**THE IMAGE OF A NARRATOR IN *HARD TIMES*   
BY CHARLES DICKENS**

**Agata Buda**

**Introduction**

Narration constitutes one of the most crucial elements of a novel. It takes different shapes and varieties influencing the creation of the characters and a reader. Narration is a factor that makes a literary work a coherent whole. Roland Barthes calls a literary work one huge sentence while analyzing it in the context of narration itself (Barthes, 2004, p. 18). According to Sławiński, narration in a novel consists of the words that play an important role, even more important than words in poetry (Sławiński, 1998, p. 123). It is a thing including scenes, action, life material and literary figures (Sławiński, 1998, p. 122). These elements are presented in a novel with the use of narration. For Hughes narration is not only a group of words or a sequence of events, but it is above all, understanding the words in a particular logical way (Hughes, 2002, p. 119).

1. **Different concepts of a narrator**

While analyzing narration it is crucial to look at the figure of a narrator. Perceiving the narrator frequently influences understanding the whole novel and the image of a reader. According to Jasińska (1987, pp. 101- 102), a narrator is the figure that differentiates a novel from a drama; he is an indispensable element of a prose structure. As Markiewicz claims after Wolfgang Kayser (1984, pp. 76- 77), a narrator is a role that is created by an author for himself. Sławiński, on the other hand, sees a narrator as a great semantic figure which is presented – together with a plot, a hero and a reader - on a non-sequential and non-linear level, contrary to the content of the work, presented in a linear way (Sławiński, 1998, p. 151). For Głowiński, a narrator is a figure that comes from the same world as the characters and has a limited awareness (Głowiński, 1968, p. 29).

Following the thoughts by Barthes, the question *who is a narrator?* is worth analyzing. According to the academic, there are three concepts of a narrator. The first one is a narrator identified with an author, the second one presents a narrator as an impersonal consciousness – the figure being both inside and outside the world of the characters. Finally, the third one is the image of a narrator who speaks on behalf of the characters and knows exactly what they know (Barthes, 2004, p. 41). Undoubtedly, this is one of many possibilities of analyzing the figure of a narrator. Another idea by Barthes is also worth pointing out – the academic claims that irrespective of a kind and a character of a narrator, he is always a “paper” person from a reader’s point of view (Barthes, 2004, p. 42). This idea seems to be in accordance with the idea proposed by Głowiński that a narrator belongs to the world of the characters.

Due to the fact that there exist numerous aspects helpful in analyzing the figure of a narrator, the analysis can appear as the process of exploring various spatial dimensions. One of the major criteria here can be the space between the work and the reader, which is the way of the narration. As Markiewicz claims, there should be two narrative sources distinguished here: spoken and written narration (1984, p. 81). While analyzing a novel, one should particularly concentrate on a written narration, which can occasionally take the form of a spoken narration[[1]](#footnote-1).

According to Jasińska, the concept of a narrator should be analysed in terms of the premises referring to the character of a speaking person. The academic distinguishes then two kinds of a narrator: an abstract one, who realizes narration in the third person, and specific one, who realizes narration in the first person. It is also crucial to take into account presence or absence of such elements as: gender, nationality, faith. They can influence the figure of a narrator in a particular way (1987, p. 101)[[2]](#footnote-2).

Such analysis of a narrator is also connected with perceiving him from another spatial point, which is a narrative perspective. The narrator’s personality can be analysed linearly (beliefs, cultural conditioning), but the point of view from which he realizes narration process cannot be seen linearly, due to its changeability. As Dąbrowski claims, a narrative perspective means a position from which the story is told. It can be the position of an omniscient narrator, a narrator with a limited knowledge or a narrator - protagonist (1995, p. 88). One should agree with the opinion by Marta Skwara (2008, p. 14) who sees narration as a problematic question. She claims that there is no innocent narration. Every person telling a story takes a particular point of view and organizes it according to his own plans and views in order to produce conclusions that can be verbalized.

Irrespective of multifaceted character of the novel, it is worth looking at these narration indicators, that emphasize numerous distinctive features of a particular literary work. One of the most popular ideas concerning narration analysis is the one by Stanzel. The division he made in the area of telling a story constitutes a clear and in-depth analysis, as well as accurate notional methods.

