

MASTERARBEIT | MASTER'S THESIS

Titel | Title

Watching from a safe distance - Second person narration, crisis and trauma in
coming-of-age literature

verfasst von | submitted by

Sandra Riedl BA BEd

angestrebter akademischer Grad | in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education (MEd)

Wien | Vienna, 2024

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt |
Degree programme code as it appears on the
student record sheet:

UA 199 506 507 02

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt | Degree
programme as it appears on the student
record sheet:

Masterstudium Lehramt Sek (AB) Unterrichtsfach
Deutsch Unterrichtsfach Englisch

Betreut von | Supervisor:

ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Eva Zettelmann

Acknowledgements

With these lines I want to express my gratitude to my supervisor Univ.-Prof. Dr. Eva Zettelmann for guiding me through the writing process and patiently answering my questions. Moreover, I am very thankful that you provided me with detailed and constructive feedback whenever I needed it.

I also send many thanks to my friends and family who patiently supported me by always having a friendly ear for me when I needed. Writing this thesis while already teaching was not always easy – you provided me with the strength to move on.

Many thanks also to my wonderful colleagues who are all in the same boat of having to finish their studies while already teaching. I am glad about the inspiring exchange and emotional support we could give to each other.

Finally, also big thanks to the author Nuala Ní Chonchúir for writing the inspiring novel *You* which did not only raise the idea of my thesis but also sent me on adventures in gorgeous storyworlds reflecting on human mental states and spending time in my favorite city, Dublin, though only in the story.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	THE CONCEPT OF SECOND PERSON NARRATION	5
2.1.	Defining the term ‘second person narration’	5
2.2.	Forms of second person narration	8
3.	FUNCTIONS OF SECOND PERSON NARRATION	17
3.1.	Functions of involvement	19
3.2.	Functions of mental representation	21
3.3.	Functions of portraying relationships	23
3.4.	Political functions	24
3.5.	Poetic functions	25
4.	CRISIS AND TRAUMA IN COMING-OF-AGE LITERATURE	26
4.1.	The terms ‘trauma’ and ‘crisis’	26
4.2.	Trauma and crisis in literature	30
4.3.	Teaching crisis and trauma in coming-of-age literature	33
5.	ANALYSIS OF <i>YOU</i> BY NUALA NÍ CHONCHÚIR	36
5.1.	Formal analysis	38
5.2.	Functional analysis	45
6.	TEACHING SECOND PERSON COMING-OF-AGE NOVELS	52
6.1.	Teaching concept for <i>You</i> by Nuala Ní Chonchúir	57
6.2.	Measures before reading	60
6.3.	Measures while reading	62
6.4.	Measures after reading	64
7.	CONCLUSION	66
8.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	68
9.	APPENDIX	73
10.	ABSTRACTS	75

List of figures

Figure 1 The Communicative Situation in ‘you’-narratives	12
Figure 2 The self-distancing ‘I’/‘you’-narrative	43
Figure 3 Lesson structure of teaching concept	58
Figure 4 Teaching concept for You by Nuala Ní Chonchúir	59
Figure 5 Measures before reading	60
Figure 6 Infobox with definitions ‘trauma’ and ‘crisis’	60
Figure 7 Measures while reading	62
Figure 8 Measures after reading	64

1. Introduction

You sit at your desk, making yourself comfortable for writing the first pages of your master thesis. You pause. Then your fingers find the keyboard.

These are not only the introducing sentences of my thesis, but they could also mark the beginning of a novel written in second-person perspective. At first glance, this narrative point-of-view might sound somewhat awkward to a reader, and this seems understandable. While usually literary texts are written in the first- or third-person point-of-view, the second-person narrative is rather uncommon and creates a strange impression. Usually, the pronoun ‘you’ either has deictic effects, which means it points towards another entity, or generic functions. The latter is the case when the second-person pronoun is used to refer to people in general (see DeHoop & Hogeweg 111). However, this does not seem to be the case in second-person narration. The narrative is “telling us who you are, what you do, and so on.” (Al-Alami 912) This might sound to the reader as if they are addressed. However, they are not experiencing what they are reading about in the book, as, of course, they are engaged in reading at the moment. And this is what creates the conflict. The ‘you’ in second-person narration does not refer to the reader but to the protagonist, although it is unavoidable that the reader feels addressed (see Reitan 147). By comparing different second-person novels, it becomes clear that there is not only one realization of this ‘you’-narrative, but that there are manifold forms. The ‘you’ can be directed at another character who plays an important role in the ‘I’-narrator’s life so that their common story is narrated in a ‘you’-format like in *Local Girl Missing* by Claire Douglas (2016). It is also possible that the ‘you’ is used to address a fictional reader, as in *If On A Winter’s Night A Traveler* by Italo Calvino (1979). There are also texts written in second-person perspective where no explicit narrator is visible and the reader gets the impression that the ‘you’ serves as self-address or self-reference, as it is in the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir, which will be the subject of this thesis.

Second-person narration does not only exist in many different forms, but it also conveys a variety of different functions. When the narrating and the experiencing self are the same person, it can, for example, create an impression of distance from oneself (see Rembowska-Pluciennik 78). This self-distancing is important when it comes to the second focus of this thesis, namely the representation of trauma and crisis in literature. While it is already difficult to define the concept of trauma – as there are several different conceptions – it is even harder to speak of individual trauma. Therefore, “[t]rauma narratives raise important questions about the possibility of verbalizing the unspeakable, narrating the unnarratable, and making sense of the

incomprehensible.” (see Schönfelder 30) I claim that the use of ‘you’-narration is one option of narrating what usually cannot be narrated. However, this does not mean that the symptoms and consequences of trauma and crisis are explicitly described and narrated. A narrative can “textually [perform] trauma and its incomprehensibility” (Schönfelder 31). The unnaturalness and in certain aspects awkwardness of the second-person narrative might therefore be perfectly suitable to convey an impression of traumatization.

To find out the relation between ‘you’-narratives and trauma is one of the goals of my thesis. I aim to find out how second-person narration (SPN) can be realized in novels about a coming-of-age crisis connected to a traumatic experience. In order to tackle this first research question, a formal analysis of the second-person narrative in a young adult novel, namely *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir (2010), will be conducted. Furthermore, I want to consider which functions SPN can have in this type of novel. Therefore, the functions of the ‘you’-narrative in the novel *You* will be examined as a next step. The aim of this thesis is, on the one hand, to identify forms and functions of second-person texts in connection to trauma and crisis. On the other hand, I want to utilize this knowledge in order to teach this uncommon narrative in upper secondary AHS. By these means I intend to make the complex issues of trauma and crisis easier to grasp for them and to broaden their horizon about unusual narrative forms. For this reason, the third research question which I intend to answer is, which benefits and risks the occupation with SPN novels about trauma and crisis has for upper secondary students. Finally, I will pursue the question of how second-person trauma and coming-of-age crisis novels can be taught in an upper secondary English class. Bearing in mind the insights from theoretical research and textual analysis, a teaching concept will be designed.

The thesis is divided into three parts. I will start with a theoretical analysis of secondary literature in which the central concepts of second-person narration as well as trauma and crisis are examined. First, I attempt to define what second-person narration is. Therefore, I compare and discuss the general paradigms about this narrative form which have been introduced by the representative researchers in the field of second-person narration, foremost Monika Fludernik and Brian Richardson. Then, I intend to map the most important forms and functions of second-person narratives, which will be important for the subsequent analysis. Moreover, I will contrast the terms trauma and crisis and the role of literature in connection to these concepts. Finally, I will discuss why and how literature about trauma and crisis should be taught at school.

The second part of my thesis is a textual analysis of the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir. This novel has been chosen as a representative of this genre, as it fits the purpose well. Firstly,

it is written in second-person perspective. Secondly, the fact that the protagonist is an adolescent makes the book relatable to the target audience, i.e., teenagers in secondary school. And thirdly, it incorporates many situations which indicate trauma and crisis, such as parental neglect and the death of a sibling. After shortly summarizing the plot and characterizing the ‘you’-protagonist of the novel, the narrative will be formally analyzed. I will not only look at the perspective, but also at other linguistic structures which suggest whether the ‘you’ has an address function in this novel or not. Moreover, I will consider the structure of narrative time, as this provides me with even more valuable insights about the nature of the narrative. Finally, the functions which the ‘you’-narrative has in the novel will be-discussed.

Based on the results of my analysis, I will design a teaching concept for *You*. The aim is to raise awareness for the subjects of trauma and crisis while at the same time introducing the students to an unconventional narrative form. This teaching plan encompasses methods from different approaches: reader response theory, the so-called ‘formmeaning’ approach (see Osterwalder 36), drama in education and the production-oriented approach. This way, it is facilitated that the students do not only understand this narrative type in its form and functions, but also affectively engage with the subject and benefit by acquiring a new means of expressing themselves.

2. The concept of second person narration

Among other more common types of narration, like those using the first-person pronoun “I” or the third person “he” or “she”, narratives in the second person exist, too. However, these are rather unusual and cannot be found in novels as often as other narrative forms. The following chapter will tackle this specific form of narration by discussing conceptualizations by theorists working in that special field of expertise.

2.1. Defining the term ‘second person narration’

Fludernik (*Narrative ‘You’* 217) interprets second-person narration broadly by subsuming every kind of fictional writing using the address-pronoun ‘you’ to refer to the protagonist. Richardson (*Unnatural Voices* 19) states that in most cases focalization happens through the protagonist who is introduced in ‘you’ form. But in contrast to Fludernik, he excludes apostrophe in his definition. This term understands speech directed to an absent person or thing, as well as someone outside of the diegesis. Therefore, novels, short stories or passages of them in which a first-person narrator addresses an absent – for example a dead – person or the reader

with the pronoun 'you' would not count as second-person narration according to this definition, even if the pronoun 'you' is used.

While Richardson and Fludernik agree in many respects, other theorists approach the term differently. Kacandes' approach is inspired by communication theory. Communication consists of a message as well as an addresser and an addressee whose roles constantly switch. According to Kacandes, second person narration features a very specific communicational setting. To describe that, she introduces the concept of the 'radical apostrophe'. In this case 'radical' means that it is not possible to locate the speaker who directs a message to an addressee. Similar to the concept of the 'apostrophe', the communication works one-way, so the inner-fictional recipient of the message won't answer. To be precise, according to this theory a second-person text features a double-address because apart from the addressee within the narration, the reader might also feel addressed by the pronoun 'you' (see Reitan 148-149). It is questionable whether this applies to all forms of second-person narration as there does not necessarily have to be an address of the protagonist. For this reason, I decided against including the concept of the 'radical apostrophe' in the definition of second-person narration used in this thesis.

When regarding the standard narratological concepts, e.g., by Gerard Genette, one is confronted with the dilemma that second-person narration does not fit into their categories. The dichotomy of homo- and heterodiegetic narration introduced by Genette leaves no space for narratives in the second person because it is not always clear whether the narrator is positioned in- or outside the diegesis (see Richardson, *Unnatural narrative theory* 390). While Genette himself allocated 'you'-narration in the heterodiegetic sphere describing it to be a rare case (see Rembowska-Pluciennik, *SPN as joint action* 160), there is doubt whether this categorization can be drawn so easily. When looking at a text written in 'you'-narration, one will notice that it is not always clear whether the narrator and the addressee are both part of the story – probably in form of a covert 'I'- or 'he'/'she'-narrator –, whether an outside narrator addresses a character within the story or whether the protagonist communicates with an exterior addressee. While the first case clearly seems to be homodiegetic narration, the other two cases would only partly fit into one of these categories.

Also, the distinction between the story and discourse level, other concepts by Genette (see Genette 11), cannot strictly be drawn in second-person texts. This theory claims that a text consists of two levels: On the one hand, there is the level of the 'story' or 'histoire', which refers to the sequence of actual events being narrated. On the other hand, the level of 'discourse' understands the recitation of these events. Usually, it is a narrator who tells the story of

somebody, who could be the narrator themselves or another person, to an audience. In second person narration, this situation becomes partly absurd because the narrator actually narrates the addressee's own story to them (see Fludernik, *Narrative 'You'* 220-221). As the story must – except in cases of amnesia – be already known by the addressee the discourse becomes unnecessary.

Fludernik therefore reassessed these standard concepts, combined them and tried to explain second person narratives by linking either narrator and addressee to the protagonist and explaining why there is not always a strict boundary between the story and discourse level. The solution suggested by Fludernik is the distinction between the homo- and heterocommunicative level when referring to texts with a communicative level (see Fludernik, *Narrative 'You'* 224). By these means it is either possible to allocate both narrator and addressee inside the diegesis, which would be seen as homocommunicative. Texts like these seem to be a one-sided communication, where a character addresses another figure in the text without expecting an answer. There can also be an exterior narrator, who is not part of the story, addressing an addressee inside the diegesis as in the heterocommunicative type. In this case, the 'you'-protagonist is part of the story, however, the narrator voice who seems to address the 'you' does not play a role in it. These terms refer to texts with a communicative level, however, not all texts show signs of communication, like the common narrational type of the third-person narrator would be. According to Fludernik, there are certain realizations of the second-person narration, which do not include communication and therefore resemble third-person narration.

A more recent approach considers cognitive sciences when defining second-person narration. Magdalena Rembowska-Płuciennik (*Enactive, Interactive, Social* 68-69) understands second person narration as a cooperation between an initiator, who is the character that initiates an action or in other words experiences it and is usually called addressee or narratee, and an interactor, who interacts with the initiator by responding to the observed action. Instead of a mere observation, the narration is therefore a form of interaction. This also justifies the choice of the second-person pronoun. This type of narration is described as being “not a mode of speaking to someone else; rather, this is a mode of speaking as someone else but from one's own perspective” (see Rembowska-Płuciennik, *Enactive, Interactive, Social* 70). Following this definition, the term 'addressee' becomes inappropriate for the character referred to as 'you' as there is no address function in the second-person pronoun in this case. This corresponds with Fludernik's assumption that second-person narration in the narrow sense involves no direct address to the 'you'-protagonist. This lack of address function towards the

protagonist does not, however, preclude the tendency of readers to feel addressed by second-person narration caused by the use of certain linguistic features that cooccur with the pronoun ‘you’. Emotive language – this means all the expressions that are used to describe feelings – serves this purpose especially well because it causes readers’ emotional reactions (see Mildorf *Reconsidering second-person narration* 155).

Finally, second person narration can also be subsumed under the term ‘unnatural fiction’. This stands not only in contrast to mimetic fiction, which aims at drawing a realistic picture of the world but goes even further. Richardson (*Unnatural narrative theory* 386) compares it with so-called nonmimetic or nonnatural fiction, which includes fairytales and other stories with fantastic element. In contrast to unnatural fiction, however, nonmimetic fiction still features a consistent story. Second-person narration, however, often challenges this consistency and can therefore be seen as unnatural.

All these previous points considered, I sum up that second-person narration will be defined as a form of unnatural narration where the **narrator**, respectively the **interactor**, uses the second-person pronoun to refer to a protagonist, who will further be called **initiator** to a **narratee** – following the terms of Rembowska-Pluciennik. Depending on the position of interactor and initiator, the narrative situation differs, which will be subject of the following section.

2.2. Forms of second person narration

Although at first glimpse it seems that there is only one type of second person narration, a large variety of forms can be identified on closer examination. To grasp these different realizations, this chapter is dedicated to creating a mapping of different forms of second person narratives. For this reason, I will consider schemes already defined by the theorists in this research field, namely by Richardson, Fludernik, and a more recent approach by Sandrine Sorlin following a model by Kluge. Each of those forms of second-person narration has different effects on the reader and therefore fulfills different functions, so this chapter serves as a basis for the next chapter about second-person functions as well as my own analysis of the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir in chapter 5.

Richardson’s model is the broadest approach in categorizing second person narratives. He identified three types, the standard, the hypothetic and the autotelic form (see Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 18).

Richardson calls the ‘standard form’ the “by far the most common” (Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 18) of the three realizations which resembles familiar types of narration the most. A well-known example for this narrative is *Bright Lights, Big City* by Jay McInerney (1988). The opening of the novel reads: “You are not the kind of guy who would be at a play like this at this time of the morning. But here you are, and you cannot say that the terrain is entirely familiar, although the details are fuzzy.” (McInerney 1) This example illustrates one distinctive feature of the standard second-person narratives: the fact that these stories are usually told in the present tense. Another typical feature is that instead of an ‘I’ or ‘he’/‘she’, the pronoun ‘you’ is used for the protagonist. However, the narrative would also still make sense if the pronoun were changed back into ‘I’, ‘he’ or ‘she’ (see Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 18-20). To illustrate that, I will take the next sentence of the novel. After replacing the second-person pronoun with the first-person, the passage would be “[I am] at a nightclub talking to a girl with a shaved head”. (McInerney 1) This adaption does not change the plot, however, the mood of estrangement, which the second person creates, gets lost.

It is striking that the ‘you’ does not always only refer to the character whose story is told but also to the one who narrates the story – and indeed also to the reader. While in actual fact there is a difference between the ‘you’-protagonist and the reader of the story, some texts play with this ambiguity. This is due to the deictic function of the pronoun ‘you’. Readers, as real-world addressees of a book, can hardly ignore this address function and are therefore continuously “drawn closer to and further away from the protagonist” (Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 21). In other words, the concept of ‘you’ in the standard second-person narrative can be identified as a fluid one designating not only the protagonist, but also the narrator, the reader or even another character (see Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 20-21).

In traditional narratological concepts, the standard second person narrative is placed somewhere between the first and third person, with certain theorists like Genette and McHale defining it as a special version of third-person narration, while Stanzel and DelConte rather see it as a marked version of an ‘I’-narration. However, Richardson states that while certainly some works of second-person narration are reminiscent of a first- or third-person style, they cannot fully be classified as one of them (see Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 21-22).

The second type is the hypothetical one, which Richardson called ‘subjunctive’ mode in his works prior to 2006 (see Richardson *Poetics and Politics* 319). It describes a story written in a style resembling a guidebook such as Lorrie Moore’s short story collection *Self-Help* (1989). The use of future tense “Your mother **will** agree that he does look like Uncle Jack.”

(Moore 50, emphasis added) and imperative forms “**Insist** that you are not scared.” (Moore 59, emphasis added) are typical for this form. These linguistic features give rise to the assumption that “the protagonist is a possible future version of the narratee” (Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 29). Moreover, it guarantees that narrator and narratee are clearly distinguished in this narrative form. The versatile nature of the hypothetical ‘you’, especially at the beginning of a narrative, also allows a broad identification among a text’s audience, in other words, it comes near to a generalized use of ‘you’ (see Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 29-30).

Richardson’s third type is the autotelic form featuring a direct address to a reader, which is also the protagonist of the story itself. Like the hypothetical form, this leads to a strong differentiation between narrator and narratee (see Reitan 152). The fact that this narrative type is mostly written in present tense strengthens the impression that the actual reading situation is narrated in the story and that the reader becomes part of the diegesis. “You are about to begin reading Italo Calvino’s new novel *If On A Winter’s Night A Traveler*. Relax. Concentrate. Dispel every other thought. Let the world around you fade.” (Calvino 2) These are the first lines of *If On A Winter’s Night A Traveler* by Italo Calvino (1979), which illustrate the pseudo-interaction of the narrator with the reader. It describes a possible reading situation. The fact that it is very unspecific makes it relatable for many readers, which again strengthens the impression of the reader being part of the diegesis.

A pure autotelic ‘you’ is usually only realized in very short texts, while in longer ones, it is used in alternation with other types of narration (see Richardson, *Unnatural Voices* 30-31). This also holds true for Calvino’s novel. Between the ‘you’-passages which stand for the interaction with the reader, the narrator tells a story in first-person perspective. “*Saturday*. It was my first outing at night after many months [...]” (Calvino 65) Apart from the change of pronouns, this story is also told in the past tense, whereas the interactive parts are written in present tense, which makes the differentiation between the two story-levels clear. A novel consisting of a purely autotelic ‘you’-narrative would indeed be possible; however, it is questionable whether it is interesting for readers, as a long text miming a situation of reader interaction might not have the most captivating plot.

