

MORALITY THROUGH MAGICAL REALISM IN ROALD DAHL'S MATILDA AND THE BFG

M DURGADEVI MA., (MPhil)

Research Scholar,

Navarasam Arts and Science College for Women
Arachalur
Erode -638101

E-Mail ID: durgadevimurugan1997@gmail.com

S.PRIYA MA., B.Ed., MPhil

Assistant professor

Department of English
Navarasam Arts and Science College for Women
Arachalur
Erode -638101

E-Mail ID: Priya.engma@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Literature for Children has its own significance in all Literatures. The primary focus of Children's Literature is to educate readers on moral values as well as entertain them. The moral is one of the key features of any Children's book. Many works that proved to be moralistic time and again past. Roald Dahl is one such prominent writer who is also acknowledged as one of the best story tellers of the twentieth century. His novels Matilda and The BFG are rich sources of moralistic values. The story is conveyed to the readers using multifarious techniques and magical realism is one among them. Magical realism is the contrast of the magical and the reality. Matilda and The BFG teach Children how to distinguish between the good and the evil. This paper focuses on active values featured in these novels and the effective results of using magical realism as the narrative technique. It further deals with the extraordinary delineation of the plot and setting and the characters as real and the moralistic values expressed in it.

Keywords: *Moralistic, Magical realism, Characters, Matilda, The BFG*

Roald Dahl was a prominent writer in the twentieth century for children's writings. His works mostly deliver moral values for children and adults. Mainly he focused on the characters; through the character, he expresses the moral values that the Children need to cultivate. His simple language makes the works readable for the children. The settings and the plot are also extraordinarily imaginative. And his character's names, stories are unique as well. When analyseshis novel the charactershave the truth, moral values were defeated. He was also the author of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Matilda, The BFG, The Witches, James and the Giant Peach* and many more brilliant stories.

'If you have good thoughts, they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely'. – Roald Dhal.

Matilda first appeared in print in 1988. Matilda Wormwood is the protagonist who is inspired by books. Because of her wide reading, she is different from her family. She is a brave, intelligent and confident girl with telekinesis, a power that she uses with her mind. She educates herself on her own. She does not receive support from her family who don't realize how bright she is. By the time she begins her school aged five, she has graduated to the level of Charles Dickens and Rudyard Kipling. She can multiply large numbers with no trouble and can compose and recite limericks with barely a breath. Her school teacher Miss Honey thinks she is a genius. Unfortunately, her parents are not so impressed. Mr. & Mrs. Wormwood completely fail to appreciate her incredible abilities, but luckily for Matilda, this also means they never fail to fall for her tricks. In spite of being clever Matilda is no stranger to a spot of mischief. From super glueing hats to hiding a parrot up a chimney, she makes her hapless parents pay for their indifference and stupidity in many subtle ways. It is her headmistress Miss Trunchbull saves her greatest trick her for though, Matilda ultimately uses her incredible powers to help Miss Honey.

‘There was no doubt in her mind that she had met a truly extraordinary mathematical brain, and words like child-genius and prodigy went flitting through her head. She knew that these sorts of wonders do pop up in the world from time to time, but only once or twice in a hundred years.’ (69)

It is made obvious that the superpower of Matilda was temporary and purposeful. So after that, she moves to live her routine life. It depends on the writers to decide whether the power should stay on or leave the protagonist. For each story, the structure differs from Harry Potter, to Spiderman and Matilda. The writer neither totally removes reality nor totally includes fantasy but he balances the two worlds. Though Matilda has special power vested with her still she has the same innocence and immaturity as other children. For instance, she is wise enough to use telekinesis but not mature enough to handle her superpower. It is Miss Honey who guides her to take things calmly and slowly as it could be dangerous for her.

‘But whatever happens, and I say it again, we must tread carefully from now on. I have not forgotten that strange and distant glimmer on your face after you tipped over the last glass.’ ‘Do you think doing it could actually hurt me? Is that what you’re thinking, Miss Honey?’ (175)

From this, it is understood that Matilda is just like other children, ignorant and innocent. It is the combination of both magic and reality. The story begins ordinarily and steadily brings in the extraordinary. Through this Matilda character, Roald Dahl expresses the moral values for children and the adult in an effective manner.

“I’ve always said to myself that if a little pocket calculator can do it why shouldn’t I?” – Matilda said.

The next character is Sophie from The BFG novel written by Roald Dahl. Sophie has a very funny and courageous personality. She is also extremely brave for facing the BFG (Big Friendly Giant), a giant that is twice her size. She is extremely curious as a girl of her age and has an intuitive way of thinking. She dareto face the giant and also she gives ideas to the good giant to destroy the evil giants. Sophie is interested in readingbooks. The BFG is also good because of book knowledge.

This story is based on the BFG, who is a dream catcher with superhuman speed and hearing abilities. Dreams are personified beyond imagination and every child would want to live in a dream country like this! The favorite giant of all children is none other than the BFG! Roald Dahl's creativity is poured into the character, his language, his occupation and his traits. BFG teaches many important lessons to Sophie and the readers. Sophie is timid and shy in the beginning but befriends the BFG giant later. As a curious mind, her questions never end and she is bewildered by the ways of the land of giants. Two good personalities planned against the evil giant's settings and the characters were also unbelievable but the moral value through the characters was very muchreal. Matilda and Sophie both the characters, instruct the truth of education and the importance of knowledge and courage.

WORK CITED

1. Dhal, Roald. *Matilda*. London: Penguin Random House, 2016.
2. Dhal, Roald. *The BFG*. London: Penguin Random House, 2016.
3. Carter, Erwin Dale. *Magical realism in Contemporary Argentine Fiction*. Ann Arbor: U Microfilms,1969