

The Philosopher Focalization in the Novel *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey

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Abstract

This article examines how focalization employed to shape what and how events, perceptions, and private thoughts are disclosed to the narratee. The object of this study is Orbital by Samantha Harvey that surrounds the six astronauts living in the International Space Station. The analysis applies Mieke Bal's focalization framework to selected passages, identifying focalizers, focalized objects, and shifts among external-bound, character-bound, and embedded focalization. The analysis also uses close reading focusing on how the narrator's selective knowledge, through panoramic framing, direct address, and interruptions of personal thoughts creates interpretive gaps that require narratee participation. The study advances the argument that Orbital leveraging the narrator functioning not only as a storyteller but as a philosophically oriented, phenomenological focalizer who repeatedly reorients attention from the events depicted to the manner in which experience is given. The findings indicate that external-bound focalization constructs shared horizons of perception, while character-bound focalization concentrates ethical urgency and interpretive uncertainty. Embedded focalization further intensifies the text's reflective structure by staging layered access. The conclusion of this study is that focalization functions as the novel's main philosophical approach sustaining inquiry rather than closure, and directing narratee toward the constitution of meaning across shifting perspectives. This study posits that focalization can be read as a phenomenologically inflected narrative practice.

Keywords: focalization; narratology; phenomenology; Orbital; Samantha Harvey

Introduction

Underscored by the recent event, humans are going back in space through NASA's space rocket Artemis II in April 6, 2026, with the mission to explore the Earth's moon (NASA, 2026). The current contemporary era has been synonymous with Anthropocene. Corlett (2014) states that Anthropocene refers to the present-day period of time in which the impacts caused by human are important along with natural process. In addition, Widisuseno (2017), explains that the principle of scientific neutrality, has been shown to have inherent limitations, particularly in terms of addressing complex problems that transcend the scientific guidelines. It means that to have a significance, scientific pursuits must look beyond itself to encompass cultural context that acknowledge human's position and perception in the world (Widisuseno, 2017). It is noteworthy that the 2024 winner of the Booker Prize, a literary award, is *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey which explores the space through the eyes of six astronauts. She appoints the narrator role to an unknown being that seamlessly follows six astronauts orbiting the Earth in the International Space Station in the H-shaped structure suspended in space. The crew, four astronauts from the US, Japan, Britain, Italy – Shaun, Chie,

Nell, and Pietro – and two Russian cosmonauts, Roman and Anton – witness the Earth in its breath-taking beauty as they complete sixteen orbits each day observing every continent, oceans, seasons, and weather. There are two women and four men, the most recent group achieving the Earth ozonic barrier. Despite the physical distance, they cannot escape Earth's gravitational pull. There in the orbit, Earth is their backyard and it makes them feel ordinary yet special. They are slowly rotating in the rapid motion of sixteen orbits each day. The astronauts will stay for nine months in weightlessness with a constant reminder of Earth in their horizon and they will eventually return back to Earth.

Given these intricacies, this study employs a narratological framework to analyze the structure of perception in the novel *Orbital*. Narratology provides a foundation to understand narrative perspective in which how story control knowledge and perception. Gerard Genette (1980) writes a notion on focalization that reconceptualizes point of view as the principle being in charge of the selection and distribution of narrative information. Genette (1980) analyses the narrative perspective at the narrative level and distinguishes the focalization based on the knowledge of narrator and character. Although it is entirely possible for one person to express the perceptions of another, ignoring this distinction leads to ambiguity. Bal (2009) notes the prominence difference of a narrator, who verbalizes the vision, and a focalizer, who sees or perceives, refining the term focalization to further notes for scenarios where a narrator may express a vision that is not its own. Bal relocates focalization from the narrative discourse to the story level. According to Bal (1981), focalization is defined as the relationship between a perceiving subject, the act of perception, and the object perceived, emphasizing that narrative events only become coherent and meaningful through such mediation. Bal (1981) uses focalization as narrative devices that foregrounds the role of characters as focalizing agents and presents the concept of embedded focalization. The concept explains that perceptions are hierarchically structured and asymmetrically distributed within the narrative.

