

Study of Writing Strategies in Toni Morrison's Paradise

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Abstract

As an influential modern black female writer, Toni Morrison has written many excellent and realistic works. Paradise is one of them. The unique writing strategies in this work have attracted much attention. Morrison's superb writing skills are reflected in the vivid writing language style, antagonistic and uncertain character relationships, and nonlinear time logic. Therefore, analyzing the writing strategies in this work could not only increase the understanding of the novel's theme and content, but also reveal Morrison's literature style and charm.

Keywords

Toni Morrison; Paradise; Writing Language; Character Writing; Writing Order.

1. Introduction

Toni Morrison (1931-2019), a colossus and legend among numerous writers in the literary world in the 20th century, becomes a representative of black female writers. She starts writing in the 1960s and the black people live in her surroundings and memories are the origins of inspiration for her creation, from which she scoops materials and purifies her thoughts. As an admirable storyteller, Morrison is noted for poetic language, excellent description, vivid figure, and rich imagination. She depicts the living condition of the blacks, reveals the destruction of the blacks' culture under the development of hegemonic culture. In addition, she also tries to appeal to the black intellectuals to turn to the traditional black's culture by the literature language and encourages them to reconstruct the national consciousness from the traditions which are despised by the white mainstream culture. Meanwhile, because of the unique sensitivity of females, Morrison could capture the ideas and details that some male writers have ignored, for example, the process of black woman's self-seeking.

After rewarding Nobel, *Paradise*, the last one of her trilogies (included *Beloved* in 1987 and *Jazz* in 1992), has completed. In this novel, Morrison attempts to replay the history of the black and convey her special understanding of racialism. The work mainly talks about the comparison of two places: one is an isolated small town named Ruby, which locates in southern America. The other one is a convent which is a shelter for several homeless women who had suffered from hardship and torment.

Ruby was supposed to be a paradise which was built by a group of black people who were called "the second generation". They were the descendants of some pure black skins who were discriminated against by the whites and expelled in the field of politics and business. Having witnessed the irreversible decline of the previous town established by their ancestors, the second generation decided to follow the old path and built a new town. They migrated again and rebuilt their home Ruby under the leadership of their patriarch, the Morgans. To keep the purity of black blood, Ruby was extremely exclusive. Any outsiders were not welcomed. But things changed and their peaceful life was broken after five women came to the convent that was nineteen miles from Ruby. Odd things happened one by one in Ruby and the black people blamed the responsibility on the woman in the convent. Ruby men's power was threatened. Being afraid of following the same disastrous road and trying to protect their paradise, nine armed men from Ruby interrupted the convent and carried out a slaughter.

The story of Ruby is a tragedy. Morrison sees through what the black people are doing, thinking, and the determination of their resistance against the white's authority. In addition to the attractive plots, profound connotation and social importance, the writing strategies of this work are also worth noting. The diversified figures of speech, flashy characterization and intriguing writing order all enhance the readability of the work. Previously, most scholars focused their attention on the theme of this work, and few people noticed Morrison's distinctive writing style. Therefore, it is necessary to study the writing strategies of *Paradise*.

2. Writing Language

Novelists' spiritual stances are always presented in the writing language. They express daily life and social experience in distinctive language style and interpret history at the height of humanity. "Toni Morrison is an extraordinarily good writer. Two pages into anything she writes one feels the power of her language and the emotional authority behind that language." The Village Nation once commented on her like this. One success of Morrison's *Paradise* lies in its excellent writing language and the use of various rhetorical devices. In this novel, symbolism, irony, and metaphorical languages appear many times. All these make *Paradise* own a magical power; not only can express the richest meaning in the simplest language, but also has a strong sense of appeal.

Symbolism is a writing skill that seeks the same or similar meanings by choosing one or several specific images. And through this method, a novel could achieve the effects of satire or sublimation. Proper use of symbolic images could transform some of the abstract spiritual qualities into concrete and perceptible images, thus leaving a deep impression and giving readers larger room for the aftertaste. Many modern writers like to use symbolism, and Morrison is no exception.

