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The Type of “Multiple” Narrator and Its Embodiment in Large Postmodern Genre Forms. Based on the Novel “Olive Kitteridge” by E. Strout

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Abstract: The present article concentrates on the concept of “narrative” as a literary category, its characteristics and structural elements. The authors of the article concretize the idea of “narrative”, analyze the main narrative theories, and compare the basic concepts of narratology in the scientific works of outstanding scholars.

The “multiple” narrator can be found in the works of original genre with complex compositional and narrative structure. In such narrative structures, the narrator can create his own “reality”, his own author’s myth through the view angle of each character.

This is typical of modern genre forms, where the plot is built on new genre canons, such as novel forms of the “talk show” format or “SMS” novel. The “multiple” narrator forms the structure, provides plot-compositional unity, “leads” narrative story and influences the genre modification of the literary work. Structural types of “multiple” narrator can perceive the reality subjectively and have the ability to present their own vision of reality and interact with other narrative components such as narrator, recipient, author-demiurge, the signs of which are closely interwoven in the modern text.

The narrative component of the novel “Olive Kitteridge” by E. Strout is examined in the article as multi-vector, characterized by free narrative and by a heterodiegetic narrator in an extradiegetic situation.

Keywords: *narrative, narrator, the “multiple” narrator, style, structure.*

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1. Introduction

In literary studies one can find a lot of scholarly works devoted to this problem, however there are still many questions that deserve further consideration, like narrator's projection and world-view, his/her view of life, the so-called glance at the world. The narrator may be different; he/she can take on different masks. Narrative components may be various in each specific case, that is in every particular text. It depends on narration style and peculiarities of the author's myth. This article presents the types of narrator, in particular, the so-termed "multiple" type of the narrator (the assemblage of voices, the angle of "reality"), who sees and perceives the artistic world ambivalently. All the structural elements of such narrator's type are endowed with individual features and have their own outlook.

Researchers have repeatedly worked on this issue, outlining certain features of narratology, such as narrative features in the artistic text, narrative models, narrator's image, his/her place and meaning in the text, types of narrators, etc. (L. Matsevko-Bekerska, I. Bekhta, I. Papusha, O. Tkachuk, B. Polishchuk, K. Kovalenko, etc.). S. Zeman (2020) discusses three central questions within the intersection between narrative micro- and macro-structures: the definition of narrativity, the status of the narrator, and the relation between narration and fictionality. However, there are still many lacunae related to the narrative structure of the work that need detailed interpretation. Therefore, the purpose of our research is to analyze the main trends of contemporary literary studies in the field of narratology so as to understand the concepts of "narrative", "narrator", as well as to define the concept of "a multiple narrator", which is a genre feature of modern novel forms.

2. The Type of "Multiple" Narrator in the Narrative Structure of the Artistic Text

In general, the concept of "narrative" is used quite actively in modern philological science, and there is a great deal of researches on the subject. Researchers try to outline the constitutive features of the narrative, distinguishing certain dominant components, which, in their opinion, in the individual-author style, depend on the perception of the text by the reader. "Narrative" "is the object and the act of reporting true or fictitious events by one (several) narrators, addressed to one (several) narrators" (Grom'yak, 2006, p. 476). In our opinion, the concept of "narrative" includes not only the type of narrative (from the first or third person), the compositional

structure, the degree of fiction and the encoding of certain ideas and meanings. Dominant in the narrative system are both the object and the character that interact differently with the inter-textual narrative instances such as narrator, recipient, author-demiurge, whose features are closely intertwined in the modern text.

R. Barthes, G. Genette, Ya. Lintvelt, J. Prince, S. Chatman, V. Schmid and other scholars have thoroughly justified the issues of narratology and the narrative structure of the writing (.). Scientists also focused on the voice of the "silenced narrator" that appears to speak from a deep ("subdiegetic") narrative level (Biti & Zigo, 2021), on ecological narration (Pozzo, 2020), temporal structure of narratives (Pólya, 2021) and mimetically unreliable narration as a gradual phenomenon and its function in contemporary novels (Herrmann, 2021), even on the form of "nautical narration" (Mueller-Adams, 2020). The theoretical and practical levels of the narrator, as an important subject of literary narration on the example of the specific works, are presented in the Ukrainian literary critics' studies (L. Matsevko-Bekerska, M. Lehky, T. Cherkashyna, G. Maksymenko, S. Siverska, I. Bekhta, K. Kovalenko).