According to Stanzel, defining the way a story is told is a basis of every analysis of narration techniques (1980, p. 247). The academic distinguishes two kinds of presenting a story in a novel: telling (account) and theatrical presentation (1980, p. 248)[[3]](#footnote-3). Undoubtedly, a narrator’s account from the time perspective influences a reader in a different way than a presentation. The account provides a reader with an impression that he gets knowledge from an indirect source, while presentation influences senses and feelings stronger[[4]](#footnote-4). Stanzel distinguishes three different narrative situations which exploit these two types of telling; these are authorial, first-person and personal narration (1980, pp. 252- 253).

Stanzel claims that an authorial novel is one of the most popular types of prose. It contains a narrator who not only comments on the events but also he himself is subjected to interpretation; on the basis of his comments, a reader creates his own vision about a narrator. An authorial narrator is located between the world of a novel and the real world. He differs from the author of a novel because he knows less than a writer. This kind of a narrator is an independent figure who frequently uses humour and irony but he is still trustworthy. He directs the process of telling, he is between the events and a reader, his presence is perceptible (1980, pp. 254- 260). Hughes states that such kind of an authorial narrator is typical for realistic novels (2002, p. 152). Płachecki wider comments on this kind of narration. He claims that this narrator is a main creator of the character’s features shown in the story. The narrator’s personality is presented mainly due to his comments on such factors as culture, society and human nature (1982, p. 88).

Płachecki also distinguishes strong and weak authorial narration. The difference lies in the distinctiveness of a narrator. In the strong authorial narration a narrator dominates over the characters and comments on their actions. In the weak version a narrator rarely presents his opinion and comments on the events. Nevertheless, as the academic points out, in both strong and weak kinds of narration, telling (account) dominates over theatrical presentation (1982, pp. 88- 89). In Dąbrowski’s opinion, authorial narration is the most popular in the nineteenth- century novels. The academic emphasizes that the Stanzel’s theory deriving from the English theory of a novel, is in fact ahistorical, so it can become a universal source of novel analysis (1995, p. 84).

Apart from the authorial narration, Stanzel also distinguishes a first-person narration. It is dominated mainly by telling (account); and it can be sometimes difficult to decide whether one deals with the authorial or first-person narrator. But Stanzel pays attention to the fact that the first-person narrator belongs to the world of a novel, in contrast to the authorial narrator (1980, pp. 260- 275). Dąbrowski agrees with the statement saying that in the first-person narration the position of a narrator is equal with the position of one or more characters in the novel, while in the authorial narration the omniscient narrator stays in a distance from the characters (1995, p. 84).

The third type of a narration distinguished by Stanzel is a personal narration. Its distinctive feature is presentation. A reader experiences here the illusion of directness, because the narrator does not interrupt the process of reading, he seems to be absent. This is no longer telling the story but showing the reality (Stanzel, 1980, pp. 276- 285). According to Dąbrowski, a personal narrator loses his personality here, his speech is no longer homogeneous but it is under the influence of the utterances of different characters (1995, pp. 85- 86). Płachecki agrees with the above statement underlining the fact that a personal narration enables to present a wide range of characters and opinions. There is no one main authoritarian narrator but there are presentations of various protagonists (1982, p. 92).

Following the categorization by Stanzel it is worth analysing different types of narration in *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens[[5]](#footnote-5).

1. **The figure of a narrator in *Hard Times*.**

### The narrative construction of a nineteenth-century English novel contains the mixture of various features. Depending on the type of a novel and its author one may distinguish several trends in the narration. Dickens belongs to the group of writers whose works seem to be homophonic in terms of narration[[6]](#footnote-6). Looking at *Hard Times* as a whole, a reader has an impression that a narrator is homogeneous, he knows a lot about the presented world and the characters. The reader also notices the cohesion of all the novel’s elements.

