Theme Of Obsessive Love Through Linguistic Features In Lolita By Vladimir Nabokov And In Tiger, Tiger By Margaux Fragoso

Introduction and aims

This investigation will validate the focal question at hand, how does the writer present the central theme of obsessive love through linguistic features in the two texts ‘Lolita’ by Vladimir Nabokov and Margaux Fragoso’s ‘Tiger, tiger’. In my first chosen literary text, the main character Humbert reveals to his fictional audience his craving for adolescent children. Interestingly Humbert had a normal upbringing, with a loving and privileged background. He went to private school and had a very good education hence his advanced conversational skills, which is unconventional for someone soon after diagnosed with paedophilia as he hides his disorder so well. The narrative is homodiegetic, breaking the fourth wall and directly addressing the reader. From this text, the reader would concur that a damaged individual such as himself does not show typical conventions of a mental unstable individual yet displays himself as arrogant and self-confident this shown through his use of prose.

‘Lolita’ told from the standpoint of Humbert, a narcissistic man who articulates himself with expertise and tries to justify his subversive needs. The novels written during H. H’s incarceration, in a cinematic prose style, occasionally surpassing the limitations of the single signifiers [1]. For example, Nabokov differentiates the narrator’s lexis by hinting at his reliability on the abundance of meaning constructed by wordplay, innuendos and other verbal devices, also the writer proliferates with double meanings and equivocation, an example of this is how he constantly plays around with Lolita’s name, almost as if he a high on even just her name. The story paints a picture of a man who takes slumber in the house of Charlotte Haze in a little town in New England. However, a catalyst speeds up the plot immediately when we meet a young troublesome girl who Humbert falls for instantaneously. His desire is to fill his empty heart with a pure, innocent love of a child. This is where he enters the life of a Miss Dolores Lolita. Humbert wishes to win over her heart by giving her a paternal love that she longed for. The main protagonist uses his charming eloquence to manipulate the people in which he meets starting off with his family and friends, leading to people such as the therapists he had to talk to when he admitted into an asylum. The main character lives an unusually normal life, works for a bit and does a lot of travelling. Whereas in my second text ‘Tiger, tiger’ it is communicated in the first person with the purpose to inform her audience about the dark encounter in her life where she was naively infatuated with an older man. The novel uses the genre conventions of a memoir but also portrays realism, giving an autobiographical feel to the novel. [1: http://www.academia.edu/29972971/THE_ATTRACTION_OF_MONTAGES_CINEMATIC_WRITING_STYLE_IN_NABOKOVS_LOLITA
https://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Introduction_to_Vladimir_Nabokov%27s_Lolita/Puns]

Alternatively, ‘Tiger tiger’ concentrates on true-life personal encounters with paedophilia. The text is about a little girl called Margaux, who ‘likes gumballs and ice cream’ much like any other normal 7-year-old would, who lives in New Jersey with her ‘mentally unstable’ mother and ‘forever-furious’ father. Margaux’s lifestyle is very unsteady and this is the reason why she

visible as an easy target to pursuer. Her hectic life drove her straight into his arms in which she develops her dependence on her molester, a man known as Curran, a 51-year-old man with grey lifeless hair who collects ‘exotic’ animals, how he schemed against anyone who tries to stop him from molesting her. Margaux’s followed by him as he subliminally tries to start the grooming process, she first sees him at the swimming pool wherein he asks to join her and goes from asking for very little from her to guilt tripping her into doing much more by saying giving her hidden demands followed by ‘only if you want to sweetheart’. Peter Curran then starts listening to her and giving into her likes and dislikes, giving her the attention, she craved from her parents, making him seem like he is her significant other and so Currans ‘love’ or connection to her develops from Ludus (playful love) to storge (familiar love). Both texts follow the narrator’s life in chronological order and their experience with paedophilia and how it affected them long term. The purpose of selecting of selection both texts is to display the theme of obsessive love based on their viewpoint, the perspective of an adult who’s besotted by ‘Nymphets’ and a child grieving from the consequences of being a victim of paedophilia after finally coming to the realisation of her grooming as an adult. 751 words

Review

Paedophilia defines as a psychological disorder where an adult or adolescent experience a sexual attraction to children. With this understanding, I went onto researching a variety of non-literary texts such as ‘The diagnostic and statistical manual on mental disorders (DSM-VI)’, which outlines the disorder as a ‘paraphilia involving intense and sexual urges towards fantasies about prepubescent children’. Furthermore, ‘On paedophilia’ identifies and explains how social and cultural aspects of society foster paedophilic behaviour. In addition, it questions why paedophilia has not been interested in’ by psychoanalysts. This could possibly suggest that the fact that Paedophilia in both books have been swept under the carpet is because it has not really been acknowledged by people enough for the individual to seek help but then to just manifest in it. Paedophilia can be categorised in two types of categories, exclusive and nonexclusive. Exclusive paedophilia is when a person is sexually interested in just children whereas the opposite; non-exclusive paedophilia is where one is interested in both child and adult in which Humbert Humbert is supposedly illustrated as being attracted to both adults and children in order to manifest in his fantasies.