One of the dominant components of the narrative structure in the artistic writing is the narrator's image, which is interpreted differently in philological science. For example, I. A. Bekhta describes the term "narrator" as "a subject of consciousness directly embodied in the text and dealt with by the reader" (Bekhta, 2013, p. 214). In an artistic text, the narrator shapes the narrative structure and provides story and compositional integrity. "The narrator is more or less explicit, knowledgeable, ubiquitous, self-aware, and reliable, he/she can be placed at farther or closer distance from the narrated situations and events and characters" (Tkachuk, 2002, p. 84).

The dictionaries provide traditional, established definition that proves that the narrator is the one who tells the story in the text. Narratives may have different numbers of narrators who take turns narrating (Tkachuk, 2002, p. 83). In our opinion, such a statement is productive, since the modern narrative outlines the type of "multiple" narrator with the multi-vector focus.

One of the narrator's (story teller's) main tasks is the ability to lead the story and influence genre modification of the writing. The narrator at the same time can "divide the matter of the text into independent meaning-making fragments, as well as condense the total meaning of the writing" (Matsevko-Bekerska, 2008, p. 49). The narrator in the text is ubiquitous and omnipresent, able to enter characters' minds, which provides the ability to assimilate with the abstract author, subjectively observe the plot and have

her/his own point of view on the events represented in the text. V. Shmid states that “the narrator is perceived by the reader not as an abstract function but as a subject endowed with certain anthropomorphic features of thinking and language” (2003, p. 38).

The narrator, as the subject of discussion, transmits his/her position through the “voice”, the appropriate “point of view”, their interaction, comparison, contrasts that determines the relationship between different levels of artistic text (on fable, plot, language, figurative, spatial, genre levels, etc.), which is an important feature of the style (style in general and author's individual style). Sometimes the image of the narrator is showed through an appropriate “perspective view”, which has a three-member structure such as the perspective of the character, perspective of the author and the view of “reality”, which are closely interconnected and in each work are shaped differently and influence genre modification and style definition of the work. The subject of the discussion can psychologically approach the author, and then the narrative acquires subjective features. Sometimes the narrator moves away from the author and becomes an independent story line with his own character and world view.

The typology of narrator in literary studies began to develop a long time ago and is represented in various ways. Widely known is Zhenett's four-member typology of the classification model for distinguishing the narrative types, which provides four different vectors of the narrator such as heterodiegetic narrator in the extradiegetic situation (where he tells a story in which he is not a character), heterodiegetic narrator in the intradiegetic situation (the storyteller of the second level, the one who tell the stories, is usually absent (“text in the text”), homodiegetic narrator in the extradiegetic situation (tells his own story in which he appears as a character), homodiegetic narrator in the intradiegetic situation (the storyteller of the second level, who tells his own story) (Zhenett, 1998, p. 397). The figure of the narrator and his relationship with diegesis was also explored by V. Shmid, who stated that “we would call a diegetic narrator who describes himself as a figure in diegesis. The diegetic narrator appears in two ways – both in the narrative (as its subject) and the narrative history (as the object). The non-diegetic narrator narrates not about himself as an object of diegesis, but only about other objects” (Shmid, 2003, p. 81). The contemporary scholar I. Bekhta identifies three main types of narrators in the prose writing such as an authoritative narrator in the form of “he/she”, personal narrator in the form of “I” or in the form of an actor speaking on behalf of his “I”, personified, designated by some name (Bekhta, 2013, p. 69). The author identifies an authoritative narrator, a narrator who possesses complete

information, objectively evaluates and can interfere with the interpretation of events. According to the researcher, the personal narrator is the one who participates in the events and tries on the mask of the observer, the witness and so on. A personalized narrator is a self-identified character of the writing.

Sometimes the basis of the narrative's typology is the measure of the author's intervention in the narratives such as authorial omniscience with productive use of the 1st person, neutral omniscience (authorial non-interference with the use of the 3rd person), narrator-witness, narrator-character; collective narrator, single narrator; dramatic narrator (external character description) and etc. This classification, in our opinion, is productive, but it is necessary to outline the role of the author in the narrative in each individual text, taking into account the genre, style, features not only of the text, but also of the author and the day as a whole.