In contrast to Richardson, Fludernik’s first model (1993) of ‘you’-narratives does not offer similar clear-cut categories. As already mentioned in the previous section, she tried to find a way to allocate second-person narratives alongside more traditional narrative situations such as the first- and third-person narration and therefore adapted and fused the models by Genette and Stanzel. In her mapping of narrative types, the first distinction has to be made between

narratives with a communicational level and those with no communicational level. Within the first category, Fludernik further distinguishes between homocommunicative and heterocommunicative narratives. Again, homocommunicative narratives can be divided into homodiegetic and homoconative ones (see Fludernik *Narrative 'You'* 224-225).

Heterocommunicative narratives describe a situation where the narrator and narratee operate on a different level than the protagonist. In other words, the communication between these two instances is not part of the plot. Third-person narratives are typical examples for the heterocommunicative realm, as one can say that a narrator who is not a part of the story tells the story to an intended reader, who is also not involved in the plot. Moreover, second-person narratives where the 'you' is only used to refer to the protagonist but not the addressee of the story can also be called heterocommunicative (see Fludernik, *Narrative 'You'* 224). One can recognize these texts as there are no phrases of address towards the character referred to as 'you' (see Fludernik, *Test Case* 449) like imperatives or questions. Like in *Bright Lights, Big City*, the story is simply told but instead of giving the protagonist a name, he is called 'you'. These texts can usually be located within the 'authorial-figural continuum' – a concept defined by Stanzel (see Fludernik, *Narrative 'You'* 224), which describes the scale between an authorial and a figural narrative situation (see Fludernik, *Test Case* 473). This means that the narrator might have all the knowledge of the 'you'-protagonist, is omniscient or anything in between.

In comparison to that, the participants on the communicational level – meaning narrator and the narratee – and the protagonists exist on the same level in homocommunicative texts. There could be several combinations, depending on whether the narrator, the narratee or both are part of the plot – either in a central or peripheral position (see Fludernik, *Narrative 'You'* 224). The novel *spill simmer falter wither* by Sara Baume is one example of this realization of 'you'-narration. Here, a man tells the story of him and his dog from the moment when they first met: "You find me on a Tuesday, on my Tuesday trip to town." (Baume 7) Here, the 'you' is constantly used to refer to the protagonist's dog. In this case, the 'I'-narrator is the central character, though. But there are also novels, where the 'you' is central, whereas the 'I' is only a peripheral character (see Fludernik, *Narrative 'You'* 224).

Homocommunicative texts can again be divided into two different forms: homodiegetic and homoconative (see Fludernik, *Narrative 'You'* 225). As long as there is an additional 'I'-narrator involved on the same narrative level, we speak of homodiegetic narratives. This is for example the case for the previously mentioned novel *spill simmer falter wither*. The other form of the homocommunicative setting is the homoconative narrative, in which the narratee is part

of the story – usually the protagonist – but the “I”-narrator addressing the ‘you’-protagonist is not. Indeed, it is only a voice telling the story of the ‘you’ (see Fludernik, *Test Case* 446-448). In other words, a narrative is homoconative if there is no ‘I’-narrator involved on the same story level. To distinguish the homoconative ‘you’ from the heterocommunicative ‘you’, one needs to look at the textual context. Compared to heterocommunicative ‘you’-narration, the homoconative ones feature structures which serve as direct address, like in *If On A Winter’s Night A Traveler* by Italo Calvino: “Well, what are you waiting for? Stretch your legs, go ahead and put your feet on a cushion, on two cushions, on the arms of the sofa [...]” (Calvino 3-4). In this example, a question – in this case a rhetorical one - and imperatives leave room for the assumption that there must be a direct address.

Finally, there are also purely reflectorial second-person narratives, where no communicative level exists. The thoughts and feelings of the protagonist are solely reflected by a narrative in second person. This creates the impression that the reader enters the main character’s mind. Fludernik states that for this certain narrative form the distinction between different pronouns is hardly important as the missing standpoint of a narrator renders the deictic power of a pronoun insignificant. Any other pronoun can therefore be used interchangeably with the ‘you’ without causing different effects (see Fludernik, *Narrative ‘You’* 226-227).

Compared to Richardson’s model, which offers clear-cut differences between the three different forms of second-person narratives, Fludernik’s model is more open and does not offer clearly defined forms. It rather offers a scheme where to place certain instances of this specific narrative type among other ones. In a remodeled version of 2011, Fludernik created a mapping exclusively for the communicative setting in second-person narration and identified six different types (see Fludernik, *You and We Narrative* 107).

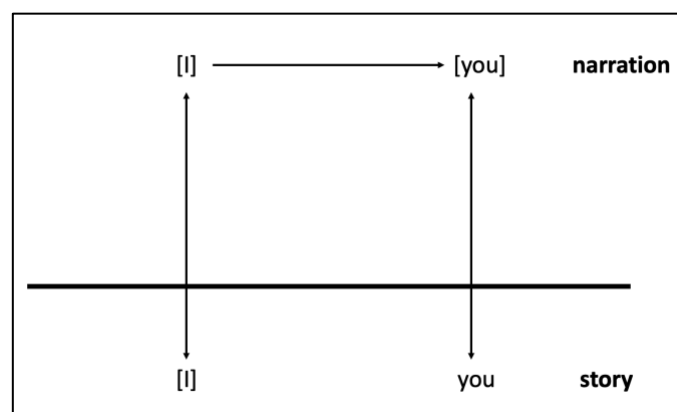


Fig. 01: The Communicative Situation in ‘you’-narratives (Fludernik, *You and We Narrative* 107)

In Fludernik's model (see Fig. 01), two levels in which communication can happen in second-person narratives can be identified: the level of the story and the level of the narration. On both levels, an 'I' and a 'you' can exist, however, it is only necessary that there is a 'you' as a protagonist on the story level in order to count as a second-person narrative following the definition given in the previous section (see Fludernik, *You and We Narrative* 107).

Keeping in mind the variable factors, six combinations are possible resulting in six different second-person narrative forms, which Fludernik called versions A to F. Starting with type A, which is called 'reflector mode', one can say that this is the simplest form. Here, only the 'you' on the story level exists and reflects the story, while there is no narrator that comments on the plot. This form might seem unnatural, as the pronoun 'you' usually suggests that there must be some form of exchange. Therefore, this form is only possible in a fictional setting. On a textual level, this becomes obvious, as typical markers of a communicational situation like imperatives are missing. Two different realizations of version A are possible: on the one hand there is the normal reflector mode which is usually written in the present tense to reflect on the sensations a character has at the moment of experiencing it. "You always did look with your mouth. The sun-warmed pebble, salty-smooth against your tongue." (O'Reilly 93). This example from the story "Mouth" (1994) by Katie O'Reilly perfectly illustrates the description of the sensations of a very young child who explores things by tasting with her mouth. A reason for the choice of the pronoun 'you' might be the fact that the girl has encountered frequent address with 'you' by her mother and therefore uses the pronoun to refer to herself. On the other hand, there is the authorial version, where it becomes clear that the reflective instance knows and evaluates more than the protagonist could probably be aware of, but still shows no sign of communication. The latter version usually uses the past tense according to Fludernik (see Fludernik, *You and We Narrative* 107-108).

When the 'I'-instance on the story level is added, Fludernik assigns it to type B, the 'non-communicative I-and-you'. This form is characterized by a present-tense narrative featuring an 'I'- and a 'you'-protagonist on the story level, but there is still no perceivable narrator and no address. Therefore, it is similar to the reflector mode. This version occurs rarely and is often combined with other narratives, like third person (see Fludernik, *You and We Narrative* 109).

Type C, called 'first person narrative + you protagonist', describes a narrative situation where there is a first-person narrator that operates both on the story and narrational level. In other words, the 'I' tells a story which they have actually experienced but not to a 'you' on the narrational level. This 'you' only exists on the story level as protagonist. Often it is a story in

the past tense from the 'I'-narrators past about a 'you', which is not present at the moment of narrating, for instance because it is dead or simply absent. Therefore, there can only be an imagined address in this narrative but not a real one. Fludernik lists *Katz und Maus* (1961) by Günter Grass, a German text, as one of the most typical examples for this form of narration (see Fludernik, *You and We Narratives* 109-110). With the past-tense 'you'-narrative "Du hattest Dich halb an das Fensterbrett gelehnt, halb auf das weißlackierte Brett gesetzt" (Grass 119) the 'I'-narrator tells the story of the common past of himself and another person called "Mahlke" who is often referred to as 'you'. There are, however, no signs of address on the discourse level. For this reason, the text belongs into category C.

The fourth type, D, is called the 'homodiegetic you', meaning the 'you' is both present on the story and narrational level. An 'I'-narrator communicates with the 'you' on the level of narration but is not part of the plot. Subject of the narrative is the story of the 'you'. The narrator can be either visible in case the pronoun 'I' is used or covert when only the use of textual features like imperatives point towards the existence of a first person narrational instance. Fludernik also states that this type coincides with Richardson's hypothetic form (see Fludernik, *You and We Narratives* 110-111). Like in the short story "The Kid's Guide to Divorce" from Lorrie Moore's collection *Self-Help* (1989), imperative commands are given to a 'you'-protagonist: "Put extra salt on the popcorn because your mom'll say that she needs it [...]" (Moore 48). In this case, no 'I'-narrator is visible. Also, the opening chapter of *If On A Winter's Night A Traveler* (1979) by Italo Calvino, where only the reading situation is narrated belongs into this category. However, later in the novel, when the story of the 'I'-protagonist is told, the narrational situation is getting more complex, as a second story level is added where the 'you' – in this case the reader – does not play a role.

There is another category where only the 'you' exists both on the narrational and the story level. This type E is called 'self-address you' because the second-person narration seems like a self-address. Here, a narrator figure on the extradiegetic narrative level tells the story of themselves referring to themselves as 'you'. The self-address 'you' is necessary for this type, however, the narrative should not solely consist of self-address but also narrative clauses are important in order not to become an interior monologue. For this reason, it is important that there are clear references "to the story world and depicting the protagonist as part of that world" (Fludernik, *You and We Narratives* 112). As a typical example for this type, Fludernik suggests the novel *Strange Fruit* (1944) by Lillian Smith (see Fludernik, *You and We Narratives* 112). There are some passages that strongly remind of an interior monologue featuring ellipses,

repetition and the expression of feelings, for example: “Strange ... being pregnant could make you feel this. So sure. After all the years, sure. Bess wouldn’t see it. You hated to try to explain. Bess would feel disgraced. Ruined. The Andersons ruined, Bess would say.” (Smith 3). However, most of the narration is in third-person perspective: “She would tell him, now that she felt certain. Though she had known since that night at the river.” (Smith 3). This makes it even clearer that the ‘you’-passages serve as self-address of the protagonist.

The final type F features all the possible instances: The “I”-narrator is also either a central or peripheral character in the story and addresses a ‘you’ which is also in the story. It might be that the “I” and ‘you’ share experiences in the past which are subject of the story. Therefore, it might also be possible that the ‘you’ is not alive anymore at the moment of narration, but still present in the “I”’s mind so that it could still be addressed (see Fludernik, *You and We Narrative* 112-113). This is, for example, the case in the thriller *Local Girl Missing* (2016) by Claire Douglas. The ‘I’-narrator, a woman called Francesca, tells the story of her and her best friend Sophie, who went missing twenty years ago and is assumed dead. “I remember when I first saw you, Soph. It was September 1983 and we were seven.” (Douglas 9). The story is told in the past tense because at the time of narration, the protagonist is already much older. Although the other woman, Sophie, is not present at the moment of narration, the direct address suggests that the narration is directed towards her.

It is important to note that these categories defined by Fludernik should not be seen as clear-cut compartments, where each narrative can neatly be allocated to. On the contrary, the position of the ‘I’ and ‘you’ is flexible and can change throughout the same narrative so that it fits into more than one category (see Sorlin 11). However, this mapping of second-person narratives provides a detailed and systematic overview over different realizations of this narrative phenomenon.

There are other approaches to categorize second-person narratives, like the one suggested by Sorlin (2021). She adapts an earlier model by Kluge (2016) and organizes second-person narratives along two axes. On the x-axis, the difference between the ‘you’ referring to the inside or outside world of the narrating instance is illustrated, and the y-axis shows the degree of personalization or generalization. This model uses a broader understanding of second-person narration also including the actual reader of a text (see Sorlin 14). It is questionable whether this typology would be applicable for this paper, as according to the definition for second-person narratives given in the previous section, only those narratives are taken into account where the ‘you’ refers to a protagonist on the story level and not the reader or a wider audience.

However, it might still be interesting, whether a certain second-person narrative has generalizing effects or is rather personalized. For this reason, Sorlin's model was mentioned at this point too.

To conclude this section, I will shortly recap that there are several suggestions for categorizing second-person narratives. On the one hand, Richardson's model offers three basic categories which are clearly separable from each other. According to this typology, narratives can be easily categorized. However, especially the standard form is a very broad concept encompassing still a variety of different 'you'-narratives. Fludernik's older model presents a concept to categorize second-person narratives alongside other narrative types and provides me with useful terms to describe a narrative situation in second-person narration. On the downside, it does not really present different categories of 'you'-narration per se but. Such a scheme was, however, given in the later model of 2011, where six different forms were introduced depending on the existence of 'I' and 'you'-instances on the narrational and story level, which cannot be seen as stable but fluid categories – even within one narrative. As this is a simple but comprehensive mapping of second-person narratives, the scheme will be used throughout this paper. Moreover, I will also look at the generalizing and personalizing effects on the reader a certain narrative has, as suggested by Sorlin.

At the end of this chapter, I will also briefly summarize the importance of narrative tense for second-person narration. As I learned from Fludernik's and Richardson's models, different forms of 'you'-narratives require different tenses. While Richardson's 'standard form' and 'autotelic form' as well as Fludernik's 'reflector mode' and 'self-address you' usually feature present tense narratives, those categories with an additional 'I'-narrator who is present on the story and discourse level incorporate the past tense. Moreover, future tense and hypothetical forms – together with imperatives – are common for Richardson's 'hypothetic/subjunctive form' and Fludernik's 'homodiegetic you'. However, it is important to note that these combinations of tenses and 'you'-narration types are flexible. This means that an atypical choice of tense is also possible for several reasons. One of these uncommon combinations are second-person texts without an 'I'-narrator on either level, which are written in the past tense. This might seem especially odd and gives an impression of strangeness (see Newman 48). To give an example, the novel *A Pagan Place* (1970) by Edna O'Brian is consistently written in past tense, as in: "You ate sweets, small chocolate buttons that congealed on the roof of the mouth." (O'Brian 25). The pronoun 'you' is used to refer to the protagonist, a girl whose name is unknown, but there are no occurrences of an 'I'-narrator throughout the novel. This seems as

if an older version of the protagonist is being told her own story (see Newman 49) or as if she tells her story referring to herself as ‘you’ in order to distance herself from her younger version. Anyway, this unnatural combination is most likely no coincidence, but it has been chosen intendedly. This strangeness of form, which is not only typical for *A Pagan Place* but for many other second-person novels too, is likely to fulfill certain functions, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

3. Functions of second person narration

After considering how second person narratives are implemented in literary texts in the previous subchapter, it is important to discuss why they are used and which functions they fulfil. As the use of the second person pronoun is not conventional in literature, its cause is often not identifiable at first glance (see Richardson, *Keeping You Unnatural* 53). There have, however, been attempts to naturalize this kind of narrative by finding model texts and real-world situations which apply to the second person pronoun use. Fludernik (*Narrative ‘You’* 230-231) roughly divides it into cases where the ‘you’ serves as an address and those where there is no address function. The difference between the two lies in the existence of an addressee on the story-level. While for the former, the person addressed with ‘you’ is a literary character, for the latter there is no literary addressee.

An example for the former is conversational storytelling, where the plot is told in the form of a conversation, as the name suggests. It is important to note that both narrator and narratee are situated on the story level. However, in some cases the reader gets the impression of being directly addressed by the narrator (see Fludernik, *Narrative ‘You’* 231) as this is the case for *If On A Winter’s Night A Traveler* (1979) where the narrator engages in a playful conversation with a fictional reader.

‘Skaz narratives’ were also mentioned in this context. This has even become a literary genre, where a narrator who is obviously part of a certain community tells stories of the community’s common past. The way of narrating resembles oral storytelling as phrases like “you know” or “if you ask me” are inserted into a, for example, third-person narrative. These phrases create the impression that narrator and narratee share a common past (see Fludernik, *Narrative ‘You’* 231-233).

Furthermore, epistolary storytelling justifies the use of the pronoun ‘you’ too, as in letters, there is usually a direct address (see Fludernik *Narrative ‘You’* 233). This is probably the most obvious case where it becomes clear why the second-person pronoun is chosen. The fourth

example for a second person narrative with an address function, the dramatic monologue, also naturalizes the ‘you’-narrative. Compared to an interior monologue, the pronoun ‘you’ has an address function here, however, as it is a monologue, there will not be an answer. Fludernik (*Narrative ‘You’* 234) nevertheless states that actually, a monologue is not a kind of narration but a direct discourse which is not mediated. Anyway, as it still informs about the plot progress indirectly, this was included in the list of naturalizations with an address function.

Four more discourse situations have been mentioned as being examples for the non-address function, where the addressee is not a literary figure. As this is highly unusual for literary fiction, the models mentioned here belong to non-fiction writing. First, there is the ‘you’ resembling a guidebook. Fludernik (*Narrative ‘You’* 235) therefore calls it ‘Instructions and Guide book you’. In texts also known as ‘How to ...’-literature, protagonists are led through the plot as if given instructions.

A second type is reminiscent of the situation before court and is for this reason called ‘courthouse you’. Here, actions are narrated as if the protagonists were confronted with them in front of a tribunal (see Fludernik *Narrative ‘You’* 236).

The last two cases are self-explanatory: There is on the one hand the ‘generalizing you’, where the second person pronoun simply refers to “one”. Although in the plot this ‘you’ refers to a specific initiator, it linguistically stands for “everyone” and can therefore be generalized. On the other hand, the second person pronoun can also be used as self-address. This resembles an inner conflict or monologue, which is easily accessible for readers, however, rather uncommon that a whole literary text is written in this style (see Fludernik *Narrative ‘You’* 236-238).

At this point it has to be noted that ‘you’-narratives do not always have to fulfil a pragmatic cause as in the cases mentioned above. Just like other kinds of literature, second person narration is not limited to miming the real world. On the contrary, “you”-literature often challenges expectations of realism in narratives, as Wiest-Kellner (*Messages from the Threshold* 20-21) analyzes by comparing the approaches by Richardson and Fludernik on this question. Therefore, the second person pronoun can have several more functions in literary texts. The following sections are dedicated to giving an overview over a few selected functions which are relevant for this paper.

There are different options to structure the functions of second person narration. In her master thesis, Verena Kandler divided them into firstly, the story-related functions, shortly explained as those functions the second person pronoun has on the story-level. In other words,

the use of 'you' adds an extra-meaning to the plot. Secondly, she also defined functions oriented on the reader-response. This subsumes all the effects the second person pronoun use has on the readers themselves (see Kandler 39-40).

For this thesis, I identified a number of different functions of second person narration and roughly structured them into five categories: the functions of involvement, the functions of mental representation, the functions of portraying relationships, the political and the poetic functions.

3.1. Functions of involvement

A number of second person narration researchers have dealt with the question whether the use of the pronoun 'you' leads to a greater involvement in a novel and identification with its characters. Wiest (*Die you-Erzaehlsituation* 76) states that 'you'-narratives have far more power to involve readers than first- or third-person narrative situations. However, the term involvement must be further clarified, as it has a rather fuzzy meaning according to Mildorf (*Reconsidering second-person narration* 148). Thus, when speaking of involvement she defines two different types, the 'aesthetic-reflective' and the 'affective-emotional' involvement. While the former stands for a rather intellectual approach of being involved like the recognition of address, the latter can be described as empathy. Therefore, she identified the address function of a second person narrative and the immersion or empathy function (see Mildorf *Reconsidering second-person narration* 156). However, it is important to note that empathy and immersion should be seen as two different concepts although they are usually strongly intertwined because it is also possible that the readers feel immersed in the text but do not empathize with the characters (see Kandler 55).

