of memories and the permanence of love. The story's framing device of an older Noah retelling his romance emphasises the power of the past to strengthen bonds. In depicting Noah's recollections as vivid and emotionally charged, the implied author

underlines their enduring influence on Noah's development. By focusing on recollections, the implied author surmises how one's past affects their current and future relationships. The implied author similarly uses the concepts of fate and destiny. Despite their challenges, the story implies that Noah and Allie are meant to be together. This concept of a set course fits with the author's worldview, showcasing how love may endure through time and circumstance. By strongly emphasising fate, the assumed author gives the story a sense of inevitability and increases the emotional impact of Noah and Allie's love story.

In addition, the implied author gives the characters a sensitive touch so that the reader empathises and feels emotionally invested in the story. Both Noah and Allie are presented as approachable and multidimensional persons, each with their own set of advantages and disadvantages as well as emotional intricacies. The implied author's thorough characterisation of the characters encourages the reader to feel emotionally connected to the protagonists' lives and to cheer for their love to triumph over hurdles in the story. However, it is essential to point out that the implied author in *The Notebook* also gives a picture of love and relationships that is somewhat romanticised and more traditional. The implied author intends to reinforce gender stereotypes by having Noah be the strong provider and protector while Allie is presented as the object of desire. This component of the implied author's creation might be criticised for supporting traditional gender norms and restricting the representation of relationships, which are possible grounds for criticism.

4.4.3.2. The Implied Author in *Safe Haven*

When analysing Nicholas Sparks' *Safe Haven*, one may look at the use of the implied author in several different ways. The narrative mode and tone of the author that is suggested in *Safe Haven* are reflective of the approach that Nicholas Sparks often takes. Sparks' fictional works frequently have a mixture of romantic and sincere narratives, primarily emphasising love, sorrow, and personal development. The narrative voice in *Safe Haven* is often soft and sentimental, emphasising the emotional journeys that the characters go on and the power that human relationships have. The development of a sense of emotional closeness is one of the distinguishing

characteristics of the implied author in Nicholas Sparks' works. In *Safe Haven*, and throughout the story, the implied author plays a crucial part in the formation of the characters and the progression of their lives. Characters that Nicholas Sparks writes about are usually likeable despite having flaws and going through significant changes in their lives. Characters like Katie, Alex, and Jo go through emotional development throughout *Safe Haven*, confront their previous traumas, and find redemption through love and self-discovery.

The implied author is a master at developing genuine people who are easy to empathise with. Everyone in the story has a unique personality, contrasting qualities, intricacies, and complexities. The characters' histories, including their traumatic experiences and anxieties from the past, are explored in depth by the author, who is only suggested. This attention to detail humanises the characters, making them more approachable to the readers and further deepening their involvement with the tale. The pleasure of reading *Safe Haven* is further improved by the implied author's use of ambient descriptions throughout the story. The reader is brought into the novel's world with vivid descriptions of the seaside location, the town of Southport, and the natural landscapes in the immediate vicinity. With rich sensory imagery, the implied author can conjure a feeling of location, generating a background that contributes to an increase in the narrative's emotional resonance. The implied author expertly combines tension and suspense, two staples of Sparks' work. The indicated author keeps the reader interested and committed to the tale with careful pacing, foreshadowing, and surprising plot twists. The author's deft exploitation of narrative tension amplifies the novel's emotional resonance.

In a nutshell, the "implied author" of Nicholas Sparks' *Safe Haven* makes use of a wide variety of literary devices and narrative choices to mould the emotional landscape of the story, construct genuine characters, communicate thematic themes, and produce a reading experience that is exciting and interesting to the readers. Thus, the readers are asked to investigate the transformational power of love, to think on themes of redemption and forgiveness, and to get emotionally immersed in the

journeys that the characters take through the story because of the skilled narration that the author suggests.

4.4.3.3. The Implied Author in *The Longest Ride*

The dependence on emotional and romanticised concepts of love in The *Longest Ride* is one of the noticeable characteristics of the implied author in this piece. Sparks frequently portrays romantic relationships as heroic and all-consuming, emphasising heroic actions and selfless contributions. Although this strategy could strike a chord with confident readers who enjoy reading about love portrayed in a more idealised light, it also runs the risk of coming across as formulaic and unoriginal. The implied author tends to focus on the idealised parts of love, which may cause them to ignore the intricacies and struggles those genuine relationships experience, which may cause the story to lack depth and authenticity.

In addition, the implied author in The Longest Ride depends on cliches and archetypes throughout the story. Characters frequently behave in ways that are expected of them, which can perpetuate gender stereotypes and lead to predictable story arcs. The male protagonist Luke exemplifies the image of the rugged and risk-taking cowboy. At the same time, Sophia, the female heroine, portrays the paradigm of the clever and creative lady who is first averse to falling in love.

Although these types of characterisations are frequent in romance fiction, they can be perceived as restricting and lacking in complexity, which may lessen the story's effect and the characters' capacity to be related. In addition, the implication that the author relied on serendipity and coincidences to drive the storyline raises issues about the plausibility and originality of the novel. The readers' ability to suspend disbelief will be tested when Ira and Ruth's tale intersects with Luke and Sophia's story, which is connected through a fortuitous encounter and a sequence of letters. Using destiny and fate as driving factors in the narrative might give the impression that it is manufactured and take away from the feeling that the story is realistic.

Moreover, the implied author's handling of several subjects in *The Longest Ride* may be seen as one-dimensional and needing more depth by the reader. While

the novel does touch on topics such as sacrifice, personal growth, and the pursuit of passion, it does so in a manner that could be more predictable and concise. The implied author's treatment of these subjects tends to be shallow, depending on stock conclusions and cliches. Some readers may be left with the need for a more detailed and thought-provoking treatment of these subjects if this method is taken. To conclude, A close reading of Nicholas Sparks' *The Longest Ride* exposes the implied author's skills and faults. While the author's talent to weave touching tales may win over romance novel readers, it also begs issues about the story's originality, depth, and plausibility. Clichés, sappy depictions of romance, and formulaic story beats may turn off readers who prefer more complex and thought-provoking literature.

4.4.3.4. The Implied Author in *A Walk to Remember*

The implied author in *A Walk to Remember* possesses several abilities, including the capacity to construct a personal and emotive story. In Sparks' novel, the story is told from the first-person perspective of the protagonist, Landon, who recalls the happenings as a student at the high school where the story is set. This approach in the narrative enables readers to relate on a more personal level with Landon's thoughts, feelings, and development as a person. The tale can successfully generate a wide variety of feelings in the readers, from happiness and optimism to melancholy and heartbreak, which causes the story to connect with the readers on an emotional level.