Literary texts with complex plot-composition structure or endowed with features of the original genres are characterized by the “multiple” narrator, whose different voices are endowed with personal traits and profess their own ideology.

Examples of the “multiple” narrator directly can be traced in the samples of the latest literature, as modern novel forms tend to originate from original genres. Contemporary British literature representative Julian Barnes constantly experiments with the narrative structure of his works. Our prime interest is his novel, “Talking it over” (1991) and “Love, etc.” (2000), which were written using the latest narrative techniques. It is the melodrama story, which was created in the spirit of the comedy of morals and the comedy of dell'arte, and is presented through the perspective of all storytelling characters involved in the discussion of complex issues of a human being. The characters of the novel (Stuart, Gillian and Oliver) discuss in detail the situation in their family, through the intense dialogue they try to find a way out of a difficult situation, to convince each other of correctness of their judgments.

The title of the novel, as well as its plot, provides for many interpretations of where the subjects of the narrative complex system becomes at the core. The narrative strategy of the novels is based on the lack of the author's perspective, which implies certain “freedom” in the reader's perception, not burdened by the author's intentions. An important narrative discovery of the author in the novel is confessional, almost sociable, tone of the characters, which speak directly to the reader and seek to engage him in the discussion and convince him of their own judgment.

A narrative feature of romance forms is the formal level, built on the principle that each character can express his or her own point of view regarding another character or events in general. And events are covered by each character subjectively. It is the formal factor, which is a part of the writer's aesthetic play, that serves as a bridge that unites all the characters into a single-story unit. The formal component of duology is characterized by variability. In the first novel, there is a meaningful component in the dominant position, while the form is created as a dramatic writing, where each character declares a monologue heard by both readers and other characters in the novel. In the second novel, the meaningful component goes into a constant position, giving a way to the formal factor. "Love, etc." formally consists of many short monologues declared by several narrators. The characters of the novel are communicating as if they were in the form of modern videos ("talk shows") or information technologies (Viber, etc.), which involve the exchange of messages between many users. There are several main characters in the dialogue: Stuart, Gillian and Oliver, sometimes children Marie and Sophie join them, Gillian's colleague and Stuart's lover Ellie, Stuart's former American wife Terri, Gillian's mother, Madame Wyatt, and several others. The characters show the melodrama story of love and betrayal through various focuses. Life-long events are thoroughly reviewed and analyzed by the characters. The characters are controversial about the past, trying to deal with difficult conflict situations.

Rhetoric becomes a stylistic feature of duology. Characters communicate in a confessional format with an imaginary listener, sometimes asking him for something, teaching, asking for clarification or advice. The rhetoric of prose increases closer to the finale, where almost every monologue contains different forms of addressing. "What do you think?" speaking style is found in almost every monologue, because the relationships of characters are deadlocked and they cannot worthy solve the situation. It is quite logical that the last monologue of Gillian's mother is about the life that is able to "dot the i's" on its own, it is necessary to live simply, enjoying every moment, since no one knows when "everyone's clock will stop".

3. The "Multiple" Narrator Type in Large Postmodern Genre Forms (Based on the Novel "Olive Kitteridge" by E. Strout)

Elizabeth Strout (born in 1956) is a contemporary American writer who has won numerous literary awards, including the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for her novel "Olive Kitteridge" (2008). In June 2010, Italian publishers awarded this book the Remio Bancarella Award. Elizabeth Strout became the first American who received the award after Ernest Hemingway.

Researchers are unanimous about the author's merits in the field of fiction, because the novel “Olive Kitteridge” is innovative in the format of content and form, which brought it worldwide fame. The aim of our work is to outline narrative strategies in the major genre forms of the postmodern period, including Elizabeth Strout's novel “Olive Kitteridge”, and to substantiate the new narration form, the “multiple” narrator, which is increasingly manifested in modern genre forms.

The plot of the novel “Olive Kitteridge” by Elizabeth Strout is based on the life story of a typical resident of Crosby town in Maine. She is like everyone else, with her problems and a difficult temper. The main character is not young and is not a very pretty woman. Her character is revealed not linearly, but in fragments, as if bursts in the narrator's memory. On the other hand, she is not as much the main character as the dominant one in the work: in the past she was a Mathematics teacher who devoted thirty years to school. Most of the residents of the town are either her students, or students' parents, or neighbors. Olive's husband, Henry Kitteridge, owns a pharmacy, so it is logical that the heroine is often in the middle of all local events.

