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The Embrace: Narrative Voice and Children's Books

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Abstract

Dans cet article qui fait l'analyse précise des paragraphes initiaux de plusieurs oeuvres extrêmement connues, comme *The Paper Bag Princess* de Munsch/Martchenko ou la série des *Jacob Two-Two* de Mordecai Richler, R. McGillis observe que l'enclenchement de la narration dans l'oeuvre destinée à l'enfant-lecteur tend à adoucir, à amadouer, à produire une adhésion et un rapport de sécurité. Ce "ton" particulier pourrait s'appeler l'etreinte, unissant le lecteur et son narrateur.

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Embrace your inner child -- no, this not a new-age, feel-good article but a skill required to successfully deliver a story from a child's perspective. The child that was still lives in you, as does your knowledge of your own children and every child you've ever come to know. You must dig deep and find those youthful voices that live within you, if you want to truthfully write in the voice of a child. This is not a book for children, but a book written (at least in the early chapters) in a child's voice -- first person narrative. I should add there are two narrators, Bria who we meet at 9 and Mary, who becomes a mother figure. Yes, as I state in my article, children do mirror what they receive, and children who are given the stimulation of articulate parents and good books will reflect that back. The concepts of narrative voice and narrative perspective tend to get lumped together as the "point of view" in inattentive analysis, yet the distinction is important and clear in contemporary literature. To illustrate the distinction, let's consider an example. I write a story with a third-person limited viewpoint about a child growing up. There is a clear main character, and we only see things from his "point of view." Now what if I tell you that the narration is done through a set of journal entries from the child's mother. Nothing about the story itself has changed, but it seems the "point