In addition, the implied author investigates atonement and inward metamorphosis concepts. The story traces Landon's development throughout the novel, beginning when he is a defiant and self-absorbed adolescent and ending when he is a more sensitive and empathic adult. Through his interactions with Jamie, the protagonist's love interest, the suggested author demonstrates the significance of love and its influence on a person's growth and development as a character. The implied author's examination of these subjects enables readers to think about their own lives and relationships, generating a sense of reflection and empathy. However, there are problems with how the implied author carried out their work. The somewhat romanticised image of Jamie as a holy and heavenly character is one of the criticisms that has been levelled. The author may intend for Jamie to be portrayed as an

unwavering light of virtue and purity, yet this might appear unreal and unduly romanticised. This representation of Jamie's character may restrict the richness and depth of her personality, turning her into more of a symbol or archetype than a fully formed human.

In addition, one may argue that the implied author's approach to religion and faith is heavy-handed and didactic. The work heavily uses Christian ideas and principles, with Jamie's steadfast faith as an essential character component. Exploring religious issues is not necessarily problematic; the implied author's approach might appear preachy and straightforward, potentially turning off readers with different religious or philosophical ideas. Withal, the implied author employs a conventional narrative framework for romances, with Landon and Jamie's relationship progressing through phases of early hostility, subsequent understanding, and final love. This predictability might lessen the effect of some plot twists and may cause the whole tale to appear formulaic and devoid of surprises. It can also make certain plot twists less surprising.

In conclusion, the results of an in-depth critical study of the implied author in *A Walk to Remember* reveal a complex evaluation. There are flaws in the execution of the novel, even though the implied author effectively creates an intense and poignant story that delves into themes of human development and atonement. The story's lack of depth and complexity may be due, in part, to its romanticised representation of the people, it is heavy-handed handling of faith, and its predictable plot structure. In the end, readers who enjoy Sparks' typical combination of romance and themes of human growth may find *A Walk to Remember* intriguing, whilst other readers may want a more nuanced and thought-provoking study of these issues.

4.5. Diegesis

Diegesis is the term used to describe the universe that the author of a work of fiction creates, including the settings, characterisation, and events (Porter, 1997). Diegesis is an essential component of Nicholas Sparks' novels, playing an essential part in the narrative's construction and the reader's engagement. Examining the diegesis in

Chapter Four: From North Carolina with Literature

Sparks' novels shows several important characteristics worthy of consideration. The fictional worlds Nicholas Sparks creates in his books frequently involve quaint villages, seaside settlements, or stunning landscapes. These locations instil a feeling of comfort and familiarity yet also stir up a certain sense of melancholy. The author's detailed description of the setting draws the reader further into the narrative and strengthens their emotional investment in the characters and the events. The sexual relationships and emotional odysseys portrayed in the novels frequently use the locations as a background for their development.

In Sparks' novels, the diegesis is inhabited by characters with backgrounds and goals relevant to the reader. Characters who frequently exhibit flaws and have several dimensions, as well as battle with personal issues and make progress, are frequently presented by the author. The diegesis is more immersive when complex characters are developed, and this helps the reader empathise with the trials and tribulations endured by the characters and the changes they go through. Furthermore, characters with sympathetic histories and goals may populate the diegesis in all of Nicholas Sparks' novels. The author frequently shows imperfect and multi-dimensional individuals who are engaged in the process of human development and struggle. The diegesis can become more immersive when characters are given greater depth, which helps readers empathise with the experiences, predicaments, and changes that the characters go through.

The diegesis of Sparks' novels is designed to elicit powerful feelings in the readers of stories. The author uses several storytelling methods, such as vivid descriptions, emotional conflicts, and heart-breaking moments, to evoke an emotional reaction from the listener. The diegesis aims to transport the reader into the world of the characters and make them feel as though they have a personal stake in all the ups and downs, they experience. Furthermore, Sparks' diegesis generally creates a balance between realism and romanticism. There is a sense of idealised romanticism and happy ends, even though the locations and people may have a sense of authenticity and be relevant to the reader. Love is shown to be a transformational force in the diegesis, capable of mending scars and bringing about human progress. Although this

idealism may be reassuring and appealing to readers, it also risks being perceived as unduly simple and divorced from the realities of the actual world.

In a nutshell, in his works, Sparks delves with reoccurring emotive topics like love, grief, forgiveness, and redemption through the medium of the novels' diegesis. These themes are intertwined throughout the storyline and have a role in determining the paths taken by the characters. The diegesis allows readers to reflect on their own experiences and feelings, enabling them to connect with the universal elements present in human connections.

4.5.1. The Diegetic World of *The Notebook*

The diegesis of *The Notebook* features a dual narrative structure, which is one of the most noticeable aspects of the story. In the novel, the narrative shifts back and forth between the present day, when Noah and Allie are now older, and the past, where they reflect on their teenage love affair. This dual narrative establishes a multi-tiered diegetic universe by weaving the past and the present together. As a result, the reader can see the development of the characters' relationships and the effect of time. By contrast between the two timeframes, the diegesis can elicit feelings of melancholy, yearning, and the everlasting strength of love. A little seaside town in North Carolina, which serves as the location of the diegesis, also plays an integral part in the novel's narrative. The detailed descriptions of the town and the surrounding countryside help the lovely and wistful ambience. The diegetic world of the little town nearly becomes a character, offering a feeling of place and helping to build a connection between persons and their environments. Plus, the environment elevates the story's already romantic undertones and bolsters its central message of a love that is both enduring and unending.

Moreover, the storytelling is further enhanced by utilising narrative techniques within the diegesis. It is possible to have a more in-depth understanding of the characters' thoughts, feelings, and recollections using flashbacks, personal letters, and entries from the characters' diaries. These narrative methods establish an intimate connection between the reader and the characters, paving the way for a more thorough

comprehension of their experiences and the forces that motivate them. The narrative's emotional depth and sense of authenticity are expanded due to the diegesis' incorporation of these aspects. Love and memory are investigated as the story occurs in its realm. The diegesis emphasises the ability of love to be independent of both time and memory. The dual narrative format allows for depicting the characters' everlasting love as a force that spans decades, with their shared memories and feelings continuing to impact their lives. The diegesis stresses the importance of memory in relationships and draws attention to the influence that the past has on the present.