The narrative component of the novel is multi-vector, as the story is told through the perspective of different characters, sometimes even strangers. A sharp change in focalization is a stylistic feature of the work that allows to interpret the actions, characters, relationships between the characters from mutually exclusive positions. Each of the stories is characterized by a free narrative, as the story ends abruptly. The novel is characterized by a heterodiegetic narrator in an extradiegetic situation (where he tells a story in which he does not perform the functions of a character) (Zhenett, 1998, p. 397), who asks many rhetorical questions to which he does not give answers. The consciousness of the narrator does not guarantee compositional integrity of the work. So, in this text a non-traditional type of narrative is constant, which provides free indirect discourse. This form of narrative partially displaces the narrator, as each of the stories is presented through a different focus. The combination of free indirect discourse is based on complex coordination of voices of different characters with each other and with the voice of the narrator, which involves “the play on polyphony”.

Free indirect discourse is formally embodied in the specific genre form, which we describe as a novel in short stories. The non-diegetic narrator immerses the reader in the existence of individual characters, gives the opportunity to be them, so that the reader can see “his” heroine. Novels do not repeat, do not duplicate each other, but complement each other,

branching and systematizing the thematic diversity of the work, i.e the novel is built on the principle of “matryoshka doll”, when a new story reveals the unknown facets of the phenomenon. The problems of the characters are projected on the reader, it is he who chooses the most acceptable scenarios for solving a particular problem. Any character can have many hidden motives for behavior, the reader chooses the one that is acceptable in every certain case.

The formal component is based on thirteen complete stories that depict the lives of the inhabitants of Crosby. Some stories are dedicated to some important moments in the life of the Kitteridge family: “Pharmacy”, “A Little Burst”, “Tulips”, “Security”, others – (“The Piano Player”, “Winter Concert”) retell events from the lives of strangers, but in each of them Olive or her husband are mentioned. There are also stories in which the Kitteridges do not take part in the plot but become a reference point for the characters (“Ship in a Bottle”, “Criminal”).

One of the most important components of the genre content is the chronotope, which has a real basis in the novel, but is quite typical. Time-space performs the structural function: it reproduces the relationship between the spaces of the author-creator and the hero, combines points of view, reveals the value of space-time images and analyzes the macroworld of heroes in the unity of spatial and temporal aspects (Nikoliukin, 2001, p. 1173). The time-space of the novel is described in detail: it is a small town Crosby in state Maine. The plots are taken by author as if from life, they are so bright and alive, and their reality is beyond doubt. The space is described with a lot of details (quiet wide streets, small cottages planted with greenery, small shops with food or industrial goods, etc.), certain toposes are detailed. Suddenly, at some point, the reader is no longer distracted by landscape sketches, but focuses on the events in the novel. In modern literature, what matters is what a person thinks, not what he/she does; the real plot unfolds not in space, but in the heads and souls of the main characters. The dominant component is the psychological component, which only intensifies over time. “External confusion is necessary only for the reader to stop paying attention to the landscape overloaded with details, to start looking into the faces of passers-by and to listen seriously to what is being said around... So that readers get bored of locals as if we meet them every day for many years. Names and faces have lost their meaning, because you can't remember them all” (Kumysh). The space of the novel is depressing, permeated with decline, the only bright spot is the figure of Olive, able to give hope and bring pessimism out of the darkness. “Postcards came – a few and not all at once: “I'm sorry... how sad...”, “I'm sorry, just found out...”.

She answered every postcard. “Don't sympathize,” she wrote. “We all know this is bound to happen. There is no devil in the world that should be regretted. “And only once or twice, and even for a moment, it occurred to her that she may not be in her right mind” (Strout, 2008, p. 17). The main character perceives the world in many ways, looking at situations from different angles. She believes that many people live life thoughtlessly, and this is realized only in old age: “People, living their lives, most of them do not quite understand that they live it. However, now she has her memories... perhaps they are the purest of all that she had.” (Strout, 2008, p. 18) Olive is portrayed as a wise, cautious, uncompromising woman, a person with a difficult destiny and boundless thirst for life, which does not give up in hopeless situations.