One of the foundational principles in the narratology theory is the emphasis on the focalization have been increasingly conducted in recent researches. The development arises from growing awareness of meaning construction through focalization. Existing articles discuss the crucial role of focalization in shaping how narrative events unravel within literary texts. Related analysis confirms that focalization is not limited to a specific genre, but operates in a variety of forms of narrative and it includes written and visual narratives. The respective are several studies that are relevant in the implementation of focalization theory in narratological research.

Oliveira and Maggio (2017) publish research examines the focalization in *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak by arguing that focalization is a central narrative technique in the novel, primarily enacted through the empathic and omniscient perspective of Death as both the narrator and the focalizer, who selectively filters the story to foster reader sympathy for characters. Death creates empathic characters experience during the Nazi era, highlighting the interplay between narrator-focalizer authority and embedded character perception Uno (2024) investigates operatic *Brokeback Mountain* through interdisciplinary analysis. The result highlights the structural harshness, psychological trauma, and omniscient focalization

through the engagements of sound, sight, and text. Meanwhile Punia (2025) explores the focalization in *Samskara* and *God of Small Things* through Dalit reading. The two novels mask the power imbalance and caste violence by using suppressed focalization although the two works are anti-caste literature, it further reiterates caste hierarchies exposing the Brahminical gaze.

George and Evangeline (2025) argue that Suzette Mayr's *Dr. Edith Vane and the Hares of Crawley Hall* and Janice MacDonald's *Another Margaret* employ feminist narratological strategies to construct female discourse and authority within the academic setting of campus fiction. These narratives reveal the persistent silencing of women in academia while also highlighting how female authors use narrative form to amplify women's emotions, trauma, and professional struggles, thereby contributing to both feminist narratology and trauma studies.

That being the case, all of the studies mentioned examine the narrative perspective from focalization along interdisciplinary angles. Therefore, this study focuses on the perception and the construction of focalization, specifically addressing how focalization can shape character consciousness as well as embodying a philosophical orientation, particularly phenomenology as subjective perception and experiential awareness are raised throughout the text.

To further inquire *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey, existing studies demonstrate that a literary work can be examined through multiple approaches. As a novel is not limited to singular interpretation, but may be explored depending on the theoretical lens applied. The following studies are relevant to the object of this study through several approaches.

Lunyova (2025) argues that the Moon in Harvey's novel functions both aesthetically and ideologically as it exposes how narrative techniques can subtly naturalize or critique political ideologies. The study explains the paradox of spatial earth that reflects human attitudes and the contrast of the cosmonauts (Russian astronauts) expansionist ambitions with exploratory, knowledge-driven motives of international astronauts. Subsequently, Cazajous- Augé (2025) discusses that Harvey's novel reconfigures the traditional sublime through an Anthropocene cosmic sublime that foregrounds embodied astronaut perception, ethical responsibility, and ecological interconnectedness. Moreover, the paper states that space exploration amplifies Anthropocene's exploitative and destructive pattern tied to the universe, arguably as the urge to colonize other planets. Then, Azim's (2025) research is a comparative study that argues Harvey's spatial, orbital perspective emphasizing human insignificance and planetary fragility, while Ghosh's allegorical fable critiques resource exploitation through a postcolonial. Both novels critically engage with the intertwined ecological and existential crises of the Anthropocene.

Despite focusing on the same object these studies yield different interpretations and analytical results. Therefore, the reflection of plurality of the findings are the result of divergent theoretical perspectives.

From a distance, one may wonder the purpose of circling perpetually without arrival, yet Earth is their point of return. The astronauts bear news prompting thoughts of their lives back at

their respective home characterized by the sentiment of joy and longing. These sentiments are exemplified through scenes such as Roman's loneliness, Chie mother's death, and Anton's beloved kids. Though they also witness a typhoon threatens loved ones in awe and fear, highlighting the Earth's fragile and vulnerable human existence. As the extreme isolation engulfs them down, they find a profound sense of connection and protectiveness toward Earth. It notes the earnest sense of belonging that they are also part of the world, especially the Earth. The six of them face subtle change, bones a little less dense, and thinner limbs, still and all their eyes witness the space pastoral. This urgency emerges through the novel's capacity to navigate the epistemic instability of the Anthropocene, a period where the chasm between human action and planetary reaction has become so vast that traditional narrative forms can no longer bridge it. The study of *Orbital's* focalization is therefore an investigation into the cognitive tools required for human survival and ethical reorientation on Earth. Therefore, this study will examine the focalization in the novel *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey to determine the focalization and the impact of the shifts in terms of impression of the events unraveling in the novel. The hypothesis of this study is that it has a phenomenologically oriented focalizer which creates space to construct meaning thus transforming the narration into an exploration.

