



Article

“And in That Moment I Leapt upon His Shoulder”: Non-Human Intradiegetic Narrators in *The Wind on the Moon*

Karin Molander Danielsson

School of Education, Culture and Communication, Mälardalen University, Box 883, 721 23 Västerås, Sweden; karin.molander.danielsson@mdh.se

Academic Editor: Joela Jacobs

Received: 9 January 2017; Accepted: 26 March 2017; Published: 30 March 2017

Abstract: Non-human narrators, by definition anthropomorphized, fill different functions in literature, and have different effects, not always positive for the species that is utilized, for example to voice a human political concern. However, many animal studies scholars agree that anthropomorphism, while inadequate, may be the best way we have to get to know another species. Animal characters who tell their own, autobiographical, stories are particularly interesting in this regard. Eric Linklater’s children’s novel *The Wind on the Moon* (1944), raises posthumanist questions about human–animal differences, similarities and language, especially through its engagement of several non-human intradiegetic narrators. In a novel with surprisingly few other forms of characterization of the non-human characters, their own detailed narratives become a highly significant means of access to their species characteristics, their consciousness, and their needs. In an analysis of these embedded narratives using Genette’s theory of narrative levels and functions, as well as intersections of speech act theory and cognitive narratology, this article exposes an otherwise inaccessible dimension of characterization in Linklater’s novel. It argues that the embedded narratives, in contrast to crude anthropomorphism, are in fact what enables both a verbalization of the character narrators’ otherness, and a connection and comprehension between species. In other words, these non-human narratives constitute what might be called (with Garrard) examples of critical anthropomorphism.

Keywords: non-human narrators; intradiegetic narration; Gerard Genette; anthropomorphism; Eric Linklater; *The Wind on the Moon*; direct speech; characterization; posthumanism; inter-species comprehension

1. Introduction

“And when I was hungry I went hunting, and that was the loveliest thing in life, to go hunting in the moonlight, and feel your blood like quicksilver in your veins” (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 100). The voice telling the story from which this excerpt is taken belongs to a puma, an important non-human character in Eric Linklater’s classic children’s novel from 1944, *The Wind on the Moon*. This novel, otherwise told by a heterodiegetic narrator, is scattered with a number of embedded narratives in direct speech, (usually between one to three pages in length) told by various characters. The examples that interest me, and that will be discussed here, are embedded narratives by two non-human characters, the Puma and the Falcon, whom I will treat as intradiegetic narrators, using a term from Gerard Genette (Genette 1988), and William Nelles (Nelles 1997), among others. Apart from the fact that these embedded narratives are lengthy and very noticeable in the text, there are two circumstances that make them interesting from a theoretical point of view: The first is that unlike the human characters, the animal characters are not focalizers. Neither are their cognitive functions, actions or

reactions interpreted or discussed by the narrator or by the characters. This places a large importance on their narratives, since they provide the otherwise missing link: access to the minds of these characters by means of direct speech. The other circumstance is that unlike many other talking animals in literature, these characters are not speaking a human language, but “the language of animals” (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 76) which (through magic) the human characters have also acquired. It is an important plot device that the child protagonists know this language, because this enables them to listen to and understand the non-human animals, which gives the children the knowledge and help that they need in their adventures. As the children gain this ability, so do we, the readers. Because we understand what they say, we understand what they mean, and how they justify their species-specific actions; in other words, through their embedded stories, they are characterized as cognizant, sentient beings. In this article I argue that *The Wind on the Moon*, through its non-human intradiegetic narrators, draws attention to, and negotiates the human–animal boundary in an interesting way, creating an inter-species connection that evokes, in the words of Bernaerts et al., “a double dialectic of empathy and defamiliarization” (Bernaerts et al. 2014, p. 69).

In what follows I will first give a brief introduction to the novel and its context, and then outline some recent ideas about anthropomorphism and the significance of non-human animal narration, before I present the narratological elements and concepts that are central for my subsequent analysis of the levels and functions of non-human intradiegetic narration in *The Wind on the Moon*.

2. Eric Linklater’s *The Wind on the Moon*

The Wind on the Moon is a long children’s novel that is somewhat difficult to ascribe to a certain genre. It was published in 1944, during the war, but like in many children’s books published at this time, the war is not visible (Hunt 1994, p. 129), other than as a threat that calls the protagonists’ father abroad, and starts the adventures. Like many children’s books, it has didactic undertones but the message is not the usual insistence on good behavior, but rather a universal right to freedom of body and mind, regardless of which species you happen to belong to. While it has important animal characters, it is not primarily an animal story, but it adheres, in perhaps unexpected ways, to some of the traditions of animal stories. For example, there are magical transformations of humans to animals that recall pre-Christian myths and tales, and the parts of the story where animals express their desire to be set free from the zoo are similar to the Victorian animal tales, such as Anna Sewall’s *Black Beauty*, that gave voice to the suffering of animals (De Mello 2013, p. 2). For a novel written well before the posthuman turn in philosophy and literature, it is remarkably posthuman in the way it proposes, in the words of Jacques Derrida, “a multiple and heterogenous border of this abyssal rupture” (Derrida 2008, p. 31) that is, a destabilized and non-binary human–animal distinction.

Although human–animal transformations and talking animals in children’s literature often indicate the fantasy genre, this novel is however also largely realistic in its representation of both human and non-human characters, and especially in discussions of their behavior and their living conditions. This is thus not a case in which, in the words of Cary Wolfe, “the discourse of species, and with it, the ethical problematics of our relations to non-human others, [can be] be treated largely as if species is always already a counter or cover for some other discourse” (Wolfe 2003, p. 124). Although some of the objectives of humans and non-humans in this novel converge, (notably freedom from confinement), these different non-human animals also speak rather eloquently for their species-specific needs.

