STORYWORLD POSSIBLE SELVES

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JULIA LÓPEZ NARVÁEZ
Universidad Complutense de Madrid
julial06@ucm.es

Narrative engagement is a complex concept that has raised interest in several fields due to its interdisciplinary nature. In the last few decades this concept has shifted its attention from the text towards the reader's mind processes in narrative experience. Narrative engagement has interested diverse fields, such as literary studies, social psychology, cognitive linguistics and cognitive poetics, which have tried to explain the idiosyncratic reasons regarding readers' engagement or disengagement and their self-transformation in the narrative experience. However, as Martínez points out, there seems to be a lack of specificity on how this transformation happens (4). It is along these lines that *Storyworld Possible Selves* is written. This work aims at creating a model that can explain the cognitive processes of the reader's mind in narrative experience, emphasising emotion and feeling "as indispensable components of human cognition" (1).

Storyworld Possible Selves is included in the book series "Applications of Cognitive Linguistics", whose objective is, according to the publishers, to serve as a forum for works "where the theoretical insights developed in Cognitive Linguistics (CL) have been (or could be) fruitfully applied" ("Applications of Cognitive Linguistics"). In this way, this book follows the research line of this series, as it casts new light on the possible applications of cognitive linguistics regarding narrative engagement. *Storyworld Possible Selves* is divided into six chapters. The first three serve as the theoretical framework for the "*storyworld possible self*" (SPS) model (2), while

chapters 4, 5 and 6 focus on the SPS theory, its applications, and concluding remarks. In addition, each chapter features a brief introduction and conclusion that summarise the salient aspects and the main concepts applied throughout the book.

Chapter 1 provides the model's basic foundations, developed in the book. Martínez introduces the reader with notions, concepts and complex terminology which will become relevant for SPS. The author first focuses on narrative engagement from a psychological perspective. Martínez introduces three concepts essential for narrative engagement, which she calls "engagement pre-requisites" (27): perspective and focalisation (based on Genette's [1980] narrative perspectivisation theory), deictic shift, and possible worlds. These pre-requisites clarify how readers, through the focalisation of the narrator (Genette 1980), can move from their world to the storyworld (the fictional world) in a deictic shift (explained in Chapter 2).

SPS is based on blending theory, mainly on the work by Fauconnier and Turner (2002). Following their theory, SPS consists of four mental spaces, further developed in the following chapters: generic space (narrative perspectivisation), two input spaces (reader's self-concept and perspectiviser's construct) and the emergent structure (the blend). The two inputs will project features into a new space, the blend. SPS thus aims at a projection of the storyworld where features from the reader's self-concept and the perspectiviser (narrator or character) will be linked in a blend that the author calls *storyworld possible self*, defined as "the hybrid mental construct […] with which we inhabit the storyworlds projected by narratives" (2).

Chapter 2 discusses the linguistic mechanisms involved in the anchoring of the SPS, focusing on interactional cognitive linguistics and interactional sociolinguistics. Martínez draws on Langacker's "viewing arrangement" (2008: 73) and Verhagen's theory (2005), and states that SPS contains an object of conceptualisation (the storyworld), in which the conceptualising entities (reader and narrator/focaliser) join their attention, with an onstage area and an offstage region. The anchoring is deeply analysed in terms of indexicality and interactional facework. Martínez uses several works on interactional facework, defined as a "sum of interaction strategies aimed at the cooperative management of face and identity" (54-55). She also mentions Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987), since the SPS model will borrow the concepts of connectedness and separateness from these experts. Following these ideas, Martínez explains how a reader can decide whether to make a convergent or divergent alignment with the features of the narrator or focaliser, the character "from whose perspective and viewpoint the fictional world is presented" (134). In relation to the linguistic anchoring of the SPS, objectification and subjectification are essential. Objectification is originated when narrator/ focaliser and reader are one mental referent. The linguistic mechanisms used to

achieve objectivity include double deixis, pseudo deixis, the generic *you*, the pronoun *one*, indefinite pronouns and noun phrases. On the other hand, subjectification is achieved without verbal coding through the agentless passive voice, narrated perception, inner speech and the language of connectedness and separateness.