Method

Consequently, to assist the analysis, this paper implements close reading as the method, as previously mentioned. Culler (2010), states that close reading is a New Criticism tradition characterized by attention to language, tone, and figures in a text, often with an emphasis on slowing down and examining textual details carefully. On this study, the method investigates the subtle alteration between the narrator's voice and the focalizer's vision within the work. Thereby, the close reading method provides the necessary theoretical foundation to contribute in analyzing the novel *Orbital*. The data sourced from *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey published by Vintage, part of Penguin Random House UK, in 2024. The data itself is textual passage from the novel which will be analyzed through a focalization framework.

Result and Discussion

Focalization describes the organization of perception, interpretation, and access to story-world information. According to Mieke Bal (1981), focalization is the relation linking the perceiving subject (a focalizer) and the object of the perception, to avoid the conflation of the question in the matter of who speaks and the question of who perceives. Focalization structures how the Earth is disclosed as meaningful by regulating the relation between a perceiving position and the objects made available to perception, thereby shaping what is treated as salient, routine, or extraordinary in the narrated experience (Bal, 2009). This operation is evident across the excerpts through systematic shifts between external-bound and character-bound focalization, as well as through embedding, where one focalizing position frames another. In *Orbital*, the narrator does not have a name and is an unknown being. The focalizer in the novel itself is a phenomenological focalizer pulling the attention from what happens to how experience is given. According to Husserl (1983), phenomenology is a branch of philosophy aiming to describe and analyze phenomena as it appears.

Meanwhile, based on Merleau-Ponty (1968), phenomenology is a disciplined shift from an accepting stance toward a questioning stance in relation to experience. In this view, philosophical inquiry is not reducible to the accumulation of knowledge claims; it also interrogates the conditions and grounds of such claims (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; 1968).

Perceptions Through Focalizations

Narration concerns with the utterances of signs by a narrator as the subject of speech, whereas focalization concerns the perceptual-interpretive orientation within the story. Therefore, the notion of a narrator may report perceptions without being the focalizer and a focalizer may be present without speaking directly are two separable functions.

The first excerpt frames spaceflight as simultaneously normalized and bewildered. The evidence establishes a generalized positioning of the six astronauts and evaluates their situation in terms of ordinariness alongside wonder.

“They are the latest six of many, nothing unusual about this any more, routine astronauts in earth’s backyard. Earth’s fabulous and improbable backyard. Turning head on heel in the slow drift of their hurtle, head on hip on hand on heel, turning and turning with the days. The days rush. They will each be here for nine months or so, nine months of this weightless drifting, nine months of this swollen head, nine months of this sardine living, nine months of this earthward gaping, then back to the patient planet below.” (Harvey, 2024:2).

The focalizer is external-bound, since the perspective is not anchored to any one character’s situated access but instead presents an organizing viewpoint that can generalize about the astronauts as the latest six of many (Bal, 2009). The focalized objects include the astronauts’ integrated presence, Earth conceived as a proximate backyard, and the repetitive bodily rotation that is extended into time. The narrative discloses orbit as a stable experiential horizon in which repeated bodily orientation and time converge, producing a sense of routine that does not erase extraordinariness but coexists with it. Through the phenomenological focalizer, the attention to how a world is given in experience as a meaningful horizon rather than as a neutral container for events.

“Roman has a sense of himself a few months hence staring from his bedroom window at home, moving aside his wife’s array of dried – and to him unnameable – flowers, forcing open the condensated and stiff casement, leaning into the Moscow air, and seeing it, the same moon, like a souvenir he’s brought back from a holiday somewhere exotic. But it’s just for a moment and then the sight of this moon from the space station – lying squashed and low beyond the atmosphere, not really above them but across, like an equal – is everything, and that brief comprehension he had of his bedroom, his home, is gone.” (Harvey, 2024:2).

