Time
Narrated time VS Narrative time

• **Narrated time** = period covered by the narrative.

• **Narrative time** = temporal structure of the narrative
Narrated time

- Period in which the text is set.
- Length of time covered by the narrative.
- Referential function:
  - Direct
  - Indirect
Narrative time

• Order

• Frequency

• Duration
Order

Order in which events occur  Order in which they are narrated
Order

• Linear sequence, chronology:
  « The simplest way to tell a story, equally favoured by tribal bards and parents at bedtime, is to begin at the beginning, and go on until you reach the end, or your audience fall asleep. » (David Lodge)

• Disrupted by:
  – Analepsis (flashback)
  – Prolepsis (flash forward)
Frequency

Number of times an event occurs → Number of times it is narrated
Frequency

• **Singulative mode**: an event happening once is narrated once.

• **Repetitive mode**: an event happening once is narrated several times.

• **Iterative mode**: an event happening several times is narrated once.
Duration

Length of the event

Length of the narrative
Duration (David Lodge)

• « [...] measured by comparing the time events would have taken up in reality with the time taken to read about them. »

• Adventure novel = fast-moving narrative
• Realistic novel (ex: *Middlemarch*) = average pace.
• Stream of consciousness = slow-moving narrative.
Duration

- **Acceleration**
  - Narrative time is shorter than narrated time
    - Summary
    - Ellipsis

- **Deceleration**
  - Narrative time is longer than narrated time
    - Stretch / scenic treatment
    - Pause
Conclusion

• Time as a structuring principle for the narrative.

• Time as topic of the narrative.

→ Cf « The Fishing Boat Picture »
Time: examples
Excerpt 1

• **Narrated time:**

  - « there’s no getting away from this date » + « The time matters too ».

  - « August 15th, 1947 » + « On the stroke of midnight » + « At the precise instant of India’s arrival to independence »
• Narrative time:
  – « I was born…chained to those of my country » = scene.

  – « For the next three decades, there was to be no escape » = summary + prolepsis.

  – « Now, however, time (having no further use for me) is running out » = ellipsis.

  – « I will soon be thirty-one years old » = proleptic statement.
Excerpt 2

• Narrator → narratee
• « And besides, you’re going into the army » = proleptic statement.
• Ellipsis : « And then, I was made a cook » / « Now you see me ».
• « Did you know I saved her life? » = analepsis (within the prolepsis) + story within the story.
Excerpt 3

• Disconnected narrative.

• Narrated time: « The affair lasted for twelve years » + « Twelve years passed and she was […] sixteen ».

• Narrative time:
  – Opening = scene/pause (one evening).
  – « Eric was born » + « Hilda » = ellipsis (+ prolepses?)
Excerpt 4

• **Narrated time**: no indication.

• **Narrative time**:

  – **Duration**
    
    • Opening = dialogue / scene (narrated duration = narrative duration).

    • Rest of the text = stretch (narrative time > narrated time). New temporality (« brain time »)
– Order

• Passage 2 = analepsis / passage 1. (1)

• « But before all this occurred… » = analepsis within the analepsis. (2)

• « He did not remember » + « This is what he remembered » = analepsis within the analepsis within the analepsis. (3)

• « The bullet is already in the brain » = (2)

• « But for now » = (1)