In the novel, philosophical motives are constant, in particular the motives of life, death, existence, etc. Often the narrator on behalf of the hero reflects on the meaning of life. For example, Olive secretly believes that life in general depends on what she mentally calls “big bursts” and “small bursts”. “Great events are first of all a marriage or the birth of a child, personal relationships that keep you afloat, but behind these big bursts are dangerous invisible currents. Therefore, a person also needs small splashes: say, a friendly salesman in a Bradley store or a waitress in a donut shop “Dunkin’ Donuts”, who remembers what kind of coffee you like” (Strout, 2008, p. 8). Throughout the story, through multiple focusing, the philosophical problems that interest the reader after the heroine are considered. In each retold story, the narrator convinces the recipient of the importance of enjoying life every moment, appreciating every minute spent with family and friends, just living life to the fullest.

The literary time of the novel is based on the biographical mode, but in the literature of postmodernism the time layer is conditional. The novel shows a discrepancy between the plot and the plot time, because the plot time, in contrast to the plot, reproduces the events in the author's vision. The plot time is the “living” time of a literary work, it is maximally concretized, complicated, “layered”, characterized by dualism, “splitting”, parallel plot lines, variability. Plot time is paused to view the space. The compositional method of delaying the development of the plot – retardation (usage of lyrical inserts, excursions into the past, descriptions (landscape, interior, portrait), prehistory, memories of the characters, etc.), manifesting itself in the plot time, makes it slow down. In this novel, the dominant position is held by the narrative time, characteristic of postmodernism literature in general, because the works of this literary direction are characterized by deep subjectivism and psychologism. “A third-person

narrative operates most freely in literary time: it can dwell on the analysis of psychological states for a long time and very briefly inform about long periods that do not carry psychological tension, but are plot chains. This makes it possible to increase the weight of the psychological image in the general system of the story” (Khalizev, 2002, p. 319).

In “Basket of Trips” chapter, the main character helps to bury her former student, whose widow, Marlene Bunny, is her former student too. The author takes a retrospective, describing through Olive's focus the memories of a woman who became a widow early. Finally, the main character, like a mother, must comply with the request of her student: to throw away the “basket of trips”, a bunch of guides that the man had reread before death, dreaming of traveling. The events presented through the focus of Olive Kitteridge do not fully reveal the characters but allow you to see the heroine from different angles.

The family motif is especially loud in the novel, as each of the characters is recreated in a family circle. In the first chapter “Pharmacy”, the reader gets acquainted with the main character, but not directly, but through the perspective of Henry Kitteridge, her husband, who “kept” the pharmacy in the city. Acquaintance with a sharp, straightforward woman at first does not cause pleasant impressions, but the devotion of the husband to the wife testifies for the reader the versatility of the heroine, her psychological uncertainty. This chapter traces the story of Henry's warm relationship with a new drug saleswoman who was the complete opposite of his wife. Henry had some feelings for Denise, but remained faithful to his “half”. For many years, the characters have been in correspondence, in which Olive is a constant addressee. In the last letter, after suffering a terrible illness, the girl defiantly signs: “With love, Denise”. The protagonist does not consider it necessary to comment on the message, as he considers himself completely safe with Olive: “All those years while he suffered from guilt because of Denise, he was restrained by the realization that he still has support, he has her, Olive” (Strout, 2008, p. 4). Henry forgives his wife for her feelings for the schoolteacher and helps her survive the news of his death in a car accident.

The leading motif of the novel is the motif of parents and children, as all the characters are written in this relation. Because of too much love and care, Olive loses her son Christopher, who is tired of his mother's constant supervision and reproaches. He decides to break with this and move to another city. Christopher's wife is a wealthy, beautiful, self-confident girl, Susan, who, as Olive thinks, supposes she knows Christopher better than his mother. “But they've only known each other for a month, not

more, spent some time in bed – and this Susan suddenly decided, as if she had studied him? Did she see his first steps, his first smile, does she know how he cried when he broke his knee?” (Strout, 2008, p. 8). Mother perceives the son as the greatest value in the world, and for the wife he is just a husband. Olive was right, as the couple soon divorced, but the son never returned to his parents because he wanted to live his own life.