A biography is a record of anecdotal events based on the writer’s perspective, told through a first-person narrative or as otherwise known, a homodiegetic narrator. Also known as, a memoir differentiates from an autobiography because it ends on a summary of how the occurrence of the event formed their lifestyle or their new perspective to life. The reason for the narratology of first person illustrates a way to put across personal views. An insight on why the writer wanted the audience to join them on this journey of discovery and give hindsight on their experience much like in ‘Tiger, tiger’. The writer foretells how her first ‘lover’ shaped how she looks at people in her present and how it will still affect her in her future.

The significance of the ignorance displayed in both texts is highly significant in regards to the outline of the stories as it may suggest that there are more underlying issues at hand being ignored rather than the fact of just being diagnosed with paedophilia. An example of this is in regards to ‘Lolita’ this may give the reader a reason for Humbert’s compulsive and obsessive behaviour towards the minor Lolita whereas in ‘Tiger tiger’ there could be a background of trauma faced by the perpetrator hence his actions. 403 words

Analysis

How does the use of first-person narrative and structure shape the outlook on the theme of obsessive love?

Humbert uses the opportunity of talking from a first-person narrative to persuade the audience and justify his reasons for his taboo and obsessive love. Nabokov disguises Humbert's charm through the rhetorical technique to make time for the central character to woo his audience in listening to the reasoning behind his fetishizes. This is his stylistic device as an auteur throughout the novel as a whole and is done to evoke an emotional response in the audience. There are two blatantly common techniques Nabokov uses, which are irony and metaphors. Nabokov does this in order to deprecate the 'taboo' of paedophilia and shed a new, almost humorous perspective. The usage of onomatopoeia is another device Humbert likes to use, as he tries to make Lolita's name playful yet ends back on her name. This can be a metaphorical representation of how their 'relationship' functions, tends to be playful but still stands on a serious note towards the end of the sentence. Furthermore, it can be interpreted as the two personas of the characters, Humbert being the character of seriousness, constantly plotting his way into Lolita's life and Lolita on the sidelines, playful, much like a child should be. "Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul. Lo-lee-ta: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo. Lee. Ta. She was Lo, plain Lo, in the morning, standing four feet ten in one sock. She was Lola in slacks… But in my arms, she was always Lolita". This depth of Humbert's fantasies is promoted through the unconventional narrative, where in the beginning of the novel the audience are exposed to his infatuation.

Lolita uses a non-linear narrative structure but also refers to a recollection of events leading up to it, this is shown when we are told that he told his tale when he was in incarceration. In the novel, we are informed about events during his childhood at the beginning of the story. An example of this is when he describes Lolita as 'LOLITA, the light of my life…….' therefore in the beginning of the novel we are immediately introduced to his obsession through the use of the possessive pronoun 'my'. This could suggest that she is the real reason behind the very cause of his incarceration, behind all his twisted plots; we are initially shown the metaphorical 'root' of his disease. This was a purpose construction of the novel. This helps the audience decide how H.H got to the place that he did. Also conveys a strong sense of narrative by giving the reader insight as to why Humbert is the way he is, but is also enigmatic as it makes the reader question how a young girl could be of such impact to a grown man. In addition, this interpretation is backed by the exhibition of page ten, where he exclaims that he was a 'healthy and happy child in a bright world of illustrated books'. Nabokov deliberately fed us this information to hint that his childhood is not the case or excuse for his 'disease' as said by many professionals analysing the novel also.

Tiger uses a linear narrative to tell the story from beginning to end, as she wants the reader to embark on the journey of revisiting her past with her. Margaux begins to tell her story of how she was groomed and how her victim enchanted her and bound her to him. The author illustrated this as it is important in evoking an emotional response to the reader and the reader can identify or relate with the central character. 610 words

How does the perpetrators manipulate his audience through indirect and direct rhetorical technique?