Dickens creates his narrator in a way that suggests his authorial character. A dominant technique here is telling (account). The narrator frequently describes the events that happened in the characters’ lives from the perspective of passed time. A great example can be here the situation of Sissy, a girl living at Mr. Gradgrind’s house, described by the narrator – observer, reporting on the process of her education:

Sissy Jupe had not an easy time of it, between Mr M’Chakumchild and Mrs Gradgrind, and was not without strong impulses, in the first months of her probation to run away. It hailed facts all day long so very hard, and life in general was opened to her as such a closely ruled ciphering- book, that assuredly she would have run away (Dickens, 2000, p. 43).

The narrator shows here his knowledge that is wider than the reader’s knowledge. He can go in his story several months back and refer what happened then. Moreover, he empathizes with the heroine’s situation and is reliable claiming that the girl wanted to escape from her benefactor’s house. Undoubtedly, the narrator does not belong to the world of the novel’s characters because his knowledge goes beyond the presented world[[7]](#footnote-7). The narrator often presents the protagonists using the technique of telling (account) in past tense. The example can be the description of Stephen’s past, who worked in Mr. Bounderby’s factory:

He had been for many years, a quiet silent man, associating but little with other men, and used to companionship with his own thoughts. He had never known before the strength of the want in his heart for the frequent recognition of a nod, a look, a word; or the immense amount of relief that had been poured into it by drops through such small means (Dickens, 2000, p. 114).

Except the evidence that shows the omniscient narrator, there are also other characteristic features of the narrator that are perceived by Stanzel as features of a personal novel. It makes the narrator in the novel by Dickens a more complex figure than it could seem after the initial analysis of a narrative technique. One can find in the novel a theatrical presentation in which the narrator seems to be absent, and the reader, on the other hand, becomes the participant of described events. The addressee of the novel frequently becomes a witness of presented events, like in the situation when Mrs. Sparsit, Mr. Bounderby’s employee, gets to know that her employer married Louisa Gradgrind:

After allowing herself to be betrayed into these evidences of emotion, she would force a lambent brightness, and would be fitfully cheerful, and would say, ‘You have still good spirits, sir, I am thankful to find;’ and would appear to hail it as a blessed dispensation that Mr Bounderby bore up as he did. One idiosyncrasy for which she often apologized, she found it excessively difficult to conquer. She had a curious propensity to call Mrs Bounderby ‘Miss Gradgrind’ (Dickens, 2000, p. 147).

It is one of the examples when the narrator “blends in” with a described person. This telling is deprived of the narrator’s comment and due to this fact it seems to be natural and objective. The reader perceives the whole passage as the heroine’s thoughts, which is shown by the use of words expressing personal feelings such as *she would force, she often apologized.* Due to such kind of a presentation of a character’s behaviour, the reader creates his own image of Mrs. Sparsit, irrespective of the narrator’s comments.

The reader also becomes the witness of creating the figure of Tom Gradgrind, Louisa’s brother. Seized by remorse after robbing a bank and doubtful about his future, Tom suffers mentally after a conversation with his sister:

Then the wretched boy looked cautiously up and found her gone, crept out of bed, fastened his door, and threw himself upon his pillow again: tearing his hair, morosely crying, grudgingly loving her, hatefully but impenitently spurning himself, and no less hatefully and unprofitably spurning all the good in the world (Dickens, 2000, p. 151).

In this presentation of Tom’s behaviour the addressee of the novel experiences the protagonist’s mental suffering stronger than it could be in the case of presenting it in the form of an account. The language of a presentation that contains such participles as: *tearing, loving, spurning*, helps to strenghten the reader’s feelings. Using present tense influences the reader’s emotions, as he experiences the feeling of closeness character’s both body and mind. A personal creation of the narrator lets the reader see the characters objectively, in the form of self- presentation.

In both above-mentioned cases there are two groups of words that play an important role in a description: these are the words referring to feelings and the verbs of movement. The words referring to feelings such as: *apologized,* *tearing, loving, spurning*, are very personal and they impose on a writer the necessity of using theatrical presentation. It enables to show the characters in the most realistic way. If the writer used those words in telling (account), the description would seem artificial and deprived of emotions. The verbs of movement, such as: *crept, fastened, threw himself*, are great for building a dramatic scene in a theatrical presentation, offering dynamics and emotions. Due to this narration technique, a main focus of the novel moves towards the characters’ feelings in the particular situations.