The diegetic world's emotional impact on the characters is essential to *The Notebook*. The purpose of the diegesis is to elicit a variety of feelings in the listener or reader through its meticulously created narrative parts. The tale has a more serious and profound effect on the reader's emotions due to the immersive quality of the diegetic environment and the passionate conversation and emotional problems. The reader is immediately transported into the life of the characters, where they feel the characters' happiness, grief, and yearning.

4.5.1.1. The Narrator in *The Notebook*

The narrator of *The Notebook* is a character within the narrative, making them an example of an intradiegetic narrator. It turns out that the person serving as the narrator is an earlier version of Noah, one of the main protagonists. He discusses the happenings and recollections of his history, including his connection with Allie during the time. Noah is an example of an intradiegetic narrator, which means he is personally involved in the tale and gives insights into his own experiences as well as the feelings he is experiencing. In addition, the narrator is considered homodiegetic since he participates in the events described as the protagonist. Throughout the narrative, Noah, who serves as the narrator, discusses his own experiences, recollections, and emotions. This subjective narration reflects Noah's ideas, feelings, and comments about his previous relationship with Allie.

It is essential to point out that although the perspective of the narration is predominantly homodiegetic and intradiegetic, there are times in the story when it

turns to an extra-diegetic or heterodiegetic perspective. These moments are interspersed throughout the novel. These instances take place in the portions set in the present day, in which Noah, in his role as an old narrator, offers comments on his own experiences and engages in conversation with the reader. These occurrences produce a degree of separation from the diegesis, producing a layer of contemplation and introspection on the part of the character. On the other hand, most of the story of *The Notebook* is told from Noah's point of view, both from an intradiegetic and homodiegetic perspective.

4.5.2. The Diegetic World of *A Walk to Remember*

A Walk to Remember takes place in the fictional North Carolina community of Beaufort, which serves as the story's primary location. The novel's diegesis brings to life a vivid and evocative location, affecting the characters, their interactions' dynamics, and the theme's overall investigation. The town is known for its peacefulness, location on the shore, and singular allure and personality. The diegesis depicts Beaufort as a small town with a strong sense of community, where everyone knows their neighbours and respects long-standing norms, beliefs, and practices. The feeling of familiarity and warmth that permeates the narrative is aided by the fact that the town is on the smaller side and has a more intimate environment.

In addition, the realm of the diegetic universe encompasses not only the geographical location of Beaufort, but also specific locales found inside the city itself. The interactions between the individuals, as well as the progression of the plot, take place against significant backgrounds, such as the local high school, the church, the shoreline, and the neighbourhood coffee shop. The diegesis establishes a feeling of a place through its specific descriptions, enabling readers to form an image of the town and the landscape around it. Withal, the diegetic universe of *A Walk to Remember* addresses not only the physical location but also the social and cultural features of Beaufort and its physical surroundings. The diegesis strongly emphasises family and community's role in the protagonists' lives. The tight-knit nature of the community is portrayed through the town's social activities, such as school festivities and community get-togethers, in which the characters congregate and build relationships.

The diegetic environment reflects the community's core beliefs and customs and serves as a background for the characters' struggles with morality, personal development, and other obstacles.

Moreover, the diegetic universe investigates many aspects of faith and spirituality as central themes. The town of Beaufort is shown as having a considerable religious presence, and the church plays an important part in the lives of the many individuals throughout the story. The diegesis goes on topics such as faith, redemption, and the influence one's beliefs may have on their travels. The spiritual and theological underpinnings of the novel's universe play a role in the development of the characters, the difficulties they face, and, ultimately, the work's overarching message. Overall, the universe where A Walk to Remember takes place provides the feeling of a cosy small town filled with a sense of community and values that run deep. Diegesis allows readers to experience the lives of the characters and the thematic undercurrents of the novel by immersing them in the setting of Beaufort through its thorough descriptions, focus on specific locales, and investigation of social and cultural factors. This allows readers to feel as though they are there in Beaufort. The emotional and spiritual journey of the characters is set against the backdrop of the diegetic universe, which provides a narrative experience that is both rich and interesting for the audience.

4.5.2.1. The Narrator

The narrator of *A Walk to Remember* is extra-diegetic since they[45] do not live inside the tale's universe and do not take part as a character in the happenings the narrator recounts. The narrator is an independent third party who relays the events of the tale objectively, shedding light on the lives of the individuals and the circumstances in which they find themselves. This may be demonstrated by employing a narrative voice that is in the third person and is distinct from the characters' points of view. In addition, the narrator is a heterodiegetic figure since they do not play a role as the protagonist or a participant in the narrative. The events and personalities are presented

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[45] The use of they is on purpose, as the gender of the narrator is unknown.

to the reader from an outsider's perspective, making the narration objective. The narrator is aware of what the characters are thinking, feeling, and doing, but the narrator does not share the same experiences as the characters.

It is vital to point out that the primary focus of the narration in *A Walk to Remember* is not on the narrator's perspective but instead on the actions and feelings of the individuals in the story. This is something that the reader should keep in mind. Throughout the narrative, the narrator maintains a dispassionate and impartial stance, remaining outside the action yet telling what happened.

4.5.3. The Diegetic World of *Safe Haven*

The diegetic world of *Safe Haven* produces an engaging and immersive environment that helps the narrative and thematic analysis of the novel. The diegesis transports readers to the town of Southport by immersing them in the decadent richness of its descriptions, the specificity of its settings, and the complexity of its social interactions. This enables readers to experience the lives of the characters as well as their paths to self-discovery and redemption. A narrative experience that is both rich and evocative is provided by the diegetic environment, which acts as a backdrop for the emotional and transforming arc of the story. The town of Southport is a crucial character in the fictional universe of *Safe Haven*, which the show represents. The diegesis paints a picture of Southport as a tranquil and picture-perfect community, one in which the splendour of nature, particularly the sea and the scenery all around it, plays a significant role in the events. In contrast to the internal struggles and obstacles that the protagonists must overcome, the scenery creates a calm and almost enchanted ambience for the story.

In addition, the sites inside Southport that play an essential role in the narrative are investigated within the diegetic world. These places include the house where the main character, Katie, lives, the local grocery shop, the beach, and the heart of town. Each location plays a vital role in establishing a feeling of place and serves as a backdrop for the interactions between the characters and the story's progression. Through evocative descriptions, the diegesis brings these settings to life, allowing

readers to imagine the town and its surroundings. Additionally, the diegetic environment explores the physical setting, the social dynamics of Southport, and the actual area itself. The social structure of the diegetic narrative's universe emphasises concepts such as connection, trust, and the efficacy of interpersonal interactions.