For starters, it was the "oven" that has witnessed the migration of black people. This image may not be eye-catching and could even be ignored easily. However, the "oven" echoed all the stages of the story and the trend of the entire work. It was built by the older generation in Haven and shared by the whole town like public property. People cherished the "oven": "They made good strong brick for that oven when their own shelter was sticks and sod." (Morrison 85) This "oven" was so important to the black people that they dismantled it and took it away when they had no choice but to move out of their dreamful home after the fall of Haven. "When they got back to the State, they took it apart, carrying the bricks, the hearthstone and its iron plate two hundred and forty miles west." (Ibid. 6) Several years passed when they built a new town, the "oven" was reassembled, but it had no practical use. Each family had its kitchen, and they didn't need the collective anymore. The significance of this "oven" had been lifted to the spiritual level and exceeded its material value. It had become the emotional sustenance that was believed to be an indispensable and irreplaceable token liked a knot tied tightly in people's heartstrings that can't be broken. When the governors in Ruby resolved to take revenge on the women who lived in the convent, one of them looked at the "oven" and memorized: "An Oven, Round like head, deep as desire. Living in or near their wagons, boiling meals in the open, cutting sod and mesquite for shelter, the old Fathers did that first: put most of their strength into constructing the huge, flawlessly designed Oven that both nourished them and monumentalize what they had done. When it finished-each pale brick perfectly pitched; the chimney wide, lofty, the pegs and grill secure; the draft pulling steadily from the tail hole; the fire door plumb-then the ironmonger did his work." (Ibid. 6) The kind, simple black people had disappeared, only leaving coldness and indifference. Accordingly, the "oven" also changed. "Shortly after the men have left Sargeant's place, the citizens of Ruby arrive at the Oven. The rain is slowing. The trash barrel swirls with debris. The stream has instead. Rain cascading off the Oven's head meets mud speckles with grout flakes washed away from bricks. The Oven shifts, just slightly, on one side.

The impacted ground on which it rests is undermined.” (Ibid. 287) The relationship between black people and the “oven” was the same strain. One prosperity led to another; so did decay. Breakage of the “oven” indicated that Ruby was no longer a paradise, and it would repeat the same tragedy of Haven in the future.

Ruby residents had a conflict because of a slogan on the “Oven”. The younger generation managed to change the slogan carved on the it so that it could updated and kept pace with times; while the older generation was adamant that the inscription must be preserved and passed word for word. The process of migration and the condition of the “oven” complemented each other. When the town flourished, the “oven” also presented a delicate state for it was well maintained. When the town tended to fall, the “oven” began to collapse. After Haven declined, people left, and the “oven” was also taken apart and been taken away. Ruby was built, and the “oven” was put back together to give birth to a new life. But the “oven” was quietly undergoing qualitative changes. Except for baptism, it had no use, and what was needed when Haven was built was not necessary in Ruby. To some extent, the “oven” only became a specific concentration of black people in the novel.

Other images in *Paradise* also present strong symbolic meanings, such as the cross that appeared frequently in the novel. It was in the convent’s room and also at the wedding of K.D. and Arnette. The cross represented the infinite respect, love for God and the thirst for God’s mercy. In the convent, from the man’s point of view, the cross was a comparison of the evilness of women. In their hearts, this group of women was sinful. Their behaviors were out of line, their thoughts were revolting, and they didn’t meet the standard of moral women at all. Rather than saying the convent women had run away actively, Ruby men were more likely to believe that these bad women were driven out of their homes because they were morally corrupt and did not submit to male control. Only under the light of the cross could they repent and atone for their sins. And in the wedding, Steward regarded the cross as the belief of the white people and there was racial discrimination in it. The scars left by the white people were firmly rooted in his heart, and it touched his nerve in every moment, which indicated the potential breakdowns and extreme behaviors in the following chapter.

What’s more, all the chapters of the novel are named after female characters in which Morrison hides profound meanings. For example, the hostess of the convent, Consolate, took care of those women who had been hurt and helped them to achieve self-improvement. She had the most powerful strength of comforting which cured and warmed herself as well as other women both in the convent and Ruby. Her name sounded like “consolation”, which was consistent with her personality in the novel. The name “Lone” also suggested character’s personality and destine. She was a woman who lived in Ruby alone. Without families or relatives, she could be counted as the loneliest person in this black community. Her heart was empty, and her personality has been smoothed by the dull town life. She was eager to live like the women in the convent. That’s why she had kept contact secretly with Consolate for a long time. When she found that the men were going to attack the convent, Lone was desperate to collate other people and help these poor women. The symbolic meanings make the names in *Paradise* more than simple combinations of letters, but choices make through multiple considerations.

Irony is a technique universally used in literary works to expose the shortcomings and ridiculous essence of something, thereby producing a humorous effect. There are lots of ironies in *Paradise*, which is of great importance to the practical significance that Morrison wants to convey.