The protagonists are two pre-teen human sisters, Dinah and Dorinda, who, when their father goes abroad, create a series of adventures to brighten up their dull school days. At one point they ask the local witch for help to frighten the people of their village, Midmeddlecum. With a magic draught, they turn themselves into kangaroos, a species chosen as much for its ability to carry objects (such as the bottle with the remains of the magic potion) in its pocket, as for its size and agility. This exemplifies the ease with which this novel negotiates anthropomorphism and defamiliarization, in a fashion similar to many of its more famous forerunners by Beatrix Potter, Kenneth Grahame and Lewis Carroll, discussed by David Rudd (Rudd 2009). Unfortunately, the children’s plan to strike fear

into the villagers is foiled when they are captured and taken to the local zoo. Here they meet other inmates of the zoo, the Puma, the Falcon, the Giraffe, the Bear, and many others. They also realize that the bottle with the magic potion has fallen out of Dinah's pocket, and that they now seem destined to remain kangaroos for the rest of their lives.

3. Talking Animals and Anthropomorphism

An unexpected result of the girls' transformation is that they now understand "the language of animals, as well as English, and they had learnt it without any trouble to themselves. This was very gratifying when they remembered the weary hours they had spent with Miss Serendip, trying to learn French" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 76). The fact that all non-human characters in the story speak the *same* language is interesting in several ways. It is easy to see how a plot involving zoo animals (many different species at close quarters) can be advanced by this maneuver; most importantly, it enables them to plan and execute their escape. It could also be seen as the result of a reductive view of the human–animal distinction, an issue I will address and refute in what follows. It also calls attention to the relationship between language and consciousness and the well-known philosophical dilemma which lingers everywhere in the background of this novel, namely how non-humans and humans may connect with, and comprehend each other.

Kari Weil discusses this as "the tragedy of language" which ensues "when we acknowledge that there is another consciousness there . . . that we desperately desire to know through language" (Weil 2012, p. 9), something which has often been seen as the major if not the exclusive hindrance to inter-species comprehension. Language, spoken or written, is after all how we humans primarily communicate, and language is especially privileged in literature, so a literary representation of non-human consciousness has to grapple with this. In fiction, the solution sometimes is to let the non-humans speak a human language, as for example in C.S. Lewis's Narnia series (1950–1956), and in Kafka's "A Report to an Academy" (1917). Kari Weil, however, in a discussion citing Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?", uses Kafka's story as an example of how non-humans learning a human language equals a problematic form of assimilation. As Weil points out: "Language is at the core of Kafka's critique of assimilation as a process that gives voice only by destroying the self that would speak . . . [I]f they learn our language, will they still be animals?" (Weil 2012, p. 6).

A related problem is Wittgenstein's claim that "If a lion could speak, we could not understand him" (quoted in Cary Wolfe, (Wolfe 2003, p. 44)). Wolfe, in a discussion of several philosophers' writings on this observation, quotes Vicki Hearne, who appreciates the fact that Wittgenstein's claim shows that this is a problem for us, not for the animal. Wittgenstein's lion, "regarded with proper respect and awe, gives us unmediated knowledge of our ignorance" (Hearne, quoted in (Wolfe 2003, p. 45)). In *The Wind on the Moon*, the non-human animals do not have to assimilate, but neither are the humans faced with their ignorance, at least not immediately. In the more pragmatic and comedic manner of children's literature, the transformation of the girls into kangaroos automatically opens their ears not only to the fact that the animals talk, but also to what they say, and to what they can learn from them.

The "language of animals" perhaps suggests *The Jungle Book* (1894) (Kipling [1894] 2012), where the animals of the jungle are able to communicate with each other, and with Mowgli who has been raised by the wolves. However, unlike the situation in *The Jungle Book*, which opens with wolves and jackals speaking to each other, we never hear the animals in *The Wind on the Moon* talk until the girls are introduced to a llama and realize that they are able to understand what she says (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 76). Speech and understanding are thus accentuated in Linklater's novel, in a way they are not in Kipling's.

This also turns the girl protagonists in *The Wind on the Moon* into translators and mediators between the non-human characters and the readers, because it is the fact that the girls are able to understand the non-humans that enables the readers to do so. It also creates, I would argue, a reason for readers to take an interest in the non-human characters, because as soon as they talk, (and we understand them) they are identified as cognizant subjects with interesting and educational things

to say. In this novel, then, the problems of assimilation and asymmetry are skirted (if not resolved) by letting the human protagonists (and by association and imagination the readers) use a language common to all non-human species. The kangaroos Dinah and Dorinda retain their human minds and their individual traits even though they eat and speak like kangaroos: they get bored without books to read or games to play, and are determined to change back to children as soon as the bottle with the magic draught is found. Similarly the other animals of different species are able to express their minds without assimilating, or adapting to human standards or forms of communication, and indeed without conforming to any reduced form of animality (cf. (Derrida 2008, p. 31 and passim.) On the contrary, the common language is what enables their expression of species-specific and individual characteristics.

The following scene shows with some clarity how a common language alters our view of non-humans. The sisters, (now kangaroos) are allowed to walk freely on the grounds of the zoo, and here notice for the first time the Puma and the Falcon in their cages.

They were both so beautiful that Dinah and Dorinda stood between their cages and could not decide which to look at first.

“Good afternoon,” said the Puma. “Hail!” cried the Falcon. “How do you do?” said Dinah and Dorinda. (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 97)

As soon as the non-humans speak, they are transformed from objects under the sisters’ gaze, to subjects in control of the situation. The sisters, too, change, from spectators to polite participants in a new social setting, and proceed to introduce themselves, as they would to adult humans, people of some significance. This key scene is then followed by extensive intradiegetic narratives by the Puma and the Falcon, (which will be analyzed in detail below), and by then we are already prepared to listen to these characters and learn more about them.

