

Guidelines for Collaborative Annotation of Narrative Levels in SANTA

Narrative levels

General assumption: some narrative takes place in relation to another one (not *necessarily* embedded or framed, since, according to Genette, the narrating instance of a first-level narrative is extradiegetic by definition).

In the following, (1), (2), (3), and (4) as a rule overlap but indicate different ways of looking at the phenomena (cf. Pier, “Narrative Levels” in *The Living Handbook of Narratology*).

What could be annotated:

(1) Change of narrative levels (Genette), a threshold between the one and the other: according to Genette, strictly speaking only of a second narrative (metadiegetic level) within the first one (the intradiegetic level).

(1.1) an actual change of narrator (one of the narrated characters, i.e. a character mentioned by the narrator, tells a story etc.); cf. Ryan’s illocutionary boundary: a different speaker

(1.2) no change of narrator

Genette also differentiates between who speaks? (i.e. narrator) and who sees? (i.e. focalizer)

Schmid speaks of primary, secondary, tertiary etc. narrative level – the nomenclature does not imply a hierarchy of significance but of embedding/framing. The extradiegetic narrative would then be the primary narration.

(2) Change of narratee (cf. Nelles)

(3) Change of narrated worlds (Ryan’s “ontological boundary”)

(3.1) actual

(3.2) virtual (modalities, beliefs, dreams etc.)

(4) Change of speakers (Ryan’s “illocutionary boundary”)

(4.1) actual

(4.2) virtual

(5) The nature of the level-change structure:

(5.1.1) framing (the main story is the embedded one),

(5.1.2) embedding (the main story is the embedding one)

(5.1.3) we cannot decide between framing/embedding

(5.2.1) frame/embedding opened but never closed

(5.2.2) frame/embedding closed but never opened

(5.2.3) we cannot decide whether embedding/framing is complete or not

(6) The nature of the boundary between the levels (cf. Füredy)

(6.1) Strictly observed

(6.2) Metalepsis (cf. Genette)

(6.3) Pseudo-diegetic narration (cf. Genette: second-level narrative told as first-level narrative)

NB: Mistake in Pier, paragraph 23: instead of “actual crossing of the illocutionary boundary but virtual crossing of the illocutionary boundary” it must be: “virtual crossing of the ontological boundary and virtual crossing of the illocutionary boundary” (referring to Ryan).

GUIDELINES (DRAFT)¹

<primary_narration>

The primary narration is relevant to every narrative text and denotes the standard case. It is the one level that comprises and encompasses all other narrative levels within a text. Although this is the standard case, we still name the narrator and indicate whether s/he is overt / covert and heterodiegetic or homo-/autodiegetic, which means that the tag features such as SPEAKER, FOCALIZER, WORLD are given. In some cases, there may be an editor who opens the narrative; in this case, this should be indicated accordingly.

<secondary_narration>, <tertiary_narration>, etc.

A change of narrative level takes place when the narrator changes or the narration enters into a different world (i.e. speaker and/or world are concerned here). If the change takes place on the basis of a primary narration, the passage encompassing this change is tagged as <secondary_narration>; if it takes place on the basis of this secondary narration, it is tagged as <tertiary_narration> etc. Tag features such as SPEAKER, FOCALIZER, and WORLD have to be indicated. The narrative level changes with the narrator; it stays the same with the focalizer. The primary narration thus does not end, but the secondary, tertiary, etc. are embedded in it (embedding here refers to the level of tagging!).

Focalization and character speech do not indicate a shift in narrative levels (as they are transmitted by the narrator) but may be characteristic of a narrative level. We therefore indicate changes in focalization and character speech.

FOCALIZATION

<focalizer>

If, within a narrative level, the focalization shifts to one of the characters that are part of the narrative, this has to be indicated as, sometimes, for example the same scene is focalized through the eyes of various characters (multiple focalization); it may, however, just be from the point of view of one character that is embedded in the narrative level (single focalization). Cases of zero focalization are the standard case and are not generally marked.

