

Memory, Narrative, and Authenticity in Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*

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Abstract

Kazuo Ishiguro's first novel, *A Pale View of Hills* (1982), is a first-person narrative of a middle-aged Japanese woman Etsuko living alone in England, who is guilt-ridden over the recent suicide of her daughter Keiko. This tragic circumstance awakens her memories of a particular summer event in Nagasaki when she was pregnant with Keiko. Unlike Dickens's first-person autobiographical novel *The Personal History, Adventures, Experience, and Observation of David Copperfield*, Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills* is not written in the form of 'History'. It takes the form of *memory*. Each narrative form (*history* vs. *memory*) has its own relationship between authenticity and (un)reliability. A novelist, who calls a novel a history, attempts to associate its authenticity with the narrative grounded on truth or reliable, 'pre-existing fact' (Miller, 1974: 457). Memory, in contrast, to use Etsuko's own words, 'can be an unreliable thing; often it is heavily coloured by the circumstances in which one remembers...' (Ishiguro, 1982: 156). Ishiguro himself affirms the unreliability of his narrators but views it as 'authentic' in terms of 'human nature', since 'any of us, when asked to give an account of ourselves over any important period of our lives, would tend to be 'unreliable'' (Ishiguro, 2015).

This paper discusses Ishiguro's idea of authenticity demonstrated in Etsuko's unreliable narration. It examines how she (un)consciously reconstructs or distorts her memories—and thus how she indirectly comes to terms with her responsibility for her daughter's death.

1. Ishiguro, memory, and narrative

In a 1986 interview with Masson, Ishiguro explains his abiding interest in memory: 'things like memory, how one uses memory for one's own purposes, one's own ends, those interest me more deeply' (Mason, 1989: 14). To put it another way, he is concerned with how one remembers one's own past experience in response to one's present needs or how one fulfills one's present desire by reconstructing past experience. 'And so for the time being', Ishiguro goes on to say in the interview, 'I'm going to stick with the first person, and develop the whole business about following somebody's thoughts around, as

they trip themselves up or to hide from themselves.’ As he says, he stuck with the first person until his latest novel, *The Buried Giant* (2015), in pursuit of his interest in structuring one’s remembering process, particularly at the time of one’s crisis and dilemma.

During the interview, which was held after the publication of his first and second novels, *A Pale View of Hills* (1982) and *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986), he was writing the third novel, *The Remains of the Day* (1989). The first three works have strong resemblances and form ‘a trilogy of aging protagonists reflecting upon disappointing pasts and disillusioned presents’ (Mason, 1989: xi). Each narrator is in the midst of identity crisis due to his or her past failure and ‘uses memory’ for mitigating the present hardship. What Ishiguro attempts to do in these novels is to represent how these unstable narrators remember and reflect the past events rather than what they actually experienced in the past. He states: ‘What I’m interested in is not the actual fact that my characters have done things they later regret, I’m interested in how they come to terms with it’ (Graver, 1989). In fact, the thematic focus of these works is not on the past remembered events but on the present process of remembering, or more specifically, how the present self distorts the memory in the remembering process of the past events.¹

One of the ways to structure memory or the process of remembering is creating narrative. Birke argues two contrastive roles it plays in identity formation. On the one hand, narrative serves to stabilize one’s identity: ‘Narrative allows us to forge meaningful links between past events and our present life, to define our present selves in relation to our past selves, and to assert a development’ (2008: 3). Narrative, on the other hand, can lead to one’s identity crisis. She explains this destabilizing function by referring to the passage from Eakin, who suggests ‘the ambivalent status of narrative for dealing with the past’:

- (1) However, narrative can also take on a problematic momentum of its own. John Paul Eakin, an expert on autobiography, sums up the ambivalent status of narrative for dealing with the past: “Conditioned through social accountability to think of narrative’s contribution to identity as life-enhancing [...], we may find it hard to accept that narrative capacity is in fact, value neutral, for there is evidence that narrative can warp or even destroy identity.” (Eakin 1999:130) Narrative helps to structure memory, but it can also become a factor that is ultimately destabilizing. This is where crises of memory are attributable to crises of narrative.