First of all, Morrison puts a strong ironical meaning in the name of the novel and two towns. The title of this work is “Paradise”. After reading the novel, readers would feel cheated because the town described in the novel had a wide gap between paradise in normal imagination. Instead of a perfect place, there were many stifling problems. People who lived in heaven were tormented inside and couldn’t live the life they truly wanted. The ironic meaning could be more

obviously expressed in the names of the two towns: Haven and Ruby. The first town Haven was built by the ancestors. In people's cognition, it should be a pretty place like heaven for black people. The ancestors bore countless difficulties and fled from the white world with beautiful hopes in their hearts. As they conceive, black people could live freely without oppression and discrimination. But the fact was that this ideal life did not last long. Haven finally declared bankruptcy for various reasons. So, black people had to struggle to create a home that felt like a paradise again. They did not hesitate to travel thousands of miles to a barren place and built a new town Ruby.

The history of Ruby was similar to Haven. Although the newly built town had the same name as Ruby Morgan, the little sister of Morgan family, who died because she was rejected by a hospital controlled by the white people, the word "Ruby" was intended to be a red jewel. It meant the life of the town was hard-won. The thoughts and original texts of the black people's eagerness for a peaceful life were as precious as ruby. Unfortunately, the lives of the residents were still not as comfortable as expected. Series of problems appeared in the town, which seemed to predict the hopeless future of Ruby. The older generations were willing to be the protectors of this town like lions and made great contributions to safety and order. However, they were so controlling that they hurt everyone around them, especially the young people who were feathered and prepared to break free and create a brand-new life. Ruby, the place that should have become a paradise did not become a paradise again. It was like a seemingly strong and energetic tree, decayed from the core. "What the town of Ruby seems to represent, then, is a distillation of all the abuses and failures of the American democratic experiment in respect of its black population." (Widdowson 324) *Paradise* has never been a product of intensified racial conflict, but rather a story of the introspection and deep reflection within the black community. These ironic names reveal Morrison's original intention of writing and express her deepest hope for the black nation that American society could become a paradise where blacks and whites coexist peacefully one day.

In the plots of the novel, ironies are also widespread. For instance, in Chapter Two, Mavis's family condition was not very well. In her daily life, she had to buy cheap sausage instead of expensive meat. In her home, even some infrastructure and furniture were not equipped. In this case, her husband Frank bought a car luxuriously--a mint green Cadillac. "It isn't new, though. It is three years old. A '65'." (Morrison 25) Having such a car was destined to be a compelling thing, which made people talk, and even cast a sly look. So, after the twin babies' suffocation accident, it seemed that the neighbors were very sympathetic to Mavis. But actually "the neighbor seemed pleased" and "the shine of excitement in their eyes was clear." (Ibid. 21)

The comparison of Billie Delia and Arnette also has ironic meaning. Billie Delia was recognized as the most swaying girl in Ruby. When she was just a little girl, she had already run around on the road only wearing underwear. It was only an honest mistake; the townspeople seized the opportunity and rumored that she had been a slut since childhood. Although she was given such an indecent title, she had never done anything unusual when she grew up. She didn't have sexual relationships with anyone. Like other girls, she was friendly, kind, good at housework and even had intimate friends. Billie was the one who could enjoy the happiness in her heart and see things as they really are. In contrast, Arnette, a known obedient girl, became pregnant before marriage. She delivered a stillborn baby and married K.D. But her mental problems have taken a toll on her marriage. Through this irony, readers could be aware of the values of people in Ruby were distorted and misplaced. The honest girl was accused of abuse while the truly immoral one was defended by all. The ideology of the Ruby people became the real cause of the town's decline.

Furthermore, metaphorical languages are widely employed in the literature world. Undoubtedly, there are also metaphorical languages in *Paradise*. The combination of simile and metaphor not

only shows Morrison's skillful writing ability, but also makes the description of the scene more vivid and meaningful.

Many descriptions in the novel use simile, especially in the description of environment. For example, "The sky was behaving like a showgirl: exchanging its pale, melancholy mornings for sporty ribbons of color in the evening" (Ibid. 86) Here, the sky was likened to a showgirl. In the morning, the sky was gloomy, gray, and lifeless. But at night, the sky was like a "showgirl" wearing colorful clothes. This description gave the sky vitality and made the language more interesting. Another example is "The words to say her shame clung like polyps in her throat". (Ibid. 179) This was the truest feeling that Pallas had when she first entered the convent. The use of simile showed the feeling she wanted to express but she could not. After experiencing the humiliation and trauma, her body and mentality were totally torn apart, and her inner world completely collapse. Helplessness overflows between words and lines and the girl's desperation becomes palpable.

