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NARRATING MEMORY THROUGH SYNTAX: A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF TEMPORALITY IN HARUKI MURAKAMI'S 1Q84

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Abstract
This paper aims to investigate the relationship between narrative syntax and the representation of temporal shifts and memory in Haruki Murakami's 1Q84 (Volume 1). Using Genettean narratology and Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), the study examines linguistic structures, particularly tense modulation, aspect, modality, and narrative focalization, to construct the novel's destabilized sense of time and fragmented memory. Focusing exclusively on Volume 1, the study addresses a notable gap by emphasizing how syntax, rather than broader thematic concerns, plays a critical role in shaping the reader's experience of alternate realities and subjective temporality. This paper achieves its objectives by identifying the syntactic patterns used to depict temporal shifts and analyzing their role in the portrayal of memory and alternate realities. Recommendations for future research include extending the syntactic analysis to later volumes of 1Q84, comparative studies of translation strategies, and broader applications of linguistic narratology to contemporary fiction.

INTRODUCTION
Haruki Murakami is known for his distinctive storytelling style that blends magical realism, existentialism, and surrealism. He is widely regarded as one of the most celebrated modern writers. His works often explore themes such as identity, memory, time, and the blurred boundaries between truth and deception. Marked by a versatile approach, Murakami's narrative weaves together everyday life. Among his many books, 1Q84 is particularly notable for its mystery, objectives, and hallmark analysis of philosophical and intellectual topics. The novel, set in an alternative Japan in 1984, 1Q84, published in three volumes from 2009 to 2010, emerges with a depressed atmosphere and a complete personal description. The book binds together the survival of two main protagonists, Aomame and Tengo. Murakami contemplates love, damage, governance, and the abnormality of actuality through the medium of his characters' memoir. One important aspect of 1Q84 is its own treatment of duration and recollection. With its usual shifting between various time points, the story generates an active interaction within the past, present, and an imagined exchange universe. It generates shifts that obscure the lines between time eras and compel readers to travel a universe that opposes. These shifts provide perceptive interpretation of how remembrance and perception shape human experience.
This study magnifies the decisive role of narrative word order in molding secular perception and memory samples by highlighting Haruki Murakami's 1Q84. A book known for its nonlinear narrative, temporal distortion, and supernatural complexity. This article expands the understanding of how innovative literature

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uses grammar and syntax to explore subjective time, memory distortion, and the blurred borders between real and imagined experiences. This examination shows clearly how Murakami applies temporal highlights that question normal narrative unity and welcome the reader into a disrupted universe where duration is both periodic and detached. The aim of this study is to investigate how Murakami uses dialect tools to indicate temporal shifts in 1Q84. By examining the syntactic traits of the novel, this study seeks to uncover how these shifts boost the narrative's thematic fullness. In this context, the following major research question has been formulated.

- How do linguistic structures in 1Q84 convey temporal shifts, and in what ways do these shifts shape the representation of memory and alternate realities within the novel?
- How do linguistic structures, particularly syntax, contribute to the representation of temporal shifts in 1Q84?

This study is limited to Volume 1 of Haruki Murakami's 1Q84, which constrains the analysis of narrative syntax and memory to the early stages of character development and world-building. This limitation is acknowledged to maintain analytical focus and depth within the bounds of Volume 1.

Literature Review

Narrative syntax is the structural arrangement of sentences and phrases inside a narrative that creates meaning, coherence, and effect. It changes tone, mood, and reader involvement by structuring events, description, and conversation to improve the narrative experience. Narrative time has been a major concern of literary theory and linguistics. Gérard *Genette's Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (1980) establishes the fundamental concepts for the understanding of how time is handled within stories. He establishes order, duration, and frequency as fundamental aspects of narration, with particular emphasis on analepsis (flashback) and prolepsis (flashforward), both of which are prominent in 1Q84 (Genette, 35). Both these narrative shifts disrupt chronological order, and syntax plays a crucial role in guiding the reader's sense of time.