This kind of a narration is called free indirect discourse and it enables diminishing or even fading away a distance between a character and a narrator (Głowiński, 1968,p. 27), because the character’s utterance overlaps the narrator’s speech (Dąbrowski, 1995, p. 95)[[8]](#footnote-8). This technique helps to emphasize the presented world and makes the role of a narrator less important and less influential (Sławiński, 1998, p. 154).

Dickens uses presentation employing free indirect discourse when he wants to create a realistic image of a character, similar to the reader’s idea. Irrespective of that, the narrator created by the writer frequently becomes a commentator. It happens that this figure of a storyteller - commentator uses irony, confirming his role as an authorial narrator. While introducing the reader into the world of characters, the narrator presents them criticising their vices and drawbacks. Mr. Gradgrind is one of the most frequently commented figures; the narrator describing him, uses irony from the very beginning of the novel:

Tomas Gradgrind, sir. A man of realities. A man of facts and calculations. A man who proceeds upon the principle that two and two are four, and nothing over (Dickens, 2000, p. 4).

The description of a teacher shows the criticism of his lifestyle. The narrator, trying to show Mr. Gradgrind’s way of thinking, uses trivial but meaningful mathematical calculation. The narrator shows his intellect here, as he does not apply direct terms to describe the teacher but he uses irony. The lack of directness in commenting on the characters’ drawbacks, as well as intelligent allusions, make the narrator be perceived as a reliable person. He uses similar techniques to portray Mr. Bounderby, who possessed a distinctive feature of character:

It was one of the most exasperating attributes of Bounderby, that he not only sang his own praises but stimulated other men to sing them. There was a moral infection of clap- trap in him (Dickens, 2000, p. 34).

The narrator’s words can frequently make the reader laugh when the authorial narrator comments on the figures and their behaviour. While presenting Sissy’s school friend Bitzer, as an adult person, the narrator describes his character in such a way:

He held the respectable office of general spy and informer in the establishment, for which volunteer service he received a present at Christmas (Dickens, 2000, p. 91).

In this case the narrator’s irony is based on very well- matched oxymorons: the *respectable office of general spy*, *volunteer* [spy] *service.* All the scenes in which the narrator presents villains are connected with his personal thoughts. They are not, as in the case of free indirect speech, some character’s words or feelings, but they are the proof of the authorial narrator’s independence, his position over the novel and reliability.

Moving around the narrator’s comments on the characters, it is worth noticing that he imposes the perspective of perceiving the protagonists on a reader. Describing villains, the narrator uses irony while presenting positive figures he favours them. It can be noticed when the narrator names the positive characters using diminutives or using only their first names, without their surnames. He calls a good and honest girl Sissy; the same girl that has a pleasant name reflecting her good character, for Mr. Gradgrind is just *a girl number twenty* (Dickens, 2000, p. 4). It is worth noticing that Bitzer, Sissy’s school friend, and later on, Mr. Bounderby’s spy, is usually called by the narrator by his surname. Those two different ways of presenting the characters by the narrator are a direct evidence of his attitude towards them. It is at the same time an indirect way of commenting the characters’ lives and behaviour. To create a more reliable image of the novel’s protagonists, the narrator underlines the way they talk one to another. For example, one of the circus inhabitants and Sissy’s friend, Mr. Childers, calls the girl by her diminutive name. In this way, the reader understands the narrator’s comments as similar to those uttered by positive figures. Another way of favouring the characters by the narrator is a description of their appearance which influences the way the reader perceives them. The image of Rachel, Stephen’s friend, is a great example of this thesis:

[Rachael] showed a quiet, oval face, dark and rather delicate, irradiated by a pair of very gentle eyes, and further set off by the perfect order of her shining black hair (Dickens, 2000, p. 51).