The mother's motive determines the character of the main heroine, as she is portrayed partly in the family circle. After having accidentally overheard Susan's words about Christopher's “difficult childhood” (“Tulips”), Olive suddenly sees through and does not understand where she made a mistake in raising her son. “I've always loved him” (Strout, 2008, p. 9), – says the shocked mother, but in the first story “Pharmacy” through the Henry's vision perspective the basics of raising a child are showed. Olive allowed herself to shout, to humiliate not only the boy but also the father, which did not give him authority in the family. Not surprising, mother and son have different childhood memories. In the story “A Different Road”, the Kitteridge family after visiting a restaurant stopped at a hospital where the robbers broke in. The heroes become hostages, are under the sight of a revolver, fortunately remain intact and unharmed, but for some time suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. It was there where Henry dared to tell his wife that his son had left because she had completely taken over his life and left him no free space. The boy could not be married and stay in their city at the same time. Olive realizes that something has gone wrong in her life, tries to correct the situation, but cannot accept the current state of affairs. However, sometimes the heroine remembers the words of an acquaintance, whose grandson remarked: “You may be my grandmother, but that does not mean that I have to love you!” (Strout, 2008, p. 13). Respect and good treatment must be earned, which for some time is incomprehensible to Olive.

The novel is characterized by existential motives that permeate the social mode. Motives of dying, extinction become constant in the novel. Henry dies at the age of seventy, Christopher divorces almost immediately after his marriage, and then remarries a woman with three children from different men, whom he met during psychological rehabilitation sessions. Olive tries to get closer to her son (“Security”), but at the last moment she can't stand it and breaks down (the reason for her anger was a stain on her dress, about which her son didn't tell her). Psychological reflections on the existence of the individual, his place in the universe, loneliness, loss, etc. become dominant in the novel.

The non-diegetic narrator surprisingly subtly and deeply reproduces the existential mode. The leitmotif is the statement that “after all, life is a gift, which is important to understand when you become old, that so many moments in your life were not just moments: they were gifts” (Strout, 2008, p. 15). In the space-time of the novel, it is Olive Kitteridge who becomes the pivotal character, to whom other characters involuntarily address at the turning points of their lives. For example, the protagonist of the story “Incoming Tide” returns home to commit suicide. However, at the last moment he meets Olive Kitteridge, a former teacher who seems to have sensed the boy's intentions. She found exactly the words she needed to keep Kevin on the edge. The story is characterized by free narrative, as it is unknown whether the hero will carry out his plans, but the rescue of his ex-girlfriend predicts a comforting finale. In another story “Starving” narrated through the perspective of Harmon, a man of old age, Olive appears as a caring woman capable of compassion. The heroes try in every way to save a young girl suffering from anorexia, but the disease has taken over her so much that the girl dies. The ward's death pushes Harmon to an unusual step: he leaves his wife, with whom he has little in common, and tries to build relationship with his longtime girlfriend, Daisy Foster.

At the turning points of their lives, the novel's protagonists remember either Olive Kitteridge herself or her words. In the story “Ship in a Bottle”, the reader meets Julie Harwood, whom the groom refuses to marry. The girl makes a difficult decision: she runs away with her ex-boyfriend to Boston to manage her own life. The impetus for this step were the words of a former teacher (Olive Kitteridge), who persuaded students “not to be afraid of their thirst”, otherwise they will become the same simpletons as everyone else (Strout, 2008, p. 23). Winnie Harwood, Julie's younger sister, through whose perspective the story is told, does not understand the words of the “terrible” teacher, but for Julie they serve as a guide. The name of the story “Ship in a Bottle” also becomes symbolic, as the girls' father builds a ship in the basement of his house, without even considering the possibility of taking it out. The boat becomes a symbol of abandonment of their dreams, a symbol of restriction of freedom and impossibility of intentions.

The absence of a close person at the turning points of life can lead one to the limit, and, consequently, to crime. In the story “Criminal”, the main character, who was also the daughter of a priest, is so lonely that she had no one to talk to. During the story, she calls the trading company every day and orders clothes for her boyfriend just to talk to someone. Over time, the girl begins to steal various trinkets just to feel her significance. The

heroine sadly remembers a teacher who felt the need for a child to talk to someone. For now, no one will help Rebecca to hold back: not to fail, not to lose common sense, not to commit a crime. There is no one around who would support, comfort. The state of loneliness is inherent in every hero of the novel, and loneliness is not when a person is left alone, it is emptiness of thoughts, when a person is tired of fighting, resigned.