The next textual evidence signals that the scene is organized through Roman’s experiential orientation and that objects are selected as a perceptual route toward a central object. The focalizer is character-bound, because the passage attributes perception and self-positioning

to him, however, it is also embedded within a framing level that reports this projection, since Roman's future-seeing is presented rather than directly enacted as immediate perception (Bal, 2009). The focalized objects include the domestic setting, the wife's flowers that not able to be named, and especially the moon as the thematic center. The philosopher organizes the moon as an object whose significance is constituted through Roman's directed orientation as it appears not merely as an astronomical body but as the same object re-encountered under altered circumstances, rendered meaningful through comparison and memory. Experience is perceptive and that meaning emerges through the relation between orientation and object rather than from objects alone.

"Up here in microgravity you're a seabird on a warm day drifting, just drifting. What use are biceps, calves, strong shin bones; what use muscle mass? Legs are a thing of the past. But every day the six of them have to fight this urge to dissipate. They retreat inside their headphones and press weights and cycle nowhere at twenty-three times the speed of sound on a bike that has no seat or handlebars, just a set of pedals attached to a rig, and run eight miles inside a slick metal module with a close-up view of a turning planet." (Harvey, 2024:11).

This passage foregrounds ordinary training actions while simultaneously contradict the spatial situation as these actions are inside a defined environment with a persistent perceptual horizon. The focalizer is external-bound, given the generalized they and you and the broad access to the regimen as a whole, yet the phrasing closely signifies the group's experiential condition, producing an external stance that remains near to the lived constraints of the situation. The focalized objects are the exercise practices, the apparatus and module, and Earth as a continuously visible object. The philosopher focalization discloses the spacecraft as a world of disciplined repetition in which intense bodily motion is decoupled from ordinary movement through space, while Earth's visibility persists as a stabilizing background that continually reorients significance. This is consistent with phenomenological emphasis on how ordinary practices are reconstituted when the world-horizon shifts, and how routine can function as an experiential structure rather than merely a sequence of actions.

Embedded Focalizations

Further, Bal (2009) explains the focalization concept that differentiates focalization based on the position of the focalizer respective to the represented events. Character-bound focalization occurs when the focalizing position is anchored in a character's perceptual range and situated access (Bal, 2009). Bal (1981) states that an external focalizer may be explicitly marked as observing a character's act of perception, which indicates that focalization can be organized from a position outside the character's viewpoint. Focalization may also be embedded, producing stacked viewpoint structures such as an external focalizer observing a character who is observing another character (Bal, 1981). Bal (1981) shows that such embedding is analytically significant because it creates unequal access to what is perceived and known; one level can contain another, but the reverse does not necessarily hold as in practice, embedded focalization is treated as a hierarchy of perceptual positions that can shape reader access and alignment.

“They are a choreographing of movements and functions of the ship’s body as it enacts its perfect choreography of the planet. Anton – quiet, and dry in his humour, sentimental, crying openly at films, at scenes outside the window – Anton the spaceship’s heart. Pietro its mind, Roman (the current commander, dextrous and capable, able to fix anything, control the robotic arm with millimetre precision, wire the most complex circuit board) its hands, Shaunits soul (Shaun there to convince them all that they have souls), Chie (methodical, fair, wise, not-quite definable or pin-downable) its conscience, Nell (with her eight-litre diving lungs) its breath.” (Harvey, 2024:11).

The focalizer in the excerpt is external-bound that does not attributable to any single character’s situated perception, organizing the crew as a group. The focalized object is the crew and their system, and their functional differentiation. External-bound focalization through the philosopher, establishes a lifeworld horizon in which individual persons are primarily given as functions within a shared whole. This framing supports a phenomenological reading of meaning-constitution which explains that the space ship is not merely setting but a lived structure that organizes how persons show up as meaningful to one another within an interdependent world. The passage thus foregrounds the conditions of coexistence rather than a sequence of actions. the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*), which Husserl (1970) develops as the prescientific world of everyday experience as a pre-theoretical, practical world through which shared meanings are formed and sustained. Because judgement and inquiry arise from this ordinary experiential ground, the lifeworld functions as a condition for the possibility of knowledge. Husserl states, “All life rests upon prediction or, as we can say, upon induction...any straightforward experience is inductive” (Husserl, 1970:51). Then, Zahavi (2003) also emphasizes that lifeworld analysis clarifies the relation between scientific theorizing and pre-scientific experience, contributes to the trajectory toward transcendental reduction, and remains connected to inter-subjectivity.

