

ARTISTIC AND POETIC FUNCTIONS OF THE RETROSPECTIVE METHOD IN NOVELLAS**Toshpo‘latova Zarina Hakim kizi**1st-year Master’s student, Uzbek Language Education
Asian International University**ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the artistic and poetic functions of the retrospective method in novellas as an important narrative technique in modern prose. Retrospection is analyzed as a compositional and aesthetic device that enables authors to expand temporal boundaries, deepen psychological characterization, and enhance semantic richness within a compact narrative form. The study focuses on the role of retrospection in revealing characters’ inner worlds, structuring the plot, and creating emotional and symbolic layers through the interaction of past and present. Special attention is given to the subjective nature of retrospective narration and its connection with memory, perception, and narrative perspective. The findings demonstrate that the retrospective method performs multiple artistic and poetic functions, contributing to thematic coherence, narrative dynamism, and philosophical depth. The thesis concludes that retrospection remains a relevant and expressive narrative strategy in novellas, reflecting the complexity of human experience and the aesthetic potential of prose fiction.

Keywords

retrospection, novella, narrative technique, artistic function, poetic function, memory, narrative structure.

INTRODUCTION

In modern literary studies, increasing attention is paid to narrative techniques that shape the artistic structure and semantic depth of prose works. Among these techniques, retrospection occupies a special place, particularly in short novels and novellas, where limited narrative space requires expressive and multifunctional compositional devices. Retrospection, understood as a deliberate return to past events within a narrative, serves not only as a structural element but also as a powerful artistic and poetic tool [1].

In novellas, the retrospective method allows the author to expand temporal boundaries and reveal the inner world of characters more fully. By shifting the narrative focus from the present to the past, writers are able to uncover the psychological motivations, emotional experiences, and formative moments that influence characters’ current actions and decisions [2]. This technique enhances narrative complexity and deepens the reader’s interpretative engagement with the text.

From a poetic perspective, retrospection performs several important functions. It contributes to the integrity of the plot, ensures thematic coherence, and creates a multilayered temporal structure within the narrative. Through retrospective episodes, authors often contrast past and present, reality and memory, thereby intensifying emotional tension and reinforcing the central idea of the work [3].

Such temporal shifts also allow writers to manipulate narrative rhythm, slowing down or accelerating the storyline depending on artistic intention.

Scholars emphasize that retrospection in novellas is closely connected with subjective narration and memory-based storytelling. The retrospective narrative often reflects the character's personal perception of reality, where memories are selectively reconstructed rather than objectively reproduced [4]. This subjective dimension transforms retrospection into a poetic device that expresses nostalgia, regret, loss, or moral reflection, enriching the aesthetic value of the text.

At the contemporary stage of literary development, the retrospective method is widely used to explore identity, historical consciousness, and individual experience. Its artistic and poetic functions in novellas demonstrate the flexibility of narrative form and the capacity of prose to convey complex temporal and psychological realities [5]. Therefore, the study of retrospection as a narrative technique remains a relevant and significant task in literary criticism.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the artistic and poetic functions of the retrospective method in novellas, focusing on its role in character development, plot construction, and aesthetic expression.

MAIN BODY

The retrospective method occupies a central position in the artistic structure of novellas, serving as an effective narrative tool that enhances both poetic expression and semantic depth. Due to the compact nature of novellas, authors often rely on retrospection to overcome temporal limitations and to present complex character development within a relatively short textual space. By revisiting past events, the narrative gains additional layers of meaning that would otherwise remain inaccessible in a strictly linear storyline [1].

One of the primary artistic functions of retrospection in novellas is the revelation of character psychology. Retrospective episodes allow authors to disclose formative experiences that shape a character's present behavior, worldview, and emotional state. Through memories, flashbacks, or internal monologues, the reader gains insight into the motivations and inner conflicts of characters. This technique is particularly effective in portraying psychological tension, as past traumas or unresolved experiences often resurface at critical moments in the narrative, influencing present actions [2].