In order to increase the readability and literary nature of the work, metaphor is inevitable in the work. Metaphors can make language implicit, efficient, and highlight the features of things and characters. Morrison is proficient in all kinds of rhetorical devices, and this ability to control language is fully reflected in the description of the environment. She also uses metaphor to depict the sky: "The wind souged as though trying to dislodge sequins from the black crepe sky". (Ibid. 190) The sky turned into a fabric here, and the stars were the embellishments above. This description was like a picture, which set the atmosphere for the subsequent plots. The sentence "The sign of racial purity they had taken for granted had become a stain" (Ibid. 194) is also a good example. Racial purity was the boundary they had adhered for their whole life. They believed that as long as the purity of the race was guaranteed, they could be protected from oppression. But racial purity had clearly become an unwelcome and disgusting thing here, which indicated that the black people who had been isolated may also question whether absolute segregation and exclusion really worked. The belief of racial purification they had stuck with was not sacred enough, but a "stain". Metaphors have the ability to add color to ordinary, plain language and achieve a special rhetorical effect envisioned by the author.

Expect the metaphor for specific things; Morrison has added metaphorical meaning to the setting of many scenes. The convent is a metaphorical scene. In Chapter Two, according to Mavis's perspective, the environment outside the convent was first described: "Now, behind the red chair, she saw flowers mixed in with a circle, not a line, in high mounds of soil. Chickens clucked out of sight. A part of the garden she originally thought gone to weed became, on closer inspection, a patch of melons. An empire of corn beyond." (Ibid. 40-41) This was a sense of freedom and leisure everywhere. It was a place where anyone can find comfort and spiritual rest, regardless of color, race, status, or origin. "Thus Morrison opens up the bounds of the racial imaginary without substituting one fixed system for another". (Krumholz 28) Women who had suffered pains were looking for peace and self-salvation in the convent. They were self-sufficient and lived a carefree life. But in Ruby's view, this was a place full of sin, and women living there were also sinful. Through this metaphorical scene of the convent, the opposite between men and women and potential conflicts was fully demonstrated.

Morrison had delved deeply into white classics and was heavily influenced by mainstream literature. Therefore, her works present a fusion of mainstream literature and black literature. *Paradise* uses various rhetorical techniques to contribute to the plot and character description. The symbolic images in the novel increase the meaning behind the appearance and make the plain language more profound. The ironic technique also makes the story fuller. Metaphorical Languages make sentences readable and aesthetic. These techniques have made the writing language of Morrison's novel advanced and innovative.

3. Character Writing

Characters are the soul of a novel. Through specific description, some aspects of a character could be highlighted, and their psychological activities could also be fully analyzed, so that the characters in a work become real and tangible. At the same time, it can also present the center theme of the article more deeply. Successful character description can make the reader hear and see the person, just like the characters in the story are beside them. Traditional character writing usually depicts the appearance, movement, language, and psychological activities of the characters, but Morrison's *Paradise* uses special methods--binary oppositional narrative and unstable relationship, which have achieved an unexpected effect.

In *Paradise*, Morrison adopts the strategy of binary oppositional writing. The opposition includes whites and blacks, men and women, as well as pure blacks and light-skinned people.

To start with, the most obvious conflict in the town is about the whites and the blacks. Because of historical factors and social status, blacks were treated as slaves, were oppressed and tortured. With the aspirations for God and the longing for a better life, they escaped from the white-dominated society and found a territory that belonged only to the blacks themselves. They admired and respected their own culture and color. In this way, the black people first established Haven and then Ruby. In such a small and isolated town, they gained, equality, freedom and lived the life they hoped, so they rejected other people, especially white people who made them remain of the painful treatment that their ancestors suffered. Thus, the women in the convent and their different skin colors became the target of Ruby man. The representatives of these people were the Morgan twins. They were like emperors who controlled the life and thoughts of this town. They were stubborn, even old-fashioned. "In contradistinction to the Convent, the leaders in Ruby—either by direct decree or through discursive pressure—winnow down the potential for communication; difference is met with scorn, and the leaders are quick to silence competing voices searching for meaning." (Grattan 386) Whether they quarreled with young people or launched a massacre at the convent, their purpose was to maintain the town's appearance. Morrison believes that the true paradise is a society in which whites and blacks live in harmony and develop together. In the Morgans' mind, however, black supremacy and deference to whites could not be easily removed.

