**R. K. Narayan's Narrative Technique in the Novel *The Guide***

[R.K Narayan](https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/r-k-narayan-contribution-literature.html) uses the interesting technique of a varied narrative perspective. At a time it is [Raju](https://www.englishliterature.info/2019/10/the-character-of-raju-in-novel-the-guide.html" \t "_blank) the main character speaking and at other times the story is told from the point of view of an omniscient narrator. The author also utilizes cinematic element such as flash back and jump cuts.

When we first encounter Raju, he is about to meet Velan, and he is seen at this point from the perspective of an omniscient narrator. Then Raju who takes over the narrator chores and relatives his progress from sweetmeat seller to jailbird to Velan. In between the omniscient narrator punctuates Raju's narrative by showing him dealing with the villagers as a holy man.

[The Guide](https://www.englishliterature.info/search/label/The%20Guide?m=1) divided into two parts narratives Raju childhood, love affair, imprisonment, (first part) and growth into a Swami (second part). Though the streams move simultaneously the first part is sat in Mangla, Raju's present while Raju's past in Malgudi is narrated by Raju himself his present in Mangla is narrated by the author.

R.K Narayan is a novelist of common people and common situations of English literature in India. His plot of The Guide is built of material and incidents that are neither extraordinary nor heroic. The Guide is a story of Raju's romance, his greed for money, his sin and repentance. It is also the story of every man's growth from the ordinary to extraordinary, from the railway guide to the spiritual guide.

For most of his life Raju had managed to manipulate other people's emotion need for his own advantage, but the novel shows him going beyond himself to do a genuinely disinterested act at the cost of his life.

      Raju begins his professional life as the owner of a sweetmeat stall at the railway station in the region of India, that has become a popular tourist attraction. He soon discovers that he had a knack for telling people what they like to hear and become a full-time guide. the profession leads him into an affair with one of his clients, [Rosie](https://www.englishliterature.info/2019/10/rosies-character-in-novel-the-guide.html) the neglected wife of an anthropologist Marco. Rosie has a passion for dancing which Marco doesn't approve of, Rosie encouraged by Raju decided to follow her dreams and walk out on her husband. Raju become her stage manager and soon with the help of Raju's marketing tactics, Rosie become a successful dancer. Raju however develops and inflated sense of self importance and tries to control Rosie. Gradually the relationship between Raju and Rosie becomes strained. Marco reappears and Raju get involved in a case of forgery and get two year sentence.

      After he completing the sentence, Raju is passing through a village when and he is mistake in as a 'Sadhu' (spiritual guide). He is not interested having to return in disguise to Malgudi, he stays in an abundant Temple. Raju satisfies the demand of villagers of Mangla. Slowly and gradually he becomes the spiritual guide of the villagers who comes to get all sorts of issues resolved by him. They start to trust and listen to him and soon he earns their respect and turns into a Guru or god like person for them.

      Everything was running smoothly till the time the village is affected by a major draught, and one of the villager mistaken Raju comments to be a vow to keep a fast for 12 days in order to please the rain gods. Raju has no other option but to comply by his vow. The role that he took unhappily and forcibly in the beginning becomes very dear to him as time passes. He starts believing in his role and feels that for the first time in his life he is doing something for the people, selflessly, out of his humanity and not lust for money or other material goods. The news of his fasting spreads throughout the country like wildfire and a huge crowd of curious onlookers from other places start gathering around him. As he can no longer take the fasting, his legs gives away he collapses dreaming and visualising the raindrops somewhere in the hill. The novel ends with a question still unanswered whether he dies or whether the rain actually comes.

      In Narayan's plot there is a mixture of comic and serious, the real and the fantastic so in the case with The Guide. Raju the poor become the rich, the convict gets the reputation and regard of the saint the holy man and the Swami.

      Another technique Narayan uses is imagery and symbolism which is rooted in Indian culture but has universal appeal. At the end of the story sunrise with the suicide sense Narayan effectively communicates Raju's death as an image of of hope consistent with the Indian belief in death and rebirth.

Narayan has a gift of sketching pen pictures that bring scenes and characters. Thus the use of flashback, common lifestyle, comedy, language and the double perspective Raju and the novelist makes the novel fresh, stimulating, provocative and interesting.