“In these dishes is humanity, Anton says to Roman in the Russian lab. The two of them move humanity about with their pipettes. The pink-purple configuration of cells was once the skin taken from human volunteers, the skin cells reverted back to stem cells, the stem cells into heart cells. The skin samples were taken from people of different ages, backgrounds, races.” (Harvey, 2024:11)

The next passage blends external-bound description with character-bound evaluation embedded via Anton’s utterance. The focalized objects include the cell cultures and the category humanity applied to them. The embedded character-bound focalization functions as an orienting act as it directs consciousness toward the dish as humanity, exemplifying intentionality’s structure of being about something under a particular meaning. The philosopher framing supports the object’s material origin, showing how the same referent can be disclosed under different aspects. This interplay models a phenomenological interest in how meaning is not simply found but organized through orientation within a practice-world. Within that lifeworld, phenomenology foregrounds intentionality meaning consciousness is not self-enclosed but always consciousness of something (Husserl, 2000).

Acts such as seeing, remembering, or fearing are inherently about objects, events, or states of affairs (Zahavi, 2018). This directedness is not fixed to a single aspect of an object; rather, the same object can show up in multiple ways along different acts and contexts which indicate that experience is perspectival and meaning-laden. Phenomenological description also distinguishes the natural attitude, the default position in which the world is taken as simply there.

“To all in the Philippines: get out or hunker down. To those on the tiny eastern islands, just get out. To one particular fisherman and his family, Pietro thinks, get out now, get out yesterday. But get out where? And how? And for the fisherman there’s this protective urge not to leave your things, they being the few things you still have after the last typhoon and the one before that and the one before that.” (Harvey, 2024:37)

The focalizer from the passage here is character-bound explicitly anchored in Pietro. The focalized object is the typhoon’s threat as it narrows from masses to one family, plus the practical impossibility of action. Character-bound focalization discloses the disaster not as an abstract event but as a morally coaxed experiential field in which a single imagined other becomes central. This aligns with philosopher emphasis on how experience is structured by directedness and explains the object of concern is constituted through Pietro’s orientation toward a specific life-world circumstance. The passage also stages an implicit limit of the natural attitude that the assumption that one can act effectively is interrupted by the inability consequently exposing fragility in a taken-for-granted practical sense.

“By now Shaun and Chie have come, and Anton is at the window in the Russian module, and Pietro in the lab, the six of them drawn moth-like. The orbit rounds out above the Antarctic and begins its ascent towards the north. It leaves waves of aurora in its wake. The towers collapsing as if exhausted, twitches of green on the magnetic field. The South Pole recedes behind.” (Harvey, 2024:41).

Meanwhile, from this passage the external-bound focalization with panoramic access to positions and orbital movement. The focalized objects are the crew’s convergence and the auroral phenomena. The philosopher focalization constructs a shared perceptual scene in which the spectacle is disclosed as a recurrent attractor of attention. Furthermore, the philosophical focalization also emphasizes the lifeworld as inherently structured by communal orientation and shared horizons of visibility. The passage does not report private inner states as it renders collective perceptual organization as an observable pattern of being-in-a-world.

“You know this of course, but in space you see it. The looping weather. This is what Nell could watch all day. A research meteorologist before she became an astronaut, she has an eye for the weather. How the earth drags at the air. See how the clouds at the equator are dragged up and eastward by the earth’s rotation. All the moist warm air evaporating off the equatorial oceans and pulled in an arc to the poles, cooling, sinking, tugged back down in a westward curve.

Ceaseless movement. Although, these words – drag, pull, tug – they describe the force of this movement but not its grace, not its – what? Its synchronicity/fluidity/harmony.” (Harvey, 2024:56).

The passage provides a view of embedded structure as an external guiding viewpoint frames a character-bound competence attribution to Nell. The focalized object is looping atmospheric movement and its intelligible patterning. As it foregrounds that what shows up depends on orientation and competence that explains Nell’s meteorological eye conditions what can be perceived as patterned and meaningful. It brings attention to how experience is not mere reception but an organized disclosure of relations within a horizon. The explicit struggle for adequate description further indicates that focalization can register the gap between experience and available articulation without abandoning the influence of viewpoint.