As Birke says, narrative can either stabilize or destabilize one’s memory and identity

and it is the detabllizing fucntion that attracts Ishiguro’s interest. In his first three novels. Ishiguro deliberately chooses the first-person narrators with emtional instablity and renders how the present circumstances in which they remember deforms the past memory in the course of narrative. Care needs to be taken, however, that these narrators cannot help but distort or even invent their memory in order to protect themselves from identity crises.

Literary critics often labels Ishiguro’s first-person narrators as an unreliable narrator². In *Guardian’s Webchat-as it happened*, he answered a reader’s question about his unreliable narrators. He explained: ‘I just wrote my narrator’s up in the way I felt authentic—the way I felt most people would go about telling a story about themselves’. Ishiguro himself affirms the unreliability of his narrators but views it as ‘authentic’ in terms of ‘human nature’, since ‘any of us, when asked to give an account of ourselves over any important period of our lives, would tend to be ‘unreliable’. That’s just human nature’ (Ishiguro, 2015). It is authentic for him to represent one’s unreliable memory or one’s distorted remembering process as it is experienced by the first-person narrator.³

This paper examines how Ishiguro demonstrates his idea of authenticity, reconsidering the relationship between memory and narrative in terms of narrative reliability and authenticity. It analyses as a case study his first novel, *A Pale View of Hills*. Firstly, I introduce a concept or a genre of ‘fictions of memory’ to explain the thematic focus of contemporary and traditional first-person autobiographical novels. Then this study looks at how the thematic difference is associated with the relationship between reliability and authenticity and schematizes the shift in tendency of narrative reliability in terms of the tension between two selves. Lastly, I analyse how Ishiguro represents the remembering process in *A Pale View of Hills*, focusing on his narrative techniques which continually remind the reader of the narrator’s present instability in the retrospective narrative.

2. Fictions of memory and thematic focus

Although memory or the process of remembering has long been an important theme in fictions, it was not considered as a specific genre. Nünning and Neumann, for the first time, coined the term ‘fictions of memory’. Neumann broadly defines it as ‘the stories that individuals or cultures tell about their past to answer the question “who am I”, or, collectively “who are we”’, or simply, ‘an imaginative (re)construction of the past in response to current needs’ (2008: 334). According to her definition, Ishiguro’s novels as well as traditional autobiographical novels like Dickens’ *David Copperfield* are broadly included in fictions of memory.

However, there is an important difference between these works. In order to distinguish

traditional and contemporary fictions of memory, Neumann introduces two axes. The first one is thematic focus. While the traditional fictions focus on the products of remembering, that is, the images of the remembered events, the contemporary ones tend to thematize the process of remembering itself, drawing the reader’s attention to the present reconstruction process of the past. The second axis is whether individual or collective perspective is reconstructed in narratives, although it is often difficult to distinguish between personal and collective memory.⁴ Among the different types or sub-genres, this paper focuses on contemporary first-person fictions of memory and how individual memory is reconstructed in autobiographical recollections.

Type	Traditional	Contemporary
Thematic Focus	Products of Remembering	Process of Remembering itself
Perspective	Individual/Collective	Individual/Collective

Figure 1 Traditional/Contemporary Types of Fictions of Memory

The thematic difference is closely related to the nexus of memory, identity and narrative. Narrative, as mentioned above, has the potential to either stabilize or destabilize memory and identity. The stabilizing function tends to be foregrounded in the traditional first-person fictions of memory. In such novels, the narrator often emphasizes a remarkable ability to remember the past events, claiming that his or her narrative is a true personal history. A novelist, who calls a novel a history (e.g. Dickens’s *The Personal History, Adventures, Experience, and Observation of David Copperfield*), attempts to associate its authenticity with the narrative grounded on truth or reliable, ‘preexisting fact’ (Miller, 1974: 457). In the traditional autobiographical narrative, the motivation of the narrator is predominantly to reconstruct the past remembered events in chronological order (i.e. the products of remembering) and thus portray the psychological development throughout his or her narrative.