Then, the confrontation of gender also exemplifies binary opposition. "In modern Ruby, the men are so focused on preserving their forefathers' achievements that they have no personal accomplishments through which to define their masculinity. Instead, they avoid acknowledging the inherited shame of the Disallowing by defining their identities purely through wealth and possessions that their forefathers' achievements generate." (Read 532) Ruby men attributed the decline of town to the women lived in the convent and eventually attacked them. Ruby was a concentration of a male-dominated society. Men had absolute dominance and women were in relatively lower social status with comparatively few rights. And they could only be tied to men's lives as incidental items. They couldn't live with their own wishes and had to obey the standards and rules of being a virtuous wife and mother. Anna was the owner of the grocery store. After her father's death, she inherited the small business. She was open-minded and helpful. But in this secluded town, other residents made her excluded. When the town had problems, men's first reaction was to the convent. This impulsive behavior showed their narrow mind, distorted consciousness and incompetence in managing a town. The odd events in Ruby didn't find appropriate solutions to solve. The declining situation was also irreversible, and innocent women lost their lives. This was the most ridiculous thing in this slaughter because there was no winner in this fabricated competition. The women in the convent were unrestrained and self-reliant. Their mode of getting along was the epitome of a truly harmonious society, which contained the spirit of unity and self-redemption. As the queen of the convent, Connie was wise to lead others in the right direction and her image became taller

in this binary opposition. She healed the women who came to the convent and helped them realize their worth. She also provided ingredients for people in Ruby and shelter for women in there. Whether it was the flesh or the soul, it was very precious. Adopting this binary oppositional writing method not only provides readers with a new perspective to combine the plots, but also allows them to understand characters and shape their images more thoroughly. Moreover, there is also an implicit rivalry between the pure black-skinned people and the light-skinned people in Ruby. "It would seem, then, that Ruby's citizens have created a neat reversal of the Western color hierarchy that privileges whiteness and derides blackness and ranks those in-between according to how they fall on the phenotypic spectrum." (Jenkins 280) Ruby's people not only rejected white people, but also disliked people with light skin. This created a strong exclusion and specificity. Patricia's mother was not a pure black race. Her light-colored skin attracted her criticism and brought her misfortune. In order to ensure the purity of ethnic skin color, men in the town set up strict requirements on the skin color of the married person. Social status was not determined by contribution or leadership. Black skin was already destined to enjoy the power and gain respect. So when Patricia's father decided to marry the light-skinned woman, it was doomed that their family would not be completely accepted by Ruby people. When Patricia's mother died because of postpartum hemorrhage, men were still reluctant to ask a doctor even though other women were pleading for help. Patricia and her daughter also inherited the mother's light skin, so in Ruby, their status was almost at the bottom. In the way of treating the light skin, Ruby's black people, especially men, become as cruel as whites who once discriminated against them. "In their quest to believe in the goodness of their blackness, they ultimately reject all things non-black." (Williams 184) Through this description of opposition and conflict, the two ethnic groups of black and light-skinned people had left a deeper feeling for readers.

In *Paradise*, there are lots of characters, and the relationships between characters are as complicated as a spider web. But Morrison can clearly sort them out. The relationship between the characters is temporary and unstable. Especially for the description of the five women who come to the convent. They all encountered something that forced them to leave their original homes and came to the convent. Before that, they had fixed relatives and relationships in their lives. These were all broken because of their escape or displacement.

Mavis, the protagonist in the second chapter, had a family that looked very happy. She was a daughter, a wife and a mother. These were all broken because she accidentally suffocated twin babies in the car. Neighbors mocked her. Her husband and children also gave her pressure and mental damage. She went to her mother's house and eventually left. She escaped and broke all the relationships. On the way to escape, she met several people who took a ride and established a short-term friendship with them. But these girls left one by one and this relationship was broken again. Until she arrived at the convent. Here, she was not a daughter, not a wife, nor a mother. The new relationship was established so that she could become independent and enjoy a new life. The same was true of Gigi. Leaving home meant her relationship with her parents was broken. Later she and her boyfriend were separated. Although her story was not completely and clearly stated in the novel, it could be seen that her interpersonal relationships were both short-lived. Consolata also had a strong interpersonal relationship with her parents and lover. But these eventually brought her much damage. She broke free from these sorrowful experiences and became an independent and mysterious person. These women had established new relationships with each other after coming to the convent, such as friends, or people who support and redeem each other. These relationships were supposed to maintain for a long time. But the rude behavior of Ruby men broke this state. They killed the white woman and the other women who survived fled away. The relationship broke again. No one knew where they went.