Most theorists agree that certain contexts and realizations of the second person narrative favor a higher degree of immersion and address. According to Fludernik (*Narrative 'You'* 227), the reflectorial second person narrative leads to stronger empathy and identification with the narratee because of the seeming absence of a narrator and the missing standpoint of the narration. Mildorf (*Reconsidering second-person narration* 153) adds that the protagonist's character traits also play an important role concerning the involvement. On the one hand, she states that characters with experiences and backgrounds similar to the reader lead to a higher identification. On the other hand, she admits that it is not always beneficial in the sense of involvement that the 'you'-protagonist is presented with very specified characteristics. Phelan (351) supports this view and states that a detailed characterization of a 'you'-narratee leads to

a greater awareness of not only the similarities but foremost the differences between reader and this character and therefore hinders identification. Bonheim (73) presents another important factor, which leads to a greater involvement: He writes that, if the pronoun ‘you’ cannot clearly be assigned to a specific and physically present figure in the text, it is more likely that the readers feel addressed by the ‘you’ themselves.

However, the use of second person narration can not only lead to more identification and empathy but also to a stronger feeling of distance to the character. In some cases, there is even a constant shift between identification- and distancing-effects within one text (see Richardson *Unnatural Voices* 28). Fludernik (*Narrative ‘You’* 227) similarly states that the distancing-effects at the beginning of a text, where the second person pronoun is perceived as a generalizing ‘you’, changes to empathy and identification the more reflectoral the narration becomes. This can even lead to identification with fictional characters with different morals or backgrounds (see Fludernik *Narrative ‘You’* 229).

However, at this point, it is important to note that it is not only the second-person pronouns which cause these effects of involvement and distancing. While the use of ‘you’ definitely creates a sense of an internal perspective, nevertheless, the linguistic environment is even more important. Deictics, for example, can lead to an internal perspective and emotive verbs raise empathy and emotional involvement (see Mildorf *Reconsidering second-person narration* 155).

Moreover, the choice of tense also plays an important role concerning the distancing effect. DelConte states that second-person narratives in present or past tense make it easier for a narrator to distance themselves from their story – in case the narrator-figure tells a story they are, for example, ashamed of. These two above-mentioned tenses suggest that the events which are narrated have either already occurred or are about to occur. This gives it the air of ‘realness’. It is therefore easy for a reader to believe that the narrated events happened to somebody else other than the narrator (see DelConte 57). On the contrary, if future tense or a subjunctive or hypothetical mode is used, it is harder for a narrator to create distance through the use of a second-person pronoun. As a story which is told in the future tense has not actually happened but describes a possible situation in the future, the reader is likely to assume that the narrator relates their story to something which has already happened to themselves (see DelConte 59).

Furthermore, also past and present tense have different functions when it comes to reader involvement. DelConte suggests that a reader feels addressed more easily if the past tense is used. This can be explained as follows: a present-tense narrative tells a story as if it is happening

right now. However, in reality there is no possibility that these events take place at the same moment, so it is hard for the reader to feel addressed by the 'you'. As a consequence, the reader involvement decreases. A text in the past-tense, however, leaves more space for reader involvement, as it does not challenge their current status (see DelConte 57). Probably, something similar happened to them in the past, which leads to a stronger identification and involvement. Nevertheless, there are some exceptions, like the opening chapter of Italo Calvino's *If On A Winter's Night A Traveler* (1979), where a typical reading situation is described, which automatically leads to an impression of reader involvement.

3.2. Functions of mental representation

There is no clearcut distinction between the different functions of second person narration, on the contrary, they also interfere with each other. The constant shift between empathy and distance, which was mentioned before, can for instance mirror consciousness (see Richardson *Unnatural Voices* 28).

This leads to the next category of functions, namely those concerning the representation of mental states. In a myriad of ways, the second person narrative is able to add manifold details to a simple description of the mental situation of a character on the story-level.

Interestingly, when comparing previous analyses on the functions of second-person narration, I was able to discover that this type of narrative hardly ever creates the sense of a positive mental state. In most cases the use of a second person pronoun points towards a fragmented mind, anxiety, oppression, or memory loss. These might have been evoked by either a traumatic experience in the past (see Iliopoulou 29; Kandler 41) or a threshold experience of the literary character (see Wiest-Kellner *Messages from the Threshold* 35). In the following paragraphs, I will analyze how the use of the second person pronoun can lead to these effects.

First, a narrative written in the second person can lead to a sense of fragmentation of the protagonist's mind. Margolin (qtd. in Kandler 42) sees it as one possible explanation for this use of second person that the protagonist is not able to see themselves from their own perspective. Being regularly confronted with other viewpoints on oneself might lead to the adoption of an exterior perspective which is in consequence used to narrate one's own story.

This fragmenting effect can also be created when second person speech is naturalized as inner self-address. Richardson (*Unnatural Voices* 23) came to that conclusion when analyzing *Bright Lights, Big City* (1988) by Jay McInerney. He speaks of the ambiguity of the second person narration which leaves room for the assumption that the second person functions as a

kind of inner conflict. It mimes the “small voice inside” (Richardson *Unnatural Voices* 23), which might be a hidden ‘I’-instance being in a dialogue with the self. This can in consequence be seen as a form of self-fragmentation.

This inner voice that resembles someone talking to oneself can also have a different function, namely as a form of self-comforting (see Kandler 41). When there is a need of comfort, it is obvious that the protagonist must be in a state of inner arousal. Therefore, another possible interpretation of the second person is distress and anxiety.

Furthermore, the second person narration can also illustrate a struggle against oppression. In this case, the ‘you’ gets another function. It is not the split inner voice like in the first two cases but the imagined voice of an outside oppressor which instructs the narratee what to do (see Kandler 63). Therefore, it seems like a form of one-way communication with an unbalanced power relation. The protagonist is addressed by the pronoun ‘you’ but is not able to talk back, therefore holds inferior power (see Kacandes 334). This is also manifested in the depiction of the character – usually a rather passive and obedient figure while the narrational entity seems to hold power over it (see Wiest-Kellner *Messages from the Threshold* 55). The second person pronoun is indeed an excellent device to create a sense of oppression through de-individualization. According to Wiest-Kellner (*Messages from the Threshold* 55) the ‘you’ has the power to conceal the name of the protagonist or even absorb it. This becomes especially clear for those novels, where the name of the narratee is only revealed rather at the end or not at all. Richardson (*Unnatural Voices* 26) emphasizes this by discussing the example of *A Pagan Place* (1970) by Edna O’Brian. Its ‘you’-protagonist is a girl living in poverty with a violent father and constantly struggling with the hardships of society. Her powerlessness is echoed in a certain form of silencing, that is seemingly expressed through the use of a second person narrative.

When analyzing Ilse Aichinger’s “Spiegelgeschichte”, Scott (323) found out that a combination of ‘you’-narratives with imperatives intensifies this image of oppression. The imperative passages mirror the restrictions which society imposes on the protagonist – a woman who is dying and whose story is told in reverse. Together with the ‘you’-narrative, which in this case also wields power over the narratee, this protagonist is made passive until she regains power through intentional silence (see Scott 323).

There is finally also the possibility that the second-person narrative holds a memory function. In this case, it must be assumed that a memory loss has taken place and the ‘you’-protagonist is not able to remember their own story (see Fludernik *Narrative ‘You’* 224).

Therefore, the choice of this rather unnatural narrative type can be naturalized as a recounting one's own past. Here too, a covert 'I'-narrator can be imagined which might be a younger version of the self, which has not yet forgotten what happened before the memory loss. It is also possible that the covert narrator is an older version of the protagonist who already gained the knowledge and the memory again.

As already mentioned before, these mental disturbances might have been caused by traumatic experiences. The use of the second person pronoun might then in consequence be explained as an attempt by the narratee to step back and regard one's own past from a safe distance. It is assumed that only in the way of that certain withdrawal, a critical reflection of their own past can take place (see Ilioupoulou 29). DelConte supports this view and mentions that in texts where second-person and other narratives are used alternately these second-person passages are usually those parts of the plot where something shameful happens to the protagonist (see DelConte 55).

By analyzing the novella *Rape: A Love Story* (2003) by Joyce Carol Oates, Cortés Vieco found out that second-person narratives create an excellent distancing effect in life-writing when it comes to trauma narratives. The story is a fictional autobiography of a young woman who witnessed her mother's rape as a child. In this case, the process of telling one's own story is said to have healing powers, therefore it can be assumed that the protagonist, Bethie, is also the narrator. In order to distance herself from the injurious events of the past, the pronoun 'you' might be used instead of an 'I' (see Cortés Vieco 164). Moreover, second-person narratives with an address function are also prominent in texts about mental health problems or trauma. The direct address can create the impression that the narrative is directed either at therapist or at a friend (see Day 66-67).

These are only two of the functions, a 'you'-narrative can have in trauma literature. I intend to discover further ones through analysis of the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir in this thesis.

3.3. Functions of portraying relationships

In order to illustrate the nature of relationships, the dialogic function of the second-person pronoun becomes prominent. However, it does not need to appear in a visible dialogue but can also be part of an apostrophic, or in other words one-way communication. Especially the latter perfectly fits to portray problematic relationships with a certain tension between the partners. Apart from love liaisons second person texts also often feature those between mother and daughter (see Fludernik *Test Case* 469). This has been the case for Joyce Carol Oates' short

story “You”, which is obviously told from the grown daughter’s perspective. The ‘you’-protagonist is, however, her absent mother, whose story is narrated (see Richardson *Keeping You Unnatural* 50).

The reason why second person narratives are suitable for illustrating problematic relationships can be seen in the nature of communication. Due to the fact that communication usually works bilaterally, the situation is not ideal in ‘you’-narration. As already mentioned in the previous section about oppression, the ‘you’-protagonist is muted in texts like these because they usually allow no answer by the narratee. Therefore, the normal communicational situation is disturbed and this points towards troubled relations (see Richardson *Keeping You Unnatural* 50).

However, it is not always the case that relationships featured in second person texts are problematic. This narrational type is also highly suitable for telling shared memories. In order to naturalize a second person story, there will be a tendency to assume that the narrating instance shares the same experiences as the narratee. Otherwise, it would not be realistically possible to know what the other person knows (see Mildorf *Literary and conversational storytelling* 80). Anyway, as already mentioned, it is not the goal of second person texts to be realistic (see Richardson *Unnatural narrative theory* 389-390). This form of narration, nevertheless, allows to play with reader’s expectations and therefore creates an image of mutual memories.

3.4. Political functions

Political functions are strongly intertwined with those previously mentioned. According to Richardson (*Unnatural Voices* 36), second person narration is perfectly suited to raise awareness for minorities in the sense of race, class and gender. This is the case because this certain narrational type allows for identification and empathy, the illustration of power struggles and inclusion of subjects that are usually excluded from the literary discourse.

As already mentioned before, certain second person texts allow a strong identification with and empathy for the ‘you’-protagonist. If the protagonist belongs to a minority group, readers are able to experience the world from their perspective (see Kandler 60). The question arises if it is necessary for this illusion to work that the background of the narratee becomes clear. Probably, readers would not link the protagonist to a certain minority group if the ‘you’-character is not specified enough. This could, however, reduce the identification effects, as already mentioned in the section about the functions of involvement. Fludernik (*Test Case* 471)

has already partly answered this question by stating that it is also the fascination for characters very different from oneself that creates this sense of empathy.

Moreover, it is also possible for second-person narratives to raise awareness for oppressed groups as this type of narrative creates a sense of domination. As mentioned before, the use of the pronoun 'you' holds power over the narratee. When they become muted and not even their name is known, the subjects function as a perfect example for oppressed minorities. DiMeo (152) also found out that heterocommunicative 'you'-narratives – in Fludernik's terms – even create a stronger sense of oppression. In texts in which the narrator operates on a different level than the narratee this narratee seems passive and dependent. This is due to the fact that the heterocommunicative 'you'-narrative is more like a third-person narrative, where instead of a name the pronoun 'you' is used. This, in consequence, is as if somebody else is telling you your own story without you having the chance to answer or correct anything (see DiMeo 152). This act can in fact be seen as the process of imposing a history on someone – for example on a minority group (see DiMeo 154).

Another interesting feature of the second person pronoun is its ambiguity, which can fulfill even more political functions (Richardson *Poetics and Politics* 312). Certain texts play with reader's expectations on purpose. Although Richardson (*Unnatural Voices* 33) rightfully states that the second person pronoun cannot stand for everyone, in most languages, the pronoun 'you' does not need to specify gender and number of the addressee. This opens up a broad spectrum of the protagonist's possible backgrounds. This, in consequence, allows that it is, for example, unclear, whether the 'you'-protagonist is in a homo- or heterosexual relationship. Anyway, it can be expected that most readers identify the narratee as part of a majority, like a white, male European. However, second person narration has the power to surprise the reader by revealing the actual background only at the end (see Fludernik *Test Case* 471).

3.5. Poetic functions

As second person narration can be seen as unnatural narrative, it does not always have to fulfill a pragmatic function. Often, the choice of the second person perspective functions as a break of conventions. By using a rather unconventional form of narrating a story, the text draws attention to itself with all its narrational devices (see Mildorf *Literary and conversational storytelling* 91). In this way, a second person text highlights its status as aesthetic artefact. This unfamiliar type of storytelling opens up new options to creatively illustrate story elements like characters with unstable minds (see Mildorf *Literary and conversational storytelling* 94).

This also leads to meta-awareness of the readers. Not only does the use of the second person as narrational instance challenge their expectations of how to grasp a story (see Mildorf *Literary and conversational storytelling* 94), it also blurs the boundaries between discourse and story level. While in traditional literary texts, the narrative levels are clearly distinct, this is not the case for second person texts because the ‘you’ creates the impression that the reading audience itself is part of the story world due to its address function (see Fludernik *Test Case* 457). Therefore it “threatens the ontological stability of the fictional world” (Richardson *Unnatural Voices* 20), however, this does not happen involuntarily – it is used on purpose by the majority of authors of second person texts to playfully challenge the limits of narrativity (see Richardson *Unnatural Voices* 20).

To conclude, it is important to stress that the choice of the narrational perspective does not always fulfill a pragmatic purpose. As it is often the case with second-person narration, unnatural narratives might also be chosen for aesthetic and metafictional reasons and to raise awareness for the fictionality of a work of fiction. And in some other cases, like Richardson (*Unnatural narrative theory* 396) suggests, atypical styles are simply implemented to break conventions.

As previously mentioned, all these functions do not work in isolation. They are strongly intertwined and often presuppose each other. For this reason, I will not tackle them separately in the following analysis but in an integrated way.

4. Crisis and trauma in coming-of-age literature

Given that the focus of this thesis is to analyze a second person novel featuring coming-of-age crisis and traumatizing events, the following chapter will be dedicated to the underlying concepts. This implies a short survey of the historical development of the term trauma as well as the definition of trauma and crisis from a psychological point of view, followed by the discussion of their importance for literature. Finally, the didactic implications for teaching coming-of-age novels about trauma and crisis will be analyzed as a last sub-chapter.

4.1. The terms ‘trauma’ and ‘crisis’

Nowadays, one recognizes that the term ‘trauma’ and ‘crisis’ are overused referring to anything bad that happens in one’s daily life. This is due to the fact that most people do not understand the real definition and the concepts behind these terms (see Roberts 90-91).

The terms ‘trauma’ and ‘crisis’ are often confused or used synonymously. However, there is a difference between the two notions, which will be clarified in the course of this sub-chapter.

The reason why defining trauma is rather complicated lies in the fact that the term refers to a range of different concepts depending on the underlying discipline. Medical trauma, describes injuries, and psychological trauma refers to pathologic emotional long-term reactions to overwhelming events. However, there are even more concepts of trauma, like cultural or historical trauma (see Schönfelder 28), which I will not explain further at this point. In this thesis, I will use the psychological definition of trauma, which corresponds to the concept of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In order to understand this idea of trauma, it is important to examine briefly how the term developed throughout history, starting with the etymology. “Trauma” originates in the Greek language and denotes an externally caused physical wound (see Bond & Craps 2). Therefore, the term was used in a medical sense up to the 18th century and the industrialization. Only then did it start to gain a psychological dimension, too. In the middle of the 19th century, the phenomenon of the so-called railway spine first occurred when victims of railway accidents suffered from spine injuries. Further investigations into the origins of pain showed significant correlations between the symptoms and public distress about modern developments suggesting psycho-somatic causes for the disorder (see Bond & Craps 15; Schönfelder 42).

In the further course of history mainly wars led to a development in the understanding of trauma. During the First World War the concept of being “shell shocked” was introduced to describe the sufferings of soldiers returning from battles. Also, Second World War played an important role in the development of an understanding for trauma. however, it was not until the Vietnam War that the concept of PTSD was introduced describing reactions to the terror of the soldier’s experiences during war ranging from fury to the feeling of being numb (see Bond & Craps 35, Schönfelder 43).

Although there had been a comprehensive understanding of trauma in past times, there were still shortcomings concerning the inclusiveness of the term. As the concept of trauma was merely bound to situations of war and genocide in the past, it was not an inclusive one. Only specific types of experiences were taken into account and therefore mostly the effects on the white, male population were investigated. Another shift in this conception took place in the 1970s when women and children also were acknowledged as victims of traumatic events and the terms childhood and family trauma were introduced. From this time on, not only violence

connected to war played an important role for trauma research but also, for example, domestic violence (see Schönfelder 44).

Trauma in the psychological sense only was given an official status as a disease when in 1980 the American Psychiatric Association (APA) published a definition for the syndrome in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), which has undergone a range of adaptations since then. In short, three key elements define PTSD, namely the traumatizing event – which means any occurrence that involves extreme fear, helplessness or threat of life – as well as the immediate reaction and the long-term response. While at the beginning more emphasis lay on the nature of the event which initiated the trauma, the current paradigm stresses the importance of the internal reactions. This shift can be easily explained as research proved that different individuals do not react identically to the same incident. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that there is only a narrow ridge between reactions that are normal for coping with extreme situations and those which mark a mental disorder. The difference lies in the length and intensity in the symptoms, though. This explains that although almost everybody experiences events that might be traumatizing at least once in their life, only a certain number develops a trauma (see Bond & Craps 37; Schönfelder 62).

Furthermore, Sigmund Freud also contributed to the discussion about trauma and explained in his terms, why certain devastating experiences become traumatic and others not. In his view, trauma is associated with memory, namely one of a shocking event, which has been seemingly forgotten, however, it still influences one's life unconsciously (see Sanfelippo 66). To explain, why certain situations lead to traumata with some people, he used his psychoanalytic model consisting of the id, ego and super-ego. He states that trauma is not a consequence of a person being weak, but rather of an occurrence being incompatible with the ideas forming the ego. This can either lead to amnesia as a result of repression, or an attempt to resolve the conflict and working through the devastating experience (see Sanfelippo 90-91). Considering that, I conclude that – at least partial – memory loss is one possible long-term response as mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Apart from the loss of memory, there are more responses and symptoms which are typical for psychological trauma. It is usual that trauma victim's mental state is unstable, constantly changing from calmness to agitation. Moreover, the people suffering from a trauma tend to develop strong fears and anxiety, might distance themselves from any social contacts, sometimes seem to be in a trance, have problems with sleeping are depressive or are in a state of hyperarousal (see Roberts 96).

When it comes to children and teenagers, there is one more important concept: complex PTSD. This means that a trauma and traumatic symptoms are not initiated by just one devastating event but by being continuously exposed to harmful behavior, especially by parents or other people of trust. This could be any kind of abuse, violence or neglect. Being confronted with this kind of stress leads to similar symptoms as when someone experiences a single traumatizing event, like the tendency to hurt oneself, or suffering from amnesia or dissociative disorders (see Schönfelder 73).