The destabilizing function of narrative is preferred to be used in the contemporary first-person fictions of memory. They highlight the narrator’s unreliable quality of memory and tend ‘to represent problems and conflicts associated with remembering and its impact on identity’ (Birke, 2008:11). The authenticity is thus closely associated with the representation of unreliable memory or how the present mental state of the narrator deforms the past events in the remembering process.

To use Neumann’s words, the traditional narrative focuses on the ‘coherent construction of memory’ (reliable history) and the contemporary one on ‘the haphazard workings of memory’ (unreliable memory) (2008: 336). Each narrative form has its own

relationship between authenticity and (un)reliability. In the following section, I will schematize the shift in tendency of narrative reliability of first-person fictions of memory in terms of the tension between two selves.

3. Tension between two selves and narrative reliability

The characteristic feature of first-person autobiographical narrative, as Stanzel says, is the internal tension between the self as hero (protagonist) and the self as narrator, or what is called the experiencing self and the narrating self (1984:212). 'In some respects', Cohn argues, 'a first-person narrator's relationship to his past self parallels a narrator's relationship to his protagonist in a third-person novel' (1978: 143). However, there is an obvious and crucial difference between their relationship. In third-person novels, Cohn says, it is 'the purely functional relationship that binds the narrator to the protagonist', while in first-person novels it is the 'existential relationship' that unites the two selves. Since this existential unity 'imitates the temporal continuity of real beings', the narrating self's motivation to narrate is accordingly existential (1978: 144). What is important here is how this motivation or the present context on the part of the narrating self creates the tension between two selves and how it is reflected in narrative reliability.

Figure 2 suggests a continuum of the tension between the narrating self and the experiencing self in terms of the extent to which the motivation or the present context of remembering is foregrounded. At one end of the scale, 'the present context of remembering' or 'the concurrent situation of recollection' is scarcely described and backgrounded by representing the past remembered events in chronological order. It is typical of the traditional autobiographical narrative. The focus is here on the past experiencing self and the products of remembering, as a consequence of which 'the reconstructive character of meaning-making, including its dependency on co-present conditions is dissimulated' (Neumann, 2008:337). At this scale, the narrating self is relatively stable. The stability on the part of the narrating self partly comes from some parallel relationship between first-and third-person narrators as Cohn mentioned above. Birke argues that traditional first-person narrators or narrating selves are 'credited with some of the attributes we ascribe to' third-person narrators, such as 'superior understanding', 'better judgement', and 'a fairly good memory' (Birke, 2008: 82). Despite their limitations on point of view or focalization, this quasi omniscient quality might contribute, for the reader, to accepting the reliability of the traditional first-person narrators.

At the other end of the scale, the present context of remembering is foregrounded. This draws the reader's attention to the present mental state of the narrating self and the present process of remembering. At this scale, the narrating self is often in an unstable state of mind. The instability is represented by using the technique of unreliable narration, which 'can serve to expose the act of narration as a highly constructive and self-serving activity' (Birke, 2008: 83). However, paradoxically, this constructed nature of unreliable memory seems to bear more resemblance to 'the workings of 'real' memory' (Birke, 2008: 83) than the quasi-omniscient nature of memory.