In addition to character development, retrospection plays a significant role in plot construction. By interrupting chronological narration, authors create a fragmented temporal structure that reflects the complexity of human memory and perception. Such narrative fragmentation intensifies intrigue and encourages active reader participation, as the audience must reconstruct the sequence of events and establish causal relationships between past and present [3]. In this sense, retrospection transforms the reader from a passive observer into an active interpreter of the text.

From a poetic standpoint, the retrospective method contributes to the emotional and aesthetic richness of novellas. Retrospective passages often carry a heightened lyrical tone, marked by nostalgia, regret, or longing. These emotional nuances deepen the artistic impact of the narrative and strengthen

its expressive power. The contrast between past and present—frequently idealized memory versus harsh reality—serves as a poetic device that amplifies thematic tension and reinforces the central message of the work [4].

Another important poetic function of retrospection is the creation of symbolic meaning. Past events recalled in the narrative are rarely presented as neutral facts; instead, they are symbolically charged and selectively reconstructed. Objects, places, and moments from the past often acquire metaphorical significance, representing lost innocence, broken hopes, or moral turning points. Through retrospection, such symbols become integral components of the narrative's artistic system, contributing to its semantic coherence [5].

Retrospection in novellas is also closely linked to narrative perspective. Frequently, retrospective narration is filtered through the subjective consciousness of a character or narrator. This subjectivity introduces elements of unreliability, as memories may be distorted, idealized, or suppressed. However, rather than weakening the narrative, this subjectivity enhances its poetic value by reflecting the fluid and fragmentary nature of human memory. The retrospective method thus becomes a means of exploring not only events but also the process of remembering itself [6].

At the structural level, retrospection allows authors to manipulate narrative tempo. By slowing down the narrative through detailed recollections or accelerating it through brief flashbacks, writers control the rhythm of the text. This rhythmic variation prevents monotony and maintains reader engagement. In many novellas, key retrospective moments are strategically placed at emotional or thematic turning points, reinforcing the dramatic structure of the work [7].

Furthermore, the retrospective method serves an important ideological and philosophical function. By juxtaposing past and present, authors invite reflection on themes such as identity, time, moral responsibility, and the consequences of human actions. Retrospection enables the narrative to address broader existential questions without abandoning its focus on individual experience. In this way, the novella transcends its limited scope and attains universal significance [8].

In contemporary literary practice, retrospection has become an essential means of representing historical and personal memory. Novellas that employ retrospective techniques often explore the relationship between individual destinies and historical processes, revealing how personal memories intersect with collective experience. This aspect is particularly relevant in works dealing with social transformation, cultural identity, and historical trauma.

Overall, the retrospective method in novellas performs multiple artistic and poetic functions: it deepens character portrayal, enriches narrative structure, enhances emotional expressiveness, and strengthens thematic unity. Its effectiveness lies in its ability to integrate temporal shifts into a cohesive artistic whole, transforming memory into a dynamic narrative force.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the retrospective method plays a significant artistic and poetic role in the narrative structure of novellas. As demonstrated in the analysis, retrospection serves not merely as a compositional technique but as a multifaceted artistic tool that deepens psychological characterization,

enriches plot construction, and enhances the aesthetic expressiveness of the text. Through deliberate temporal shifts, authors are able to overcome the structural limitations of the novella genre and present complex inner worlds within a condensed narrative form.

The study confirms that retrospection contributes to the creation of a multilayered temporal structure, allowing the interaction of past and present to shape meaning and emotional intensity. By engaging memory, subjectivity, and symbolic representation, the retrospective method strengthens thematic coherence and invites the reader to actively participate in the interpretative process. Moreover, retrospection enables writers to explore universal philosophical issues such as identity, time, moral responsibility, and the relationship between personal experience and historical reality.

Thus, the retrospective method in novellas fulfills essential artistic and poetic functions, transforming memory into a dynamic narrative force. Its continued use in contemporary prose highlights its relevance and expressive potential, making retrospection a key object of study in modern literary criticism.

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