Having now clarified that trauma – as the term is used in this thesis – defines a strong emotional reaction to a disastrous event which is pathologic and lasts for an especially long time span, I will now come to the definition of crisis: First, there must be some kind of problematic situation which is challenging for a person as it threatens an important aspect of this person's life (see Frank-Richter 2). This can be, for example, a divorce because the separation from one's partner will in most cases lead to drastic challenges like the separation of the household, probably a dispute over custody if children are involved and also emotional irritation. To speak of a crisis, one more factor must apply to the situation, namely that the person does not have enough and adequate resources or capability to overcome the problematic situation (see Frank-Richter 3). For the previous example this might mean that one subject that is getting divorced does not know how to proceed legally, may be disadvantaged in the process or might not be able to get assistance, however, it can also be an emotional crisis when the person is mentally unable to cope with the separation from a previously loved one.

There is not only one single type of crisis, but several different ones have already been identified. Richard James (qtd. in Frank-Richter 4) defined a scheme consisting of four types of crises: developmental, situational, existential and ecosystemic ones. As the name developmental suggests, this type of crisis refers to crucial transitions in life (see Frank-Richter 4). For this thesis, especially the transition from youth to adulthood will be important. If young people are not capable to face the challenges, which life as an adult poses to them, one can speak of a coming-of-age crisis.

Next, the situational crisis describes one that is initiated by drastic incident like – as mentioned above – a divorce, or the death of a person close to someone. Moreover, there are also existential crises, where a person contemplates over one's own worth and future perspectives. While the first three categories describe inner struggles, the fourth one, the ecosystemic, stands for crises which are caused by environmental disasters or terror and only indirectly effect the person in question (see Frank-Richter 4).

As already mentioned, the terms trauma and crisis are firmly intertwined and in some cases hard to differentiate. Especially, the situational crisis strongly reminds of a trauma. Both are problematic outcomes caused by a certain devastating event, but while the term trauma describes the mental responses that are pathologic to a certain extent, the situational crisis rather refers to the hardships accompanying the probably traumatizing event. This comparison is once more reinforced by Barbara Rubin Wainrib and Ellin Bloch's (20) statement that crises are universal and trauma specific. This means that crises will most likely be experienced by the majority of people as difficult situations cannot totally be avoided, while only a few develop a trauma throughout their lives depending on very personal and internal factors (see Wainrib & Bloch 20).

Crisis and trauma can also cause each other. Usually, a crisis follows a traumatizing event, as trauma victims are more vulnerable and lack their usual coping strategies (see Roberts 94).

Finally, this leaves me to mention that while trauma is always pathological, a crisis might also entail some positive aspects. If enough support is given it provides the opportunity for a drastic change or the chance to grow personally (see Frank-Richter 2; Wainrib & Bloch 20).

4.2. Trauma and crisis in literature

Having now clarified what the terms trauma and crisis refer to, I will return to literary studies after this brief excursion to psychology, as this is after all a literary thesis. In order to be able to analyze texts featuring traumatic events and crises, I will discuss the connection between literature and trauma as well as crisis. First, I will tackle the question why people write about these phenomena, considering if this activity might be helpful in certain situations. I will also focus on some challenging aspects about trauma fiction and how this literary genre can be realized.

To start with, trauma and crisis became essential topics for literature in the modernity following disastrous events in the recent and earlier past, especially the Second World War. Shock and agony are characteristic for our time and with it comes a certain fascination for everything that is disastrous and traumatic (see Nadal & Calvo 1). But not only this obsession with the tragic is key to the success of trauma literature, there is far more beyond that.

First and foremost, the nature of literature enables the representation of experiences or conditions which are otherwise hard to verbalize. Due to its fictional and symbolic character, literature can explore what is usually hard to grasp. By putting extreme situations and their aftermath in various fictional or historical contexts and using symbols and metaphors, it is

possible to write about them without claiming to fully comprehend what a certain person is feeling in a specific situation. This enables a critical and reflective engagement with different traumata among the readers as well as it enhances feelings of identification and compassion (see Schönfelder 29).

Another important function of trauma literature is to give a voice to groups which have often been silenced in history. By writing about the injustices and misfortunes certain marginalized groups experienced, literature makes their fate more accessible to a broader audience, which might easier understand their struggles (see Schönfelder 29).

Returning to the psychological spheres, one also has to note that telling has beneficial effects on working through a trauma or a crisis. Therefore, writing about one's own and reading about other's devastating experiences might also have healing powers (see Kostova 163), so therefore literature is an ideal space for placing trauma as it, on the one hand, seems very natural to read about a trauma testimony in a novel and on the other hand encourages victims to follow the example and tell their own experiences, for example to a therapist.

However, ethical considerations must be taken into account in trauma literature. Individual trauma – compared to cultural trauma – and crisis are something very personal and therefore cannot be narrated by an external person. For this reason, again the fictional power of literature plays an important role: By inventing fictional characters with fictional traumata and crises, one can write about these experiences without claiming ultimate knowledge of other people's pain (see Schönfelder 30 & 38). Also, the importance of avoiding to over-identify with a trauma victim while still feeling sympathy for them is what theorist Dominick LaCapra called "empathic unsettlement" (qtd. in Koopman 243). In other words, literature should offer readers the opportunity to feel close enough but not too close with those, who are suffering.

This imposes severe difficulties on literature especially about trauma. Crises, as mentioned before, are more universal and have more likely been experienced by a larger number of people they therefore might be easier to grasp and to narrate. Trauma, on the contrary, is often hard to represent as it is too intense and exceeds the power of language (see Nadal & Calvo 2-3). The attempt to put trauma into words in order to understand it, however, might lead to a misrepresentation of the true traumatic experience, as sometimes the memory is blurred and distorted and might be hard to fully understand. Therefore, literature should, according to theorist Cathy Caruth (qtd. in Schönfelder 31) not only narrate but perform trauma in a textual way, incorporating features typical for it, like repetition, gaps or miscommunication.

This directly leads to the question of how trauma is usually depicted in literature. After considering prior research in this field, I was able to identify five central features that are characteristic for trauma literature, these are a language breakdown, memory struggle, unfamiliar use of time or repetition, unrealistic elements and impossible voices.

As already mentioned above, trauma is often seen as something unspeakable. The horrors that often come along with devastating events which lead to trauma leaving victims and witnesses speechless cannot always be described verbally. Just as in reality, people might not be able to find the right words in order to react adequately to the pain of others. This is why saying nothing can in some cases even express more than words. This silence can be textually realized in gaps, blank spaces or unfinished statements and sentences (see Schönfelder 31-32; Jones 51).

Moreover, the fact that there is a connection between memory and trauma has already been clarified in the previous subchapter. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that problems remembering certain events are a recurrent motive in trauma literature. Just as flashbacks and so-called “intrusions” can appear in reality as an answer to amnesia after a trauma they can also be depicted in novels. Furthermore, the protagonist’s challenge of reconstructing traumatic experiences is often a major part of the plot (see Schönfelder 75-76). Apart from narratives miming therapeutic settings, where the protagonist attempts to fill their memory gap, there are other texts where interviews with witnesses fulfill this purpose (see Kostova 165). Finally, also the contemplating over old photographs or the collection of items connected to the past are typical features in a story that point towards memory struggles as these things might help the protagonist in solving the puzzle of the past (see Kostova 169).

The use of narrative time is especially interesting in trauma novels. First, it is important to note that in order to talk about trauma, at least two moments in time are necessary: The time when the traumatizing event happens and the moment of the reaction, meaning the point in time when an event becomes traumatic for a person. Therefore, the trauma creates a link between the past, the present and the future of the protagonist creating numerous opportunities for novelists to play with narrative time. One way of doing this is by frequent repetitions. This is also strongly linked to the struggle to remember one’s traumatic past as discussed before: By repeating an event over and over again, the protagonist tries to make sense of that devastating occasion – and also to fill memory gaps (see Nadal and Calvo 3). Furthermore, temporal anachrony is another typical feature for trauma narratives. Jumping between flashbacks and flashforwards, the narrator makes an attempt to make sense of the pieces constituting a trauma.

Finally, a certain timelessness may also be a characteristic of trauma fiction, as the boundaries between past, present and future seem to blur making it impossible at times to differentiate between the different points in time. This can be even more supported on the language level as the sometimes alternating use of present and past tense create an even stronger sense of temporal leaps or timelessness (see Kostova 172).

The last two characteristic features, unrealistic elements and impossible voices are strongly linked together as both of them are a way of representing something that is actually not representable. Elements of magic realism are able to draw a caricature of society, which readers can clearly identify as criticism. Moreover, they help keeping a distance to the trauma victims, which is important according to the above-mentioned empathic unsettlement (see Kostova 168-169).

Finally, it is also very likely that trauma narratives incorporate unusual voices rather than straightforward ones. While still many novels about trauma and crisis use a personal heterodiegetic or first-person homodiegetic narrator, this genre provides numerous opportunities to realize rather atypical narrators. Apart from the second-person narrator, which – as analyzed in the previous chapter – perfectly conveys the sense of fragmented personalities, memory crises, anxiety and oppression, other unusual narrator voices, like the first-person plural collective voice are also used at times, for example to refer to collective wounds of a whole community or society (see Kostova 173).

All things considered, literature provides many opportunities to narrate trauma due to its fictional nature, which enables a certain distancing from real trauma victims, and the manifold options to not only tell but also perform trauma textually in order to grasp it in all its dimensions.

4.3. Teaching crisis and trauma in coming-of-age literature

The findings discussed in the previous chapter suggest that young people will inevitably face a crisis at some time in their later life and there is also the possibility that a few will even experience something traumatizing. Still the question arises, whether there should be room for this issue in the classroom too, or not. Critics of this approach might say that it is risky to confront children and teenagers with the hard sides of life at such a young age. The question, if this is truly the case or if the benefits outweigh the pitfalls, I will discuss in this subchapter.

First, it is important to elaborate on the role which crises and traumata can play in children's or teenager's lives. As already mentioned before, a juvenile person is usually facing their first big life transition from being a child, ideally with hardly any responsibilities, to becoming an

adult, which might be challenging or terrifying for at least some. This could then result in a developmental crisis (see Frank-Richter 4), which I called coming-of-age crisis before. While this is still a rather normal process, children and teenagers may have it even harder after having experienced a trauma – an issue which is constantly getting more attention (see Jones 49). These devastating experiences proved to be significant challenges for adult people, however, the irritation might be even graver for young people, as they possibly have not developed enough coping mechanisms or do not fully understand an event's nature. Also, it might be more difficult to endure painful situations, if one has hardly any experiences in doing so (see Thompson 21). These sufferings do not stay out of the classroom, anyway, whether young people share their stories themselves (see Dailey 196), or close relatives and social workers (see Jones 49). Showing the wrong reaction as teacher might then be as problematic as not reacting at all. This is why I think it is so important to be prepared and pro-actively tackle the issue of crisis and trauma in the classroom.

Literature might be one suitable way of doing so, as it allows teachers to address sensitive topics without needing to have the expert knowledge of a psychologist. This, in consequence, helps in reducing the inhibition to talk about trauma so that mental health issues become less of a taboo in our society (see Jones 55). Moreover, literature can provide people with a perspective after having experienced a trauma or crisis and even raise hope. Especially coming-of-age novels are appropriate in fulfilling this task, as the central theme of them are the challenges or even hardships of the transition from being a child to becoming an adult. Their protagonists therefore serve as excellent role models for a juvenile person, as they do not only stand for the experience of an individual but also a collective one, which many teenagers can probably refer to (see Jones 49). These models do not only guide young people but also help them to find a meaning in their proper experiences (see Dailey 200).

Teaching coming-of-age literature with or without a trauma focus is also beneficial when students have not yet experienced something traumatizing. Fictional literature offers various possibilities to explore worlds as well as feelings and is able to raise a sense of empathy in its young readers. This helps them to find out how the hardships of life might feel but in a safe space (see Jones 50). Moreover, also the newly defined teaching principle “Health promotion” (see Lehrplan 20) as well as the educational area *Gesundheit und Bewegung* of the Austrian curriculum requires teachers of all subjects to raise awareness not only about physical but also about mental health (see Lehrplan 12), so this also holds true for the foreign language classroom.

After having clarified the necessity of addressing literature about coming-of-age crises and trauma at school, the question arises, how this should be done. However, there is not one single answer, as there are various possibilities to fulfill this task. Depending on the choice of book, there are several options to introduce this kind of literature into the language classroom, from analyzing the protagonist, the violence or stroke of fate which the person experiences, the relationship between the victim and a possible offender or the relationship between the protagonist and society to discussing surviving skills and coping mechanisms (see Dailey 199). Consulting previous research on this issue provided me with three valuable approaches, a theoretical-analytical, a drama pedagogical and a production-oriented one.

In Kate Dailey's approach students are first equipped with some theoretical background about trauma and its healing phases. She illustrated that on the basis of a three-stage model of healing after having experienced sexual violence: First, the creation of a safe environment for the victim, second, the phase of remembering and grieving and finally, the returning to a normal everyday-life. After having discussed this small chunk of theory, students are entitled to look for these three phases in a selected trauma novel (see Dailey 197-198).

The first approach by Zach Jones was targeted at a class in juvenile prison – a group of people that is most likely to have already experienced problematic if not traumatic episodes in their lives. In this setting the play "Macbeth" was acquired in a theatre pedagogical way. After providing the students with some background about the play, certain key sequences were practiced in divided roles leading to reflection about the characters and their decisions and inevitably a discussion about guilt about the murder, Macbeth committed due to social pressure (see Jones 52).

Jones' second approach was a creative writing project, where a class consisting of students from different backgrounds with different attitudes towards reading and literature wrote a book together. Alternatingly, each chapter was written by a different learner. The horror-genre ensured, on the one hand, that there would be any kind of trauma represented and on the other hand, it drew a connection to many teenagers' life worlds. The most crucial part of the project was the development of the characters. Through the engagement with them, the students were able to identify with or feel empathy for them and also had the chance to try out different reactions and behaviors in a safe environment (see Jones 52-53).

These were just a few examples of how trauma and coming-of-age literature can successfully be taught in a language classroom utilizing a variety of approaches and methods. Anyway, a lot has to be considered before implementing these methods into one's own

teaching, as the engagement with trauma and crisis has benefits as well as risks. First, it is important to know one's students well enough, as there might be neurodiverse students, who react differently to a subject than others. Moreover, ones who have recently suffered from trauma or made similar experiences as in the chosen book may be strongly triggered or re-traumatized. In this case, one must be very cautious or even consult mental health professionals to assist (see Jones 54-55). Although the assistance of mental health experts is surely a good option for teachers to be on the safe side, it would be desirable that teacher training prepares new teachers better to become confident in dealing with mental health problems as the demand for it is constantly increasing (see Purser 66).

However, if methods and texts are well chosen, which means that they are also appropriate for the student's culture and age, the teaching of literature about trauma and crisis can be highly beneficial for young people who experienced traumatizing situations by providing them with perspectives and inspiring them to endure their difficult situation, as well as for those who have not by giving them insights in how a person's mental health can be influenced by certain situations (see Jones 54).

Finally, this leaves me to mention that it can sometimes be hard or uncomfortable to tackle sensitive issues such as trauma or a developmental crisis in a classroom. Nevertheless, it is important not to leave important issues like that, which need to be discussed, unspoken (see Jones 54).

5. Analysis of *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir

In the following chapter, I plan to analyze my chosen novel on the basis of the theoretical insights which I gained throughout the previous chapters. Firstly, I will look at the formal aspects in order to find out which forms of second-person narration are realized in each novel and then I discuss which functions are fulfilled by these forms.

The choice of my primary text was influenced by several factors. First of all, it is important that adolescents can relate to the novel as the goal of this thesis is not only to analyze a text but also to discuss its potential for teaching in an upper-secondary English as a foreign language classroom. For this reason, I picked a novel with a juvenile protagonist who is facing severe challenges during their coming-of-age process. Although the protagonist of *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir is only ten years old, I decided to pick this text anyway, as the life circumstances of the ten-year-old girl require her to act older than her age. Therefore, I believe that albeit the protagonist is younger than the target audience, the students might relate to her perfectly well.

Secondly, I had to pick a novel in which trauma and crisis play a crucial role as I intend to analyze and discuss the link between second-person narration and trauma as well as crisis. The chosen text features potentially traumatizing events, namely the tragic death of a loved one, which could be the prerequisite for a crisis. But not only the theme of death occurs, but also problematic family situations of the protagonist might add to a coming-of-age crisis. The reason why I chose a novel instead of short stories is that I want to analyze nature and consequences of trauma and crisis over a longer time span, especially focusing on the dimension of narrative time. For short stories, however, a short time frame is usually chosen, therefore it would be hard to evaluate how trauma develops over time.

After having clarified why I chose to analyze the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir, I will briefly outline how I intend to structure my analysis. I will start on the plot level: after giving a brief overview over the plot of the novel, there will be a short character description and analysis of the ‘you’-protagonist. Next, I will assess the nature of the traumata and crises which are subject of the text.

On the textual level, I start by closely examining the form of the second-person narratives. To do so, first, the question who the ‘you’ refers to must be clarified. Then, the different narrative levels will be discovered in order to identify the narrator- and narratee-instances on each level. Moreover, I will look for clues to find out whether the text features any form of address, is neutral or even reflectorial. With this knowledge, I will be able to assess if the ‘you’-narrative in this novel is either hetero- or homocommunicative, and further homodiegetic or homoconative. I will also try to assign the second-person narrative of the novel to one of Fludernik’s categories according to its communicative situation. Furthermore, it will be investigated, if the use of ‘you’ is strongly personalized or has generalizing effects too, as Sorlin suggests. The final step of formal analysis is to look at the dimension of time: I will evaluate the use of tenses as they play an important role concerning the second-person narrative’s functions. Moreover, I will look at the chronology of the discourse. In order to find out, how trauma is portrayed in the novels, it is interesting to see whether there are temporal anachronisms or repetition.

Having a clear picture of the form of the ‘you’-narratives in the novel is a prerequisite for discussing their potential functions. With regards to the linguistic features of the discourse, I will examine which functions the narratives fulfill. While the previous sections are analytical, this final part is slightly interpretative as different forms might stand for different functions and reception also strongly depends on the subjective assessment.

All findings considered I attempt to answer the question how second-person narration supports the portrayal of trauma and crisis in the analyzed text.

5.1. Formal analysis

The novel *You*, which was published in 2010 by the Irish writer Nuala ní Chonchúir, is set in suburban Dublin in the summer of 1980. Its story is divided into two parts: at the beginning of ‘book one’, the reader gets to know the ‘you’-protagonist, a ten-year-old girl whose name is unknown. Together with her mother and two younger brothers, she lives in a house next to river Liffey. As the mother is mentally unstable and suffers from an alcohol problem, the protagonist has a strong sense of responsibility towards her younger brothers. When the girl returns from her last day of school before the summer holidays, she learns that her mother is at a psychiatric hospital after injuring herself severely. The children are minded by the neighbors who are friends of their mother. However, even after the mother’s return, the girl’s struggles increase. The protagonist’s best and only friend Gwen moves to Wales and her mother begins a new relationship with the neighbor’s brother Kit, towards whom she adopts a hostile demeanor. The first part of the novel ends with a tragic climax when the one-year-old half-brother of the protagonist drowns in the river Liffey, while her mother is on holidays with her new partner and the neighbors look after the children again. In ‘book two’, the setting changes. After the death of the youngest child, the mother suffers from a mental breakdown and is hospitalized again. For this reason, the protagonist girl and her other brother move to their father, who has a family of his own. The girl realizes that the father’s new girlfriend is upset with the two children staying with them in their small flat and therefore decides to run away together with her younger brother. They take a ferry to Wales and seek shelter at her best friend’s place, from where their father collects them after a desperate search. Finally, the protagonist’s mother recovers so that the children can return to their proper home. Although this reads like a good ending, it remains unclear whether the mother can cope with her situation as single parent better than before. Anyway, as the reader experiences the story through the eye of the daughter, one recognizes the relief of the protagonist at the end when she finds out how much she actually appreciates her family and living in her own house.