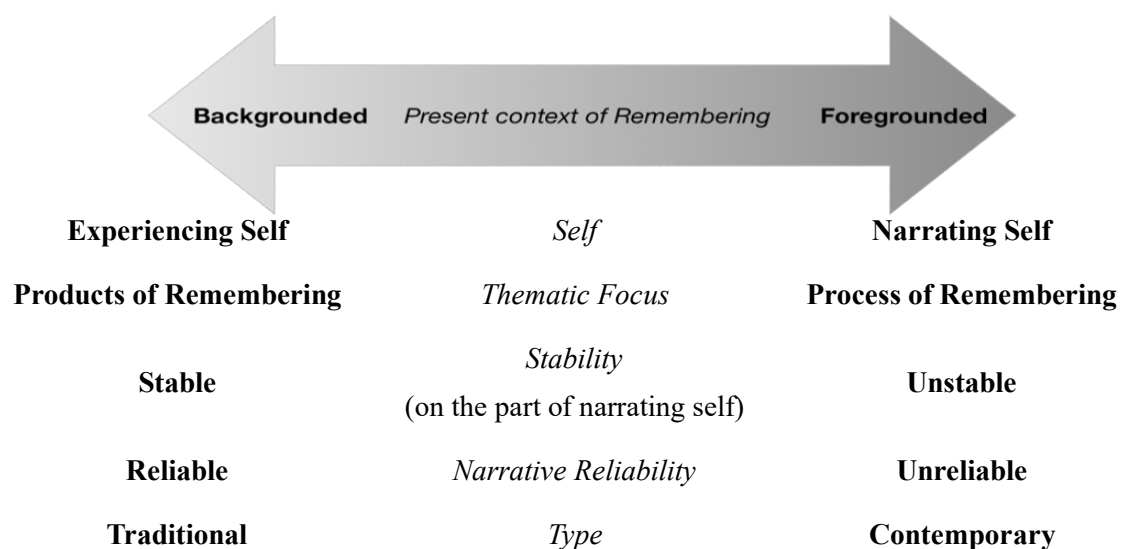


Figure 2 Continuum of Tension between Two Selves
(cf. Neumann, 2008:337; Birke, 2008:82-83)

In section 4, I examine how these features of contemporary fictions of memory are embodied in *A Pale View of Hills* and what kinds of narrative techniques Ishiguro uses to represent the distorted remembering process.

4. Representation of remembering process in *A Pale View of Hills*

Etsuko, the first person narrator of *A Pale View of Hills*, is a middle-aged Japanese woman now living alone in England. She feels guilty of the recent suicide of her elder daughter Keiko whose father is her first Japanese husband, Jiro. Keiko's death is related to Etsuko's departure from Japan with her second British husband, Sheringham. This leads to her daughter's depression and consequent suicide. However, Etsuko in her narrative does not tell the reasons for leaving Japan and what happened to Keiko then, probably because she cannot face directly this harsh reality. Instead, she indirectly tries to come to terms with

her loss and guilty over Keiko's death through other people's stories. Throughout Etsuko's narrative, in fact, Ishiguro demonstrates 'how someone ends up talking about things they cannot face directly through other people's stories' (Mason, 1989: 5)

In Etsuko's narrative, there are two different time levels: narrative present and narrative past. Etsuko's narrative present is set in England in the early 1980s, during the time after Etsuko learns the news of Keiko's suicide. Niki, her younger daughter of her second British husband, comes to visit on 'a mission' to reassure that Etsuko is not responsible for Keiko's death. This present tragic circumstance awakens her memories of a particular summer event in post-war Nagasaki in the early 1950s when she was pregnant with Keiko. These past memories form Etsuko's narrative past. Most of her narrative is devoted to her remembered events of Nagasaki, particularly her memories of a mother and a daughter, Sachiko and Mariko. In the course of her narrative, however, the reader's attention is continually attracted to Etsuko's present mental state, that is, her feeling of guilt over Keiko's death. She says: 'although we [Etsuko and Niki] never dwelt long on the subject of Keiko's death, it was never far away, hovering over us whenever we talked.' (Ishiguro, 1982: 10)'

What I am interested in here is how her past memories are highly coloured by the present context of remembering. In fact, Etsuko admits herself that '[M]emory, I realize, can be an unreliable thing; often it is heavily coloured by the circumstances in which one remembers' (Ishiguro, 1982: 156). Her metanarrative comments on memory implies that she is aware of the nature of memory's haziness and unreliability, but she is hardly conscious of how the present circumstance affects the past memory. In what follows, I examine how Ishiguro represents Etsuko's distorted remembering process by continually reminding the reader of her present emotional instability while she is narrating the past memories of Sachiko and Mariko.