“For Chie, as a child, the photograph had a power she neither understood nor questioned. The lure of the absent moon, the absent landing, the great proclaimed day that was happening, but happening elsewhere. Mythical in its remove. Moon Landing Day. She’d thought as a child that it must have been what her mother was looking at from the beach, something happening up on the moon, and that her mother could see it with her naked eye. Or as if her mother had been part of the event in some way.” (Harvey, 2024:56).

Character-bound focalization in this case is Chie organized through memory, assumption, and interpretive limitation. The focalized object is the photograph and its meaning. This is focalization as an explicit problem the object is present, yet its meaning remains unstable across time. The passage stages how the same object can appear differently across acts and contexts consistent with intentionality view point of variability. The repeated she doesn’t know marks the limits of certainty within the natural attitude and foregrounds the novel’s interest in how sense is constituted retrospectively rather than simply retrieved.

“And us? We are one. For now at least, we are one. Everything we have up here is only what we reuse and share. We can’t be divided, this is the truth. We won’t be because we can’t be. We drink each other’s recycled urine. We breathe each other’s recycled air.” (Harvey, 2024:64).

This passage shows character-bound focalization is through embedded focalization. The focalized object is a shared body as an infrastructure and enforced unity. The “we” installs intersubjectivity as the primary view point that explains individuals are disclosed as materially constituted through shared air and water. The philosopher here insists that the constitution of a shared world is inseparable from relations among subjects. Focalization is not merely perspective as it is a mode of lived coexistence made immediate through bodily reliance.

“Nell had dreams of flying when she was a child and then later a teenager. The others did too, each one of them. Short dreams of surging flight or long and languid dreams of discovery, in any case dreams of breaking or being free. The flying they did, or still do, in dreams is the closest analogy they have to moving

in space, these dreams share the same weightless ease and the same sense of miracle, because it ought to be impossible for a heavy wingless body to be gliding this freely and smoothly and yet here it is and it seems that you are finally doing the thing for which your being was born. It is hard to believe.” (Harvey, 2024:70)

Predominantly external-bound, with interior experience aggregated into a shared pattern. The focalized object is the dream-analogy and its felt qualities. The external-bound, the philosopher, viewpoint performs a form of analytic consolidation as it collects multiple subjective reports into a recurrent structure of experience. Through the philosopher lens, it identifies what stays constant across different dreams and individuals while focusing on the shared yet stable characters without lessening them to abstract generalizations. The passage thus uses focalization to render a shared experiential logic of weightlessness.

“Tucked under the belly of the earth, in all these hectares of night, is the odd ambience of the South Pole in twilight, but here at these more northerly latitudes the sky is thick and full of galaxy. You are looking now straight into the heart of the Milky Way, whose pull is so strong and compelling that it feels some nights that the orbit will detach from the earth and venture there, into that deep, dense mass of stars. Billions upon billions of stars that give off their own light, so that it’s no longer true to speak of darkness.” (Harvey, 2024:126)

Through this excerpt, the external-bound focalization guides viewpoint with panoramic access, following the focalized object, the galaxy, as both visual field and affective. The philosopher's focalization expands the horizon of the lifeworld while keeping perception anchored in a current situation. The galaxy is disclosed not only as seen but as captivating, assembling the experience through allures. This perspective underscores that the world is given as a field of significance and affective orientation, not as a neutral array of objects. The natural attitude remains as natural to the extent that it is not yet critically thematized (Husserl, 1983). A further commitment is the search for essence explains the aim to articulate what makes a phenomenon what it is (Husserl, 1983). This is supported by imaginative polarity, in which one imaginatively alters features of the phenomenon to distinguish accidental from necessary characteristics. Zahavi (2018) describes by imagining a phenomenon otherwise, one can strip away its accidental properties and isolate features without which it would not be that kind of phenomenon. Husserl (1970) also extends to intersubjectivity, since the constitution of objective reality is inseparable from how subjects experience and recognize one another. Empathy is central here, to the degree that it believes a relation between one embodied subject and another.