The novel recreates several life stories related to the main character. However, there are also stories when the main character is not the object of the narrative. In the story of “The Piano Player”, the main character is a musician with phenomenal abilities, Angie O'Meara, who thoughtlessly lives her life, playing every day in the town restaurant. She is endowed with a remarkable flair: she can play any melody without having musical literacy. However, the heroine is afraid of everything in her life, even playing in front of the audience. She deliberately does not take breaks between musical numbers, so as not to start all over again (get up, go out, etc.), and her weakness is veiled by alcohol, which she uses every day for courage. She has no family, no normal relationships, but one day she decides to change her life. It was a remarkable step on her part, as the woman, “killed” by everyone, seemed to wake up in her old age. The heroine is not mentioned anywhere else in the novel, but her psychological state produces a positive ending. Existence, not life, is presented to the heroine against the background of the biography of Olive Kitteridge, who, according to the author-narrator, would not tolerate such an attitude towards herself and would certainly change something, perhaps in her own way, but unquestionably.

The finale of the novel, though filled with existential sadness, is optimistic. As Olive Kitteridge gets older, she meets a man (“River” chapter) who, like her, suffers from loneliness, a widower, Jack Kennison, with whom she is getting very close. Abandoned by children, lonely, they find solace in communication and begin to meet. Olive, who, according to her words, learned everything in life, is again puzzled: “He confused her, this world, he surprised her” (Strout, 2008, p. 31). The narrator emphasizes that a person at any age can be happy, the one just has to want it. The heroine lives on, feels she is needed again, and finds happiness in the simplest things: the touch of a dear person, pleasant communication, a delicious donut and etc. The novel is characterized by free narrative, because it is unknown what awaits the heroine in the future, but she can be happy right here and now.

4. Conclusions

The concept of “narratives” has not been fully formed yet, despite a considerable amount of researches. Researchers are trying to outline the constitutive features of the term, distinguishing certain dominant components, since the reception of the text by the reader depends on the manner of narration, presentation of material in the individual author's style. However, it is difficult to characterize new narrative forms that do not “fit” into already defined “boundaries” of the narrative. Modern narrative forms are characterized by a “multiple” narrator (a set of voices, a perspective of “reality”), whose ambivalence determines the diegesis. A narrator of this type (the simplest type of “multiple” narrator can consist of two narrators) forms the structure, provides story-compositional unity, has the ability to lead the narration and influence the genre modification of the writing. The plot in such genre forms is not presented linearly, it is torn, broken, time-space is fragmentary, crushed, and that “glues” everything in the mind of the reader. Vision from different focuses simultaneously gives the opportunity to comprehensively consider the novel situation, get into the inner world of “neutral” characters, independently communicate with the reader, co-exist with him, and engage in controversy. The possibility of changing the perspective of the story or its fragments contributes to the deepening of the plot, as well as complicates the psychological portrait of the characters such as the world of literary writing becomes volumetric, interesting to watch and get into it. The “multiple” type of narrator is, in contemporary works, a factor that allows you to get deeper into the plot, outline your own attitude to a particular character or event and give an independent assessment of the situation.

Thus, we consider Elizabeth Strout's novel “Olive Kitteridge” as a socio-psychological novel-“matryoshka”, which is a literary example of postmodernism. The image of the main character is multifaceted: it is associated with the motives of decline and death, but also becomes a symbol of rebirth, hope (many of the heroes of the novel begin a new life thanks to Olive Kitteridge). The narrative component of the novel is multi-vector, as the story is told through the perspective of different characters, sometimes even strangers. A sharp change in focalization is a stylistic feature of the work that allows you to interpret the actions, characters, relationships between the characters from mutually exclusive positions. A non-diegetic narrator asks many unanswered questions. The dominant motives of the novel are existential (decline, extinction, loneliness, family, mother, etc.), psychological (substitution, sublimation), philosophical (life, death, being,

meaning of life, etc.). The chronotope of the novel has a real basis, is quite typical and performs structural, imagogic and imagological functions. Literary time is based on the biographical mode, but is conditional and characterized by retardation.

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