It becomes clear that the protagonist and her family are in a crisis more than once. At the beginning, it starts with the mother of ‘you’ having a mental breakdown due to her inability to deal with her life as a single mother. Through the eyes of the protagonist girl the readers also learn that she often drinks alcohol excessively in front of her children. They therefore lack

stability and especially the girl who is the oldest has to take on many duties which a normal ten-year-old child would not have to. While the reader gets the impression that the girl is able to fulfil her responsibilities, there are signs that she is not. Her spontaneous bursts of rage towards her peers, especially Anne who tries to befriend with her after her best friend left (see Ní Chonchúir 66; 175), show that she is overburdened. This novel also displays several occurrences which have the potential to be traumatizing – either to the protagonist or to her family. First of all, the numerous instances where the protagonist found her mother binge drinking and is insulted by her mother, like at the end of the first chapter (see Ní Chonchúir 10) might add up leading to complex PTSD. Moreover, it is also possible that the situation where the protagonist-girl finds her mother's lover Kit naked and drunk on the toilet has a traumatizing effect on her, like a passage in the novel would suggest: “You’re in a kind of daze and you can’t seem to move. Kit smiles at you and blows a kiss with his lips [...]” (Ní Chonchúir 32). Generally, one would not assume that it is a shocking experience finding somebody naked on the toilet, however, the act of throwing a kiss towards a young girl is potentially harassing. This becomes clear when watching the girl’s reaction becoming immobile. The event which has the most traumatizing potential, however, is when the baby brother of the protagonist drowns in the river while the children are minded by their neighbors. It is obvious that the mother faces a trauma as a consequence because she suffers from another mental breakdown, is hospitalized again and shows typical symptoms like acting numb and paralyzed and being unable to connect with the outside world. The daughter’s reaction is more complex, however, and will therefore be assessed after having analyzed the formal qualities of the narrative. Like this, I will be able to judge whether there are any linguistic hints for a traumatic reaction.

As already mentioned, the central character of this book is the ten-year-old girl whose name is never mentioned. The reader learns that it must be something Irish, “Your name is not in the book, which is typical, and it’s the whole problem with having an Irish name – nobody cares about them.” (Ní Chonchúir 71) This is the only time when her name is of any relevance throughout the plot. Her mother sometimes calls her “Little Miss Prim” (see Ní Chonchúir 4). Otherwise, she is just referred to as ‘you’. There is not a lot of direct characterization, either. As the story is told from the girl’s point-of-view, the reader merely learns something about her when she describes herself. She claims that her hair is “mousy, straight and in rats’ tails” (Ní Chonchúir 15) and her lips are “a bit flat and thin and ordinary” (Ní Chonchúir 85). On the one hand, this vague description makes her generalizable and identifiable for many girls, especially when she calls herself ‘ordinary’. On the other hand, the negative tone in it serves as an indirect

characterization of her being self-critical. She also calls herself clumsy, although it is unsure whether she drew this conclusion herself by saying “You’re clumsy.” (Ní Chonchúir 56) or if she adopted somebody else’s point of view towards herself. This ambiguity draws advantage from the fact that the second-person pronoun is used, so it is easy to believe that the protagonist’s mother said this statement to her before she included it into her self-concept. The protagonist is not only self-reflective but also very conscientious. As her mother is mentally unstable, she takes on multiple responsibilities towards her younger brothers: “You get Liam’s breakfast ready and then pull him out of bed.” (Ní Chonchúir 4), but also cares for her mother: “You make a cup of tea for your ma and bring it up to her bedroom.” (Ní Chonchúir 4) As a consequence she puts her own needs last and risks negative results: “That means you’re late for meeting Gwen and it’s the last day of school before the summer holidays and she’ll walk without you.” (Ní Chonchúir 5) She is even supportive after her youngest brother died although she is upset herself. “Your ma went off her head. She was drinking all the time and talking to herself out loud. She wouldn’t have a bath or even eat anything, no matter what you made.” (Ní Chonchúir 125-126). Bearing in mind that the girl is only ten years old, it becomes clear that this burden is too heavy for her. Although she needs a mother to protect her, she is usually the one trying to protect her mother. First, she tries to keep her safe from Kit, who might hurt her as well as – the readers can assume – her previous partners. “You’re always watching him, because someone has to keep an eye on him, to see what he’ll try next.” (Ní Chonchúir 90) Moreover, she avoids bothering her mother with her own problems, for instance the fact that her best friend Gwen moved away (see Ní Chonchúir 45). On the contrary, there are a few passages, when she behaves childishly like a normal ten-year-old would, like when she is playing with her dolls. Nevertheless, she is critical with herself for doing that, thinking to herself that she is actually too old for that (see Ní Chonchúir 24). The assumption that she is self-conscious is supported when she shows off in front of her classmates and pretends to have an uncle in Manhattan (see Ní Chonchúir 6). This, I think, is typical behavior for ten-year-old children, as well as her short-temperedness at some times. When her other friend Anne says something, she does not want to hear, she reacts impulsively, screams at her and runs away (see Ní Chonchúir 66; 175). This can also be a normal reaction of a child, as the ability of solving a conflict is usually not fully developed at the age of ten. However, it can also be a sign that the girl is overstressed. Finally, she can also be described as witty and a bit bold, for example when she says to her mother: “‘Your new boyfriend reminds me of something that you hate’, you say. ‘A big, slimy rat!’” (Ní Chonchúir 39) Usually, she keeps these frank remarks to herself, but in

her thoughts she comments rudely on other people, like her half-sister Clare: “At least Geraldine tries to make her look decent, which is a hard job. A bit like Cora and her mother, Clare is plain, God bless her.” (Ní Chonchúir 42) Apart from seeing these remarks as real criticism of other people, it again strengthens the impression that the protagonist girl wants to compensate her own insecurity by belittling others.

To conclude, the character being referred to with ‘you’ throughout the novel is a girl whose appearance is not very specified and who is very strict and critical with herself assuming that she has to keep her family together. Although she usually acts older than her age, she still shows typical behavior for ten-year-old children. This character is the ‘you’-instance on the story level. There are no signs that there is an additional ‘I’ on any level, as the only times when the pronoun ‘I’ is used is in direct speeches. Moreover, the reader gets the impression to experience the story through the girl’s point-of-view. Child-like language – “All they do is cry and poo and have suckies.” (Ní Chonchúir 20) –, restricted knowledge – “‘Give us a Simon and Garfunkel one’, your ma says. [...] Kit winks at your ma, then he sings the song about silence, which happens to be her favourite” (Ní Chonchúir 30) – and the use of phrases, which are most likely adopted from adults without reflection – “Cora’s husband, Noel, is a lousy eejit.” (Ní Chonchúir 3) – strengthens the assumption that the story is told by the girl herself. However, it is unclear whether the story is actually ‘told’.

You hear your ma calling you, she’s wondering who was at the door. You tell her it was only Gwen and she asks you to bring her a pot of tea and two cups. You think she must be gasping if she wants a pot, so you make the tea good and strong and then knock on the door. She says just leave it outside, like a good girl, and go and see where Liam is. You wonder why she’s trying to get rid of you, so you just pretend to go out and you stand at the bottom of the stairs and listen. You can definitely hear voices this time and it’s not only the baby gurgling to himself in nonsense words or your mum playing with him. (Ní Chonchúir 37)

In this passage, it becomes clear that the protagonist’s point of view is adapted. Almost all the sentences begin with the pronoun ‘you’ followed by a mere description what this ‘you’ is experiencing. The reader gets the impression of a certain immediacy, it is as if the ‘you’-protagonist shares her thoughts. Sensory verbs, like ‘hear’ or ‘see’, or verbs for mental or emotional states, like ‘think’ or ‘feel’ are used throughout the novel – like in the example above – to reflect what the protagonist girl is hearing, thinking or feeling at the moment. The use of the present tense in most parts of the book also strengthens this assumption of immediacy. Moreover, the pronoun ‘you’ is never used as an address towards the protagonist – except in

direct speeches. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that the main part of the novel is written in a reflectoral 'you'-style using the terms of Fludernik.

Another clue that points towards the fact, that reflectoral mode is used in this novel is that the passages are hardly ever organized. Like a stream of consciousness, the discourse starts with a reflection what is going on at the moment of telling.

"So you drag Liam and the baby with you down past the bridge to Gwen's house. [...] Gwen is in her room listening to Kate Bush on her transistor.

Your ma looks like Kate Bush only older. Everyone says it. She has wavy hair. You wish you had hair like that, but you've obviously got your da's hair: mousy, straight and in rat's tails. That's what your ma says, that your hair is like rats' tails. She says it in a way that makes you know that there's nothing you can do about it. It's not very nice. Cora looks a bit like Nana Mouskouri, who is Greek and wears big glasses." (Ní Chonchúir 15)

Then there is something that makes the protagonist stray from topic. In this case, it is the mention of the singer Kate Bush. The thought of this singer reminds the protagonist of her mother and one thought leads to the other and she is daydreaming. This style reflects the structure of many people's thoughts: they are hardly ever structured and jump from one topic to another related one. After the mind of 'you' has most likely drifted off the present situation and many short background stories have been told, there is always an impulse that brings her back to the present. In this case, her daydreams are interrupted by her friend Gwen speaking to her: "I might marry Johnny when I grow up," says Gwen." (Ní Chonchúir 16) The following interaction ends the chain of thoughts so that actions and impressions are reported again.

To sum up, most parts of the novel adopt a 'you'-narrative without address and with no communicative level. The use of present tense and the immediate description of sensations and experienced actions lead to the assumption that a major part of the novel is written in the style of a reflectoral 'you'.

There are also some passages, which are written in past tense. Usually, it is simply used to reflect on memories: "You like the sun. Once you got so sunburnt that you had delusions." (Ní Chonchúir 33). However, there are also longer sections using the past tense, especially in the second part of the book. The chapters 2 and 6 of 'book two' are fully written in past tense, so this gives rise to the assumption that these are flashbacks of something that happened before the narrated time. In chapter 1 of 'book two' some time has passed, and the protagonist and her brother Liam live with their father now. Chapter 2 answers the question what happened in between the death of the baby and their relocation. Chapter 6 interrupts the story of the protagonist's escape to Wales. It is about the day, when the children visited their mother at the psychiatric hospital together with their father. The woman is presented in an extremely fragile

mental state so that it becomes clear that it will take a greater amount of time until she will be able to care for her children again. As the past tense is used, the sense of immediacy is lost, therefore these passages cannot be reflectoral, however, the ‘you’ is still not used as an address. There are two possible explanations for this case. First, it might be reflectoral anyway, as it could be the case that the ‘you’ protagonist remembers these past actions in the same moment just like a spontaneous flashback. The second option is that the girl narrates these background stories from the past but using the pronoun ‘you’ to refer to herself in order to distance herself from these mostly upsetting memories. In this case, a hidden ‘I’-narrator is added on the discourse level. This ‘I’, however, is the same person as the ‘you’ who is the initiator of the action. By using the pronoun ‘you’ instead of ‘I’, the narrator can pretend that what happened was happening to another person. This is none of Fludernik’s six types, however, this combination (see Fig. 02) would be a useful addition to her model.

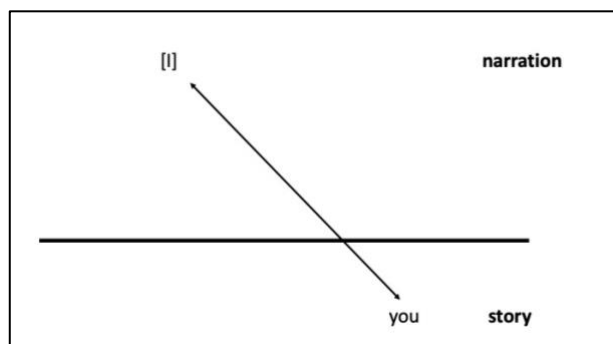


Fig. 02: The self-distancing ‘I’/‘you’-narrative

In this case, there is a hidden ‘I’-narrator, who is telling their own story, however, does not use the pronoun ‘I’ for this reason. By referring to oneself as ‘you’ on the story level, it creates the effect that there are two different people. The protagonist and narrator can therefore distance oneself from their own stories. As the invisible ‘I’-narrator and the ‘you’-protagonist are the same person in this interpretation, I even go as far as to call this narrative form a concealed homodiegetic narrative, as the narrator tells her own story with the only difference that she does not admit that it is her own.

This assumption does not only apply for the past-tense passages. There are also some sections in present tense, where the reader gets the impression that the action is mediated. This is especially the case for chapters or passages which are structured in any way. This holds true for chapter 8 of ‘book one’. It starts by the protagonist describing herself as clumsy. At the beginning of the chapter, it is unclear for which reason she elaborates on that. The circle closes, however, when later in this chapter she knocks over a mug of tea and spills it over Kit’s trousers

(see Ní Chonchúir 59). As it would be a big coincidence that the girl was thinking about her own clumsiness shortly before performing a clumsy action, I assume that there is a narratorial instance mediating this action and creating suspense.

In the second part of the book, there is another special case, where the tense changes within the narration of a memory. In the bus on the way back to her house, the ‘you’-protagonist remembers the situation where the protagonist’s mother had a mental breakdown: “One morning when you got up, she was sitting on the kitchen windowsill with her legs hanging out over the edge, over the river. She was throwing all the baby’s clothes and toys into the water, one by one.” (Ní Chonchúir 126) From that moment on, when the protagonist realizes that she is not able to handle this situation on her own and gets help, the tense is changed to present tense, although it is still a memory. With the change of past to present tense, the speed of narration is also decelerated, and more details are given. This linguistic choice might have several reasons. One could be to emphasize that the latter part of this memory is still very present in the protagonist’s mind, and she remembers it as if it happens right now.

Not only the choice of tense but also the structure of the narrative time plays an important role for the second-person narrative here. The reflectoral narrative, which is the main narrative, is generally organized chronologically in the order in which the girl experiences it. As already mentioned, memories are narrated within this reflectoral main narrative. In the first part of the book, these memories consist of only a few paragraphs. However, in ‘book two’ these flashbacks become more frequent and resulting in full chapters which are flashbacks. Also, the speed of narration varies from time to time. In purely reflectoral passages, the narrated time is almost as long as the narrative time, as the experiences and sensual impressions are described as they are: “You hear someone calling ‘Yoo-hoo’ and you think it sounds like Cora, and then you get a shock because it is Cora and she’s walking right up in front of you.” (Ní Chonchúir 114) Also the narrative time of her daydreams might cover the exact same time as their actual duration. Often, the events are shortened, too: “You drop Liam home and set him up to have his breaky.” (Ní Chonchúir 35) and sometimes the speed of narration changes within one scene, especially when the protagonist’s mind returns from daydreaming into present time actions.

Some chapters even feature a circular structure. As mentioned before, chapter 8 of ‘book one’ starts with a remark about clumsiness and ends with the consequences of the protagonist’s clumsy mistake to spill Kit’s tea on his trousers. Other chapters get their circular structure through the frequently repeated motive of the river. This is the case with chapter 12 of the first part of the novel. It begins with a remark about the sound of the river: “The way you hear the

river, as it flows past your house all day and night, is somewhere in the back of your head.” (Ní Chonchúir 85) At the end of this chapter, the protagonist is annoyed by her mother’s affection for Kit and seeks a quiet place next to the river: “You slip out through the yard, past the ivy bushes with their rubbery leaves and on down to the river where everything shushes quietly.” (see Ní Chonchúir 92)

This repetitive mention of the river stresses its importance as a recurrent theme in the novel. As in the scene above, it stands for a place of peace and quiet for the protagonist, where she can escape the struggles of her daily life. Anyway, it is also associated with danger: “[Anne]’s not even allowed down near the river – her da won’t let her; he says it’s a deadly dangerous spot.” (Ní Chonchúir 70) This picture of the dangerous river becomes dominant again, when – at the climax of the story – the baby brother drowns in it. In the final chapters of the novel there is some reconciliation with the river, as the protagonist realizes how much she misses it. Even in the final scene of the book, the girl watches the river while she re-establishes harmony with her mother too (see Ní Chonchúir 186).

Having considered many aspects of the formal realization of the second-person narrative, one can conclude that the novel *You*’s main narrative is a reflectoral ‘you’, which enables the reader to experience the plot through the eyes of the protagonist. There are other sequences, where a narrational instance, which mediates and organizes the story, is recognizable, especially during flashbacks. There are no forms of address and no clues that this narrator is anyone else than the protagonist herself, therefore it can be assumed that she tells the stories within the main narrative herself while hiding behind the second-person pronoun.

5.2. Functional analysis

Although, I already made some minor assumptions why this special form of narration has been chosen for this novel when analyzing the form, I will concentrate on the functions in more details in the following sections.

Naturalizing functions: the ‘small voice inside’

First, I will discuss whether there are any possibilities to naturalize the chosen narrative in this novel. As there is no instance of address throughout the text, the four types of address functions can be excluded right away. It is not intended to sound like a conversation. However, there are also non-address functions, which are described in chapter 3. One might say that it could be a ‘generalizing you’, as there are some hints pointing towards that. On the one hand, the protagonist describes herself as being an ordinary girl, which could mean that she stands

for all the girls experiencing such a situation of parental neglect or the loss of a loved one. And on the other hand, there are a few instances where the ‘you’ which usually refers to the protagonist could be read as a ‘generalizing you’ as well. “They crunch when you squash them and that makes you feel sick.” (Ní Chonchúir 18; emphasis added) In this example the first ‘you’ is ambiguous and can be either read as referring to the character in the book or to everybody. However, a look at the second ‘you’ already confirms that it must be read in a personalized way. There are still some generalizing tendencies, therefore the interpretation of the narrative as ‘generalizing you’ is indeed possible.

Fludernik (Narrative ‘You’ 238) also suggests another non-address function, which is paradoxically called ‘self-address you’. This form, however, is more reminiscent of an interior monologue than any form of address. In the novel *You*, this self-address can be imagined as a small voice inside that tells the protagonist what to do at the moment. This becomes especially plausible, as I already characterized her as being very self-critical and as consequence unsure in her behavior. Especially in the light of the hardships of her life, it would make sense to have this inner voice that provides stability.

Identification and distance: an ordinary girl

It becomes clear that the novel does not feature ‘aesthetic-reflective involvement’ as the second-person pronoun does not serve as address, so the audience can hardly feel addressed. It is, however, likely that the ‘you’ leads to ‘affective-emotional involvement’. The reflectoral style enables the readers to immerse into the protagonist’s thoughts and experience her feelings. There is no visible narrator, therefore one adapts the standpoint of the character while reading. This way, the actions of the protagonist girl become transparent and her decisions comprehensible so that empathy is a logical consequence.

While a reflectoral style would also work with the pronoun ‘I’, the use of the second person is crucial here in order to raise the sense of immersion and identification. While an ‘I’ definitely creates a barrier between the reader and the narrating instance – as ‘I’ can definitely not be ‘you’, therefore surely not the reader –, the ‘you’ loosens this boundary. Due to its ambiguity whether it refers to the initiator of the action on the story level or even the reader themselves, the latter can easily identify with the protagonist.

This immersion and identification are supported by the vague description of the central character. Again, it is crucial that she describes her features as ordinary. And this ‘ordinary’ can be read as ‘just like any other girl’. Also, her character is very open, being cheeky but responsible and at times also a bit self-conscious – this is how presumably many teenage girls

would describe themselves. The only difference to other girls is her familial situation and the hardships she has to endure. This is, however, beneficial for children and teenagers being in a similar situation as they might identify even more.