But even if we accept that language in fiction is a path to the recognition of consciousness and self-awareness in others, are not talking animals anthropomorphized, and is this not in general to their disadvantage? It is a concept loaded with negative connotations, and has in the words of Greg Garrard, “until recently been used exclusively as a pejorative term implying sentimental projection of human emotions onto animals” (Garrard 2012, p. 154). However, as Garrard also points out, a too one-sided view of anthropomorphism “risks making it impossible to describe animal behavior at all, so the problem is to distinguish between different kinds of anthropomorphism” (Garrard 2012, pp. 154–55). Garrard uses the term crude anthropomorphism for phenomena such as “disnification” (a term he takes from Baker’s *Picturing the Beast*, 1993), and the term critical anthropomorphism for its scientific use, e.g., in ethology (Garrard 2012, p. 157). So, even though anthropomorphism, in the words of McFarland and Hediger, is “the natural human tendency to view an animal’s actions in terms of our own conscious motives” (McFarland and Hediger 2009, p. 3) it is perhaps the only means we have to form any notion “of what takes place in the mind of an animal” (Washburn, qtd in (Bekoff 2002, p. 48)). Marc Bekoff, professor of biology and the author of many works on human–animal interaction, and on non-human cognition, underlines that being human,

we have by necessity a human view of the world. The way we describe and explain the behavior of other animals is limited by the language we use to talk about things in general. By engaging in anthropomorphism we make other animals’ worlds accessible to ourselves and to other human beings. By being anthropomorphic we can more readily understand and explain the emotions or feelings of other animals. But this is not to say that other animals are happy or sad in the *same* ways in which humans (or even other members of the same species) are happy or sad. (Bekoff 2002, p. 48)

Bekoff thus underlines that the limitations of our human existence, our dependence on language for reasoning about the world, makes some anthropomorphism necessary, if not unproblematic. However, Bekoff is talking about understanding actual animals. Representations of talking animals in literature have often been used for purposes other than conveying animal consciousness. Lars Bernaerts et al.

mention satiric, didactic, and ethical functions, (Bernaerts et al. 2014, p. 70), and Karla Armbruster notes functions such as providing an outsider point of view, or voicing social criticism of various kinds (Armbruster 2013, p. 18). Clearly, in most such cases, except perhaps in the voicing of suffering of animals, anthropomorphism is of little use to the animal thus represented, or to anyone wishing to reach some understanding of that animal's mind.

Even so, imagination is a key to understanding, as Thomas Nagel notes his famous essay, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?" (Nagel 1974) and fictional representation may of course have other purposes and qualities. Armbruster, for instance, suggests that, "a yearning to genuinely know the otherness of non-human animals runs through most, if not all, talking animal stories, as well as the motivations of their readers" (Armbruster 2013, p. 19). If that is so, the fact that these fictional animals share a language with us, does, perhaps paradoxically but in line with Bekoff's ideas, enable readers and other characters to infer the experiences and emotions of animals, and to appreciate their difference.

Derrida says of the (hypothetical) animal who speaks in the first person: "Whether it is pronounced, exposed as such, thematised or not, the I is always posed autobiographically. It refers to itself" (Derrida 2008, p. 56). I would suggest, that when fictional animals not only talk, but also become intradiegetic narrators, that is, when they get to tell their own autobiographical stories in their own voices, distinguishable from other characters and narrators, their otherness has an even better possibility to filter through to other characters and to the reader. Naama Harel also suggests:

The nonhuman narrators, who tell their own story in a way which is impossible outside the world of fiction, are indeed pronouncedly anthropomorphized, [sic] yet they can still raise significant questions about nonhuman existence and its relationship with human existence. Anthropomorphic representation should not necessarily lead to anthropocentric interpretation, which excludes the nonhuman protagonists. (Harel 2013, p. 49)

In other words, fictional works with non-human character narration affords us a possibility to access subjects that would be otherwise inaccessible, and therefore deserve an effort on our part, to read them in good faith. Nagel, although of course ultimately pessimistic about our possibilities of ever understanding what it is like for another being to be it, makes the point that "even to form a conception of what it is like to be a bat (and a fortiori to know what it is like to be a bat) one must take up the bat's point of view" (Nagel 1974, p. 442). One way to enable that attempt, that leap of imagination, is to allow animal narrators to express that consciousness in a mutual language. Furthermore, if the text as a whole is, "both inviting the reader to identify with the nonhuman animal as a fellow living being and reminding him or her of the inevitable differences between humans and other species" (Armbruster 2013, p. 24), this places the burden of a nuanced interpretation more firmly on the shoulders of the narratees, and on the readers.

In *The Wind on the Moon* there exists both a rather pointed invitation to the reader to empathize with the non-human characters, and a reminder of the difference. One example of the latter is the fact that human and non-human characters differ in modes of characterization, and in the representation of consciousness. The human characters' are often focalizers and their minds are regularly represented in indirect, and free indirect discourse: "Dinah wondered why there should be a light in his house" [indirect thought]. "Perhaps he was ill?" [free indirect thought] (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 84). In contrast, and even though some non-human characters have large and important roles to play, the animals are never focalizers, and the instances when non-human minds are represented, or non-human actions interpreted, in the extradiegetic narrative are very rare. One of those few examples is this, from a scene when the human protagonists come back, after some delay, to liberate the Puma from her cage: "Then the Puma turned her head, and her agate eyes, as if a lamp had been lighted behind them, shone suddenly with a wild joy" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 182). Even so, the Puma's joy is seen in her eyes, not expressed as a representation of her thoughts. This asymmetry in characterization suggests a reluctance on the part of the narrator to interpret non-human behavior in human terms, that is, to engage in simplistic, or crude anthropomorphism (Garrard 2012). However, since the Puma and the other non-human characters are allowed to express their minds at length in direct speech in a

common language, we get access to what they feel and think through what they say, and we are invited to empathize. This circumstance, apart from emphasizing the Puma's and other animals' ability to speak (and our ability to understand them) therefore highlights both defamiliarisation and empathy (Bernaerts et al. 2014).

In what follows, I will show how the direct speech events of the non-human characters in *The Wind on the Moon* call attention to themselves, both because they invite us to learn about and empathize with these cognizant characters, and because many of them constitute sizeable embedded narratives with interesting textual functions.

4. Direct Speech, Character Narratives, and Narrative Levels

Before I move on to the analysis of these narratives, I would like, first, to connect with at least some of the work that has been done on speech categories (such as direct speech) in literature, and then show how narrative levels or embedded narratives like the ones that interest me in *The Wind on the Moon*, may be analyzed. I became interested in direct speech because it is so conspicuous in *The Wind on the Moon*, as the predominant form of discourse associated with the animal characters.