In addition, the diegetic universe investigates rehabilitative and redemptive themes throughout its narrative. The town of Southport becomes a haven and a place of change for the characters, allowing them to leave their painful histories behind and begin over. When coupled with a community that is encouraging and supportive of one another, the surrounding natural beauty acts as a stimulus for personal development and emotional well-being. The diegesis draws attention to the healing potential of love, forgiveness, and the pursuit of happiness.

4.5.3.1. The Narrator

The narrator of *Safe Haven* is extra-diegetic since they[46] do not live inside the tale's universe and do not take part as a character in the happenings the narrator recounts. The narrator is an independent third party who relays the events of the tale objectively, shedding light on the lives of the individuals and the circumstances in which they find themselves. This may be seen by the fact that the story is told in the third person, using a voice distinct from the characters' points of view. In addition, the narrator is heterodiegetic since they neither take part in the tale's events nor take the protagonist's role. The events and characters are presented to the reader from an outsider's perspective, making the narration objective. Although the narrator is aware of the characters' ideas, emotions, and actions in the story, the narrator does not share the same experiences as the characters.

It is essential to consider that the primary emphasis of the narrative in *Safe Haven* is not on the narrator's unique point of view but on the characters' actions and feelings. The narrator stays relatively distant and objective for the entirety of the story,

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[46] They refer to the narrator because the gender is unknown.

which allows for a more in-depth look at how the events in the diegetic universe are playing out.

4.5.4. The Diegetic World of *The Longest Ride*

The narrative of Sophia, a college student, and Luke, a professional bull rider, is told from the perspective of a timeline in which the action takes place in the current state of North Carolina. The diegesis paints a picture of the modern world of rodeos and ranches and the ambience of a small town like Winston-Salem[47]. The diegetic universe creates a compelling setting for Luke's passion and work by immersing readers in its vivid descriptions of the rodeo circuit's sights, sounds, and challenges. This provides a dynamic background for Luke's passion and career. In addition, the setting investigates the complexities of a current relationship and the effect of family, job goals, and personal sacrifices.

The second plotline of the fictional universe takes place in the past and focuses on the romance between Ira and Ruth. It is told against the backdrop of universe War II and the years following the conflict. The primary settings for the historical component of the diegesis are the rural landscapes of North Carolina and the art world of New York City. The diegesis conjures up the era's ambience, including the conflict's effects, the social mores, and the artistic landscape. The diegetic world investigates concepts such as selflessness, enduring love, and the capacity of art to bridge the gap between generations through the lens of this historical context.

A deeper narrative resonance is produced due to the connectivity of these two tales inside the universe of the diegetic narrative. Sophia and Luke, the protagonists in the current day, learn about the love story of Ira and Ruth, which is disclosed through Ira's collection of letters and is influenced by this love tale; how the past and the present interact adds depth to the investigation of love, sacrifice, and the enduring strength of relationships as a central theme. The diegetic universe links these distinct eras, emphasising timeless ideas that transcend generations. In addition, the universe of *The Longest Ride* investigates the value of art and the capacity of various forms of

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[47] A town in North Carolina.

creative expression to evoke and communicate a range of feelings. Ira, an art collector, and Ruth, an artist, contribute significantly to the fictional universe's creative component. The tale is given more depth by the elaboration on the enjoyment of art as a method of communication and emotional expression, as well as by the descriptions of Ruth's artwork. The diegesis highlights the transformational potential of art and its capacity to express messages and emotions in a way that goes beyond words.

4.5.4.1. The Narrator

The narrator of *The Longest Ride* is extra-diegetic since they do not live inside the story's universe and do not take part as a character in the happenings that the narrator is recounting. The narrator is an unknown third party who relays the events of the tale objectively, shedding light on the characters' lives and the circumstances in which they find themselves. This is made clear because the story is told from a third-person perspective, distinct from the characters' points of view. Furthermore, the narrator is considered heterodiegetic since they[48] neither take part in the tale's events nor take the protagonist role. Everything in the story is presented to the reader from an outsider's lens, making the narration objective. Albeit the narrator is aware of the characters' ideas, emotions, and actions in the story, the narrator does not share the same experiences as the characters.

4.6. Sparks' Fiction Between Imitation and Individual Talent

The essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919) by T.S. Eliot is a significant and influential piece of writing that questions traditional views of creativity and the artist's role in tradition. It was written as part of Eliot's "The Waste Land" collection. The essay was written by Eliot and published in 1919 during tremendous artistic and cultural upheaval. In it, Eliot attempts to rethink the notion of originality while also asserting the significance of tradition in creating new works of art (White, 2007).

Eliot argues that art must not be seen exclusively as a reflection of the artist's uniqueness. He argues that a vast network of previous literary works, cultural

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[48] They refer to the narrator because the gender is unknown.

traditions, and the collective awareness of humankind impacts an artist's creative process. Every new piece of creative work, in Eliot's view, functions as an "imperfect medium" since it bears the legacy of previous artistic endeavours, therefore reshaping and reinterpreting them. In this view, the artist is not a singular genius but a conduit through which tradition is filtered and updated. In other words, the artist is not an isolated genius (Koppes, 1978).

Eliot argues that the artist's goal is not merely to copy or imitate what has come before but rather to engage in a process that he calls "depersonalisation". To do this, the artist must rise beyond their unique experiences and ego and take on an objective and impersonal position. When an artist takes this approach, they open themselves up to the influence of tradition and permit it to shape their work. Therefore, it is not the artist's job to proclaim their singularity; instead, it is the artist's responsibility to continue conversing with the collective's aesthetic history, through which tradition is refined and updated (Perloff, 2005).

Eliot contends that the artist's capacity to effectively connect with history and contribute to the evolution of art is contingent on their awareness of their own historical and cultural context. This understanding is necessary for the artist to engage with tradition properly. He strongly emphasises the relevance of knowledge and education in providing the artist with the ability to recognise the significance of works created in the past and to incorporate those works into their own creative endeavours meaningfully. In this way, the artist gets integrated into a broader artistic community and actively contributes to that community's development (White, 2007).

"Tradition and Individual Talent" by Eliot may also be interpreted as encouraging artists to interact with tradition critically and create new ways of addressing it. It enables artists to realise and accept their place within a greater artistic continuum while at the same time encouraging them to bring their distinctive viewpoints and ideas to the table. The article written by Eliot emphasises the fluid and ever-changing character of tradition, implying that the artist possesses the potential to reanimate and reinterpret it in a manner that is uniquely their own (Jabbur, 2010).