The fact that identification is enabled through the use of the pronoun 'you' does not preclude any distancing effect. This distance, however, is not created between the reader and the protagonist but within the protagonist herself. It is obviously her story that is being told and the reader experiences it through her point-of-view. Therefore, the pronoun could be perfectly well exchanged with an 'I'. The passage where the protagonist realizes that her youngest brother drowned, could therefore be as follows: "[My] feet are stuck to the grass; all [I] can do is stand there and stare. Rory brushes past [me] and pulls the cardigans off the picnic basket." (Ní Chonchúir 105-106) The meaning is the same as if the second-person pronoun was used, however, this pronoun 'you' carries an additional connotation in this case. It makes the protagonist seem even more passive and unable to decide and perform on her own. Especially in this situation as recounted above, one gets the impression of the protagonist stepping back and watching the world passing by as she is no longer in control of things.

To sum up, the 'you'-narrative, as it is used in the novel *You*, has a strong identification function as the author created a highly relatable protagonist, especially for an adolescent audience. Moreover, the second-person pronoun also strengthens the impression of a narrator distancing herself from her own story.

Portraying relationships: You and your ma

It is also interesting to look at the relationship function of the 'you'-narrative. The second-person pronouns do not straightforwardly seem to function as a marker of a troubled relationship, like in the example given in chapter 3.3 of Joyce Carol Oates' short story 'You'. In this case, the story is not told from the perspective of the 'you'-initiator who is the mother, but obviously from the daughter's point-of-view. The non-dialogic use of 'you' therefore creates the impression that something is wrong in their relationship. In the novel of Nuala Ní Chonchúir, the story is focalized through the 'you'-protagonist herself, so it cannot symbolize a failed communication between the girl and another person. Yet, it is possible that it pictures a troubled relationship with herself. As already mentioned, the protagonist is portrayed as being very critical and strict with herself. She puts the interests of her family before her own and does hardly ever allow her inner child, who probably wants to play instead of minding her younger brothers, to talk back. She is therefore not oppressed by any authorities but by the high standards she sets for herself.

Although the 'you' is not directed at her mother, it could still contribute to illustrating the relationship of the girl and her mother. For that, I want to pursue the question why the narrating instance might use the second-person pronoun to refer to herself in the first place. At the end of the first chapter of 'book one', the mother is drunk again and scolds the girl: "'You', she slurs, 'you're the cause of it all.'" (Ní Chonchúir 10) The frequent use of the second-person pronoun gives room to the assumption that the daughter adopted this pronoun to refer to herself after being yelled at with 'you' and not her proper name. This would mean that the 'you'-narrative mirrors the mother's attitude towards her daughter and also the daughter's affection, which is still tremendous even though she has been neglected many times. In other words, the girl sees herself the way she believes her mother sees her. Therefore, the second-person narrative illustrates not only the relationship of the girl with herself but also the one with her mother.

Political functions: Only a girl?

It becomes obvious on the first pages of the novel that the protagonist who the 'you' refers to is a girl when her mother says to her: "'Leave it there, like a good girl'" (Ní Chonchúir 4). There are more references to the main character's gender throughout the book, so there is no ambiguity about it. With regards to the fact that the story is set in Ireland in 1970, where the "women's role [...] has been traditional in comparison with many other Western countries" (Fine-Davis 1) this is relevant for the political functions of the 'you'-narrative. Women did not have the same rights as men; the right to get a divorce as woman was, for example, only fully realized in 1995 (see Fine-Davis 1). The tasks which the girl has to fulfil in order to support her mother – such as minding her younger brothers, cooking and managing the household – are also typically femininely associated duties. It is therefore interesting to examine, which role the pronoun 'you' plays in this context.

Together with the fact that the protagonist's name is unknown, the second-person pronoun removes her status of being an individual. Instead, she becomes passive and dependent. Bearing in mind the possibility that the girl uses the pronoun 'you' to refer to herself because her mother keeps using it when she is scolding her daughter, I can assume that the immediate source of oppression is the mother herself, who reflects the attitude of society towards women. It would therefore be interesting if the 'you'-protagonist's situation had been a different one if the protagonist had been a boy. Probably, the child would have gotten less responsibility and might have been assigned a name – like it is with the brother Liam.

When regarding the namelessness in connection to disadvantaged groups, there is another correlation which caught my attention. Apart from the protagonist girl, there is one more character in the novel whose name is unknown, namely the baby brother. It is striking that this youngest child, who has a different father than the girl and Liam, is said to have brown skin color: “You love the baby; he has a mad, happy laugh and lovely brown skin.” (Ní Chonchúir 11). So, the only two characters in the novel not being addressed with a proper name both belong to underprivileged groups, one according to gender and the other due to the skin color. It is therefore also interesting to see that the girl has such a strong affection towards the baby – probably because they are having something in common.

By creating empathy, as already mentioned, the ‘you’-narrative and the nameless depiction of the protagonist and her brother raise awareness for disadvantaged groups.

Poetic functions: break with conventions

The ‘you’-narrative does not only fulfil pragmatic functions. As mentioned in chapter 3.5, the uncommon use of the second-person pronoun in novels raises awareness to the language and the unnaturalness itself. The same holds true for the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir. Not only the use of the pronoun ‘you’ of the protagonist to refer to herself is unconventional but there are also breaks in grammar and syntax, which might make the reader pause and reflect on the language on a metalevel. An example is when the protagonist’s father requires her: ““You pack up Liam’s things for him.”” (Ní Chonchúir 170) This reads like an imperative as he instructs her to do something, however, the verb is not on the first place as it is usually, but there is the subject ‘you’. According to syntax, it would be a normal declarative sentence, yet, its pragmatic meaning is this of an imperative. The reader might therefore ask if there is a reason for this curious choice of syntax and reflects about the text on a metalevel.

Also, abrupt breaks in the narration and passages which are fast forward and therefore very dynamic add to the overall atmosphere of the novel and the impression one gets about the main character’s personality. This is, for example, the case when she awakes from daydreaming, suddenly has an argument with her friend, jumps up and runs home (see Ní Chonchúir 16). It makes the narrative seem very unsteady and also quite impulsive – overall it is therefore unconventional.

Representation of mental states and trauma

All the previously mentioned functions are strongly intertwined with the last and most important category for this thesis, namely the functions of mental representation.

Before discussing whether the 'you'-narrative points towards the protagonist suffering from trauma or crisis, I will look at the general functions of mental representation. Examining the theoretical framework, I found out that a second-person narrative might be used to illustrate a memory loss (see Fludernik *Narrative 'You'* 224). This is hard to assess because a major part of the story is narrated in present tense, which means that the action takes place at the moment of narration. However, in 'book two' after the baby's death, one can detect some gaps and breaks in the narrative. Important pieces of the plot are missing, especially when the narration jumps from the accident at the river to the girl and her brother Liam living at their father's flat. At a random moment, the past tense narration of the events that happened in between is inserted. This creates the strong impression that the protagonist remembers these events just at that moment. This assumption is supported by the reflectorial style of the novel as this makes the narration sound like a stream of consciousness of the main character. If the reader keeps experiencing what the girl sees, feels or thinks at the moment, then the memories must come to her mind the same point in time.

As a consequence, the narrative can be seen as oppressed memories which flare up like flashbacks at times. Another trace for oppressed memories and thoughts is the fact that the protagonist does not mention the dead baby for a long time at the beginning of the second part of the novel. Only at the end of the first chapter, she reflects: "Liam starts licking his thumb like a baby. Like the baby." (Ní Chonchúir 115) The comparison of her other brother Liam with a baby might have triggered this unwanted memory. Only a few passages later, the present tense narrative is then interrupted by the recounting of the youngest brother's funeral (see Ní Chonchúir 117-122). It is, however, not like the memory function in the classic sense, that somebody else reminds her of her forgotten or oppressed memories, as there is no other person addressing the protagonist with 'you'. On the contrary, it seems like she is telling the missing pieces herself.

Apart from the memory function of the second-person narrative, it also participates in depicting the main character's fragile personality. As already mentioned, the pronoun 'you' might stand for the girl's adoption of an exterior viewpoint on herself. She tends to see herself like her mother wants her to, as her address is most likely the origin of the second-person pronoun. The statement: "You are clumsy." (Ní Chonchúir 56) is probably something that she had not discovered herself, but others might have told her so. Moreover, there are the rather derogatory characteristics which she uses to describe herself, like that she has "hair [...] like rat's tails" (Ní Chonchúir 15), which is "mousy" (Ní Chonchúir 15) and her lips are "ordinary"

(Ní Chonchúir 85). All these exterior conceptions of herself add up and lead to an inner fragmentation: on the one hand there is the impression which her environment has of her and on the other hand there is how she sees herself. This leads to an inner conflict, justifying that she is so critical with herself as already mentioned before.

The second-person narrative is also likely to function as a comforting voice inside the protagonist's mind. The girl experiences struggles not only after her brother's death but straight from the beginning. Her mother is often unable to care for her family, so the main character learns that she can depend on nobody else but herself. By consoling herself and by creating distance to her sufferings through the use of the second person, she is able to be strong and keep the family together. However, there are still moments when she breaks down, for instance on the boat when she tells a stranger the whole story about her family while crying. It is interesting, though, that this recounting of the events is not done in direct speech with the pronoun 'I' but in reported speech. Like that, she can still use the 'you' to refer to herself. This might be due to the sorrow and shame which she feels about the events. Through the second person she can, again, create a distance between herself and her story.

Finally, it must be considered whether the 'you'-narrative hints at a trauma or crisis which the protagonist goes through. It is not clear that the girl is a trauma victim – compared to her mother who definitely is. The woman incorporates many of the trauma symptoms, which I already described in chapter 4.1. She is emotionally unstable, her mood changes within seconds. After the baby's death, her alcohol problem intensifies, she avoids eating or bathing and acts impulsively and irrationally (see Ní Chonchúir 125-126). Later, when she is hospitalized, she seems like in a trance (see Ní Chonchúir 147).

The daughter's reactions to the baby's death or to the parental neglect are not so obviously traumatic reactions. It is, however, apparent that she suffers from a crisis. From the beginning on, the girl has to face situations which she might not have the resources to cope with. When her mother is gone or not in the right state, she has to mind her younger brothers and even tries to protect her parent. Although she seemingly tries to look strong on the outside, the 'you'-narrative draws a different picture of her mental state. As already mentioned, the fragmentation effect which is created when a character refers to oneself as 'you' suggests that she is not at peace with herself but rather critical about herself. Moreover, the self-address as a comforting inner voice and the attempt to distance herself from her stories are indices that the ten-year-old girl is unable to cope with her problems herself.

She might also suffer from a trauma after her brother's death. Considering the literary devices, which are often used to indicate trauma, as mentioned in chapter 4.2, many indices point towards that. The anachronism in time, which seem like flashbacks are one example for that. Moreover, the novel also features frequent repetition of the recurrent motive of the river. Repeating things over and over again seems like a compulsive action, which might also be a traumatic reaction.

Finally, also the unusual narrative could even be another clue on a potential trauma, as it is the link between the protagonist and her traumatized mother. Through the 'you', the girl mirrors the image which her mother has of her. So, the question arises if this also works the other way around. By describing how her mother behaves in her eyes, maybe the girl also gives away something about her proper inner state.

To conclude, the second-person narrative might have been chosen for several reasons. It makes the narrative sound like an inner self-address. Moreover, enables readers to identify with the protagonist and empathize with her. It also creates a sense of distance between a person and her unpleasant story, therefore illustrates a problematic relationship between the main character and herself. Relying on the assumption that the use of 'you' originates in the mother's yelling at her daughter, the narrative also serves as mirror of the troubled relationship between mother and daughter. Nevertheless, the novel *You* confirmed that the second-person narrative has the power to raise awareness for unprivileged groups and to encourage readers to reflect on language on a meta-level. Finally, and most important, the unnatural 'you'-narrative adds manifold details to the portrayal of the protagonist's mental state, which a pure description would not be able to do. Through the use of 'you', the protagonist of the novel tries to comfort herself and distance herself from her struggles. It also illustrates her inner conflict and creates the impression that she remembers her oppressed memories in a way that sounds like she is telling them herself. The narrative definitely portrays a crisis-beaten, if not even traumatized, mind.

6. Teaching second person coming-of-age novels

The field of second-person narration is a rather neglected one in literary didactics. For this reason, it is one of the goals of this thesis to assess the potential of this unusual narrative for the classroom and further on create a teaching concept for the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir. I will align my conception on the didactics of postmodern literature, as second-person texts belong to this category.

The central ideas of “postmodernism are distrust and disbelief” (Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 66). This also applies for literature: postmodern texts break with traditions and challenge expectations on many levels. Postmodern literature can be characterized by unconventional forms and formats, unusual perspectives, tabooed topics or atypical plot structure and story elements (see Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 66). Therefore, the second-person novel with its uncommon perspective and curious narrator-narratee structure is one example for postmodernist literature.

First, I will pursue the question why second-person novels – just like other postmodern texts – should be part of the curriculum. They serve a number of purposes for the language and literature classroom. On the one hand, these atypical novels help students to develop a better understanding for mainstream novels. By analyzing what makes a postmodern text different from a traditional one, the learners are likely to comprehend which features and characteristics a book can have (see Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 70). Tackling second-person narration can therefore help students to understand the concept of point-of-view in a text. On the other hand, engaging with postmodern texts, like second-person novels, strengthens the student’s perseverance in reading books. These complex texts might be challenging for young readers as there might be passages which are not plausible at first. Yet, in postmodern literature not all the author’s choices have to make sense to the reader. On the contrary, some breaks and gaps are deliberately chosen in order to create meta-awareness. Like that, students do not only develop stamina but also an understanding for the idea of authorship. Finally, learners might also understand better that a text can have multiple meanings (see Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 71). In the novel *You*, this might, for instance, be illustrated by discussing the two different interpretations of the past-tense chapters: either as reflectorial flashback or as an ‘I’-narration where the narrator hides behind the second person.

Before I present different approaches how to teach contemporary literature with a ‘you’-narrator, I will shortly discuss what to keep in mind when choosing postmodern texts for the classroom. When selecting a novel for teaching purposes, educators tend to pick books which are similar to the student’s usual reading habits (see Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 72). While this is beneficial in order to encourage those learners which are not so keen on reading, teachers should also broaden their student’s horizon by presenting them texts, which they would not read themselves. This also goes for postmodern novels. Interestingly, the interest of learners in postmodern texts is not as low as some teachers might expect, therefore they are a good choice as class readers. However, it is still crucial to consider the student’s fields of interest as well as

the curriculum requirements when selecting the right postmodern book (see Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 72). Considering that the story and characters are relatable for the students so that identification and affective response is possible is even more important than the language level (see Osterwalder 35). The fact that the novel *You* features an adolescent protagonist who suffers from the hardships of the coming-of-age phase makes it suitable for teenagers, who might themselves be confronted with difficulties linked to increasing responsibilities and independence.

Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the comprehension of postmodern texts requires a certain metafictional knowledge, as metafictional devices are often a component of postmodern literature (see Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 72). In second-person texts, this could for instance be a direct reader address like in the novel *If On A Winter's Night A Traveler* by Italo Calvino. These devices might be unfamiliar to some students. Therefore, it is important that teachers instruct them about the relevant metafictional devices beforehand (see Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 72).

There are different approaches to address literature in the classroom, which can also be applied to texts written in second-person perspective. In this thesis, I will focus on four approaches which I deem relevant for this type of literature: Reader Response criticism, the 'formmeaning' approach, drama in education and production-orientation.

Focusing on Reader Response is essential, especially for books which are as emotionally involving for readers as reflectorial second-person texts like *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir. According to this approach, the reader's reactions to a text are considered. The theorists go so far as to state that a text cannot have a meaning isolated from a reader as each individual finds the meaning for themselves. This highlights the subjectivity of a text's interpretation. However, students are not entirely free to construct meaning, as the text itself guides them through it (see Osterwalder 35). There are different ways to implement Reader Response into the literature classroom. Students can, for example, formulate a written response to the text or write an interpretation, where they use passages from the text to support their claims (see Osterwalder 35-36). Other ideas would be to write a reading diary, where the initial emotional response is captured. In class, students can also debate about their interpretations in discussions.

While Reader Response focusses on the dimension of meaning, there is also the Stylistics approach which concentrate solely on the form of a text. However, as language in – especially postmodern – literature is usually well chosen and constructed in order to fulfil a function and create meaning, the form should not be considered individually. For this reason, the

‘formmeaning’ approach has been developed. According to that, form and meaning cannot be treated as separated entities when discussing a text. In a straightforward text, this approach can also be chosen in order to enhance language learning. Yet, in postmodern texts or poems, where language is often constructed in a creative way, this seldom works (see Osterwalder 36-37). Nevertheless, students can be guided to uncover connections between unusual grammar or syntax and its deeper meaning, like it is in second-person texts.

Furthermore, I will also consider drama in education as a beneficial approach when teaching novels with ‘you’-narratives. When speaking of drama in an educational setting, usually ‘process drama’ is intended. This means that the goal of the drama pedagogical tasks is not a theater play which is performed in front of an external audience. On the contrary, the process and development of sketches or other dramatic artefacts is its focus. Nevertheless, it is possible and common that the products are presented in front of an internal audience (see Pham & Nguyen 4454). One advantage of drama in education is that it enables students to experience language and literature not as something that is fixed and motionless but dynamic and open to creative interpretation (see Pham & Nguyen 4463). It is even more important that drama approaches proved to be highly suitable for raising empathy among students. In the acting process, the learners adopt the perspective of another person – it could be a character from a novel – and experience the world through their eyes (see Dzhyra 124). As perspective is crucial for second-person novels, drama approaches should definitely be included in a teaching concept.

The final approach which will be mentioned in this context is production-orientation. This is a holistic approach – like drama in education – where students experience texts not only analytically but also practically. This can enhance their understanding of a text on a different level than with cognitive approaches. The goal of production-oriented tasks is usually a written text which reflects aesthetic components of the original text. Possible tasks can be that the creation of inner monologues of a character, diary entries or the re-writing of the ending. What is possibly most interesting for second-person literature is to write analogous texts using the stylistics and patterns of the original one (see Helten-Pacher 4). By trying out to use the second-person perspective and other characteristic features of the novel *You*, the students might gain a deeper understanding for the functions of this unusual form.

So far, I only looked at the didactics of second-person novels in general. Before presenting my teaching concept for the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir, I will briefly discuss the benefits and risks of teaching second-person narration with a focus on trauma and crisis and the

implications to consider, which I deduct from the theory examination and text analysis of the previous chapters.

Like already discussed in chapter 3.1, I have to repeat at this point that second-person novels often allow for a strong identification with the main character. Due to the lack of a proper name, which often goes along with the second-person pronouns, the protagonist becomes highly generalizable and therefore relatable for many readers. If they then also have something in common with this character, there are good chances for experiencing empathy with it. Through identification and empathy, the protagonist can also become a role model for the young readers for how to cope with difficult situations. Another benefit is that the occupation with second-person novels can make a complex concept like trauma or crisis more comprehensible to learners. Especially through reflectoral texts like *You*, the readers dive into the protagonist's mind and experience what the character feels in a certain situation. Therefore, also the traumatic symptoms or the consequences of a crisis are mirrored and made accessible for the readers. Most importantly, unconventional literary types equip students with a new way of expressing themselves. This also applies to books written in second-person perspective. When the students realize the manifold dimensions of meaning which a 'you'-narrative conveys, they might try out to write in this style themselves, for example to express feelings. As already mentioned in chapter 4.2, writing has healing powers. Probably, there are students who experience a crisis or even suffer from a trauma or simply want to write about something they are ashamed of. By using the second-person perspective, they can articulate their emotions without losing their face. Like in the novel *You*, they can distance themselves from their own stories and maybe also develop emotional distance through that.

Anyway, there are not only benefits in teaching second-person novels in connection to trauma and crisis but also risks. Firstly, students might be unable to grasp the unusual nature of the second-person narrative. This can lead to their attempt to over-naturalize and over-explain the use of the second-person pronoun to refer to oneself. Like that, neither the poetic quality of the text can be enjoyed, nor can there be a transfer to the understanding of trauma and crisis. The biggest risk, however, is that students who experienced a similar trauma or crisis – like the loss of a sibling, as it is in the novel which I focus on – might be triggered by reading about something that reminds them of their proper wounds. Teachers therefore have to be very cautious in order not to re-traumatize a student.

