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Vivekananda College

Thakurpukur

TOPIC- Plot construction of Pride and  
prejudice

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Wrap Text



Tools



Keyboard

## Plot construction of Pride and prejudice

1. The plot is a well knit plot marked by precision and symmetry. It has no moral or philosophical distraction, no obtrusive characters and no digressive episodes.
2. The main plot is built around Elizabeth and Darcy whose relationship form a pattern of converging and diverging lines.

At first they are impelled to fall apart until they reach a climax of mutual hostility. Then they converge when there is mutual understanding and respect between them.

3. After the first meeting and Darcy's rejection of Elizabeth, both are still confident and complacent about their own critical judgement.

Gradually, as the novel proceeds both are prompted to question the standards of their world. Elizabeth is embarrassed by her mother's vulgar behaviour, the lack of refinement in her younger sisters and also is taken aback at the gross materialism in her friend, Charlotte. Darcy realises the unsavoury vanity of people like Miss Bingley and also of Lady Catherine.

4. The process of self reflection begins after Darcy's proposal at Rosings. His subsequent letter to Elizabeth makes her aware of her blind prejudice against him propelled by her infatuation with Wickham who sensing her dislike for Darcy, makes false accusation against him. Darcy too realises his fault in being condescending towards Elizabeth while proposing to her.

5. Skillful brede of main plot and subplots - the subplots are integrated with the main plot so deftly that the action of the main plot progresses on the basis of the action of the sub plots.

There are three subplots in the novel leaving out another that comprises Mr. and Mrs. Bennett.

The Jane-Bingley subplot begins with Darcy and Bingley coming to Netherworld, the affair between Jane and Bingley draws in Elizabeth. This relationship has another function, it gives Darcy the opportunity to see the pros and construction of such an affair objectively and the disadvantages of marrying into the Bennett family. As a result he dissuades Bingley from continuing the affair which has great structural relevance in embittering Elizabeth and deepening her prejudice against him. It is also when this prejudice is at its optimum level that Darcy proposes to her and is rejected

The Lydia Wickham subplot has a very important function. Wickham is presented as a foil to Darcy. He is pleasant, charming, attentive, everything that Darcy is not. Darcy slights Elizabeth whereas Wickham flatters her. This outer pleasantness wins Elizabeth over temporarily. Later on Wickham eloped with Lydia and Elizabeth thinks that such a scandal would distance Darcy forever from ever involving himself with such a family.

This incident helps to bring out the innate goodness of Darcy because he takes the initiative to get them married and save them from ruin, rising above his pride and prejudice.



Mobile View



Tools

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The Charlotte Collins subplot brings Darcy and Elizabeth to Rosings and the climax of the novel. Mr. Collins'gossip brings Lady Catherine to Longbourn in order to dissuade Elizabeth from accepting Darcy's proposal if he again proposes. Elizabeth refuses and she complains to Darcy and ironically gives him the impetus to propose her again.

7. A good plot does not depend on coincidence for the progress of action. The action should be propelled by the behaviour of characters .In the novel the whole action formulates on the basis of the pride and prejudice of both Darcy and Elizabeth and also some other characters. Austen does not consider pride to be a negative quality if it is in the right proportion. She distinguishes pride from vanity.

8. The plot can also be called dramatic because there is a prevalence of the unexpected in many situations. The first meeting of Darcy leaves everyone disgusted but he turns out to be a gentleman . Wickham pleases all but turns out to be the villain. Lydia flirts with the military officers and when the regiment leaves everyone is relieved but the next thing to happen is her elopement. The string of irony in the situations is characteristic of an Austen novel.

9.The whole novel revolves around the theme of love and marriage and the necessity of money. Austen pragmatically presents her views on foolish marriages based on looks without economic solvency like the one between Mr.and Mrs. Bennett, emotional excess as in Lydia's elopement, total disregard for emotions and prioritizing only money and security in Charlotte. The ideal marriage one which has been tested through ups and downs of emotions and practical considerations, the one between Elizabeth and Darcy. The Jane-Bingley marriage is merely a weak shadow of the main plot.

10. As said earlier, the plot is extremely well balanced.Events seem to be balancing each other maintaining a kind of symmetry.

Darcy and Bingley coming to Netherfield begins the action, then they leave giving rise to apprehension and then at the end return to resolve matters.

The first coming creates a flutter of expectation and optimism as they are seen as prospective grooms but ends in a fiasco. The second arrival is in gloomy circumstances, but the movement ends in fulfilment.

The first section begins with a surprise marriage between Charlotte and Collins and the the second section sees the surprise marriage of Lydia and Wickham.

Darcy's actions are also balanced - he separates Bingley and Jane as an unsuited couple and in the end brings Lydia and Wickham together.

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