Chapter Four: From North Carolina with Literature

The works of fiction by Nicholas Sparks strike a careful balance between imitation and original genius. The author constructs tales that rely upon common motifs and story structures but injects them with his distinctive voice and point of view, creating a work of fiction that strikes this delicate balance. A deeper look uncovers aspects of Sparks' particular skill that set him apart as a writer, even though some people believe his works lean toward copying, adhere to the formulaic narrative, and rely on predictable clichés. Despite these claims, Sparks' fiction can be distinguished from the work of other authors thanks to the unique characteristics of talent.

Sparks' novels centre on topics such as love, sorrow, and second chances, and they resonate with readers because they investigate emotional relationships and the events that humans go through. There is a possibility that critics would say that Sparks' ideas are only sometimes original because they are regularly investigated in a variety of other literary works. Sparks shows his distinctive genius in executing these ideas and the depth to which he explores them. One of the things that sets Sparks' writing apart and makes his work stand out is his ability to develop vivid and approachable characters. Sparks creates multifaceted characters that go through the processes of personal development and change by having them go through the problems, hopes, and goals that they have. Sparks imbues his characters with distinct histories, motives, and emotional depths, which enables readers to connect with the journeys that his characters are on, despite the fact that the motifs of star-crossed lovers, wounded souls seeking forgiveness, and small-town romances may appear to be expected.

In addition, Sparks uses unique locations throughout his tales to heighten the emotional effect of his characters' experiences. His choice of locales produces a feeling of place that contributes to the emotional resonance of his storytelling. Whether it is the coastal cities of North Carolina, the quaint charm of tiny settlements, or the haunting beauty of natural landscapes, his choice of locations invokes this sense of place. Sparks' storytelling is given an additional layer of depth and personality by how he weaves together his characters' geographical settings and inward journeys. The narrative framework Sparks uses in his stories is another facet of his writing,

demonstrating his unique talent. He uses flashbacks, multiple narratives, and other non-linear storytelling techniques to build tension and intrigue in his works, even though they frequently follow a standard sequential path. These storytelling strategies add new levels of complexity and surprise to the story, which keeps readers interested and anxious to discover the full extent of the story's meaning.

Nicholas Sparks' fiction straddles the line between imitation and original genius, fusing well-known themes and frameworks with the author's distinctive writing style and point of view in each of his stories. Sparks demonstrates his distinct genius via the deft creation of characters, intriguing locations, and complex narrative decisions he makes. While some aspects of imitation may be present, this is not true. These components elevate his writing beyond simply copying and allow it to captivate readers with the emotional depth and universal issues it explores. Sparks is recognised once again as a gifted storyteller working within popular fiction because of his distinctive writing style and capacity to connect profoundly emotionally with readers.

4.6.1. A Postmodern-based Fiction

In several ways, Nicholas Sparks' novels are postmodern in that it shares many traits and concerns with the postmodern literary movement. Postmodernism is a literary and cultural movement that originated in the middle of the 20th century and questions canonical concepts like truth, reality, and the linearity of narrative. Sparks' storytelling strategies, deconstruction of conventional genres, and examination of first-person experience are all postmodern touches in his literature. One of how Sparks' literature is compatible with postmodernism is that it features non-linear narrative structures. Many of his books throw off the conventional course of the storyline because he uses non-linear storytelling techniques such as various timelines, flashbacks, and fragmented narratives. Sparks urges readers to question the stability of time and memory and to embrace a more fragmented and subjective perception of reality by attacking the concept of a fixed and stable narrative framework. Sparks does this by challenging the notion of a fixed and stable narrative structure.

Exploration of subjective experiences and the relative nature of the truth is yet another postmodern component that can be found in Sparks' writing. The inaccuracy of individual viewpoints is brought into sharp relief because his characters frequently struggle with their own interpretations of past events, memories, and feelings. This focus on subjectivity is reminiscent of postmodernism's preoccupation with the fragmentation and plurality of truth and the realisation that one's perception of reality is frequently shaped by the filters of one's personal history and culture. In addition, Sparks frequently blurs the borders between numerous genres within each pieces he creates. His novels are frequently characterised as romance or popular fiction; nevertheless, they also contain aspects of other genres, such as mysteries, suspense, and even magical realism in some of their plots and characters. This merging and hybridisation of genres reflects the postmodern inclination to challenge standard genre differences and produce narratives that defy classification—the postmodern tendency to challenge traditional genre distinctions and create narratives defying categorisation.

Moreover, Sparks' literature questions the validity of conventional dichotomies, such as love and hatred, good and evil, and truth and fiction. He frequently investigates the intricacies of human relationships and emotions, creating ethically ambiguous people who resist standard categorisations in his writing. Sparks encourages a more complex and varied perspective of human experiences by subverting binary differences. This aligns with the postmodern rejection of absolute facts and rigid categories. The postmodern concern with metafiction and self-reflexivity is frequently reflected in Sparks' fictional works. Metafiction refers to embedding comments and self-referential elements into a piece of fiction (Hutcheon, 1989). Occasionally, Sparks includes self-aware aspects, such as characters recognising their roles as characters in a tale or commenting on the storytelling process. Other times, Sparks includes components that are not self-aware. These instances of self-awareness shatter the illusion of a continuous narrative and encourage readers to consider the text's created origins as a source of possible confusion.

4.6.1.1. *The Notebook* as a Postmodern Fiction

As a postmodern literature, *The Notebook* questions canonical story arcs, delves into the relative nature of truth, dissolves distinctions between fact and fiction, and upends conventional ideas of romantic love. The novel's narrative decisions and thematic development reflect postmodern concerns about the fluidity of truth, the adaptability of memory, and the complexity of human experience. In its multifaceted and fractured depiction of reality, *The Notebook* is emblematic of the postmodern inclination to subvert conventional storytelling techniques.

The narrative structure of *The Notebook* puts it in line with postmodernism. The work is structured around a narrative device in which an old Noah Calhoun tells his love tale to a lady he has never met in a nursing facility. This metafictional approach adds a reflective dimension to the story by making storytelling a significant plot point. The novel questions the idea that there is a single, objective reality by using numerous layers of storytelling to do so. Furthermore, *The Notebook* probes into how truth and memory are very contextual. As Noah's memory of events changes with the passage of time and his own biases, the novel explores concerns regarding the stability and malleability of memory. Different memories of the same events are held by Noah and Allie, who provide more evidence of the subjective nature of memory. Postmodern worries about reality's fluidity and relative nature find resonance in this investigation of individual experience and the diversity of truth.