In narratology direct speech is generally considered as mimetic, that is, a representation of an actual utterance, a "literal quotation" (Genette 1988, p. 50). Similarly, according to Leech and Short, the reporter of direct speech claims "to report faithfully (a) what was stated, and (b) the exact form of words which were used to utter that statement (Leech 1981, p. 320)". They also point out that apart from the grammatical differences such as verb tense and syntax, there is an equivalence between direct and indirect speech (Leech 1981, p. 320), in the sense that when indirect speech is offered, what we read is the narrator's report of the direct speech of a character. However, as Terence Patrick Murphy has shown (Murphy 2007), the equivalence relation between the indirect speech reported by the narrator in the narrative discourse, and the direct speech that we are to infer took place in the story, is in fact far from 1:1. Narrators have reasons for choosing one or the other reporting form, and the effect of their choice is considerable. Murphy argues for instance that by choosing what he calls monitored speech (indirect or free indirect speech) "the narrator thereby conveys that speech at one remove, potentially suppressing what makes that particular character's speech forms unique" and is thus able to "upgrade or downgrade typical speech forms of that character" vis-a-vis the ideology of the novel (Murphy 2007, p. 28). He also points out that without the reported direct speech of the characters, readers are unable to accurately reconstruct the scene with regards to who is present and participating in the conversation. Monitored speech thus becomes, not only a more economical (because usually shorter) way to express something less important, but a tool for selecting and controlling the effect of characters' utterances, and even their perceived presence in the scene (Murphy 2007, p. 29). It seems to me therefore, that direct speech offers a more direct access to the speaker's own ideology, speech forms, and grade of activity, than indirect speech, and that this makes direct speech a source of characterization and a point of access to the speaker's mind.

The view of direct speech as indicative of a character's mind is also indirectly suggested by other scholars. Jonathan Culpeper, for example, in theorizing how characterization can be inferred from textual features, states that "in literary texts an author can afford us such direct access into a character's mind through such devices as thought presentation or soliloquy" (Culpeper 1996, p. 336). Similarly, Lars Bernaerts, analyzing speech acts in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, claims that "A character's speech acts activate a particular nexus of character or personality traits and suggest a particular mental functioning" (Bernaerts 2010, p. 291). While, as Brian McHale points out, "the 'originality' of direct quotation in fiction is entirely illusory" (McHale 2009, p. 435), because it is also controlled by a narrator, this illusion is in many cases all we get. When, as in *The Wind on the Moon*, indirect discourse and direct or indirect characterization of non-human characters are almost non-existent, whereas character narratives in direct speech are conspicuously common, the latter do therefore invite an analysis into the speaker's mind.

Before I move on, I need to address a question of terminology. As mentioned above, direct speech has traditionally been considered mimetic, that is, non-narrated, and my designating examples of direct speech as embedded narratives, and the speakers as intradiegetic narrators, might therefore cause objection. Genette, however, suggests in *Narrative Revisited*, that dialogue should be seen as transcribed or quoted, by the narrator (Genette 1988, p. 43), and Nelles, citing Genette, declares that “I will view all quoted dialogue in this way, not as direct speech spoken by characters, but as spoken by the general narrator in the persona of a character” (Nelles 1997, p. 60). Nelles later states:

[A]ny discourse can be seen as a narrative, since, given the proper context, any discourse can imply a story. Following this reasoning, the difference between a character addressing a speech to a listener and a narrator narrating a narrative to a narratee is not quantitatively determinable. One could thus label any character whose direct discourse is presented a narrator. One definition of “embedded narrative” would then be “character discourse”: all intradiegetic narrative is embedded narrative. (Nelles 1997, p. 122)

It could seem that this means that the direct speech connection to the speaker’s mind would thereby be lost, but for the fact that the general narrator speaks “in the persona of the character” (Nelles 1997, p. 60). The way I understand it, this persona must include the character’s consciousness. David Herman offers a good example of direct speech analyzed not only as a point of access to the speaking character’s mind, but also as an embedded narrative, in his discussion of Joyce’s “The Dead” (Herman 2007). He points out about “an embedded narrative told by Gretta” that “Rather than conveying bedrock facts about Furey, [her long-dead boyfriend] the story represents Gretta making her best effort to understand what happened, and during their interaction her attempt informs Gabriel’s inferences about Gretta’s mind” (Herman 2007, p. 254). In what follows, I try to do something similar, that is, I read character discourse as embedded narratives, told in the persona of characters, and therefore characterizing these characters as particular personalities with particular “mental functioning[s]” (Bernaerts 2010, p. 291).

The embedded narratives in *The Wind on the Moon*, told by non-human character narrators, can be analyzed following Genette’s model in *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, 1988 (Genette 1988), in which he sees intradiegetic narratives as occupying different levels. Genette calls the embedding narrative the first or primary level, which may be told by an extradiegetic narrator as in *The Wind on the Moon*, or an intradiegetic and homodiegetic, (or character) narrator. Second level, (or embedded), narratives are always told by an intradiegetic narrator, like the Puma in *The Wind on the Moon*, who per definition exists in the embedding narrative and possibly but not necessarily in the story she tells.

Intradiegetic narratives can frame other intradiegetic (also called metadiegetic) narratives, in an ever increasing number of levels, as for example, in *The Wind on the Moon*, where the extradiegetic narrator of the first level introduces a story told by the character the Falcon, which, occupying the second level, in turn embeds the narration of another character, the Bantam Hen, occupying the third level. These inserted narratives can, according to Genette’s revised theory (which was informed by that of John Barth) fulfil six different narrative functions (Genette 1988, p. 93). The first is the explanatory one, an analeptic narrative that explains parts of the same story (*fabula*) that we would otherwise have no access to: background facts, for example, which are common in *The Wind on the Moon*. The second is the “predicative function of a metadiegetic prolepsis” (Genette 1988, p. 93), like the witches’ prophesy in *Macbeth*, and a few possible examples in *The Wind on the Moon*. The third, the thematic function, a story of similarity or contrast which develops a theme or motif, and the fourth, the persuasive or dramaturgical function in which the narrative, “perceived by the narratee, has consequences in the first action” (Genette 1988, p. 93), are both common in *The Wind on the Moon*, and will be seen in examples below. Function number five is distractive, like a story told while the characters wait for something else to happen, and number six is obstructive, like Sheherazade’s stories which actually stop her from being killed.