Building on Genette, Paul Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative* (1984) expands the argument that narrative creates time, not represents it. Ricoeur suggests that readers themselves create temporal succession from linguistic and syntactic cues (Ricoeur, 72). This is especially relevant to 1Q84, where Murakami's precise handling of tense, aspect, and sentence form builds the reader's experience of competing chronologies.

Catherine Emmott, in *Narrative Comprehension: A Discourse Perspective* (1997), discusses the role of discourse structure in the construction of time sense, pointing to the way grammatical markers such as verb tense, aspect, and adverbs indicate time change (Emmott, 102). Murakami's manipulation of verb form and sentence structure contributes to a disjointed but flowing construction of time in 1Q84.

Murakami's novels are basically associated with nonlinear time, dreamlike transitions, and double realities. Jay Rubin, in Haruki Murakami and *the Music of Words* (2002), argues that Murakami's prose is modelled on jazz improvisation, and the narrative rhythm becomes elastic, in which changes of time and point of view become seamless rather than abrupt (Rubin, 146). This suggests that sentence rhythm and form are central to the sense of time in Murakami's novels.

Another significant work is Rebecca Suter's study of translation and temporal experience in Murakami's work. She argues that Japanese sentence structures create different temporal effects from their English translations, particularly in the use of tense and aspect (Suter, 265). This is significant in analyzing how linguistic elements create the temporal duality in 1Q84, since shifts between past and present, reality and alternative reality, are indicated through specific syntactic strategies.

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Memory, like time, is a construct mediated through language. Maurice Halbwachs's theory of collective memory and individual recall frames memory as a social phenomenon, structured by language and narrative (Halbwachs, 32). Murakami's 1Q84 deals with memory as both unreliable and fragmented. Characters such as Aomame and Tengo navigate memories that do not correspond to objective reality, often referring to events they feel happened but cannot verify. These memory sequences often feature free indirect discourse, subtle tense shifts, and deictic dislocations.

Susan Napier, in her study of Japanese postmodernism, notes that Murakami's fiction often employs "a surreal manipulation of time and identity," destabilizing both cultural and chronological reference points (Napier, 158). These shifts are not merely thematic; they are embedded in sentence-level syntax that queers the reader's orientation in time. For instance, the frequent use of iterative past tense ("used to") and subjunctive mood creates narrative ambiguity, allowing the text to float between recollection and immediate experience.

Murakami's 1Q84 addresses memory, time distortion, and parallel worlds, all of which impact linguistic encoding of temporal displacement. In The Forbidden Worlds of Haruki Murakami (2014), Matthew Strecher explains how Murakami constructs "time loops" and "memory gaps" to create ambiguity in the reader's experience of time (Strecher, 198). Cognitive narratology supports this, asserting that readers construct events from syntactic and linguistic signals (Fludernik, 89).

Theoretical Framework

This study draws upon an interdisciplinary theoretical framework, combining Genettean narratology and linguistic stylistics. The narratological concepts developed by Gérard Genette, particularly order, duration, and frequency, are central to this study. Genette's framework provides the tools to describe the temporal structure of narrative: Order refers to the sequence of events in the story vs. the order in which they are narrated (e.g., flashbacks or analepses). Duration examines how much textual space is given to a particular event in comparison to the event's actual duration. Frequency explores how often a single event is narrated and from which perspectives.

These concepts are particularly useful in Murakami's work, where temporal distortion and repetition reflect the characters' fragmented mental states and memories.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, textual analytical research design within the fields of linguistic stylistics and narratology. The purpose is to explore how narrative syntax in Volume 1 of Murakami's 1Q84 shapes the representation of memory and contributes to the novel's temporal complexity. As this volume introduces the parallel narratives of Aomame and Tengo, it is particularly suited for analyzing how the syntax of narration constructs disjointed, layered timelines that reflect the characters' evolving relationship with memory.