¹ The guidelines, at least partly, follow those suggested by heurecléa/CATMA, 18-22 <<http://heureclea.de/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Zur-Annotation-narratologischer-Kategorien-der-Zeit.-Guidelines-zur-Annotation-des-CATMA-Tagsets.pdf>>

CHARACTER SPEECH

<dialogue / monologue>

We assume that dialogue / monologue is not located on a different level but transmitted by the narrator; nevertheless, dialogue / monologue should be marked as such.

SPEAKER and WORLD

In order to indicate on which basis the change of narrative levels takes place, we tag how this change takes place: is it a change in the speaker (who speaks) or in the focalizer (who sees) or in the world (see above). One of those has to take place, speaker or focalizer may coincide with world.

Double values are possible, which means that it is possible to mark, for example, both auto-diegetic narrator and covert, as well as autodiegetic and narrating I or ambiguous etc.

<speaker> / <speaker type>

Whenever the speaker changes, this needs to be indicated. This change of the speaker can take place on the level of speech or thoughts of a narrating character: this concerns quoted and transposed speech of a character different from the one narrating on the overall level. If this speech is only narrated (as indirect speech), no speaker change takes place as it is still given by the narrating voice.

Speaker change is also true for cases of a change from the narrating to the experiencing I in autodiegetic narratives. In some cases, narrating and experiencing I may overlap in the sense of them being ambiguous. This ambiguity should also be tagged. In collaborative annotations, the denominations of individual speakers should be agreed on before annotating.

<world> / <world type>

The world in which the narrative is set may be specified (e.g. "London 1847"). World type denotes the setting and locale in which the narrative is set; it may be a 'real' world within the narrative, a 'virtual' world (e.g. a dream, or taking place within the genre of fantasy, e.g. the world of *Harry Potter* or Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*), a world of the past, present, future etc. The combination of various subtags (e.g. virtual can be combined with fantasy, dream etc., real can be combined with past, present etc.) is possible. This means that dreams within narratives should be marked as such as well as when characters refer to narratives from the past or pass a threshold into a different world (as in fantasy fiction). In collaborative annotations, the denominations of individual worlds should be agreed on before annotating.

LEVEL TYPE

<level type>

The level type refers to the nature of the level, i.e. whether it is embedded or framing.

Practical Advice

Example (1): the narrator stays the same, but we have several focalizers

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<secondary_narration> <speaker: narrator_overt> <focalizer 1: NAME A> ... </focalizer 1: NAME A> <focalizer 2: NAME B> </focalizer 2: NAME B> </speaker: narrator_overt> </secondary_narration>
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Example (2): embedded dialogue

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<secondary_narration> <speaker: narrator_overt> <dialogue: Speaker 1 and Speaker 3> ... </dialogue: Speaker 1 and Speaker 3> </speaker: narrator_overt> </secondary_narration>
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Example (3): world shift

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<primary_narration> <speaker: narrator_overt> <world: London 1947> <secondary_narration> <speaker: NAME 1> <world: dream> </world dream> </speaker: NAME 1> </secondary_narration> </speaker: narrator_overt> </world: London 1947> </primary_narration>
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Works Cited

- Genette, Gérard. *Narrative Discourse*. Translated by Jane E. Lewin. Oxford: Blackwell, 1980.
- Nelles, William. *Frameworks: Narrative Levels and Embedded Narrative*. New York: Lang, 1997.
- Nünning, Ansgar. "On Metanarrative: Towards a Definition, a Typology and an Outline of the Functions of Metanarrative Commentary." J. Pier (ed.). *The Dynamics of Narrative Form: Studies in Anglo-American Narratology*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004. 11–57.
- Pier, John. „Narrative Levels.“ *The Living Handbook of Narratology*. 2011. Last revised 10 Oct. 2016.
- Ryan, Marie-Laure. "Embedded Narratives and Tellability." *Style* 20 (1986): 319–40.