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## **Creating a Unique Character in Fiction**

In her lectures, which are concentrated on creative writing, Scarlett Thomas (“The End of Mr. Y”, “PopCo”) says that there are times when she is so lost in a story or some reflections that she cannot go on. Everything stops and she doesn’t know what to write next. The reason is a lack of attention to a character, especially to his desires. There is no dynamics if there is no character with a strong personality.

The described situation shows that all in all any story is based on a character, everything starts with him. Robert McKee admits that for a writer (a novelist or a screenwriter) the choice of actions (and that of a continuation) depends on the personality of a protagonist, a character, who makes a storyline go on. To write an interesting novel, an author should first create a “paper person” in minute detail [1].

Two parts of a creation process can be distinguished: a characterization and a personalization. Characterization is the “outside” features, some basic information, which helps a reader place a character in the everyday life system or to understand the uniqueness of a newly created world: sex, age, appearance, where he lives, what his occupation is, his values, attitudes, body language. All these qualities are often on the surface and are easily observed. They make a character unique and decorate him, but don’t give a deep understanding of his priorities and don’t guide him through a story. For a plot progression another point is more important – the inner features, as in the end they form the behaviour of a character. They are invisible at first sight, as they are revealed only through actions, under the pressure of inevitable choice, but they are that engine, which makes a machine of a story go. The inner features are rather abstract, like *kind*, *risky* or *shy*, but their combination gives a writer an answer to the main questions: What does a character want? What is his motive? What is he looking for and how far can he go to reach it? Realizing the answers the author knows in what direction this character moves and what his next step could be.

Usually the abstract traits given to a character are opposite to each other. The aim of opposition is to create an inner conflict, which makes a character more complex, more interesting. What is also worth noting about personalization is a realization of its potential. Robert McKee admits that an author shouldn’t offer an explanation for the characters’ actions, as

readers may understand them very differently. The more reasons variations a reader has the more attractive a personage turns out to be. To give an audience a chance to think a writer should leave some space. It means that all the expressions of protagonist's nature should be "active", they should be mirrored in actions, not just in monologues or in a narrative explanation.

Moreover words describing the circumstances are valued more, than character's words about himself. Our perception of a protagonist is changing according to other characters' attitudes. For example, Mr. Darcy (in "Pride and Prejudice" by J. Austen) is supposed to be a rude and cold man, as we see him through the eyes of Elizabeth, whose basic information about the gentleman is rather specific. When Elizabeth finally comes to a conclusion that Mr. Darcy is a pleasant, though closed, person, our thoughts about him change. An author can choose the point of view to make us see what he wants us to see in a character.

A story is mostly remembered due to a character. We might forget some details, but we never forget Leon who saved a little girl from certain death, or Raskol'nikov whose inner struggle impressed the whole world. The authors' task is to create such a "paper person", and though there are some tips, the art stays magical and in the end the inspiration can offer more than any instruction [1].

### ***Библиографический список***

1. McKee R. Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting. New York City: Regan Books, 1997.