The design is interpretative, emphasizing close reading and linguistic examination of the text. Rather than attempting to generalize across the entire trilogy or across different novels, this focused design allows for an in-depth, nuanced understanding of the language choices in Volume 1. The data for this study is drawn from selected textual extracts from the English translation of 1Q84 Volume 1, translated by Jay Rubin. The selection of data is purposeful and thematic, based on scenes where memory becomes a focal point of the narrative or where temporal disjunction is linguistically emphasized.

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Analysis

Basically, the nature of reality, perception, and the porous borders of time in Haruki Murakami's 1Q84 is a book. Its story depends on a minor but significant time difference felt by Aomame and Tengo, the protagonists, as they slide from the known world of 1984 into a parallel reality called "1Q84". Focusing on the first chapter, "Aomame: Don't Let the Appearances Fool You," this study will look at how Murakami uses particular linguistic elements, especially syntactic structures, to portray the early phases of this chronological transition. This study will show how the linguistic architecture of the chapter carefully builds Aomame's dawning awareness of temporal displacement and defines the central ontological ambiguity of the book by applying principles of narratology, specifically by concentrating on ideas including focalization, narrative voice, tense, mood, and temporal order. Primarily by means of sentence structure, modality, and tense as seen via Aomame's perspective, Chapter 1 marks the transition from a stable temporal frame (1984) into one defined by unsettling difference (1Q84), linguistically and narratively marking a critical threshold.

Narratology

Narratology, the theory of narrative structures, provides essential tools for dissecting how stories represent time and consciousness. Focalization refers to the perspective through which a narrative is presented. It concerns who sees or who perceives the events of the story, as distinct from who tells the story (the narrator). Narrative focalization consists of the relation between the vision (or perception) and the narrator, or more precisely, between the focalizer, the one who perceives, and the narrator, the one who speaks. (Genette,186) Gérard Genette's distinction between "who speaks?" (voice) and "who sees?" (focalization) is paramount. 1Q84 predominantly uses a third-person narrator, but the novel employs internal focalization heavily centered on Aomame. This means the narrative, while grammatically in the third person ("She checked her watch," "Aomame thought"), filters events, perceptions, and, significantly, the experience of time through Aomame's consciousness. The narrator rarely offers information Aomame herself doesn't possess or perceive. This technique is crucial for depicting the temporal shift not as an objective event declared by an omniscient narrator, but as a subjective, unsettling realization unfolding within the character's mind. The syntax often mirrors her thought processes, hesitations, questions, and deductions.

The dominant narrative tense is the simple past, typical for retrospective narration ("The traffic jam was atrocious," "She climbed the stairs"). However, the depiction of temporal shifts often involves subtle interplay with other tenses and aspects (past perfect for established background, present tense for immediate sensory input or generalized truths asserted within the narrative moment, and, critically, mood. The indicative mood reports perceived facts ("The taxi was stuck"), while subjunctive or conditional moods, often embedded within Aomame's internal monologue, express uncertainty, hypothesis, and the counterfactual nature of the unfolding situation ("If she did that..."). Modal verbs (might, could, seem, must) become vital linguistic markers of Aomame's struggle to reconcile perception with her established understanding of reality and time.

This study follows the chronological sequence (anachrony is minimal initially); the perception of time's fabric changing disrupts this linearity internally. Aomame's reflections constantly juxtapose the 'now' with the 'before', creating an internal analepsis (recalling the norms of 1984) against which the present is measured.

Narrative Speed

Murakami manipulates narrative speed. The traffic jam is described with a sense of stasis, elongating perceived time (detailed scene). The climb down the emergency stairs is also rendered in detail, marking its significance

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as a transitional passage. Conversely, background information might be summarized quickly. The pacing reflects Aomame's heightened awareness during critical moments of observation and decision. For example: "Looks like a major accident up ahead. This is no ordinary traffic jam. We've hardly moved for quite a while" (Murakami, 8). The phrase *"no ordinary traffic jam"* subtly foreshadows the transition from the ordinary world to the surreal alternate reality that Aomame will soon enter. The stagnation in traffic mirrors the disruption of linear time and reality, a central theme in the novel. This moment initiates a temporal and narrative shift, aligning with the novel's exploration of dislocation, memory, and parallel worlds.