Art Of Persuasion

Art of rhetoric comes in three parts. Ethos, pathos and Lagos (H.H use Lagos). These are the three modes of persuasion used to persuade audiences but Aristotle claims it as ‘three artistic proofs’. Ethos being the credibility and factuality in terms of the characteristics of the narrator, pathos meaning the morality and values held by the person and lastly Lagos, reasoning and evidence in what the person does or says. In the novel Lolita, Humbert uses his general knowledge to then create a plausibility for himself as he claims his tale telling is true (ethos). E.g. he uses adjectives to describe the weather as ‘hot and summery’ but then ushers the reader to check a newspaper ‘if you don’t believe’ him / the writer is aware of the readers scepticism as of his label and has already thought about the criticism that is to come from the reader further in the novel. Humbert also demonstrates how he can construct stimulation and appeal to the audience to read on through his fluidity and articulate use of language, language so powerful ‘it masks the taboo’ of his ‘relationship’ with an underage girl, made to sound like an ordinary conventional love story.

Humbert also demonstrates how he can construct stimulation and appeal to the audience to read on through his fluidity and articulate use of language, an example of this is Humbert expresses “You can always count on a murderer for a fancy prose style. The character knows the power of his language and how resilient it is in masking the taboo of his ‘relationship’ with an underage girl, made to sound like an ordinary conventional love story. Technique is cleverly used to elucidate the female body, makes the readers aware of the realisation of H. H’s sexual objectification of the female body. Furthermore, he denotes that his ‘lawyer suggests’ that he gives a ‘clear and frank account of the itinerary’ that they had followed. He claims that he has done this so often that it has become a point where he cannot ‘avoid the chore’. However, there are some days where he claims he is ‘too tired’ to go into detail and remains quite vague on situations the reader would love for him to delve into. This could possibly be done for enigmatic effect in his writing or to emphasise that he still has control over what people are to learn about him meaning that he could even falsify some of his stories and get away with it. Humbert shows he is skilled in persuading or swaying the mind of the audience through his proficiency in rhetorics.

Whereas in ‘Tiger, tiger’ Margaux tries to She uses Lagos and ethos. Margaux uses her general knowledge of the time and reasoning of his words that she embedded into her long-term memory, time she had spent with him as a child in order to find a way to tell her tale as if it was somewhat a flashback, giving the reader the benefit of hindsight. She reveals that she “was twelve and love burned in me like sap.’ The fact that she personifies love is effective in demonstrating how their love was not ordinary yet was very consuming. She also mentions that her ‘lover’ ‘Peter got down on his knees as though I was his goddess’. The noun goddess furthers how their ‘love’ was beyond understanding that love between a young child who knew nothing other than her predator could possibly be described as supernatural or a bond that can be only understood by the two involved and a higher being. However, an alternative interpretation of this could be that her perpetrator used the noun goddess to make the reader think that he worshipped his victim and ultimately gave her the world, when in reality he used his compelling compliments to seduce her and groom her. 641 words

How is obsessive love shown through emotive language to highlight the effect of obsessive love on the perpetrator?

Emotive Language

Obsessive love is shown through emotive language in the biography ‘Tiger tiger’ in order to highlight the aspect of obsessive love and display the train of thought within the complex mind of the perpetrator. Fragoso describes it as ‘they can make a child’s life ecstatic somehow’ and that another victim described it as ‘chasing a ghost of how it felt’. This depicts that although they are victimized, they connect and bond with their perpetrator on a much deeper level, as paedophiles seem to have a child like charm and coming off of being groomed to their mind-set is like ‘coming off a high’. The fact that it is described as a ‘high’ is a successful way in illustrating obsessive love through emotive language.

In Lolita, emotive language is used to display how Humbert came to ‘cast’ Lolita as his next victim of obsessive love. This is evident when the Nabokov details at the end of chapter 4 through the homodiegetic narrator Humbert that he ‘broke her spell by incarnating her in another’. This is ironic as it imposes that he was once bound to someone much like he evokes in Lolita later on in his life. The verb ‘broke’ suggests that he was shattered or unfixable for a time, meaning there is a possible link between the girl he loved as a kid and her being the trigger to his paedophilic behaviour. Followed right after comes the noun ‘spell’, this is interesting to the reader as in other words it means ‘an ability to control or influence people’ (dictionary) something which Humbert had learned to do so well. It can also suggest that that is why Humbert felt drawn to find another victim that filled the criteria of his last love that kept him tied to her for so long and that he did in Lolita. 306 words·

Conclusion

In conclusion, both literary and non-literary texts express thematises of obsessive love through different prose, lexis, and narrative structure. Both Lolita and Tiger tiger display their trauma by telling their story with conventional and unconventional means of narrative structure ultimately fulfilling the customs of the theme of obsessive love by subversively focusing on the obsession of their perpetrator.