In addition, *The Notebook* challenges the distinction between the "real world" and the novel's fictional universe by blurring the borders between the two. The novel takes place in a little village that appears perfect in every way, making the reader feel nostalgic and idealised ideas of the past. The limits between the real and the fantastic are blurred, creating a surreal experience. Withal, *The Notebook* subverts traditional ideals of romantic love by providing a nuanced and realistic representation of relationships instead of an idealised portrayal of them. Instead of conforming to the typical happy-ever-after storylines, the novel addresses topics such as sacrifice, devotion, and the messy truths of love. This postmodern inclination to confront and

dismantle established tropes and expectations is reflected in the rejection of idealised love narratives.

4.6.1.2. Exploring Postmodernism in *A Walk to Remember*

As a postmodern work of fiction, *A Walk to Remember* questions canonical storytelling conventions, probes reality's relative nature and destroys static ideas of romantic love and personal identity. The novel's non-linear storytelling, focus on first-person perspectives, and rejection of romantic cliches are all hallmarks of postmodernism, which is preoccupied with the mutability of truth, the fallibility of memory, and the complexity of human experience. With its multifaceted and fractured depiction of reality, *A Walk to Remember* is a postmodern novel in the best sense.

A Walk to Remember challenges stereotypical views of romance and individuality. The work questions standard romantic tropes and offers an intricate portrait of love that goes beyond simple generalisations. Contrary to popular belief, Landon and Jamie's connection flourishes past their early preconceptions. The story challenges standard conceptions of love by substituting a more nuanced and realistic picture for simplified and romanticised ones. Additionally, this novel uses postmodern concepts like metafiction and self-reflexivity. The novel acknowledges its fictitious nature and places significant emphasis on the process of storytelling. Landon's internal monologues about his past and the act of recounting his narrative produce a self-awareness within the text that forces the reader to consider the function of storytelling and the fictionality of the novel.

The storyline of *A Walk to Remember* fits in with postmodernism in several ways. In this novel's parallel narrative, Landon Carter reflects on his time with Jamie Sullivan and his life. The non-linear form throws off expectations for a continuous story by severing ties between events. The novel's use of numerous timelines and disjointed recollections reflects the postmodern preoccupation with the subjective and fractured character of human experiences. Moreover, the story also probes the relative nature of truth and recollection. Landon Raises Questions about the veracity and interpretation of recollections by retelling his connection with Jamie, which is

coloured by his viewpoint and bias. The novel discusses the frailty of memory and the importance of one's perspective in forming an interpretation of events. Postmodernism's rejection of absolute truth and dogmatic interpretation makes a natural fit with this investigation into the relative character of reality.

4.6.1.3. Analysing Postmodernism through *Safe Haven*

Safe Haven questions canonical storytelling conventions as a piece of postmodern fiction, delves into the relative nature of truth, and toys with established ideas of personhood and the world. The work exemplifies postmodern concerns about the mutability of truth, the malleability of identity, and the tangled link between fiction and reality through its disjointed narrative structure, investigation of subjective experiences, and engagement with intertextuality. Like many postmodern works, *Safe Haven* poses more questions than it answers, presenting a fractured, complex picture of the human experience and the nature of reality.

The ideas of self and reality in *Safe Haven* are twisted in surprising ways. As Katie adopts a new identity to escape her past, the novel questions the validity of permanent labels. As Katie's history catches up with her and pushes her to face the truth, the story blurs the lines between fact and fiction. The story challenges traditional conceptions of identity as stable and cohesive by presenting a protagonist who struggles with her sense of self and questions the legitimacy of her identity. In addition, the novel deals with postmodern concerns like multiple interpretations and introspection. The novel's allusions to other works of literature and popular cultures, such as classics and contemporary works of fiction, provide additional depth and prompt readers to question the nature of fiction and reality. Postmodernism's inclination to challenge and deconstruct canonical narratives and cultural allusions may be seen in this intertextual approach.

The narrative framework of "Safe Haven" is consistent with postmodernism. The work uses alternating points of view, mainly between Katie, the protagonist, and the other characters. This disjointed narration not only shows the subjectivity and variety of reality but also breaks the conventional linear course of the plot. The novel

portrays postmodern anxiety over the fluidity and subjectivity of reality by offering contrasting accounts of the same events. *Safe Haven* also probes the relative nature of reality and recollection. Katie's idea of who she is and what prompted her to seek sanctuary in Southport gets shattered as she delves deeper into her history and faces her violent relationship. The novel raises doubts about the veracity of recollection and the influence of individual experience on one's perception of reality. Postmodernism's rejection of objective truth and its tolerance of individual interpretation is consistent with this investigation of subjective experiences.

4.6.1.4. The Postmodern Face of *The Longest Ride*

Nicholas Sparks' *The Longest Ride* may be seen as a postmodern work of fiction because it questions canonical storytelling conventions, examines the relative nature of reality, and upends commonplace ideas about love and time. Thematic and narrative decisions made in *The Longest Ride* are indicative of postmodernism. The narrative structure of *The Longest Ride* is consistent with postmodernism. The work features a dual narrative, switching between the perspectives of two spouses throughout centuries. Ira and Ruth, a couple from the past, and Luke and Sophia, a couple from the present, give contrasting points of view that question the idea of a continuous story. The novel's use of many timeframes and disparate narratives reflects the postmodern preoccupation with the subjective and fragmented character of human experiences.

Furthermore, *The Longest Ride* investigates how one's perspective influences reality and memory. Memory and its interpretation are called into doubt as Ira recalls his past with Ruth in this story. The subjective aspect of memory is emphasised by the fact that the characters' recollections are coloured by their viewpoints and prejudices. This investigation of subjective experiences and the diversity of truth reflects postmodernism's scepticism towards definitive meanings and objective reality. Furthermore, *The Longest Ride* dismantles standard conceptions of affection and duration. The novel aims at romanticised and oversimplified depictions of romantic love by depicting nuanced and deep relationships. The characters struggle with difficulties in human connection, conflict, and sacrifice. Additionally, blending past

and current narratives suggests that love and human experiences are not limited by the strictures of linear time.