"To tell you the truth, there's a stairway leading from the turnout down to street level. It's for drivers who have abandoned their cars in a fire or earthquake and climb down to the street.

Usually, only maintenance workers use it. If you were to climb down that stairway, you'd be near a Tokyu Line station. From there, it's nothing to Shibuya" (Murakami, 10).

This example explores the concept of narrative speed, where a small, ordinary detail leads to a major shift in reality. Both the concept and examples are interrelated with each other.

However, Aomame's observations of difference (police uniforms) imply a shift to a new, potentially iterative reality; this is the way things are now in this altered timeline, suggesting a fundamental change in the underlying temporal state. For instance, "Just before they passed each other, Aomame noticed that there was something unusual about his uniform. The jacket was the normal deep navy blue, but its cut was different: the design was more casual, less tight-fitting, and in a softer material, the lapels smaller, even the navy color a touch paler. His pistol, too, was a different model. He wore a large automatic at his waist instead of the revolver normally issued to policemen in Japan" (Murakami, 47).

Murakami uses this precise descriptive language to highlight a disjunction in perceived reality, setting the stage for the novel's exploration of fractured timelines, subjective memory, and alternate dimensions.

Memory and Time

This article analyzes Haruki Murakami's 1Q84, applying Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) to examine how linguistic features convey the themes of time and memory.

This study is particularly suitable because it occurs after Aomame commits a pivotal act: assassinating the Leader, an event that fundamentally alters her reality and forces deep introspection about her past, present, and the nature of the world she now inhabits, the world of 1Q84. It's a chapter rich in reflection, memory recall, and temporal disorientation.

This analysis focuses on Aomame's perspective immediately following her assassination of the Leader of the Sakigake cult (founder and spiritual head of Sakigake, a new religious cult, supposedly has a unique, almost mystical connection to the supernatural forces of the world, especially to the Little People). We will employ Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), pioneered by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, as a lens.

CMT posits that humans understand abstract concepts (like time, memory, emotion) in terms of more concrete, embodied experiences, creating systematic metaphorical mappings (e.g., ARGUMENT IS A WAR, LOVE IS A JOURNEY). By examining the linguistic features of the book specific word choices, sentence structures, imagery, and narrative voice-through the framework of CMT, the study illuminates how Murakami constructs Aomame's subjective experience of time and memory, revealing their fragility and interconnectedness within the unsettling landscape of 1Q84. The study, with its focus on consequence, reflection, and the dawning awareness of irreversible change, serves as a microcosm of the novel's larger temporal and mnemonic concerns. Our research on Murakami utilizes linguistic instantiations of core conceptual metaphors- primarily TIME IS A FLUID/SPACE, MEMORY IS AN OBJECT/LOCATION, and

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REALITY IS A CONTAINER- to articulate the profound disorientation and existential questioning Aomame faces, thereby underscoring the novel's central themes of temporal rupture and the unreliability, yet persistence, of memory.

The book finds Aomame in the immediate aftermath of executing the Leader. She has successfully carried out the mission given to her by the Dowager (symbolizing an alternative form of justice): personal, hidden, but effective. She exists outside official institutions, much like the secret world Aomame enters. Her presence grounds the narrative in a form of resistance that is subtle but forceful, feminine yet assertive, using her specialized needle technique to induce a death resembling a heart attack, leaving no trace. The chapter details her meticulous escape from the hotel: changing clothes, altering her appearance subtly, disposing of her tools, and taking circuitous routes via taxi and train to reach a safe house apartment arranged by Tamaru, the Dowager's bodyguard.

