Topic- 0038: "Characterization Names"

Characterization or **characterization** is the concept of creating characters for a narrative.[1] It is a literary element and may be employed in dramatic works of art or everyday conversation. Characters may be presented by means of description, through their actions, speech, thoughts and interactions with other characters.

History

The term *characterization* was introduced in mid-15th century. Aristotle promoted the primacy of plot over characters, that are a plot-driven narrative, arguing in his *Poetics* that tragedy "is a representation, not of men, but of action and life." This view was reversed in the 19th century, when the primacy of the character, that is a character-driven narrative, was affirmed first with the realist novel, and increasingly later with the influential development of psychology.

Direct vs. indirect

There are two ways an author can convey information about a character:

Direct or *explicit* **characterization**

> The author literally tells the audience what a character is like. This may be done via the narrator, another character or by the character him- or herself.

Indirect or *implicit* **characterization**

> The audience must infer for themselves what the character is like through the character's thoughts, actions, speech (choice of words, way of talking), physical appearance, mannerisms and interaction with other characters, including other characters' reactions to that particular person.

In drama

Characters in theatre, TV and film differ from those in novels in that an actor may interpret the writer's description and dialogue in their own unique way to add new layers and depth to a character. This can be seen when critics compare the 'Lady Macbeths' or 'Heathcliffs' of different actors. The other major difference in drama is that it is not possible to 'go inside the character's head' in the way that it is possible in a novel or short story, meaning this method of character exposition is unavailable.