Getting to know the heroine, the reader undoubtedly sees her as a very gentle, delicate and honest person. Such an image of Rachel is the effect of the narrator’s manipulation, a question of choosing suitable words, such as: *quiet, delicate, gentle*. The woman’s character appears to be good in the further course of action. Portraying the protagonists by a narrator is a commentator’s action, typical for an authorial novel. But Dickens’s narrator is not unchangeable; he notices the figures’ evolution and changes his attitude towards them under the influence of new events. Presenting a severe teacher, Mr. Gradgrind, the narrator calls him using his surname. Nevertheless, when the teacher experiences a personal tragedy connected with his daughter Louisa, and when his character evolves, the narrator’s attitude towards him changes. To show and underline positive changes in Mr. Gradgrind’s behaviour, the narrator frequently calls him poor and embittered father; he sympathizes with the figure that approaches other good characters.

In the novel there exists not only the narrator who comments the figures’ behaviour, but also the narrator of a choral character[[9]](#footnote-9). He frequently expresses the views of a large social group and refers to generally accepted and universal truths. When Louisa Gradgrind goes back her family home, the narrator identifies himself with the feelings adults express in such situations:

Neither, as she approached her old home now, did any of the best influences of old home descend upon her (…): so good to be believed in once, so good to be remembered when outgrown, for then the least among them rises to the stature of a great Charity in the heart (…), it were, better for all the children of Adam that they should oftener sun themselves, simple and trustful, and not wordly-wise (…) (Dickens, 2000, p. 155).

The narrator refers here to the popular feeling of love and respect towards family that is associated with every human being and becomes the sense of life. It is also well known for the reader who can identify himself with its message. That is why the role of the narrator in presenting universal truths is enormous; he becomes an advocate of human race and its representative. Moreover, the reader who shares with the narrator his view, is more willing to perceive him as reliable. The choral narrator knows more than the protagonists of a particular literary work; his choral character can become a feature of an authorial narrator who dominates in the novel by Dickens.

The choral narrator in *Hard Times* tends to ask rhetorical questions. The reader often encounters this kind of a question referring either to unquestionable truths or to the characters’ actions. The narrator, using irony towards Mr. Choakumchild – the supporter of facts and discipline - asks him a rhetorical question that shows his philosophy of bringing-up:

Say, good M’Choakumchild. When from thy boiling store, thou shalt fill each jar brim full by- and-bye, dost thou think, that thou wilt always kill outright the robber Fancy lurking within- or sometimes only maim him and distort him! (Dickens, 2000, p. 8).

The rhetorical question greatly presents a bad influence of Mr. Choakumchild’s views on the students. It also suggests that the narrator does not have a direct contact with a character. There is no doubt that neither the narrator nor the reader expect the answer to the question that makes the students’ situation more dramatic.

The rhetorical question is also useful for emphasizing human existential problems. While describing a sad funeral procedure connected with a death of a poor Victorian worker, the narrator underlines the transience of life:

For, say that the child of a King and the child of a Weaver were born tonight in the same moment, what was that disparity, to the death of any human creature who was serviceable to, or beloved by, another, while this abandoned woman lived on! (Dickens, 2000, p. 64).

The digression is the example of a choral narrator’s utterance who represents a sensitive person. The narrator’s words confirm his position that is far from the characters and near the readers who very often are the addressees of the questions raised in the story. The narrator frequently invites the reader to take part in the discussion, asks him difficult questions that make him think; he also involves him in the process of observation of the presented world, like for instance in the situation when he wants to look at Victorian views on bringing up children:

Let us strike the key-note again, before pursuing the tune (Dickens, 2000,p. 38).

This is the direct encouragement for the reader to shared reflection over the problem shown by the narrator. It means that the narrator is aware of the reader’s presence and takes his opinion into account. He is even eager to meet his expectations. Presenting the figure of Mr. Bounderby, the narrator tries to fit in the reader’s opinion:

(…) Mr Bounderby was as near being Mr Gradgrind’s bosom friend, as a man perfectly devoid of sentiment can approach that spiritual relationship towards another man perfectly devoid of sentiment. So near was Mr Bounderby- or, if the reader should prefer it, so far off (Dickens, 2000, p. 12).

Being aware of the reader’s presence and his requests, the narrator remembers about him during the whole course of action. The reader becomes the last link cementing the novel; the narrator addresses him in the last words of the novel, hoping that his life will be as happy as Louisa’s vision, full of laughing children free from artificial knowledge and full of imagination. The last passage of the novel is supposed to make the reader believe in the narrator’s message. This passage is of a moralizing character; direct addressing the reader makes the narrator’s words stronger[[10]](#footnote-10).