Intertextuality and self-reflection in *The Longest Ride* are also postmodern themes. Art, especially the paintings of Marc Chagall, are woven throughout the story, adding depth and prompting readers to reflect on the link between fiction and reality. Postmodernism's inclination to challenge and deconstruct canonical narratives and cultural allusions may be seen in this intertextual approach.

4.6.2. The Revival of the Classics

Using various narrative approaches and the in-depth investigation of various issues, Nicholas Sparks' novels bring back familiar literary elements and topics. Sparks integrates aspects that are evocative of ancient literature while simultaneously blending them with his modern sensibility into his works, which range from tragic love stories and coming-of-age narratives to Gothic romance and dual storylines. In addition to paying respect to the eternal appeal and lasting themes in great literary works, these revivals provide readers with a new and interesting viewpoint on the subject matter.

The Notebook takes its cues from works of traditional romantic literature, especially in the genre of heart-breaking love tales. Sparks uses aspects evocative of Shakespearean tragedies, such as star-crossed lovers and the notion of forbidden love. One of the themes that Sparks explores is forbidden love. The book conjures up a feeling of love that has stood the test of time, harkening back to the concepts of enduring passion seen in other works such as *Romeo and Juliet*. In addition, the usage of a framed narrative, in which an old Noah is heard narrating his history to a lady who remains nameless, is reminiscent of the literary tradition of storytelling and reminiscing seen in classics such as "Wuthering Heights" and "Great Expectations."

The coming-of-age story[49] is a literary subgenre that is frequently found in works of classic literature. *A Walk to Remember* is a contemporary example of this type of story. The novel is reminiscent of famous bildungsroman books like *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Catcher in the Rye,* delving into topics such as self-discovery, personal development, and the loss of innocence. Sparks' infusion of moral teachings and the investigation of faith and spirituality reveal a profound link to many traditional coming-of-age novels' moralistic and philosophical themes. This is especially true of Sparks' novel, *A Walk to Remember*, which follows a young woman navigating adulthood's challenges.

The essential elements of the Gothic romance genre[50] are brought up to date in the novel *Safe Haven*. Sparks writes in a manner that is evocative of traditional Gothic fiction in that it has aspects of mysticism, suspense, and the supernatural. The protagonist is a solitary woman looking for sanctuary, while the story's protagonist is a gloomy man. The setting of the tale is a little village with dark secrets. These motifs are connected to traditional Gothic novels such as *Jane Eyre* and *Rebecca*. Sparks adds complexity and interest to the romance tale while addressing themes of atonement and self-discovery with the Gothic heritage, which he brings back into fashion.

The dual-narrative structure, common in older works of literature, is given new life in *The Longest Ride*, which celebrates the resurgence of this literary trope. Sparks weaves together the tales of two spouses who lived in separate eras, recalling the spirit of books such as *Wuthering Heights* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. This kind of storytelling enables the juxtaposition of themes and the investigation of parallel lives, both of which contribute to the overall enhancement of the tale. In addition, the story *The Longest Ride* tackles ageless topics such as love, sacrifice, and the complexities of

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[49] The protagonist of a coming-of-age story goes through a period of development and self-discovery as they go from childhood to maturity. Typically, the story will focus on the protagonist's development via a series of trials, tribulations, and defining moments (Klein, 1992).

[50] Gothic romance was born in the late 18th century and peaked in the 19th. Gothic and romantic characteristics define it. Gothic romances often include gloomy settings, supernatural themes, powerful emotions, and a focus on human nature's evil side (Waldman, 1984).

human relationships, resembling the emotional depth and universal appeal frequently seen in great literature.

Nicholas Sparks' novels, such as *The Notebook, A Walk to Remember, Safe Haven* and *The Longest Ride*, demonstrate a rebirth of traditional literary features and themes. Sparks pays respect to classic literature by infusing it with his distinctive style and modern sensibilities, which he does through the storytelling tactics and thematic inquiry he employs in his works. In each of these works, there is a resurgence of a classic, which will be the focus of this literary examination.

4.7. Conclusion

The literature of Nicholas Sparks bridges the gap between postmodernism and classicism by including characteristics of both schools of literary thought. His works frequently utilise traditional storytelling techniques and topics while posing questions to conventional narrative structures and investigating the relative nature of reality.

Sparks' fiction maintains a solid relationship to classicism by adhering to conventional aspects of narrative construction. His works often have a linear narrative structure with specific cause-and-effect links, which reflects the traditional concept of a plot that has been carefully created. Sparks embraces eternal themes like love, grief, redemption, and the complexity of human relationships, reoccurring themes in classic literature. These themes are also prevalent in Sparks' works. In addition, the literary principles of traditional narrative are echoed in his use of emotional depth, sympathetic people, and situations that evoke strong feelings.

On the other hand, Sparks is known for incorporating postmodern concepts into his works of fiction. Using methods like fragmented tales, numerous points of view, and non-linear storytelling, he casts doubt on the reliability of conventional story frameworks. This tinkering with narrative structure reflects postmodernism's preoccupation with the relative nature of truth and the varied points of view that might be held. Sparks' writing frequently explores the difficulties of memory, perception, and interpretation, obscuring the distinctions between fact and fiction. This investigation of one's personal experiences is consistent with postmodernism's

general scepticism regarding predetermined meanings and the existence of an objective world.

The literature that Nicholas Sparks has written might be interpreted as a combination of postmodernism and classicism. His works are connected to the great literary canon because they deal with enduring topics and convey stories using tried-and-true methods. While doing so, Sparks adds postmodern aspects by subverting narrative norms, investigating the relative nature of reality, and participating in intertextuality. Sparks can write emotionally powerful novels that appeal to a wide variety of readers thanks to the merging of traditional and postmodern aspects in his writing.

General Conclusion

Postmodernism is a literary movement that originated in the middle of the 20th century as a reaction against what was believed to be the limitations and deficiencies of modernism. It is distinguished by its scepticism towards big narratives, rejection of objective facts, and stress on fragmentation, intertextuality, and self-reflexivity, all of which are defining characteristics. The development of postmodernism as a literary movement resulted in considerable changes to the narrative strategies, topics, and the dynamic between the author, the text, and the reader in literary works.

Postmodernism questions the reliability and authority of language by highlighting the arbitrary nature of language and the crucial role it plays in the formation of meaning. The signs and symbols that make up a language can be manipulated and reinterpreted in various ways. Some authors take risks with language by introducing novel vocabulary or linguistic constructions. When compared to preceding movements like modernism and enlightenment, postmodernism denies the idea of a universal truth or overarching narrative (such progress, rationality, or historical determinism). Postmodernism rejects unified explanations and places value on alternative points of view and the relative autonomy of truth.

