

Why the Climber Does Not Well Describe the Climbers from the Perspective of Structuralist Narration

Dong Mengyu

School of Humanities, Tiangong University, Tianjin, 300387, China

Keywords: The climbers, Narrative logic, Narrative sequence

Abstract: The success of “The Climber” in film business cannot cover up its defects and failures in narration. First, the film uses unreliable narration to shake the audience's perception and belief in the climbing process. Secondly, with the Bremer's narrative logic theory, and the whole main story is disturbed by the apposition of the narration in main line and sub-line. Finally, the singularity of characters relationship and the flat narrative rhythm make the narrative power of an adventure type film insufficient.

1. Introduction

An important way to distinguish the narrator in the analysis of works is to tell apart the reliable narrator and the unreliable narrator. The concept of “unreliable narrator” was first proposed in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. “When the narrator's words or actions are consistent with the norms of the work and the author, I call them reliable narrators, and vice versa.”^[1] So the unreliable narrator is based on the relationship between the narrator and the implied author. The concept, “Implied author”, was also proposed by Booth, who believed that “implied author is different from 'real person'” and that it is “the author's second self”. It represents the value priorities of the author in this work and the implied substitute of the author “himself”. The same author will have his own “substitute” in different works. Of all types of narrative distance, the distance between the unreliable narrator and the implied author is the most important.

2. Unreliable Narrator

Movie narration is slightly different from literature narration in that it can show the action and space without narration. Therefore, it is necessary to figure out “who is narrating” in the first place. The narrators of films are divided into the impersonal “great image” and the personified or character narrators. In “The Climber”, Xu Ying, as the narrator of the film, seems to play a role of connecting the lines. She introduces the climbers, Fang Wuzhou, Jib, Qu Songlin and other climbers in the film, and tells the romance between herself and Fang Wuzhou. But as the narrator, she does not get involved in the climb story. Therefore, compared with the story described in the film, she can be seen as the narrator of the different story. The reliability of judging the narrator is closely related to the thought norms of the implied author embodied in the work. The values of the implied author in this film lie in that the audience can be immersed in the steps and figures of the climbers in those years, to express the national spirit of climbing the peak with fighting the hardships and

dangers, and more importantly, the implied author must let the climbers finally climb Mount Everest. With the fact that The Chinese mountaineering team successfully climb the Mount Everest, Xu Ying sacrificed in the process of climbing, which is not consistent with the main idea with putting her as the narrator. And she believed that The Everest was an obstacle between her and Fang Wuzhou. On the other hand, she made setbacks in the climbing process. For example, the climbers met the wind in the process of climbing and was ordered to retreat, with the meteorological group lost contact, Fang Wuzhou was crushed by the collapse of the ice sculpture to save Xu Ying. It make the climb task harder. The other thing is that Xu Ying, in violation of the established plan and made action regardless of personal safety and others, put the weather group staff forward to the place just in order to get contact with Fang Wuzhou. With her life at the last gasp and climbing action meeting intense action, the audience are all looking forward to the success of the climb. At the very moment, Fang Wuzhou told Xu Ying that sentence “I want to marry you”, the audience's attention was distracted by the feelings between the two of them, As the narrator, she shifted the audience's attention and turned to the result of the emotional entanglement between her and Fang Wuzhou, which proved that she was an unreliable narrator. At the same time, she acted without authorization and finally died. Her sacrifice was not for climbing itself or saving lives, so she could not arouse the sympathy of the audience, and it was contrary to the purpose of the implied author.