One of the significant devices he effectively uses in the novel, as many critics point out (e.g. Shaffer, 1998), is an imagery which evokes in the reader's mind Keiko's death or her suicide scene. She committed suicide by hanging herself in her apartment in Manchester. Even though Etsuko never saw the room where Keiko died, the image of her daughter 'hanging in her room for days on end' is 'continually' hovering her mind:

- (2) I have found myself continually bringing to mind that picture —of my daughter hanging in her room for days on end. The horror of that image has never diminished, but it has long ceased to be a morbid matter; as with a wound on one's own body, it is possible to develop an intimacy with the most disturbing of things. (Ishiguro, 1982: 54)

Throughout her narrative, however, ‘the horror of the image’ recurrently appears in various forms and insidiously distorts her past memories.

The first encounter the reader has with the hanging imagery occurs in Etsuko’s narrative present in which she recounts her recent recurring dream:

- (3) At first it had seemed a perfectly innocent dream; I had merely dreamt of something I had seen the previous day—the little girl we had watched playing in the park. And then the dream came back the following night. Indeed, over the past few months, it has returned to me several times.

Niki and I had watched the girl playing on the swings the afternoon we had walked into the village. (Ishiguro, 1982: 47)

Her dream is not ‘a perfectly innocent dream’ as the image of ‘the (little) girl playing on the swings’ is implicitly associated with that of Keiko suspended by a rope swinging back and forth.

In Etsuko’s narrative past, the first imagery that evokes Keiko’s hanging is a rope and a willow tree (drooping posture), which appear when she searches for Mariko along the river bank.

- (4) Then eventually I became aware of a separate sound, a rustling noise...I stopped to listen, then realized what had caused it; an old piece of rope had tangled itself around my ankle...

“Hello, Mariko,” I said, for she was sitting in the grass a short way in front of me...A willow tree—one of several that grew on the bank—hung over the spot where she sat...

“Why have you got the rope?”

I watched her for a moment. Signs of fear were appearing on her face...

Mariko got to her feet. I came forward until I reached the willow tree. I noticed the cottage a short distance away, the shape of its roof darker than the sky. I could hear Mariko’s footsteps running off into the darkness. (Ishiguro, 1982: 83-84)

In this remembered scene, the description of an old piece of rope which Etsuko is holding and that of a willow tree hanging over Mariko gradually overlaps Keiko’s hanging image, as Etsuko holding the rope is approaching Mariko under the willow tree. At this point, Mariko’s fear reaches its climax and run off into the darkness.

One could also read this image as if Etsuko were trying to murder the child. Later in her narrative, she recounts the reports of serial child murders at the time of 1950s in Nagasaki: ‘Received with more urgency the reports of the child murders that were alarming Nagasaki at the time. First a boy, then a small girl had been found battered to death. When a third victim, another little girl, had been found hanging from a tree there was near-panic amongst the mothers in the neighbourhood’ (Ishiguro, 1982: 100). Among the victims, the little girl hanging from a tree, is clearly associated with Keiko’s hanging image.

When Etsuko takes a day’s journey to Mt Inasa with Sachiko and Mariko, they use a cable car to climb the summit of the mountain. Here, the hanging imagery appears again: ‘...the cable car swayed gently as we climbed higher; for a moment, the treetops seemed to brush against the windows, then suddenly a large dip opened beneath us and we were hanging in the sky. (Ishiguro, 1982: 106-107)’

Near the end of the novel when Etsuko again looks for Mariko near the river bank and finds her on the small bridge, the rope appears again:

- (5) The little girl [Mariko] was watching me closely. “Why are you holding that?” she asked.
“This? It just caught around my sandal, that’s all.”
“Why are you holding it?”
“I told you. It caught around my foot. What’s wrong with you?” I gave a short laugh.
“Why are you looking at me like that? I’m not going to hurt you.”
Without taking her eyes from me, she rose slowly to her feet. (Ishiguro, 1982: 173)

Although in the dialogue between Etsuko and Mariko, the rope is only referred to by ‘that’, ‘this’ and ‘it’, the reader can identify what is referred to by these demonstrative pronouns due to the *deja vu* effect. Mariko is again afraid of Etsuko holding the rope and running away from her. The recurrent imagery of hanging and child murders draws the reader’s attention to the present mental state of Etsuko, who thinks she is responsible for Keiko’s death or even thinks she murders her own child.