“The children are safe. The sea has stopped surging, it rests exhausted. The wind is ebbing. From space the Philippines and Indonesia are shrouded now in fine arrangements of cloud in multiple vortices and eddies that soon will push westward. The typhoon has smashed itself to pieces against the land. The islands are smaller than they were several hours ago, misshapen by flood. The worst is gone.” (Harvey, 2024:135).

In this passage, external-bound focalization with assertive overview and focalized object is the storm's dispersion and altered geography due to the typhoon. The passage highlights the world by converting ongoing instability into an comprehensible aftermath. Taken together, these observations mean that this is a reaffirmation of the natural attitude's world positing through revitalizing a sense of settled reality after disruption, enabled by a philosopher focalizing position that can totalize the scene from above. The focalization thus supervises not only what is seen but how the situation becomes narratively legible as the impact.

De Jong (2014) states that focalization has cognitive aspects in which the narrator has less restricted focalization therefore the more narrates have access to information and knowledge. On this account, De Jong (2014) also explains the concept of omniscience, representing a bodiless external primary narrator-focalizer that is not limited to the human form, and has access to every character's inner thought. Whereas, according to Jahn (1996) it is possible that many scholars support narrator-focalizer in which narrators are assigned perceptual authority, there are few instances of overlap in the roles of speaker and perceiver. Jahn (1996) explains this possibility even though the narrator is constructed fictionally by the author, the process of meaning making relies on the speculation of an intentional addresser that comes from the cooperative principles of human communication.

The analysis denotes that focalization functions as the main technique through which the novel governs the narratee's comprehension of events and thought, not by comprehensively explaining motives or contexts, but by arranging selective information or knowledge. Throughout the passages, the focalizer alternates between external-bound and character-bound positions and repeatedly embeds one viewpoint within another. The shifting does not merely diversify perspective as it also functions and regulates interpretive access by deciding when the narratee is given panoramic coherence and when the narratee is positioned inside a character's inner thoughts and perceptions. In this way, the narrative does not deliver a closed account of meaning; it constructs a space where meaning must be inferred from what is foregrounded, what remains indeterminate, and what is left as a question.

Moreover, the phenomenological philosopher-focalizer consistently shows up on the narrator's recurrent practice of orientation and interruption as it reframes what is seen, redirects attention to how a phenomenon appears, and pauses to register expression. These focalizations function as reflection because the narrator does not simply report consciousness but points the conditions under which experience becomes comprehensible.

Furthermore, the text repeatedly constructs the narratee as a collaborator in contemplation. This is most evident where the narrator employs a direct address using pronoun which is 'you' and where it reserves unanswered questions. Instead of resolving these moments into knowledge, the focalizer sustains them as problems of awareness. The narratee is thus positioned to complete the inquiry. The narratee's role is required by the focalizer's access and by the narrative's preference for reflective gaps over determinate explanation.

Conclusion

Focalization is the organizing principle that governs how the narrative becomes intelligible as the novel repeatedly controls what the narratee can know, feel, and interpret by managing whose perspective shapes disclosure and how much access is granted at any moment (Bal, 2009). The narrative does not present events as self-evident, as it continually filters them through shifting focalizing positions where it moves between external, panoramic framing and character-bound moments of urgency or uncertainty, and frequently embedding one viewpoint within another. It confirms that meaning in the novel materialized through selective and strategic information reveals. Interpretation emerges within spaces created by what is foregrounded, what remains partial, and what is deliberately left unresolved.

On this basis, the narrator instance is comprehended not only as a sole storyteller but also as a phenomenological, philosophically oriented focalizer. Its focalizing interventions regularly re-orient attention toward how experience appears rather than merely what happens when it reframes characters into relational functions, interrupts narrative flow with direct perceptual guidance, and sustains moments where comprehension is strained by ethical dilemma or interpretive ambiguity. typically, the focalizer employs a panoramic scene prompting the narratee to contemplate and ponder regarding the space, Earth, weather, nature and even the astronauts' choices. These interruptions do not terminate inquiry as they reinforce it. Thus, the narratee is positioned as a necessary participant in the narrative's reflection, and captivated to collaborate in making sense of what the focalizer exposes but does not finalize. Therefore, it can be concluded that the focalization in the novel *Orbital* performs a phenomenological philosopher focalization as it structures the story as an ongoing philosophical contemplation. In this case the narrator's focalizing control and the narratee's interpretive participation collectively constitute meaning.

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