5. Intradiegetic Narratives in *The Wind on the Moon*

So what do the non-human intradiegetic narrators say, and what can we and the narratees infer from these narratives? In this section, I will present a number of sizeable intradiegetic narratives, (length is, after all, a common feature of direct speech (Murphy 2007)) which will be analyzed with regard to Genettian function and to non-human characterization and cognizance.

5.1. *The Puma*

The first example introduces the Puma, and occurs soon after the scene quoted above, when the girls (now kangaroos) meet her and the Falcon for the first time.

“Don’t you like being in a zoo?” asked Dorinda. The Puma’s cage looked very comfortable, and behind it there was an outrun with bushes and a bare stony rise, and a little brook. The Puma was silent for a while, and then *she said*, “I used to live in a forest in Brazil, and in every part of the forest there was something new to look at. Every tree had a different shape and some were smooth as a young leaf, and some were rough and deeply crinkled. Their branches made pictures against the sky, and at night they became a fishing net and caught the stars like a shoal of little fishes. Flowers like trumpets grew upon the trees, sweet-smelling and among the huts of an Indian village were small brown children playing in the sun. There were long winding paths in the forest, I could run for fifty miles. There was a river, sometimes brown and swirly, sometimes clear and smooth. I used to lie on a branch above the water and look at my reflection in a greenish pool. And when I was hungry I went hunting, and that was the loveliest thing in life, to go hunting in the moonlight, and feel your blood like quicksilver in your veins. Not a bird wakes but you hear it. Not a leaf closes but you see the edge turn in. Nothing moves but you smell the wind of its movement. And you go like a shadow through the trees, and even your skin and your claws are laughing and alive.” “I suppose a Brazilian forest is good in its own way,” *said the Falcon*, “but I wish you could see Greenland” ((Linklater [1944] 2013, pp. 99–100), my italics).

As we can see, the Puma’s narrative is a second-level narrative, marked by threshold markers, quotation marks and a reporting verb at the beginning and the end (when another intradiegetic narrator, the Falcon, takes over with another second level narrative). At least partly, the Puma’s narrative belongs to Genette’s first function, because it explains what kind of life the Puma used to have. It belongs to the story, the *fabula*, in as much as it tells us that she used to be a wild animal, not born in the zoo where we first encounter her. Her mentioning of the Indian children foreshadows (but does not exactly predict) a later explanation, of how she was captured by a human and sold to England. Then her narrative smoothly shifts gears into the third, thematic, function, telling a story of similarity or contrast. In this case, by contrast, it calls attention to the theme of mental and physical imprisonment as opposed to liberty of body and mind. This is done partly through an affirmation of the Puma’s sensory faculties (visual, audial, olfactory, and kinesthetic) and through the introduction of certain motifs and metaphors that will return in the Puma’s narratives, and that characterize her and distinguish her from the other animal narrators. The Puma is for example fond of all kinds of imagery, but especially similes: “smooth as a young leaf,” “stars like a shoal of little fishes,” “blood like quicksilver”, and metaphors.

The contrast between the Puma’s memories and her current situation is evident. She used to have a forest where “every tree had a different shape”; now she has an outrun with bushes. She used to have miles of winding paths; now she has a stony rise. She used to have a swirling river; now she has a little brook. The last part of her narrative details the joys of hunting, which is contrasted by how the Puma is described when the girl first sets eyes on her some pages previously: “a lovely animal, gleaming like gold, moving swiftly out of shadow into sunlight, out of sunlight into shadow” (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 96), illustrating the restless pacing of a caged predator.

Later in the novel, we are reminded of the Puma's first narrative and "the loveliest thing in life," hunting, when the children, the Puma and the Falcon escape from the zoo and the Puma, for a short time, tries to live in the local forest. This is her first narrative in freedom, here considerably abbreviated:

"Children" said the Puma, "let me tell you this. You have done me the greatest service in the world. You have given me freedom, and I am grateful. You have given me life again. All last night I walked in the Forest with the smell of the trees and the rich ground in my nostrils, and the darkness was beautiful, the sky with a few stars looked through the branches . . . I had not known there were deer in the wood until I caught the draught of their movement. So I turned and followed up the wind, and in the first dawning I found a stag going to drink . . . Faster I went, fast and easy, till the morning air was whistling past my ears and the forest floor slid below my feet like a torrent racing down a mountain, and the labouring haunches of the stag came nearer . . . I drew near-level with him . . . and in that moment I leapt upon his shoulder . . . and as the sun came up, I made my kill. For that glorious moment and the headlong chase in the morning, I thank you. For the life you have given me, thank you. For the freedom of today and the liberty of tomorrow, thank you" . . . Both Dinah and Dorinda were somewhat horrified to learn that the Puma, so soon after regaining her freedom, had killed a deer. (Linklater [1944] 2013, pp. 193–95)

The first thing to notice, is perhaps the motif of inter-species connection and gratitude which is established here and which recurs repeatedly until the end of the novel. But it is also important to note the thematic and metaphorical similarity of this narrative to the first. The Puma's description of her surroundings evokes the original metaphor of the stars seen through the branches. Her running and enjoyment of the speed is elaborated on, as well as the physical sensations and sensory faculties involved in hunting, and the manner in which she finds her prey. In the first narrative she says: "Nothing moves but you smell the wind of its movement" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 100) and in the second, she describes an actual instance of this in similar words: "I caught the draught of their [the deer's] movement" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 194).