For the purpose of minimizing the potential downfalls and maximizing the possible advantages, it is most important to know the group of learners well. If the teacher is familiar

with the learner's backgrounds, they can prepare adequately: both in the choice of literature and methods. If the chosen novel tackles a highly sensitive topic, the pedagogue can still consult an expert in the field of psychology or even invite one to join them in the classroom.

6.1. Teaching concept for *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir

After having clarified the theoretical aspects of teaching second-person novels in the English literature lesson, the following section is intended to describe the framework of the teaching concept central to this thesis. The subsequent chapters will outline the measures which will be taken before, while and after the reading of the novel *You*.

I will start by specifying the goals of this reading project and how it suits the targets which are defined in the Austrian curriculum. The outcome of this teaching unit should be as follows: At the end of this reading project, students are familiar with the unusual narrative of second-person narration, and which functions it serves – especially with the focus on the topic of family, trauma and crisis. This is in accordance with the Austrian curriculum's requirements for foreign languages in Upper Secondary AHS. In order to become able to communicate in a foreign language, the curriculum demands that students are confronted with a broad range of topics.

Zur Erlangung eines möglichst umfangreichen lexikalischen Repertoires sind verschiedenste Themenbereiche zu bearbeiten [...] (mögliche Themenbereiche sind zB Ich und meine Umwelt; [...], Erziehung; [...]; Lebensplanung; Einstellung und Werte; Zusammenleben; [...] Kunst in ihren Ausdrucksformen Literatur, Musik und bildende Künste). (Lehrplan 169)

To acquire knowledge about these topics, the teacher has to use manifold different sources, also literary texts (see Lehrplan 169). This means that literature is not only means to explore a topic – like in this case trauma and crisis in a family – but also a subject itself. Therefore, not only the themes of the novel *You*, but also the unusual structure will be thematized in the lessons. Moreover, the second goal is that the students can express their own emotions in a text written in 'you'-format. This, on the one hand, contributes to the educational area of creativity: "In Fortsetzung zur Unterstufe ist im Fremdsprachenunterricht der Oberstufe methodisch und inhaltlich die Möglichkeit zu kreativen Aktivitäten in der Fremdsprache anzubieten (zB Theater, [...] Schreiben als kreative Ausdrucksform)" (Lehrplan 167). In general, the curriculum requires the teacher to implement production-oriented methods in order to have diversified English lessons (see Lehrplan 168).

The intended audience is a seventh grade of AHS Upper Secondary. This choice has been influenced by regarding the Austrian curriculum's requirements for reading in the sixth semester of Upper Secondary AHS: "Hauptaussagen von inhaltlich und sprachlich komplexen Texten, auch literarischen, zu konkreten und abstrakten Themen verstehen können." (see Lehrplan 172) A literary text with unusual narratives about an abstract topic like trauma and crisis – like the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir – therefore perfectly fits into the sixth semester, which is the second semester of the seventh grade.

Now that the goals and the reference to the curriculum have been clarified, I will give a brief overview about the teaching unit centered around the novel *You*.

Pre-reading		
	Group work or plenum	Individual work or Homework
L 01	What is 'trauma'/'crisis'?	
L 02	Texts in second-person	
While-reading		
L 02		Read 'book one' ch. 1-3
L 03	Literature circle ch. 1-3	Read 'book one' ch. 4-6
L 04	Literature circle ch. 4-6	Read 'book one' ch. 7-9
L 05	Reader's theater (ch. 7-9)	Read 'book one' ch. 10-12
L 06	Literature circle ch. 10-12	Read 'book one' ch. 13-14
L 07	Literature circle ch. 13-14	Read 'book two' ch. 1-3
L 08	Formal & functional analysis	Read 'book two' ch. 4-7
L 09	Literature circle ch. 4-7	Read 'book two' ch. 8-11
L 10	Literature circle ch. 8-11	
Post-reading		
L 11	Poster creation: World Café	
L12	Drama lesson: Freeze frame	
L 13		Writing: My own 'you'-text

Fig. 03: Lesson structure of teaching concept

The plan is designed to cover 13 lessons à 50 minutes (see Fig. 03). A fourteenth lesson is optional, in case there is the need to invite a psychologist into class to answer student's questions on an expert level. With three English lessons per week in an average upper-secondary AHS, roughly four weeks have to be dedicated to this teaching project.

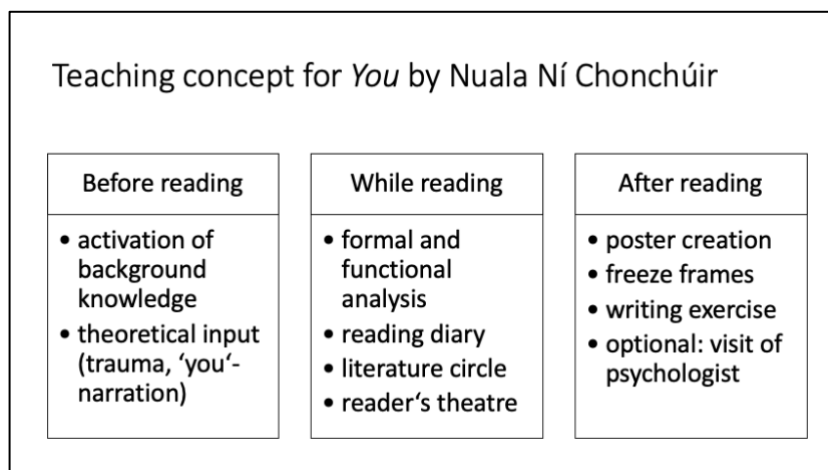


Fig. 04: Teaching concept for *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir

The teaching concept which is illustrated in Fig. 04 consists of three parts: the activities before, while and after reading. Before the students begin to read the novel, they must identify its relevance for them. For this reason, the teacher starts by activating their background knowledge about texts written in second-person format and the concepts of trauma and crisis. When the students have been equipped with some theoretical input, they read the novel in smaller chunks of two to three chapters per lesson. The reading will partly take place at school and at home. The activities during the reading phase balance the Reader Response, 'formeaning' and drama in education approach. While reading, students fill in a reading diary and discuss their insights in so-called literature circles, on which I will elaborate later. Moreover, in the while-reading phase, two lessons will be dedicated to play reader's theatre as well as to write a guided analysis. After having finished reading the book, the student's insights will be bundled during a poster creation exercise, which will be organized according to the concept of the World Café. Another drama task and a production-oriented writing exercise will conclude the unit. As already mentioned, there is the opportunity to treat the topic of trauma and crisis even more in depth by inviting an expert in psychology into class. However, as not every school has a proper school psychologist or the option to invite external guests, this point is optional.

6.2. Measures before reading

	<u>Group work or plenum</u>	<u>Individual work or Homework</u>
L 01	What is 'trauma' / 'crisis'? • activation of background knowledge • elaboration: text passage • finding definitions	/
L 02	Texts in second-person • Previous knowledge: second-person in texts • Simplified theoretical input: form and functions of second-person narration	/

Fig. 05: Measures before reading

As illustrated in Fig. 05, the pre-reading phase consists of two lessons, as the topics are quite complex. They will predominantly be held in plenum in alternation with some group work. Each lesson is dedicated to one of the big aspects of this reading project: trauma and crisis as well as second-person narration. The initial lesson focusses on trauma and crisis. As introduction, the student's background knowledge is activated. This is a pre-reading activity which is often recommended in didactics (see Richards 459). To do so, the students are divided into small groups or work in pairs and answer the following questions: what trauma and crisis are, if they think trauma and crisis are the same, and if not, what they think is the difference between the two concepts. The answers are gathered in a plenum phase but left uncommented. Next, the students listen to an extract from the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir. It is from 'book two', chapter 6 where the 'you'-protagonist, her brother Liam and their father visit the mother in the psychiatric hospital, starting at the beginning of page 147 from "Your ma was in Saint Philomena's wing." (Ní Chonchúir 147) and concluding at the end of the first paragraph on page 149: "If only Saint Philomena could come alive and take care of your ma, you thought." (Ní Chonchúir 151). This section gives a good impression of a traumatized person, namely the protagonist's mother and also roughly illustrates the daughter's crisis without taking too much away. In another group work, the students reflect on the question, who is suffering from trauma or crisis in this passage. In plenum again, the class is subsequently given two definitions either on the beamer, on the board or as a copy: one for trauma and one for crisis.

Trauma: A strong emotional reaction to a disastrous event with symptoms like memory loss, sleeping problems, depressions, trance or hyperarousal. Crisis: A difficult situation which is too challenging for a person to handle on their own.

Fig. 06: Infobox with definitions 'trauma' and 'crisis'

These definitions, which are subject of Fig. 06, were deducted from the literature review in chapter 4 and simplified so that the learners can grasp the meaning of these two concepts more easily. With the knowledge of these two definitions, the learners return to their groups and reconsider the previous question. At this point, they will have a better understanding of trauma and crisis and are likely to find out that in the given passage, the mother is depicted as being traumatized and the daughter suffers from a crisis. To conclude the lesson, the groups are asked to figure out what the reason for this traumatization and crisis is.

The second lesson of the pre-reading phase the focus is on second-person narration. Again, it is initiated by the activation of background knowledge. This time the students are asked to come up with any sorts of texts which are written in the 'you'-perspective, like recipes. The findings are collected in a mind map on the board. As a next step, literary texts written in the 'you'-perspective are introduced to the students. At this point the class reader can be handed out to them so that the first paragraph can be read together.

Your ma used up all the juice again. Last week you asked could she get two cartons of orange from now on, instead of only one, because there was never any for you and your brother Liam. She went mad, shouting at you so much that you could see frothy bits at the sides of her mouth, like the scurf that Liam calls Guinness water that floats on the top of the river. (Ní Chonchúir 3)

In a classroom discussion, the questions are pursued, what the setting is, which characters have already been introduced and who the students think tells the story. Further, the teacher can ask what the usual function of a second -person pronoun is and will likely get the answer that it has something to do with address. Next, the students examine whether this 'you' is used as an address in this passage. Just like in Kate Dailey's approach of teaching trauma (see Dailey 197-198) the teacher introduces a theoretical model to the students. The most important functions of second-person narration are explained, which is supported by a handout (see appendix 01). Again, this input is simplified in order to make the theory easier to grasp for the students. It is reduced to five functions. The function 'Identification and empathy' is being split up from the 'distance function' as this makes it easier to explain and to exemplify. Then, there are 'mental functions', 'relationship functions' and 'political and poetic functions', which have been combined. The explanations are also illustrated with examples to make it easier for the students to identify them in the novel. This input will be needed throughout the whole reading and post-reading phase.

6.3. Measures while reading

	<u>Group work or plenum</u>	<u>Individual work or Homework</u>
L 02		Read 'book one' ch. 1-3
L 03	Literature circle ch. 1-3	Read 'book one' ch. 4-6
L 04	Literature circle ch. 4-6	Read 'book one' ch. 7-9
L 05	Reader's theater (ch. 7-9)	Read 'book one' ch. 10-12
L 06	Literature circle ch. 10-12	Read 'book one' ch. 13-14
L 07	Literature circle ch. 13-14	Read 'book two' ch. 1-3
L 08	Formal & functional analysis	Read 'book two' ch. 4-7
L 09	Literature circle ch. 4-7	Read 'book two' ch. 8-11
L 10	Literature circle ch. 8-11	

Fig. 07: Measures while reading

Consisting of nine lessons (see Fig. 07), the reading phase is the longest but also the easiest to explain as the structure of each lesson is mostly similar. At the end of the second lesson – after having received the theoretical input – the students begin to read the novel *You* and finish the first three chapters as homework. In order to document their insights and reactions to the text, the learners are obliged to write a reading diary. Depending on the classes' school materials, this can be done in a folder, an exercise book or digitally. To guide the students how a diary entry should look like, they will be given a template (see appendix 02). To reflect on their emotional Reader Response, the learners have to draw an emoji which mirrors their feelings during the reading process. Furthermore, they are asked to summarize the chapter in one to two sentences, note down questions which came to their mind while reading and tick the tense which is mostly used in the chapter, which will be useful for the guided analysis later. Finally, students are encouraged to identify the functions of the 'you'-narrative by ticking what they believe applies to each chapter. There is an additional column so that the students can back up their choices through a short example.

Most of the lessons during the reading phase start with a group exercise, which I call 'literature circle'. To do so, students are put into medium sized groups of six to eight students. Thanks to this group size, the learners get a good amount of input through others but are also ensured enough speaking time for themselves. Each of these literature circles forms their own circle with their chairs – they can also sit on the floor or stay standing. First, each group member gets one minute to reflect on their insights and questions, and in the subsequent discussion the students are encouraged to answer the questions and to debate about their findings. At the end, each group decides on a group leader who presents the group results. Each lesson, fifteen minutes are dedicated to the literature circle. In order to avoid monotony due to the repetitive

structure, the groups are formed differently each lesson. Therefore, the students can engage with a variety of different perspectives on the reading material. The groups can either be randomly generated or predefined by the teacher. When the group exercise is terminated, the students can spread in or outside the classroom, make themselves comfortable and continue reading the next chapters.

Two lessons have a different structure than the one just described. Lesson 05 is dedicated to the reader's theatre. This is a method suggested by Knickerbocker and Brueggeman (73-74) which they deem highly effective in order to teach postmodern literature. The central idea is that the learners dramatically read and interpret passages from a book or scripts which they have written themselves. Writing dialogues themselves helps the students to immerse even deeper in the story and the network of characters (see Knickerbocker & Brueggeman 73-74). This method will be adapted for my teaching concept and will be realized in small groups of four to five learners. In the fifth lesson, the students have just finished reading the chapters seven to nine of 'book one'. These sections contain highly emotional situations like the protagonist's fight with Kit about the spilt tea and one of her disputes with Anne. Therefore, they offer excellent opportunities for the students to express themselves. As the novel *You* is mostly written in a reflectoral style and dialogues are sometimes incomplete when the protagonist's mind drifts off, it is a suitable task to let to students further develop the dialogues and maybe even create a script for a whole scene. At the end of the lesson, groups can volunteer to present their scenes. There will also be a short reflection in the plenum, where students think about the question what felt different when reading the book to playing and watching the dialogues. This can provide them with additional insights about the meaning and function of a second-person narrative versus the second-person address which is used in dialogues.

Finally, in lesson 09 the class writes a guided text analysis with some interpretative elements. This process is structured by the teacher as the students might not have written an analysis of the narrative form and functions of a whole novel before. It can, though, be assumed that the students are familiar with the most common concepts of narrative analysis in the second half of the seventh year in AHS. Anyway, the relevant aspects like plot, focalization, point-of-view and the organization of narrative time are revised at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher structures the analysis by providing the students with guiding questions, like: "Who does the pronoun 'you' refer to?", "Who tells or experiences the story?" or "Which tense is used in which chapters?". The student's answers to these questions are documented in the form of keywords – either on the board or in a WORD document which is accessible to the learners.

It is the student's task to write a coherent and cohesive text in individual work incorporating the insights resulting from the classroom discussion.

6.4. Measures after reading

	<u>Group work or plenum</u>	<u>Individual work or Homework</u>
L 11	Poster creation: World Café • one poster per function	
L12	Drama lesson: Freeze frame • focus: crisis and familial conflict	
L 13		Writing: My own 'you'-text

Fig. 08: Measures after reading

In the last three lessons, which compose the post-reading phase (see Fig. 08), the students recap their insights which they gained while reading and become creative. After having discussed the end of the novel in lesson 10, the goal of the eleventh lesson is to create posters or flipcharts about the functions of second-person narration in the novel *You*. This poster-creation exercise is oriented towards the method of the World Café. The teacher prepares five posters, each one dedicated to one of the functions: identification and empathy, distance function, mental functions, relationship functions as well as political and poetic functions. Each poster is put on a table together with some pens and markers. Each table also needs a discussion leader, who is ideally selected by volunteering. The other students are divided evenly among the tables. They think about text passages from the novel in which the 'you'-narrative fulfils their function. The discussion leader writes down keywords and the corresponding page numbers. For each poster they have seven minutes. The preparation time considered, this leaves enough time for a subsequent presentation and discussion. After the seven minutes, the students switch to the next poster, except for the discussion leaders who stay at their table. When the groups are done with all five posters, the group leader presents the results, which will be discussed in the plenum with the teacher giving additional input or asking guiding questions.

The next lesson follows the approach of drama in education. To prepare the students' mindsets for acting, the lesson should be initiated by one or two warm-up activities. As the teacher knows their group of learners best, it is their choice which activities to pick. In the main part of the lesson, the students get the task to build a freeze frame. This means that they play a scene without talking and at a specific point in time, they freeze and keep standing still in their position (see Baldwin & Galazka 59). First, the students will be put into groups of four or five.

In their groups they must decide on a scene where a familial conflict or crisis is explicit and compose their still image. After some preparation time, the groups present their freeze frames one after the other. While the actors stand still, the audience can walk around to regard the image. Optionally, the class can practice an adaptation of this method, where members of the audience touch the frozen characters. When a student has been touched, they must report on how they feel at this moment in their scene. Of course, they answer from their character's perspective. This way, there is an even bigger focus on empathy as the learners reflect on how they think their character might have felt in a certain situation.

The last regular lesson is production oriented. As the students should know by then what can be expressed with a second-person narrative, they have to write a short story in second-person format. At the beginning of the lesson, it is essential to emphasize that students' written products are highly personal and are not intended to be read aloud unless they wish to do so. Then, they are given the task to make up a character who is experiencing a crisis at the moment. Before writing their story, the learners need to specify this crisis, so they are provided with some guiding questions, like: "Why is your character in a crisis?", "How does your character feel in this crisis?", "What does the person do as an attempt to cope with their crisis?". After having planned their story accordingly, they can start writing. It is up to their choice if they use the 'you'-pronoun as an address for a central character in the plot or if it is used as self-reference. The narrative can function as an illustration of a troubled relationship with a family member or a heavy conflict with a good friend, for instance. It can also serve as a mirror of an inner conflict which troubles their protagonist, like their choice of a future career. Anyway, there are many different settings which the students might select in order to write their stories. By letting them create a fictional character, they can address issues which are important for them without getting emotionally involved too much. Letting them write a story about themselves would not be advisable in this context, as there might be some students who are actually experiencing a crisis and should not be re-triggered. Still, this exercise can be highly beneficial to provide students with a new way of expressing themselves in a safe way. Like in the novel *You*, they can watch their stories from a safe distance.

Depending on the class and the individual's needs, it could be necessary that this subject of trauma and crisis is additionally supported by a professional psychologist. In an optional fourteenth lesson, an expert can be invited into the classroom to assist the teacher, to answer explicit questions or to further raise awareness for the issue. Apart from that, there are various

options of how to adapt or complement this teaching concept. As the novel is set in Ireland in 1980, there can also be an additional lesson about Irish culture and the relevant centenary.

7. Conclusion

All factors considered, second-person narration can be realized in a large variety of forms. Regardless of the many attempts by the representatives in this field of research to map these unusual narratives, the various ‘you’-narratives differ mostly in the placement of narrator and narratee. The ‘you’ can either have an address function towards a character in a book or in special cases even towards a fictional reader figure or can be used in a reflectoral way. In constellations with an address function, there is usually an additional narratorial instance, which can be visible as ‘I’-narrator as in homodiegetic narratives, invisible like in homoconative ones or outside the diegesis as in a heterocommunicative narrative situation. Not only the point-of-view but also the choice of tense and structure of narrative time play an important role to define second-person narratives, as it allows the reader to draw conclusions about the immediacy or distance to the narrated events. In the novel *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir the text is mostly written in a reflectoral style in present tense, this creates the impression of being inside the protagonist’s mind. This narrative is interrupted by several flashbacks in the past tense which can either be seen as spontaneous memories remembered at the moment of the reflection or as a background story which the narrator – who is the same person as the narratee – tells in a form of self-reference.