Characters are the creation from life, the portrayal and imitation of reality. It is the character that supports the plot and makes the story an innuendo of reality. When Morrison shapes character, everyone has their own personality. In binary opposition, the features of different characters are more prominent, while the uncertain and unstable relationships between them make the development of characters and plots full of more possibilities.

4. Writing Order

Review the history, since the time of Aristotle, most literary works have been narrated according to the time order in which the story takes place, structured as a prologue, beginning, development, climax and end. However, many modern writers start to break the conventional narrative model and adopt a unique writing sequence so as to give their works the different color. Morrison's novels show such characteristics. The fragmented plots of the novel don't conform with the withtraditional chronological order, making the whole work like a jigsaw puzzle that waited for readers to read the whole text and put together the storyline. French literary theorist Genette has proposed a series of narrative theories, including the narrative order. When the time of the story has the same order as the time of the narrative, it is the normal and traditional order. But more often, the order of narratives and the sequence of stories are not consistent. So there is a disorder, which is known as anachrony. *Paradise* is inconsistent with the confusing writing order. In *Paradise*, Morrison depicts the life of Ruby and the convent. Nine chapters compose the story. They are named with nine women's names and there are no obvious connections among the chapters. They are like nine independent stories both in terms of time and characters. Only when readers finish reading the whole book, could they realize the true appearance of the complete story.

From a macro perspective, chapter one was like a prelude in a movie. It merely described a terrible scene and left a series of questions: How did the massacre happen? Who were the murderers and who was the dead woman? The author first told readers the results which left a lot of doubts and inspired their curiosity to plumb the cause and effect of the story. Chapter Two to Chapter Five mainly described the several women who came to the convent for different reasons. Chapter six was a story about a woman who lived in town. This chapter seemed completely disconnected from the previous parts. And chapter seven, Morrison changed her view; she continued to write women in the convent--Conny, the soul character of the convent. Morrison also interweaved the history of Ruby and the convent in the description of woman's life. Then in the next chapter, Lone, Morrison converted her perspective again to talk about other women in town. The massacre replayed in this chapter. Readers could also find the reason and subsequent things after the slaughter. And Chapter Nine was about the death of a girl. It also simply told readers the whereabouts of these survivors. The author did not deliberately describe the connection between different people, so the ending gave readers more space to imagine. Superficially, the nine chapters have no relations. Once the Chapter finishes, the next Chapter is another story. Therefore, the plot is fragmentary and scattered throughout the whole book.

Although the plot is dispersive, if nine chapters are reconstructed, they still have a relatively distinct logic and can compose a complete story. Readers would aware that the plots were arranged in the form of flashback. The massacre that appeared in the first chapter was the climax of the whole story and it was also the most important plot, so the author put this fragment at the beginning of the whole book. Women's stories were the reasons for the blooded massacre. Various reasons pushed the women to the convent. And they were regarded as the root crime for the odd things that happened in Ruby: the daughter pushed her mother downstairs, the bride disappeared on the honeymoon, brothers and relatives shot each other, and the younger generation openly defied the traditions of the older generations. Morrison puts

the ending of the matter and the outcome of the event first in the novel, and then replays the development of the whole story by cleaning the snippet. Because of the dismemberment of plots and unique writing order, readers couldn't understand clearly until they orderly put the pieces together. Morrison breaks the usual pattern of convention and literature, which makes the story special and bubbles with suspense.

Paradise is like a broken mirror waiting to be put together and revealed. It is the break of chronological order that covers the whole story with a layer of mystery. A large number of suspense settings make this work achieve a perfection of form that is quite new.

5. Conclusion

The writing strategies in *Paradise* not only reflect the writer's own profound literary skills, but also make great contributions to the progress of black literature and female literature. Morrison's writing language is special and has an indescribable attraction. Symbolic, ironic and metaphorical language work together in *Paradise*, which makes the writing language full of vitality and creativity. By using binary oppositional narrative and unstable relationships, characters' features become prominent, and the experience becomes full and complete. The unchronological writing order has caused confusion for readers, but it is more attractive and brings a mysterious effect.

By the study above, the writing strategies in Morrison's *Paradise* become clear. Ruby, the convent and the characters who lived in these places become vivid through Morrison's description. The use of these writing techniques shows that Morrison is deeply influenced by postmodernism and magical realism. Therefore, the study of Morrison's writing strategies provides important information for the study of postmodern literature and magical realism literature. It also has irreplaceable function for the study of black literature and female literature.

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