With hindsight, the first narrative may be seen as "premonitory" or "prophetic" (Genette's second function) (Genette 1988, p. 93), which would place the two narratives in a prophesy–fulfilment relationship, and in a sense she relives her memories in the second one. I also, however, read the first narrative as explanatory (Genette's first function) telling the story of her former life in freedom, and as establishing a theme: the natural habitat, the freedom of movement and the swiftness of action distinguishing the normal life of a puma. The second narrative is also explanatory (telling the story of her first night in the forest) but more importantly thematic (Genette's third function), because it repeats and emphasizes the motifs from the first, and shows her new life as an attempt to reclaim a more normal kind of life for a puma, in stark contrast to her life at the zoo. It is not only a question of her now being unrestricted and therefore able to chase after prey, nor only her ability to exercise athletic skills, but the very *liberty she takes* in killing a deer. We see this in the girls' reaction, which in this instance originates as much in the fact that the Puma's prey is considered the property of the landowner, as in their being unused to such unconstrained glorification of killing. I will return to their reaction below.

This reading also encourages a heightened awareness (in the narratees and in the readers) of the Puma's sensory capacities, related in the first narrative thus: "Not a bird wakes but you hear it. Not a leaf closes but you see the edge turn in. Nothing moves but you smell the wind of its movement" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 100). In particular the sense of smell is repeated and emphasized in the second narrative: "the smell of the trees and the rich ground in my nostrils . . . I caught the draught of their [the deer's] movement" (Linklater [1944] 2013, pp. 194). The Puma's superior sensory ability is also something which distinguishes her from the human characters and which is elaborated on later in

the same chapter, when she and the Falcon try to teach the girls how to use all their senses to notice everything that goes on around them¹ (Linklater [1944] 2013, pp. 198–99).

These excerpts also characterize the Puma through her choice of words, which are poetic, courteous and sensuous, and perhaps just a little old-fashioned, especially in the second quotation, where she pledges her gratitude to the children. Despite the fact that she is now free, and has a forest to run and hunt in, her happiness is somehow tainted with melancholy. Furthermore, the girls' realization that a puma might not be set free to live in an English, private, forest without "some awkward consequences" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 195) foreshadows the Puma's future return to imprisonment, and death.

This intradiegetic narrative in direct speech allows the Puma to express her otherness in a delicate play on estrangement and attachment (or, in the words of Bernaerts et al., defamiliarization and empathy (Bernaerts et al. 2014)). Her highly evolved senses, for example, which are characteristic of pumas but not of humans, are described in an elaborate language of similes and metaphors (denoting human sensitivity and intelligence) which helps us understand her and empathize with her, makes her less strange in spite of her otherness. In conclusion, in these two narratives, she becomes something more than the beautiful, non-human other the girls first notice; she develops into an accomplished and valuable character both different from and similar to us. Most of all, the contrast between the Puma's wistful tone in the first narrative, and her exultant gratitude in the second, helps the children and the readers understand the absurdity of keeping a character like this in a cage.

5.2. The Falcon

The Falcon is perhaps an even more important intradiegetic narrator, since he becomes the girls' spy and informant, the only one able to see and to report on what is going on, while the Puma and the girls are imprisoned, first in the zoo and then again in a later adventure, in the dungeons of the faraway country of Bombardy. Like the Puma, the Falcon gets to introduce himself, and to acquaint the girls and the readers with his specific Greenland falcon characteristics:

"I suppose a Brazilian forest is good in its own way," said the Falcon, "but I wish you could see Greenland. There is nothing in the world so beautiful as that enormous tableland, covered with snow, peaked and shining in the sun, cut by great ravines, and patched by blue shadows. I used to ride upon a breeze, a mile above it, in air like crystal, and on either side I could see a hundred mile of snow and sea, and icebergs shipwrecked on the beach, and the pack-ice moving, and the Eskimos in their kayaks, fishing. Then I would close my wings and dive like a bullet through the diamond sky, down to the little bushes and the glinting rocks . . . Headlong down, the thin air screaming, then *crash*—wings out, head up, and halt two feet from the heather—when I struck swiftly, straight-legged, at a fine fat ptarmigan, too slow to escape, and dashed him to the ground. Ha! The delight, the swiftness, and the freedom!" "Freedom," sighed the Puma. "Life without freedom is a poor, poor thing" ((Linklater [1944] 2013, pp. 100–1), my italics).

As we can see, the Falcon's initial tale is very similar to the Puma's in certain respects. It fulfils Genette's explanatory, first function, in showing what his life was like before he ended up in the zoo, and simultaneously performs the third, thematic function. The enormous expanses of his former homeland and especially his birds-eye perspective in describing the snow covered tableland cut by ravines, contrasts with his life in captivity, and develops the motif of (lost) freedom. His narrative also introduces the Falcon's particular species-specific capacities: his ability to fly at high speed and with

¹ This is a fascinating passage of the novel that can be compared and contrasted with Donna Haraway's ideas on animal training as a way to facilitate communication without language (Haraway 2008), but here it is the animals who train the humans. However, this discussion falls outside of my scope for this article.

great precision, and his sense of sight, which is exceptional. Both of these abilities turn out to be crucial to the plot, which also makes this an example of Genette's fourth function, the dramaturgical one.

The Falcon's narrative also characterizes him as both different from and similar to the children and the Puma. He is different, because so obviously capable of feats humans can only dream of, but similar because of his speech, which is more straight-forward and rational than the Puma's, and includes a tone of youthful delight and energy, especially in the last few, incomplete clauses where he runs up exclamations. As with the Puma, the effect of this narrative, on the protagonists and the readers, is to convince us that this is a reflecting, feeling character who does not belong in captivity.

With the kangaroos' help, the Falcon is the first non-human to be let out of his cage. He flies off to search for the bottle with the magic draught that can turn the kangaroos back into girls. During the several days of his absence, the zoo inhabitants are shaken by the repeated theft of eggs from a pair of ostriches. When the Falcon finally returns, he has an interesting tale to tell, not only of the search, but also, unexpectedly, of the hitherto unidentified egg thief. But the Falcon starts by telling the kangaroos of his search for their bottle, which despite his efforts, initially has not gone well.