There are many possible answers to the questions, why a second-person narrative is realized in a text. The purpose is either clear, with regards to the different naturalizing effects like epistolary or courthouse narratives or can be identified by reading between the lines. As the pronoun ‘you’ does also have generalizing effects, it allows for stronger identification as an ‘I’-narrative. In the novel *You*, this impression is strengthened by the lack of details the reader receives about the protagonist, like the missing name. On the contrary, the second-person pronoun can also create distance between a character and their story. By using the pronoun ‘you’ instead of ‘I’, protagonists like the girl in the novel *You* can reflect on their story without having to admit that this happened to themselves. Moreover, the ‘you’ can also point towards troubled relationships, as it is seldom used dialogically. Therefore, the narratee seems to be muted. For this reason, second-person narration can also fulfil political purposes as it can raise awareness for oppressed minorities. In other cases, the unnaturalness of the narrative is the purpose itself. Through breaks with conventions, it makes the reader aware of the power of

language. The most crucial functions in the novel *You*, yet, are the functions of mental representation. The ‘you’-narrative has a high potential to draw a mentally unstable picture of a character in a book. A past-tense narrative without an additional narrator figure might be explained by the protagonist having lost their memories and an older version of themselves is telling them what happened. Or like it is in the novel *You*, the second-person pronoun can illustrate a sensitive character who is highly critical with themselves and therefore feels split inside. Most importantly, ‘you’-narration can portray traumatized and crisis-beaten minds. In a crisis, a person cannot cope with a difficult situation alone, like the protagonist-girl in the novel *You*. For this reason, the ‘you’ can be read as an inner voice of self-comfort to help her through the crisis. Together with the function of the second-person narrative to distance oneself from one’s experiences, it has enormous power to portray pathologic mental states.

Finally, second-person narratives provide manifold options to support the subject of trauma and crisis in an educational setting. As these novels have a high potential to enable identification among the readership, they can raise empathy for trauma and crisis victims. Moreover, the immediacy of the narrative helps to make a complex psychological issue comprehensible for learners. However, it is this feeling of closeness which also poses a risk in an educational setting. If there are students with similar traumatic experiences, re-traumatization is a potential danger. For this reason, it is most important to know the group of students well before introducing such a sensitive issue. All things considered, the benefits of teaching trauma and crisis through second-person novels outweigh the downfalls. The implementation of this teaching concept is likely to work best with a mix of different approaches. Methods of Reader Response and the ‘formeaning’ approach ensure that the students get an understanding of the forms and functions of second-person narration. Through drama exercises, the learners can experience the affective component of ‘you’-narration texts about trauma and crisis. Finally, by including production-oriented tasks in the teaching concept, the students get an idea how to utilize second-person perspective to express themselves.

8. Bibliography

Primary literature

- Baume, Sara. *spill simmer falter wither*. London: Windmill, 2015.
- Calvino, Italo. *If On A Winter's Night A Traveler*. 1979. New York: Harcourt, 1998.
- Douglas, Claire. *Local Girl Missing*. London: Penguin, 2016.
- Grass, Günter. *Katz und Maus*. 1961. Neuwied and Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1974.
- McInerney, Jay. *Bright Lights, Big City*. 1988. London: Bloomsbury, 2007.
- Moore, Lorrie. *Self-Help*. 1989. New York: Vintage Contemporaries, 2007.
- Ní Chonchúir, Nuala. *You*. Dublin: New Island, 2010.
- O'Brian, Edna. *A Pagan Place*. 1970. London: Faber & Faber, 2016.
- O'Reilly, Katie. "Mouth" in *New Writing 3*, Ed. Andrew Motion and Candice Rodd. London: Minerva, 1994. 93-95.
- Smith, Lillian. *Strange Fruit*. 1944. New York: Harper Paperbacks, 1993.

Secondary literature

- Al-Alami, Suhair. "Point of View in Narrative." *Theory and practice in language studies* 9.8 (2019): 911–916.
- Baldwin, Patrice and Alicja Galazka. *Process drama for second language teaching and learning: a toolkit for developing language and life skills*. London: Bloomsbury, 2021.
- Bond, Lucy, and Stef Craps. *Trauma*. New York: Routledge, 2020.
- Bonheim, Helmut. "Narration in the Second Person." *Recherches anglaises et nord-américaines* 16.1 (1983): 69-80.
- Bundesministerium für Unterricht und Kunst. Lehrpläne – allgemeinbildende höhere Schulen. Rechtsinformationssystem des Bundes. 1 Sept 2023. Web. 31 July 2024.
<<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/NormDokument.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008568&Artikel=&Paragraf=&Anlage=1&Uebergangsrecht=>>

- Cortés Vieco, Francisco J. "'You': A Girl amidst Images and Sounds of Adult Violence in Joyce Carol Oates's Rape: A Love Story." *ATLANTIS. Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies* 43.2 (2021): 149-167.
- Dailey, Kate. "Literature of Survival: A Literature Class as a Place for Healing." *Teaching English in the Two Year College* 34.2 (2006): 196-201.
- Day, Sara K. "'You are my fictional audience and as such I appreciate you very much'. Direct Address in Contemporary American Young Adult Fiction about Mental Health." *The Rhetoric of Literary Communication: From Classical English Novels to Contemporary Digital Fiction*. Ed. Virginie Iché and Sandrine Sorlin. London: Routledge, 2022. 63-78.
- De Hoop, Helen, and Lotte Hogeweg. "The use of second person pronouns in a literary work." *Journal of literary semantics* 43.2 (2014): 109-125.
- DelConte, Matt. "The Influence of Narrative Tense in Second Person Narration: A Response to Joshua Parker." *Connotations* 23.1 (2013): 55-62.
- DiMeo, David F. "Writing the history of 'you': second-person narration and the plight of the Nubian in Idris Ali's Below the poverty line." *Neohelicon* 48.1 (2020): 143-159.
- Dzhyma, Nataliia. "Don't play the visual, play the emotion!: Fusing Drama and Film in the Teaching of Empathy." *Scenario* 8.2 (2014): 124-126.
- Fine-Davis, Margret. *Women and work in Ireland: a half century of attitude and policy change*. Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2021.
- Fludernik, Monika. "Second Person Fiction: Narrative 'You' as Addressee and/or Protagonist." *AAA: Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 18.2 (1993): 217-247.
- - -. "Second-Person Narrative As a Test Case for Narratology: The Limits of Realism." *Style* 28.3 (1994): 445-479.
- - -. "The Category of 'Person' in Fiction: You and We Narrative-Multiplicity and Indeterminacy of Reference." *Current Trends in Narratology*. Ed. Greta Olson. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011. 101-141.
- Frank-Richter, Shannon. "Crisis and Trauma". [Preprint.] 2018
10.13140/RG.2.2.23764.91527.
- Genette, Gerard. *Die Erzählung*. München: Wilhelm Fink 1994.

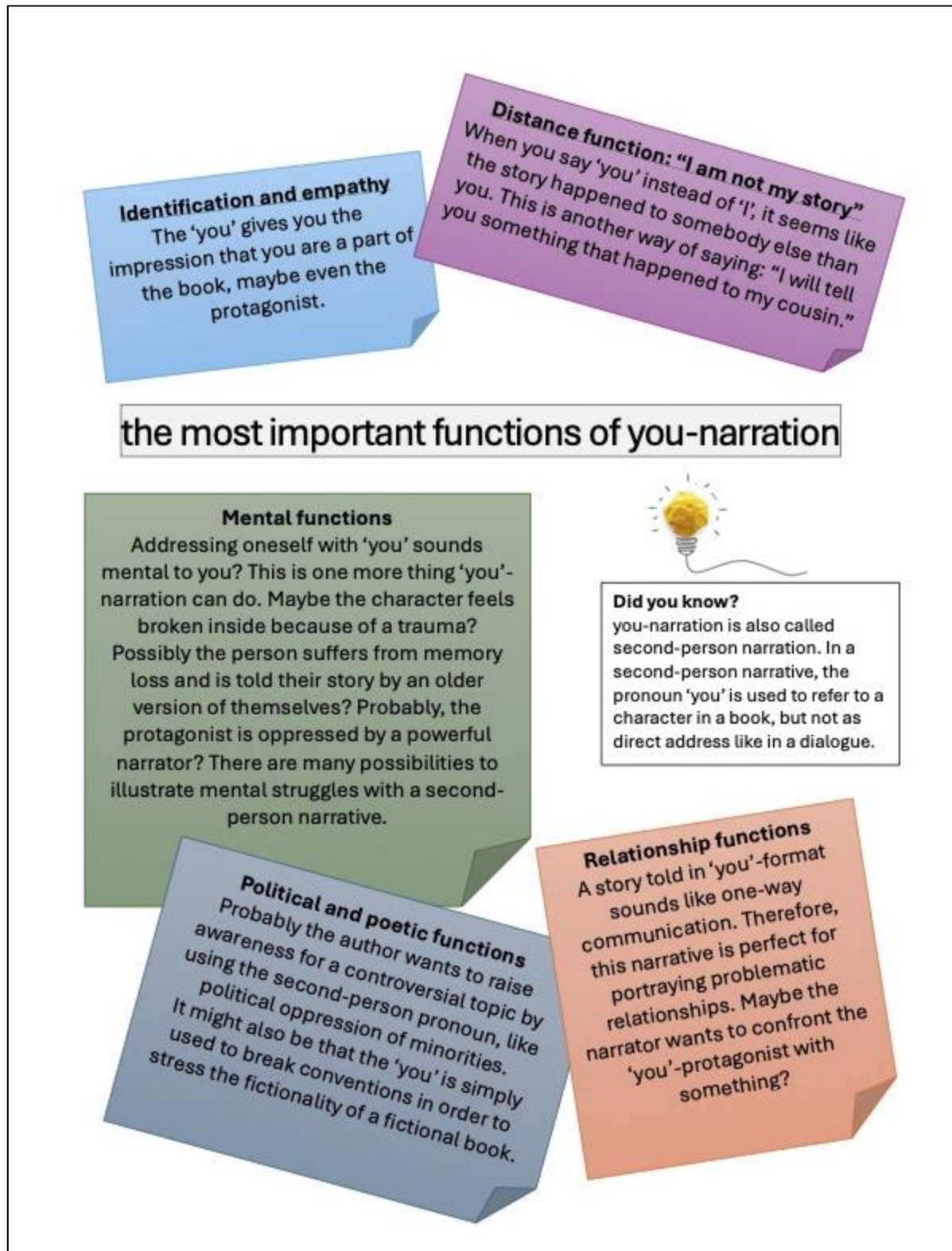
- Helten-Pacher, Maria-Rita. "Handlungs- und produktionsorientierter Umgang mit Texten." *Österreichisches Religionspädagogisches Forum* 20.1 (2012): 4-6.
- Iliopoulou, Evgenia. *Because of You: Understanding Second-Person Storytelling*. Bielefeld: transcript, 2019.
- Jones, Zach. "Trauma Literature in the Classroom: Pitfalls and Potential." *English in Australia* 56.2 (2021): 49-56.
- Kacandes, Irene. "Narrative Apostrophe: Reading, Rhetoric, Resistance in Michel Butor's 'La Modification' and Julio Cortázar's 'Graffiti'." *Style* 28. 3 (1994): 329-349.
- Kandler, Verena. "Forms and Functions of Second-Person Narration in Contemporary Short Stories in English." MA thesis U of Vienna, 2020.
- Knickerbocker, Joan L., and Martha A. Brueggeman. "Making Room on the Shelf: The Place of Postmodern Young Adult Novels in the Curriculum." *American Secondary Education* 37.1 (2008): 65-79.
- Koopman, Emy. "Reading the Suffering of Others. The Ethical Possibilities of 'Empathic Unsettlement'." *Journal of literary theory* 4.2 (2010): 235-251.
- Kostova, Bilyana V. "'Time to Write them Off'? Impossible Voices and the Problem of Representing Trauma in 'The Virgin Suicides'." *Trauma in Contemporary Literature*. Ed. Marita Nadal and Mónica Calvo. New York: Routledge, 2014. 163-177.
- Mildorf, Jarmila. "Reconsidering Second-Person Narration and Involvement." *Language and literature* 25.2 (2016): 145-158.
- . "Second-Person Narration in Literary and Conversational Storytelling." *Storyworlds: A Journal of Narrative Studies* 4 (2012): 75-98.
- Nadal, Marita and Mónica Calvo. "Trauma and Literary Representation" *Trauma in Contemporary Literature*. Ed. Marita Nadal and Mónica Calvo. New York/London: Routledge, 2014. 1-16.
- Newman, Daniel Aureliano. "Your Body is our Black Box: Narrating Nations in Second-Person Fiction by Edna O'Brien and Jennifer Egan." *Frontiers of narrative studies* 4.1 (2018): 42-65.
- Osterwalder, Hans. *Teaching Contemporary English Literature: a Task-Based Approach*. Göttingen: V & R unipress, 2017.

- Pham, Duyen Thi My and Long Thanh Nguyen. "Dramatization and Theater Performance: An Approach to the Teaching and Learning of English Literature." *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review* 7.6 (2024): 4453-4465.
- Phelan, James. "'Self-Help' for Narratee and Narrative Audience: How 'I'—and 'You'— Read 'How'." *Style* 28.3 (1994): 350-365.
- Purser Laura. "What do we need to teach new teachers about child mental health?" *The Buckingham Journal of Education* 3.1 (2022): 47-77.
- Reitan Rolf. "Theorizing Second-Person Narratives: A Backwater Project?." *Strange Voices in Narrative Fiction*. Ed. Per Krogh Hansen, Stefan Iversen, Henrik Skov Nielsen and Rolf Reitan. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011. 148-174.
- Rembowska-Pluciennik, Magdalena. "Second-Person Narration as a Joint Action." *Language and literature* 27.3 (2018): 159-175.
- - -. "Enactive, Interactive, Social—New Contexts for Reading Second-Person Narration." *Narrative* 30.1 (2022): 67-84.
- Richards, Jack C. *Key Issues in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Richardson, Brian. "The Poetics and Politics of Second Person Narrative." *Genre* 24.2 (1991): 309-330.
- - -. *Unnatural Voices: Extreme Narration in Modern and Contemporary Fiction*. Columbus: Ohio State U P, 2006.
- - -. "Keeping You Unnatural: Against the Homogenization of Second Person Writing. A Response to Joshua Parker." *Connotations* 23.1 (2013): 49-54.
- - -. "Unnatural Narrative Theory." *Style* 50.4 (2016): 385-405.
- Roberts, Albert R. *Crisis Intervention Handbook: Assessment, Treatment, and Research*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford U P, 2005.
- Sanfelippo, Luis. *Trauma, Psychoanalysis and History*. New York: Routledge, 2024.
- Schönfelder, Christa. *Wounds and Words: Childhood and Family Trauma in Romantic and Postmodern Fiction*. Bielefeld: transcript, 2013.

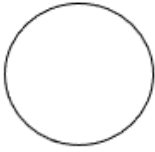
- Scott, Claire E. "Subverting Injurious Language: How Ilse Aichinger's Narratological Strategies Liberate the Protagonist of 'Spiegelgeschichte.'" *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies* 52.3 (2016): 308-325.
- Sorlin, Sandrine. *The Stylistics of 'You'*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 2021.
- Thompson, Rosemary. *Crisis Intervention and Crisis Management: Strategies that work in School and Communities*. New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004.
- Wainrib, Barbara Rubin and Ellin L. Bloch. *Crisis Intervention and Trauma Response: Theory and Practice*. New York: Springer, 1998.
- Wiest, Ursula. "'The Refined, through Whimsical Pleasure': Die you-Erzachlsituation." *Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 18.1 (1993): 75-90.
- - -. *Messages from the Threshold. Die You-Erzählform als Ausdruck liminaler Wesen und Welten*. Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 1999.

9. Appendix

Appendix 01: Copy: “The most important functions of ‘you’-narration”



Appendix 02: Template: “Reading diary”

Reading diary entry for chapter: __		 How did you feel reading this chapter? Draw!
What happened in this chapter (1-2 sentences)?		
Which tense is mostly used in this chapter: ☐ present tense ☐ past tense ☐ future tense		
Which questions came to your mind when reading this chapter? ➤ ➤ ➤		
Which functions does the ‘you’-narrative fulfil in this chapter? Tick and give a short example in the right column!	☐ identification/empathy	
	☐ distance function	
	☐ mental function	
	☐ relationship function	
	☐ political and poetic functions	

10. Abstracts

English:

The aim of my thesis is to address the issue of second-person narration in a novel featuring trauma and crisis, namely *You* by Nuala Ní Chonchúir. In my paper I firstly identified possible forms and functions of second-person narration in novels about coming-of-age crisis. By consulting secondary literature, I was able to identify that second-person narratives primarily differ in the placement of narrator and narratee and the existence of an address function of the pronoun ‘you’. In the novel *You* there are no clues for any address function, on the contrary, the text is mostly written in a reflectoral second-person narrative. This specific form conveys the impression that the protagonist of the novel suffers from an unstable mental state due to a crisis and potentially also trauma. The analysis of the novel also shows that the use of the pronoun ‘you’ to refer to the main character leads to an increase in empathy for and identification with the protagonist girl. After considering the advantages and risks of introducing a novel like that into an educational setting, I come to the conclusion that the raised empathy among readers is – among other benefits – a crucial argument in favor of teaching second-person trauma and crisis novels in an upper-secondary AHS classroom. A teaching concept has been developed, which combines methods of Reader Response theory, the so-called ‘formeaning’ approach, drama pedagogical and production-oriented approaches in order to help the students to grasp the issues of second-person narration, trauma and crisis in a holistic way.

German:

Das Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es die Erzählform des Du-Erzählers in Traumaliteratur, wie in diesem konkreten Fall im Roman *You* von Nuala Ní Chonchúir, genauer zu beleuchten. Im Zuge meiner Arbeit habe ich unterschiedliche Formen und Funktionen von Erzählungen in der zweiten Person in Coming-of-Age-Romanen, die eine Krise beim Erwachsenwerden thematisieren, identifiziert. Durch die Beschäftigung mit Sekundärliteratur zu ebendiesem Thema habe ich herausgefunden, dass sich unterschiedliche Du-Erzählungen vor allem durch die Positionierung von Erzähler und fiktiven Adressaten – in diesem Fall die mit dem Pronomen der zweiten Person ‚you‘ (‚du‘) beschriebene Romanfigur – unterscheiden. Darüber können ‚du‘-Texte danach eingeordnet werden, ob das ‚du‘ als direkte Anrede fungiert oder nicht. Im Roman *You* können keine Hinweise auf eine solche Adressfunktion gefunden werden, im Gegenteil, der Text ist überwiegend in Form der reflektischen zweiten Person geschrieben. Darunter wird eine unvermittelte Wiedergabe der Eindrücke und Handlungen einer Person verstanden. In diesem konkreten Roman erzeugt diese Form den Eindruck, dass sich die Protagonistin aufgrund einer persönlichen Krise und möglicherweise sogar einem Trauma in einem instabilen mentalen Zustand befindet. Die Analyse des Textes zeigt ebenfalls, dass die Verwendung des Pronomens ‚you‘ (‚du‘) dazu führt, dass sich Leser:innen besser mit der Protagonistin identifizieren können und mehr Empathie für sie aufbauen. Nach Abwägen der Vor- und Nachteile davon, einen Roman wie *You* im Unterricht zu thematisieren, ist es vor allem diese Empathiefunktion der Du-Erzählung, die meiner Ansicht nach den Einsatz eines solchen Textes in der AHS-Oberstufe besonders rechtfertigt. Daher ist ein Unterrichtskonzept entwickelt worden, welches Methoden der Reader Response Theorie, des sogenannten ‚formmeaning‘-Ansatzes sowie des dramapädagogischen und produktionsorientierten Ansatzes beinhaltet. Diese Kombination ermöglicht eine ganzheitliche Auseinandersetzung mit den Themen Trauma, Krise und experimentellen Erzählformen wie der Du-Erzählung, welche umfassendes Verständnis dafür ermöglicht.