Daniele Zuliani 5aALS

Oliver wants some more

The text I’m going to analyse is an estract from Oliver Twist, a novel written by Charles Dickens, during the Victorian Age. The events, that reports some events happened during a meal time, are told by a 3rd person narrator. Telling is the most used narrative technique even if showing is used. The use of a third person omniscient narrator is a way to enable Dickens to intervene in the narration, in order to provide indirectly his point of view about the society. Another technique adopted by the narrator is the use of irony, which is a way to criticize in an indirect way his contemporary society. The text can be divided into two principal parts. In the first part, the narrator creates the setting, whereas the second part deals with the protagonist's request of more food and the reaction of his request. While the first sequence of the extract focuses the reader’s attention on the setting and the description of the workhouse, in which the physical description of the children is in contrast with the determined spirit of them, Oliver mostly, in the second part is a description of the setting in which Oliver lived and the other characters. The reaction of the master to Oliver’s request is unexpected from the reader: “he turned very pale”, he “clung for support to the copper” and he replied with a “faint voice”. The writer described the master with typical gestures of Catholic rites and he seemed the priest and his followers. Also, the character of the master is made up through the category of physical aspect: he is fat and healthy, in contrast with the children of the workhouse. The gravity of the situation is again ironically underlined by the expression "allotted by the dietary". The intelligent reader understands the children have no right to request more than he has been allowed.

In conclusion, the intelligent reader may understand the purpose of the novelist is to denounce the problem of children who live in workhouses, bringing into surface their difficulties to survive and make people aware of their condition.