Another technique for reminding the reader of the present narrating Etsuko is displacement. The displacement occurs between Etsuko and Sachiko and between Keiko and Mariko. In the course of her narrative, the reader gradually identifies this displacement. In Chapter 1 when Sachiko is firstly introduced in her narrative, Etsuko observes two women’s conversation in which they talk about how Sachiko is unfriendly to them. Then in the next paragraph, Etsuko comments: ‘It was never my intention to

appear unfriendly, but it was probably true that I made no special effort to seem otherwise'. The reader is confused here because Etsuko reacts as if the two women were talking about her. However, at this stage, the reader only doubts the relationship between Etsuko and Sachiko.

Another example of displacement can be seen in the following example in which the narrative past suddenly switches to the narrative present:

- (6) "Should we go and look for her [Mariko]now?" I said.
"No," Sachiko said, still looking out. "She'll be back soon. Let her stay out if that's what she wants."

I feel only regret now for those attitudes I displayed towards Keiko. In this country, after all, it is not unexpected that a young woman of that age should wish to leave home. All I succeeded in doing, it would see, was to ensure that when she finally left—now almost six years ago, she did so severing all her ties with me. (Ishiguro, 1982: 87-88)

In this example, Sachiko said to Etsuko that they did not need to go after Mariko, who left home after having a quarrel with her mother. When Sachiko's dialogue is closed, the narrating Etsuko suddenly appears and says: 'I feel only regret now for those attitudes I displayed towards Keiko'. Here, Sachiko's attitudes toward Mariko is subtly displaced by Etsuko's attitudes towards Keiko, who leaves home by cutting all her ties with Etsuko. Etsuko seems to reflect on her past behaviour towards her daughter through narrating the story of Sachiko and Mariko.

The displacement of Etsuko for Sachiko and Keiko for Mariko is clearly betrayed near at the end of the novel, when Etsuko encourages Mariko, who does not want to go to America with Sachiko and Frank. Etsuko says to Mariko:

- (7) "In any case," I went on, "if you don't like it over there, we can always come back."
This time she looked up at me questioningly.
"Yes, I promise," I said. "If you don't like it over there, we'll come straight back. But we have to try it and see if we like it there, I'm sure we will." (Ishiguro, 1982: 173)

In this context, Etsuko should use the second person *you* to refer to Mariko and Sachiko. Instead, she uses the first person plural *we* as if she were talking to her daughter, Keiko.

This direct displacement is also seen in the Etsuko's speech when talking to Niki about the day's journey to Mt Inasa:

(8) "What was so special about it?" said Niki...

"Oh, there was nothing special about it. I was just remembering it, that's all. Keiko was happy that day. We rode on the cable cars." I gave a laugh and turned to Niki. "No, there was nothing special about it. It's just a happy memory, that's all." (Ishiguro, 1982: 182)

Here she said to Niki that 'Keiko was happy that day'. This clearly confuses the reader since Etsuko was then still pregnant with Keiko and went there with Sachiko and Mariko. It is not until the occurrences of this direct displacement that the reader realizes that Etsuko's narrative is likely to be distorted or invented for her own purpose. Through the story of Sachiko and Mariko, she tries to reflect on her own behaviour with a detached perspective and thus come to terms with her own failure.

The last technique I want to discuss is Etsuko's use of the words implying a strong feeling of anxiety that something unpleasant is about to happen: for example, the words like *premonition* and *misgivings*. Before she begins to narrate her past memories, the reader is already informed of Keiko's death. So in reading her narrative, the reader's attention is attracted to how Keiko's death is going to happen. Although the cause of Keiko's death is not directly told in her narrative, such words reminds the reader of her present miserable circumstance. For example, Etsuko uses the word *premonition* when she and Sachiko search for Mariko and cross the far side of the river which is the dangerous place for the child: 'Perhaps it is just my fancy that I felt a cold touch of unease there on that bank, a feeling not unlike premonition' (Ishiguro, 1982: 40) Here premonition clearly implies Mariko's death. In fact, when she found Mariko on the river bank, she firstly thought Mariko was dead. The word is closely associated with the image of the child's death and thus evokes in the reader Keiko's death.