"And then, barely an hour since, I was quartering the field by the gate-keeper's lodge, for the tenth, or twelfth, or fourteenth time, though the light was going fast, when I saw, not the bottle, but a plump young rabbit, and I thought to myself, There's my supper. So I stooped upon the rabbit, but the light being bad I nearly missed, and I barely gripped him by the hinder parts as he was vanishing down the hole. I pulled him out, he was squealing like a baby, and as I pulled I could see, beyond him in the hole, the bottle that you lost. It was too deep for me to reach, but the hole is near the edge of the field, on the far side of the road, eighty yards from the gate-keeper's cottage, and so that you will find it easily, I have stuck in the soil behind it the rabbit's white tail." "What a clever thing to think of!" said Dorinda. "Poor rabbit," said Dinah. "A fat and tender rabbit," said the Falcon. "I enjoyed my supper very much". (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 143)

This narrative is an example of the explanatory first function since he explains that he has found the bottle and how; but it is also thematic, (the third function) because we recognize the motif of hunting and killing. In addition, it is an example of the dramaturgical fourth function: it will enable the kangaroos to find their bottle. It also characterizes the Falcon as energetic, rational, thorough, and quick of thought, as Dorinda points out, to her sister and to the reader.

Dinah's "Poor rabbit" reaction deserves a short discussion. This is one of several instances when one of the implications of the non-humans' life in freedom becomes apparent, namely that since they are predators, they need to kill other animals to eat. Another such incident is the one related above, when the Puma kills a stag (which takes place after the Falcon kills the rabbit.) Like most children their age, Dinah and Dorinda have never had to think about where their Sunday roast comes from, but in their communication with these animals, and as an effect of their friendship, they have to at least approach the issue. After learning that the Puma has killed a deer, they are at first horrified, and realize that setting her free has had some "awkward consequences. And the longer she remained at liberty, obeying her instincts and satisfying her hunger, the more and more numerous the awkward consequences would be" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 195). After some consideration, however, they remind themselves that the Puma is their friend, and "there was no use having a friend if you were going to complain about everything that he or she did. You had to understand her point of view . . . and as to her killing [a deer] now and then,—well, was that any worse than buying a leg of lamb which the butcher had killed?" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 195). This is an instance where a shared language is not enough to create understanding. The importance of seeing the non-human's point of view, (cf. (Nagel 1974)), and of the claims of friendship become explicit here, whereas the question about the ethics of killing for food is simplified into a realization that humans do that too. Although this might be seen as if the text avoids a potentially uncomfortable issue, I think we have to consider the time of writing. The novel was written in 1944, not only a time of war and scarcity of food, but also long before the lives of farm animals had entered public debate. Moreover, in keeping with the

ideology of the novel, the girls (and the readers) are once again given the lesson that non-humans are both similar to and different from humans, and that while their differences need to be respected, their similarities nevertheless make them possible to empathize with.

The Falcon's next narrative, which follows immediately upon the one quoted above, repeats the killing for dinner motif, here juxtaposed to another kind of killing. Like the other narratives, it also explains parts of the *fabula* that the girls and the readers would otherwise have been unaware of, and offers some characterization of the Falcon himself:

"Let me tell the story in my own way," said the Falcon. "It began when I killed, early one morning, a cock pheasant in a gaudy suit of feathers . . . No sooner had I killed than a little *Bantam Hen came running from the farmyard calling: 'Well done, Falcon! That was a very proud and dangerous bird . . . We are grateful to you, Falcon, and we shall be still more grateful if you will kill another of our enemies'"* (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 144).

In this section, the Falcon first takes control of the narrative situation in his own, rational voice, and then proceeds to relate the direct speech of the Bantam Hen, a third level narrator, (signaled by threshold phrase, italicized by me, and double quotes).

5.3. The Bantam Hen

As we can see above, the Bantam Hen first boosts the Falcon's self-confidence, and then goes on to explain that the farmyard bantams have had eggs stolen by an egg thief, who has also been feasting on ostrich eggs. This narrative provides important explanations and solutions to a mystery which would otherwise have remained unsolved (Genette's first function); it includes the killing motif, and motifs of inter-species connections and gratefulness (the third function); and it is dramaturgical (the fourth function) because it provides information that will be acted upon by the narratees (the thief is a python from the zoo). Moreover, it also characterizes both the Bantam and the Falcon. The Bantam continues:

. . . but when that supply [of ostrich eggs] is finished, he will return to us, for eggs of one sort or another he must and will have. And therefore Falcon, I ask you, who are a brave and noble killer, to kill him as you have killed this naughty Pheasant, and save us Bantams from further loss and sadness (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 145).

The fact that the Bantam's speech is related by the Falcon, who gets a considerable amount of praise here, must not be forgotten. Even so, my reading is that the Falcon makes an effort to speak "in the persona" (Nelles 1997) of the Bantam, because the direct speech, with its deferent, prattling tone, both signals and expresses the differences between the Falcon and the Bantam. He is big and dangerous, and presumably capable of killing a much larger animal than the pheasant; she is a very small, domesticated bird, and apparently silly enough to approach a bird of prey who might as well attack her as listen to her. She is also mistaken in her assumption that the Falcon's killing of a pheasant also makes him a likely killer of the python. Even so, this scene actually both foreshadows and initiates the killing of the Python by the Bear in the zoo, and is thus an example of Genette's second and fourth functions.

Furthermore, the Bantam's difference from the Falcon, in size and understanding, underscores her vulnerability and the Falcon's deadly skills (Genette's third function). By reporting her "typical speech forms" (Murphy 2007, p. 28) as he heard them, the Falcon is able to convey not only the facts he learns from the Bantam, but also her exposed position, and her difference from him. This third level narrator's urgent message, and its significance for her and for the other characters, is thus conveyed without obvious distortion, but with a highlight on interspecies communication; the Falcon and the Bantam may both be birds, but one is a bird of prey and the other a domesticated fowl. The Bantam's narrative also underlines both Linklater's consistency in letting animal characters be characterized through their intradiegetic narratives, and the fact that character narrators control what is told, and how.

The novel has many more examples of non-human narratives like the ones I have discussed above, most of them told by the Puma and the Falcon in their further adventures with Dinah and Dorinda.