**Conclusion**

While analyzing the figure of a narrator in *Hard Times*, it is worth paying attention to his multidimensional character. He not only comments on the events and figures, but also favours good characters and opposes the villains. Moreover, he empathizes with particular figures and takes over their thoughts and words presenting them to the reader in the form of a free indirect speech. In a global sense, the narrator is the representative of human race who promotes life truths in the form of rhetorical questions. The narrator does not forget about the reader, addressing him frequently. A specific presence of the narrator makes the novel by Dickens realistic. This realism can be observed in the choral narrator’s utterances and in his rhetorical questions. Timelessness of the problems shown by the narrator, such as love, bringing-up children, workers’ rights, death constitutes realism of every human’s life, the part of previous and contemporary existence.

**References**

**BARTHES, R**. 2004. „Wstęp do analizy strukturalnej opowiadań” [in:] Michał Głowiński, ed. *Narratologia*. Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria, 2004. pp. 302. ISBN: 83-89405-49-0.

**DĄBROWSKI, M**. 1995. *Polska awangarda prozatorska*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Semper, 1995. pp. 183. ISBN: 8385810765.

**DICKENS, CH**. 2000. *Hard Times*. London: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2000. pp. 243. ISBN: 1853262323.

**GŁOWIŃSKI, M**. 1968. *Porządek, chaos, znaczenie. Szkice o powieści współczesnej*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1968. pp. 254.

**HUGHES, G**. 2002. *Reading Novels*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2002. ISBN: 826513999

**JASIŃSKA, M**. 1987. “Narrator w powieści” [in:] Henryk Markiewicz, ed. *Problemy teorii literatury*. Seria 1. Wrocław : Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1987. pp. 839. ISBN: 83-04-01739-3.

**MARKIEWICZ, H**. 1984. *Wymiary dzieła literackiego*. Kraków – Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1984. pp. 343. ISBN: 8370524370.

**PŁACHECKI, M**. 1982. „Z zagadnień poetyki powieści realistycznej: dystans narracyjny- bohater - zdarzenie” [in:] Jan Błoński, Stanisław Jaworski i Janusz Sławiński, ed. *Studia o narracji*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1982. pp. 312. ISSN 0084-4411.

**PRINCE, G**. 1987. *A Dictionary of Narratology*. London: Lincoln, 1987. ISBN: 0-8032-3678-6.

**SKWARA, M**. 2008. *Krąg transcendentalistów amerykańskich w literaturze polskiej XIX i* *XX wieku*. *Dzieje recepcji, idei i powinowactw z wyboru*. Szczecin: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, 2008. pp. 434. ISBN:  83-7241-398-3.

**SŁAWIŃSKI, J**. 1998. “Semantyka wypowiedzi narracyjnej” [in:] Włodzimierz Bolecki, red. *Dzieło, język, tradycja*. Prace wybrane, tom 2. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych UNIVERSITAS, 1998. pp. 239. ISBN: 8370529186.

**STANZEL, F**. 1980. „Typowe formy powieści” [in:] Ryszard Handke, ed. *Teoria form narracyjnych* *w niemieckim kręgu językowym. Antologia.* Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1980. pp. 370. ISBN: 8308001475.

**TRZEBIŃSKI, J**. 2005. “Social Reality as Stories” [in:] Zofia Mitosek i Joanna Mueller, ed. *The Narrative in the Light of Comparative Studies*. Warszawa: Wydział Polonistyki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2005. pp. 224. ISBN 8389663066 9788389663061.

**WILLE, L**. 2009. „*A Current Woman* Rather Than *Other Pleasures* – on the American Rendering of the Novel *Inne rozkosze* by Jerzy Pilch” [in:] Małgorzata Górecka - Smolińska, Grzegorz A. Kleparski i Anna Włodarczyk- Stachurska, ed. *Historical Semantics Brought to the Fore*. Chełm: Wydawnictwo TAWA, 2009. pp. 158. ISBN: 978-83-62638-09-3.