The concepts presented in the first chapters are essential for the understanding of the SPS. Martínez makes sure that all the ideas and theories that serve as the foundation for her model are well explained. She emphasises their importance and gives definitions from different authors, examples from novels, and closely analyses each concept in smaller parts. This means that from Chapter 3 onwards, the reader is well prepared to fully understand storyworld possible selves.

After having given an account of the cohesive base for the SPS theory, Chapter 3 deals with the cognitive operations of the SPS input spaces: character construct and self-concept. The first input space for the SPS blend is the narrator/focaliser's mental representation through characterisation and speech presentation. Interactional facework is also important for the character construct, as narrators/ focalisers will seek alignment with the reader. Therefore, the reader will create a character construct with features that will be included in the input, resulting in different types of blend, depending on whether these features match or clash with the reader's. The second input space is the mental representation of the reader. Drawing on Markus (1977), self-concept can be divided into two different schemas: self-schemas (what we consider ourselves to be: parent, daughter…) and possible self (what we would like or not like to be: lover, adventurer, betrayed).

Once SPS input spaces and generic space are explained in depth, the author focuses on the blend's properties and typology (Chapter 4). In relation to its typology, the SPS blend can be divided into different types, depending on the self-concept, the character construct, and the blending network. Self-concept can be divided into self-schema, desired possible self, undesired possible self, past possible self, and past SPS. On the other hand, the character construct can be focaliser or narrator. Martínez highlights the complexity of the omniscient narrator construct, as it sometimes cannot be differentiated from the focaliser's, leaving this problem, however, for future research. Finally, in order to explain blending networks in the SPS blend, Martínez again follows Fauconnier and Turner (2002), and states that there are five types of networks: simple, mirror, single-scope, double-scope, and multiple SPS blend. In SPS, the most important networks are double-scope and multiple SPS, as they create clashes between the organising frames, raising ethical conflict in the reader (explained in the next chapter).

In Chapter 5, the SPS model is applied to three narrative texts (Thomas Pynchon's *Against the Day,* Jeff Lindsay's *Darkly Dreaming Dexter*, and the TV series

Breaking Bad), focusing on ethical narrative. Martínez references *Against the Day* as an instance for showing how the input space of past SPS deals with intertextuality. The protagonist of the novel can be compared with the protagonists of Jules Verne, activating a past SPS of an adolescent-reader-of-adventures in the reader. *Darkly Dreaming Dexter* and *Breaking Bad*, on the other hand, are perfect examples of ethical conflict when projecting their input with the characters' constructs, which have organising frames that clash with the reader's. Martínez uses concepts and theories previously explained, so that when the reader reaches this last chapter, describing the concluding part of her model, every detail and aspect of SPS is perfectly understood.

Storyworld Possible Selves introduces a very cohesive model with varied and well-supported concepts. Martínez borrows previously conceived theories with which she builds her multifaceted model. Due to the multidisciplinary nature of SPS, throughout the book Martínez supports her theory and explanations with examples from both narrative texts and personal experiences, so that a reader who is not familiarised with these notions can fully understand her model and its complexity. In addition, the chapter structure including an introduction and conclusion aims at facilitating the understanding of each section's most important aspects. Thus, *Storyworld Possible Selves* starts with a solid foundation that branches out into different fields of knowledge which together, in a smooth and well-paced rhythm, create a robust theory, the storyworld possible selves model.

Narrative engagement has been studied from varied fields of expertise. SPS benefits from this interdisciplinarity for analysing the emotional response of the individual in narrative experience. In this way, Martinez's model feeds back into the theories on which SPS draws, as it serves as a model not only for cognitive linguistics, but for many other fields. Thus, SPS could be included in psychological studies about the self, empathy, or identification. It could also help improve studies on emotional response to literature or in cognitive linguistics. Martínez's model has much potential, and has proven to be a perfect tool for building a bridge between all the theories regarding narrative engagement and encouraging the interdisciplinary study of this phenomenon.

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