Nicholas Sparks, a renowned American novelist, is one of the contemporary time most read authors. Albeit his novels are too romantic, yet, this does not exclude them from postmodern, existential and dialogic touches. *The Notebook* is told in the form of a framed narrative. The main character, an older man, is the narrator of the story, and he is recalling his former love story. Because the reader is aware that the tale is being told in the form of a recall, this kind of storytelling includes a degree of self-reflexivity in the narrative. Furthermore, memory is the central theme of this book, as is the inherently subjective quality of everyone's recollections. Memory plays an important role in the novel, as does the protagonist's ability to make stories about what happened, which demonstrates how one's memories may influence how one remembers certain situations. Withal, the narrative that the narrator is telling muddles the distinction between the actual events that transpired in the past and the idealised interpretation of those events. This results in a reality-fiction interaction. A minor

component of postmodernism is the dissolution of clear distinctions between reality and fiction.

A Walk to Remember subverts the preconceived notions that people have about the major characters. In the novel, Landon and Jamie, both of whom are teens, have quite different socioeconomic origins, yet they develop a bond with one another. The novel analyses and challenges conventional beliefs about people's positions in society as well as societal expectations via the lens of a romantic relationship between two characters. Moreover, the work addresses topics such as personal development, atonement, and metamorphosis via its narrative. Because of his involvement with Jamie, the main character, Landon, goes through a transformation that has a huge impact on his personality. Some postmodern notions are consistent with this emphasis on personal development as well as the investigation of one's own subjective experiences.

Safe Haven is told from a dual narrative perspective, switching back and forth between Katie and Alex's points of view during the course of the story. This method presents a few distinct points of view on the happenings, giving the reader the opportunity to connect with the narrative from a variety of vantage points. Although postmodernism is frequently associated with this method, it is not the only context in which it may be used as a narrative technique. The reader is left with some unanswered questions about the pasts of the many people in the book, notably Katie, who comes from a mystery family. A sense of ambiguity and numerous interpretations, which are commonly linked with postmodernism, can be produced by this aspect of unreliability. To be clear, the amount of unreliability in *Safe Haven* is not nearly as strong or purposefully unsettling as it is in other postmodern works; this is an essential point to keep in mind. The characters' pasts and the events unfolding in the present are intertwined in *Safe Haven* using flashbacks and allusions. This dialogue between the past and the present reflects the characters' pasts and the ways in which they affect their present. The use of flashbacks in "Safe Haven" is more in keeping with classic storytelling strategies, in contrast to the time jumps and non-linear narrative structure frequently associated with postmodernism.

The Longest Ride is constituted of two love tales, one set in the present and one in the past, which are woven together throughout the narrative. This kind of storytelling enables for parallel plotlines to be presented, providing a variety of viewpoints on romantic love. This strategy is not exclusive to postmodernism, however, and may be seen in a variety of other literary traditions as well. There are allusions to several forms of art throughout the book, most notably the contemporary art world and the character Ira's own creative endeavours. The way in which art and life interact with one another not only gives the plot more complexity but also examines topics of creativity and self-expression. The depiction of art in *The Longest Ride* does not question or disrupt existing traditions in a way that is often associated with postmodernism. This is even though postmodern literature frequently interacts with the idea of art and life becoming more indistinguishable from one another.

In his works, Sparks strives to create believable and approachable people, and he believes that language is a key component in accomplishing this goal. His works feature discussions that try to recreate the natural rhythms, emotions, and subtleties of human speech. Sparks achieves his goal of creating a sense of authenticity in his work by using genuine language, which enables readers to interact with the characters as if they were having talks with one another in real life. Sparks uses conversation to investigate and communicate the thematic components that are present in his works. He dives into subjects such as love, relationships, faith, and personal development via the conversations that his characters have with one another. The characters are given the opportunity to discuss their experiences, engage in philosophical contemplation, or exchange contrasting points of view through the medium of dialogue, which in turn adds a layer of complexity to the novel's examination of its central theme.

Characters in Nicholas Sparks' works may have unconscious drives and desires, which in turn shape the choices they make and the acts they do. Although not overtly analysed from a psychoanalytic point of view, one may argue that the investigation of characters' internal struggles and secret aspirations does in fact touch upon the concept of unconscious psychological forces at work in the story. Furthermore, throughout the course of his works, Sparks frequently depicts

individuals who go through periods of personal development as well as emotional rehabilitation. Although it is not expressly defined in psychoanalytic terms, the concept of personal transformation might be tied, at least indirectly, to the therapeutic process of psychoanalysis, which is where individuals work through their emotional concerns and acquire insights into their own psyche.

Characters in Nicholas Sparks' novels frequently go through periods of self-improvement and development because of the changes brought on by new relationships and experiences. This voyage of self-discovery may touch upon issues of authenticity if it focuses on the characters' desire for meaning, purpose, and a real understanding of who they are as individuals. Furthermore, through narrative that is both sincere and personal, Sparks strives to forge emotional bonds of connection between his readers and his characters. Although it does not directly address the issue of existential authenticity, the focus on real feelings as well as sincere professions of love and vulnerability, may resonate with the concept of authenticity in human experiences. Withal, Sparks' stories include protagonists that defy cultural standards, expectations, or external constraints to find love and pursue their own personal happiness. This rejection of complying to cultural norms and expectations can be regarded as a reflection of individual authenticity and the departure from traditional pathways, which can be seen as a departure from conventional paths.

Overall, the novels and short stories written by Nicholas Sparks are often intensely emotional and centre on themes such as love, relationships, and personal development. His books almost always contain likeable protagonists who struggle with the complexity of romantic relationships, and they are frequently situated against the backdrop of quaint little villages or scenic scenery. Sparks' storytelling aims to portray the essence of human connections and the transformational power of love, and it does it through evoking powerful emotions in the reader. His writings may not go into profound philosophical or experimental terrain, but they provide readers an emotional and immersive experience, addressing themes of hope, forgiveness, second chances, and the persistence of love in the face of obstacles. While his works may not

be considered deep intellectual or experimental area, they do offer readers a heartfelt and immersive experience.

> "I love you. I am who I am because of you. You are every reason, every hope, and every dream I've ever had, and no matter what happens to us in the future, everyday we are together is the greatest day of my life. I will always be yours. "
>
> **Nicholas Sparks –** *The Notebook*

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