3. The Confusion of Narrative Logic and the Lack of Narrative Impetus

The main narrative logic of “The Climber” takes climbing Mount Everest as the highest wish. In the process of climbing Mount Everest for the first time, an avalanche was encountered. In order to save Qu Songlin, the camera was lost, which led the failure of the task as lack of international recognition. Therefore, the climbers need to have a second try in 1975. In this case, climbing the Everest is the priority. Sub-line narrative sequence mainly talked about Fang Wuzhou wanted to say a word to Xu Ying. The film's narrative logic should be around the main line of climbing composite sequence, but in the beginning of the film, it talked that the success of climbing in 1960, the process of forming national team and meeting of Qu SongLin, Fang Wuzhou and Jib. It takes about 25 minutes. The basic sequence of narrative thread for climbing Everest in 1960 for desire, the deterioration of action because it led to the loss of the camera, Fang Wuzhou taking improvement action and the success of climbing. However it does not present the thing in details. Instead, an 8-minute sub-narrative sequence is inserted in the 25-minute projection time, which is juxtaposed with the main narrative sequence instead of embedded one. In sub-line sequence, Jib was told that the climbing thing did not been internationally recognised by the community and Xu Ying went abroad caused deterioration. As Xu Ying said “The mountain you climb is just the hill between the two of us”. To climb Everest appears to be the paradise in the perspective of Fang Wuzhou, but the only condition for Xu Ying. The two narrative sequences are also left-right parallel as Bremon put it, that is, “The same event has function A from the perspective of actor A, and function B from the perspective of actor B.”^[2] The event of climbing Mount Everest caused antagonism between the main line sequence and the secondary line sequence, causing the audience to have doubts about the narrative value of the secondary line sequence and turning the narrative logic of the film into a wavering in the national spirit and love entanglements and a strong interference with the narrative main line of the climbing behavior.

In the second paragraph narrative logic of climbing, the research found that the deterioration and improvement represents equality and the time also can present the same 20 minutes, and formed in the same condition. Normally the narrative logic should conform that the worsen times should be greater than the improvement, which will trigger agents could continuously make improvement

action, making a tense condition in the narration. However, the antagonism between the deterioration of the narrative and the improvement of the film presents an equal state, which leads to the flat narration and equal setting of suspense. On the other hand, in the relationship between characters, in addition to Fang Wuzhou and Xu Ying, the relationship between Li Guoliang and Black Peony, Yang Guang and the doctor can also be seen as the emotional line. Too many emotional clues make the narrative rhythm slow and the narrative power insufficient. As mentioned before, the emotional narrative of the secondary line deconstructs the narrative of the main line. The characters relations in the main narrative impetus from the Fang Wuzhou and QuSongLin. The relationship between them is creditor's rights and liabilities. Because the first time in the process of climbing, Fang Wuzhou rescued QuSongLin, QuSongLin should thanks wuzhou, but he did not. The camera was lost, which made the international community did not recognized China's mountaineering action. In the words of QuSongLin, he can't afford to let China get trapped in the condition, thus makes the mutual relationship between creditor's rights. The change of the relationship between two people make the characters more livable. QuSongLin believes that life must be greater than the camera before then, because Fang Wuzhou saved himself by losing the camera, which made China unable to rise up in the world. He believed that the camera was more important than life, so Fang Wuzhou should not save himself. But after their own decision-making errors and sacrifice of Li Guo liang, he got aware that Fang Wuzhou's choice is right, the responsibility of the player's life is higher than that of the mountain.

4. Conclusion

Whether the narrative of the film can arouse the resonance of the audience's emotional value first lies in the analysis of "human interest". The audience must first identify with the behavior of the characters in order to be able to resonate with the events that the characters participate in. The behavior of several climbers in "The Climber" makes the audience feel incomprehensible. First of all, Fang Wuzhou said that "climbing is heaven for him", indicating that climbing is an honor and a career for him. However, when he was asked about the purpose of climbing in class, he said that he wanted to explore the world. When the end of the film and the theme are close to show the patriotic spirit, it seems that there is no premise above, nor the support of characters' actions, so it is difficult for the audience to feel emotional resonance.

References

- [1] Wayne Booth. *Rhetoric of Fiction [M]*. Beijing.Peking University Press, 1987, p. 187.
[2] Fa Bremon. *The Logic of Narrative Possibility. Research on narratology*. China Science Press, 1989.Pp. 157-156.