Another example is the word *misgiving*, which is used two times in her narrative with the word *motherhood*:

(9) The child's [Mariko's] response had, it is true, upset me somewhat; for in those days, such small things were capable of arousing in me every kind of misgiving about motherhood. (Ishiguro, 1982:17)

(10) I still remember those journeys vividly, and they—like those misgivings about

motherhood, like Ogata-san's visit—serve today to bring a certain distinctness to that summer. (Ishiguro, 1982: 99)

When she was pregnant with Keiko, she was very sensitive to being a mother and afraid of having a responsibility for the coming baby. She says that 'misgivings about motherhood...serve today to bring a certain distinctness to that summer'. However, it seems, on the contrary, her present circumstance compels her to highlight these misgivings about motherhood in her retrospective narrative. It reminds the reader of the fact that Etsuko fails to undertake the responsibility for Keiko as a mother and leads her to death.

5. Narrative authenticity reconsidered

This paper has investigated how Ishiguro's idea of authenticity is demonstrated in Etsuko's unreliable narration, which is highly coloured and distorted in the remembering process. In the course of the narrative, her actual motivation to narrate was not told but indirectly represented through the devices like imagery, displacement and the use of the words like *premonition* and *misgiving*. These narrative techniques continually remind the reader of her present context of remembering, particularly her guilt-ridden consciousness of Keiko's death.

Etsuko's narrative, on the one hand, destabilized her identity, transforming her 'morbid' sense of guilt into the hanging imagery in the remembering process. On the other hand, it stabilizes her identity. She tried to come to terms with her failure or 'develop an intimacy with the most disturbing of things' she could not face directly through the story of Sachiko and Mariko. By using the device of displacement, she reflected on what she had done with her daughter, keeping her presence of mind. In fact, Ishiguro skillfully combined the stabilizing function with the destabilizing function of narrative and described Etsuko's tangled workings of mind.

As mentioned above, traditional first-person fictions of memory, which often includes in their titles the word *history*, attempt to make their narratives authentic by relating the past to the actual events. However, in contemporary first-person fictions of memory, this sense of authenticity is deliberately broken through the technique of unreliable narration. In the case of *A Pale View of Hills*, Etsuko's unreliable narration reveals that the present deforms the past or the past is filtered through the present. It is authentic for Ishiguro to represent the complicated interactive process between present and past.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1. Neumann states that texts focusing on memory and the process of remembering ‘highlight that our memories are highly selective, and that the rendering of memories potentially tells us more about the rememberer’s present, his or her desire and denial, than about the actual past events’ (2008:333)
2. The concept of the unreliable narrator is firstly introduced by Booth: ‘I have called a narrator *reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say the implied author’s norms), *unreliable* when he does not’ (1961: 158-159). For the issues on this problematic definition or the elusive notion of the implied author, see Nunning 2008, and Funioková 2015.
3. One thing he cares for making this type of narrator authentic is not to make his narrators ‘any more unreliable than the average person would be in a similar context’ (Ishiguro, 2015). This paper investigates the remembering process of the middle-aged Japanese woman, Etsuko, who is probably the most average or ordinary person among Ishiguro’s narrators: cf. Ono (an artist), and Stevens (a butler).
4. Representations of individual memory have long been studied particularly in the field of narratology, but scholars have not as yet had an established approach to investigate representations of collective memory (Neumann, 2008:333).
5. As an example of this, I quote a passage from Dickens’s *David Copperfield*: ‘...and if it should appear from anything I may set down in this narrative that I was a child of close observation, or that as a man I have a strong memory of my childhood, I undoubtedly lay claim to both of these characteristics (Dickens, 1999: 13).

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