The Puma's voice falls silent, however, when she is shot while attacking and killing the tyrant of Bombardy (who has kept her, the girls and their father prisoners). Her final words, directed at the girls, confirm the motif of freedom that she and the Falcon have expressed, repeatedly, since we first met her: "You have given me a little while of freedom. Have I repaid you?" (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 388) As it turns out, the Puma's killing of the tyrant, and her liberation of the girls and their father from the dungeons of Bombardy, have wider effects. After the girls are back in England again, the Falcon is the one who tells them what has happened:

But I have other news for you . . . I flew back to Bombardy to see what happened after we left. There has been a revolution there. All the many prisoners whom that man kept in his dungeons have been set free . . . They have buried the Puma in the garden of the house where she was killed, and set up a monument to her . . . (Linklater [1944] 2013, p. 407) .

This final intradiegetic, explanatory, narrative—which naturally evokes strong feelings of empathy with and grief for the Puma—is also the Falcon's goodbye, as he sets off for the icy expanses of Greenland.

6. Conclusions

In this article I have shown that Eric Linklater's novel, *The Wind on the Moon* (Linklater [1944] 2013)—a posthumanist text in its insistence on a non-binary human-animal opposition—on the one hand leaves most non-human characters under-characterized, but on the other gives them a voice by letting them talk, and narrate their own stories. I have also suggested that given our human limitations, we must perhaps allow ourselves to imagine a communication with other species that is language-based, even though we risk falling into the trap of crude anthropomorphism. As has been argued in both science and literature (Garrard 2012; Bekoff 2002; Armbruster 2013; Harel 2013), critical anthropomorphism, characterized by an ethical approach and respect for differences as well as similarities, might be our only hope to see at least some aspect of the world from the point of view of a non-human being.

Therefore, when the non-humans in this otherwise heterodiegetic novel get to tell their own stories in a language common to all animals, their speech, and their stories, invite analysis. With the help of Genette's (Genette 1988) theory of narrative levels, I have shown how the intradiegetic animal narratives present a wide range of explanations, thematic expansions and cues for further actions for the narratees. All of this not only advances the plot and enriches the reading experience, but also allows non-human characters to shoulder important narrative functions, and, in doing so express their own concerns in their respective voices. Although intradiegetic narration is by definition relayed by another narrator, narrations in direct speech like these can be recognized as quotations, spoken in the persona of the character (Nelles 1997) something which I argue provides significant instances of characterization, and insights into the consciousness of these characters (cf. (Herman 2007)). We learn for example what they enjoy, what they are good at, what they need to lead a good life. The non-human characters explain how different wild species are associated with different, specific, habitats and behaviors that a zoo, even if it looks nice to human eyes, can never provide or sustain. Through the intradiegetic narratives, this children's novel also raises the issue of killing for food, the value of friendship, and the universal need for freedom, all of them as something predatory animals and humans have in common. These intradiegetic narratives by non-human characters are therefore of significant value for inter-species connection, and comprehension between human and non-human characters, and for the reader trying to reach otherwise inaccessible insights into non-human characters' minds.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

- Armbruster, Karla. 2013. What do We Want from Talking Animals? Reflections on Literary Representations of Animal Voices and Minds. In *Speaking for Animals: Animal Autobiographical Writing*. Edited by Margo De Mello. New York: Routledge, pp. 17–33.

- Bekoff, Marc. 2002. *Minding Animals. Awareness, Emotions, and Heart*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bernaerts, Lars. 2010. Interactions in Cuckoo's Nest: Elements of a Narrative Speech-Act Analysis. *Narrative* 18: 276–99. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Bernaerts, Lars, Marco Caracciolo, Luc Herman, and Bart Verveack. 2014. The Storied Lives of Non-Human Narrators. *Narrative* 22: 68–93.
- Culpeper, Jonathan. 1996. Inferring Character from Texts: Attribution Theory and Foregrounding Theory. *Poetics* 23: 335–61. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- De Mello, Margo. 2013. Introduction. In *Speaking for Animals: Animal Autobiographical Writing*. Edited by Margo De Mello. New York: Routledge, pp. 1–14.
- Derrida, Jacques. 2008. *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. Translated by David Wills. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Garrard, Greg. 2012. *Ecocriticism*, 2nd ed. Routledge: London.
- Genette, Gerard. 1988. *Narrative Discourse Revisited*. Translated by Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Haraway, Donna J. 2008. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Harel, Naama. 2013. Investigations of a Dog, by a Dog: Between Anthropocentrism and Canine-Centrism. In *Speaking for Animals: Animal Autobiographical Writing*. Edited by Margo De Mello. New York: Routledge, pp. 49–59.
- Herman, David. 2007. Cognition, Emotion, and Consciousness. In *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*. Edited by David Herman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 245–59.
- Hunt, Peter. 1994. *An Introduction to Children's Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Leech, Geoffrey N., and Michael H. Short. 1981. *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*. London: Longman.
- Linklater, Eric. 2013. *The Wind on the Moon*. London: Vintage. First published in 1944.
- McFarland, Sarah E., and Ryan Hediger. 2009. Approaching the Agency of Other Animals: An Introduction. In *Animals and Agency: An Interdisciplinary Exploration*. Edited by Sarah E. McFarland and Ryan Hediger. Leiden: Brill, pp. 1–20.
- McHale, Brian. 2009. Speech Representation. In *Handbook of Narratology*. Edited by Peter Hühn. New York: De Gruyter, pp. 434–46.
- Murphy, Terence Patrick. 2007. Monitored Speech in Austen and Joyce. *Narrative* 15: 24–39. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Nagel, Thomas. 1974. What Is It Like to Be a Bat? *The Philosophical Review* 83: 435–50. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Nelles, William. 1997. *Frameworks: Narrative Levels and Embedded Narratives*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Rudd, David. 2009. Animal and Object Stories. In *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Stories*. Edited by M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kipling, Rudyard. 2012. *The Jungle Book*. London: CRW Collectors Library. First published in 1894.
- Weil, Kari. 2012. *Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?* New York: Columbia University Press.
- Wolfe, Cary. 2003. *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthuman Theory*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.



© 2017 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).