Throughout this process, Aomame is outwardly calm and professional, but internally, she is grappling with the magnitude of her actions and the strange reality she occupies. Key elements include:

Her actions are precise, learned, and almost automatic, reflecting her training. Linguistically, this is often conveyed through declarative sentences and procedural descriptions. However, this contrasts sharply with her internal monologue. She notes small details: the feel of the clothes, the anonymity of the train, the features of the safe house. Yet, these grounding details often serve to highlight her sense of unreality, particularly the persistent image of the two moons in the night sky, the definitive marker of 1Q84.

The act of killing triggers reflections. She thinks about the Dowager's motivations, Tamaru's professionalism, and, significantly, her past relationship with Tengo. The memory of holding his hand in elementary school resurfaces with potent emotional force, a mnemonic anchor in a sea of change. For example, "She was aware that she had become split in two. Half of her continued to press the dead man's neck with utter coolness. The other half was filled with fear. She wanted to drop everything and get out of this room now. I'm here, but I'm not here. I'm in two places at once. It goes against Einstein's theorem, but what the hell. Call it the Zen of the killer" (Murakami, 55). This internal division highlights the emotional toll of her actions and foreshadows her growing instability in the surreal world of 1Q84.

Aomame explicitly acknowledges the changed world. She accepts the presence of the two moons and the subtle shifts she's noticed since descending the emergency staircase from the expressway. She understands her actions might have further solidified her place in this altered reality, linking her fate to this new timeline.

The chapter title "If You Don't Want to Make Waves, Don't Go Near the Water," encapsulates the theme of causality and consequence. Aomame has gone near the water; she has made significant waves by killing the Leader, and she must now navigate the turbulent currents she has unleashed.

CMT proposes that our conceptual system, which governs how we think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical. We grasp abstract concepts (target domains) by mapping them onto more concrete, experiential concepts (source domains). For instance:

We talked about flowing, passing, running out. The future approaches; the past is behind us. Time can be spent, wasted, or saved. This allows us to conceptualize time's progression and our interaction with it.

Memories can be held, lost, retrieved, buried, uncovered, sharp, or faded. We carry memories with us. This frames memories as tangible things we interact with.

We search our memory; things are deep in memory; we unlock memories; memories are stored. This allows us to think about the structure and accessibility of memory.

We are in the world; we can enter or leave a situation or state. This metaphor helps define boundaries and our position relative to our surroundings.

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Actions lead to consequences; events are set in motion, one thing triggers another. The chapter title directly invokes this type of metaphor (making waves = causing disturbances).

In 1Q84, Murakami doesn't just use these conventional metaphors; he plays with them, stretches them, and sometimes shows them breaking down, reflecting the characters' experiences in a reality where the usual rules no longer apply.

Murakami's uses various linguistic devices to portray time not as a steady, linear progression (the conventional metaphor) but as something potentially fractured, divergent, and subjectively experienced.

Conclusion

This article explores the linguistic construction of temporal shifts and memory representation in Haruki Murakami's 1Q84 (Volume 1), focusing on the role of narrative syntax in shaping readers' perception of time and alternate realities. The central topic of the study how syntactic structures influence the portrayal of memory and temporal disruption proves crucial in understanding Murakami's distinctive narrative technique, where the boundaries between past, present, and imagined worlds are obscured through language itself.

The book, 1Q84, serves as a rich text for this analysis, offering a multilayered exploration of reality, memory, and identity within an alternate 1984. Murakami's careful use of tense shifts, modality, narrative perspective, and sentence structures creates a destabilized temporal environment that mirrors the psychological disorientation of his characters, particularly Aomame and Tengo. This study successfully achieved its two primary objectives: to examine the syntactic structures used to depict temporal shifts in 1Q84. This article identified key linguistic features, such as tense modulation, modality, and focalization strategies, that mark transitions across different temporal planes. To analyze the role of these linguistic features in representing time and memory within the novel. Findings revealed that syntax not only reflects but actively constructs subjective experiences of memory recall, temporal looping, and ontological uncertainty. Future studies should examine Volumes 2 and 3 of 1Q84 to capture the full evolution of Murakami's syntactic manipulation and the development of memory and temporal instability across the entire trilogy.

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