**Summary**

The article concentrates on the idea of narration in the novel *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens. In the first part of the paper different aspects of the figure of a narrator are analysed, among others, those created by: Michał Głowiński, Janusz Sławiński, as well as Roland Barthes. Finally, the author of the paper presents the division of the narration types according to Franz Stanzel. These are: authorial, first-person and personal narration. In the second part of the article the author describes various narration types presented by Dickens in his novel. The authorial type prevails in the work by Dickens, as well as the figure of an omniscient narrator. Dickens frequently uses presentation employing free indirect discourse in his work, as well as exploits a narrator who can be perceived as choral, due to the fact that he is the representative of a group of people. Finally, the author of the paper underlines a multidimensional character of the narration in *Hard Times*, which at the same time, reflects realism of nineteenth-century England.

**Contact**

dr Agata Buda

Department of English Studies

Faculty of Philology and Pedagogy

University of Technology and Humanities in Radom

a.buda@uthrad.pl

1. Markiewicz points out at the fact that a novel can be read aloud, for instance in the radio programme. Then narration becomes a spoken one and a narrator becomes the person that feigns and presents literary fiction (1984, p. 81). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The idea by Jasińska seems to be similar to the idea by Barthes. If there exist any premises that a narrator is a writer, one may treat a narrator and an author as one. If a narrator speaks in the third person, he is an abstract narrator according to Jasińska, or, impersonal consciousness, according to Barthes. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Booth also notices two different types of presenting a story. He refers to such terms as: *telling* (account) and *showing* (scene) (2004, p. 218). Gerald Prince similarly defines and names these ideas*; telling* stands for an idea responsible for creating narrative information and paying less attention to the details, while *showing* concentrates on imitation – *mimesis* (1987, pp. 87, 96). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Jerzy Trzebiński very accurately showed the way of influencing of those two kinds of telling a story. He proves that presentation is strongly connected with empathy and that is why it is better and deeper understood by a reader. Trzebiński describes a research during which the students were presented the progress of leukemia from the point of view of a person relating the process and of the person that suffers from the illness. Those students who listened to a sick person were more willing to help in a transplant (2005, pp. 115- 116). The way of narration then, has enormous significance for perceiving it by a reader. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The division by Stanzel into: authorial, first-person and personal narration seems to be analogous to the narration theory by Henryk Markiewicz. He distinguishes a direct narrator (that can be the equivalent for an authorial narrator) and a mediating narrator identified with the characters (that can be the equivalent for a personal narrator (1984, p. 85). Moreover, Markiewicz also distinguishes autotropic and allotropic narrator (1984, p. 85). Autotropic narrator can be seen as analogous to the authorial or first-person narrator, while allotropic narrator can be viewed as analogous to the personal one. The Stanzel’s term defining the first-person narrator is coherent with the definition by Hughes; the academic distinguishes two kinds of a narration in the first person: the story of a narrator- observer and the story of a narrator- participant (2002, p. 150). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Michał Głowiński writes about the coherence of narration, following the theory by Bakchtin. One of the major features of such kind of a novel is presence of an omniscient narrator who is an authority (1968, p. 19). Dąbrowski agrees with the opinion and defines the features of a homogeneous novel (1995, p. 140). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The fact that a narrator does not belong to the world of the novel’s characters is, for Stanzel, one of the main factors defining him as an authorial narrator (1980, p. 266). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Dąbrowski pays also attention to two contexts, in which free indirect discourse can be observed. These are:   
   a narrator’s utterance showing a protagonist’s character of speech, as well as directly quoted words of   
   a protagonist in direct speech (1995, p. 103). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Głowiński writes about the choral character of a narrator. The academic compares his role in the nineteenth-century novel to the role of chorus in tragedy (1968, p. 19). Dąbrowski is of a similar opinion. He states that a choral narrator is a person that represents the views of virtual readers. The role of such narrator is definitely bigger than the role of a personal narrator (1995, pp. 123-124). Lucyna Wille, on the other hand, names such narrator a collective narrator (2009, p. 145). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. In this shape the narrator could be defined as an equal person comparing him to the novel’s characters. Jasińska distinguishes three types of a narrator: equal, inferior or superior in comparison to the characters (1987, p. 104). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)