

## The dimensions of interior monologue technique in Henry James's novels

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### Abstract:

*This paper aimed to find out the use of interior monologue technique in the following novels: "The Portrait of a Lady" and "The Turn of the Screw" and "The Wings of the Dove". Henry James was an American modernist author. He has used this literary technique in his three novels; He reflected the dimensions of interior monologue in the analysis of characters. These dimensions present James's ability to reflect an internal communication inside a character, to reflect impacts of internal communication on a character. This technique enabled James to focus on the nature of internal communication and to present the characters' impressions and to describe the world which those characters inhabit. James concerned with the human psyche to portray a character in a different style with specific psychological depth. He focused on the psychological content of the character to present its inner life.*

*He presented the dimensions of internal communication to penetrate feelings and emotions of characters and explore their attitudes which formed their internal world. Interior monologue tended to reflect internal communication and feelings inside a character's. It found out the merits of internal communication to reveal the character's analysis in psychological style. Interior monologue tended to find out the psychological spaces and dimensions inside the character.*

**Key words:** interior monologue, James, internal communication.

## INTRODUCTION

It is a term that is most often confused with stream of consciousness, Edouard Dujardin the first to use it in his novel *les larriers sont coupes* (1887). He defined it as “ *the speech of a character in a scene, having for its object to introduce us directly into the internal life of that character, without other intervention through explorations or commentaries, it differs from traditional monologue in that : in its matter, it is an expression of the most intimate thought that lies nearest the unconscious, in its form, it is produced in direct phrases reduced to the minimum of syntax, and thus it corresponds the minimum of syntax, and thus it correspond essentially to the conception we have today of poetry*”<sup>1</sup>

It is used for representing the psychic content and processes of character, partly or entirely unuttered interior monologue is also known as inner voice, internal speech, or verbal stream of consciousness is thinking in words, it also refers to the semi – constant internal monologue one has with one self at a consciousness or semi-conscious level.

Grammar rules are respected and punctuation is used to reproduce the sequence of thought, memories, feelings, considerations of the characters. the main features of the interior monologue are it is a verbal expression of a psychic phenomenon, it is a verbal expression of a psychic phenomenon, it is immediate this distinguishes it from both the soliloquy and the dramatic monologue, where conventional syntax is respected, it is free from introductory expressions like he thought, he remembered, he said , there are two levels of narration: one external to the character's mind, the other internal, it lacks chronological order and the presence of

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Humphrey, *stream of consciousness in the modern novel* (London,1954), page 24

subjective time , it disregards the rules of punctuation , it lacks formal logical order .

There were some authors who developed and exploited the term of interior monologue in the ancient world, they were Homer, Apollonius Rhodius, Vergil, Longus, and Xenophon of Ephesus, they used it with great skill and power. Homers use of the interior monologue was especially interesting; his practice was a combination of formulaic behavior and complete ease and flexibility.

Apollonius of Rhodius learned something from the Greek tragic dramatists, Vergil learned the technique from Apollonius, Ovid from both of them, in the ancient writers the interior monologue became a set piece a chance for display of verbal virtuosity, and it was natural.

There are two basic types of interior monologue, they are:

### **1. Direct interior monologue**

Is represented with negligible author interference and with no auditor assumed, this type of monologue that Dujardin is concerned with his definition.

It presents consciousness directly to the reader with negligible author interference, there is either a complete or near complete disappearance of the author from the page with his guiding “he said or “he thought” and with his explanatory comments, there is no auditor assumed means the character is not speaking to anyone within the fictional scene.

### **2. Indirect interior monologue**

This type an omniscient author presents unspoken material as if it was directly from the consciousness of a character and, with commentary and description, guides the reader through it, it differs from direct monologue basically in that the writer intervenes between the character's psyche and the reader.

Indirect interior monologue is usually combined with and other techniques of stream of consciousness especially with description of consciousness.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Interior monologue has been used by modernist writers in 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is one of the distinguishing features of psychological novel. Psychological novel is a novel that focuses on the complex mental and emotional lives of its characters and explores the various levels of mental activity. This study intends to find out whether Henry James reflects dimensions of interior monologue in his three novels to analyze his characters and their internal communication and feelings.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This paper focuses on the analysis of the characters in James's novels "The Portrait of a Lady" and "The Turn of the Screw" and "The Wings of the Dove" through interior monologue as a narrative technique.

## **OBJECTIVES**

This paper aimed to investigate the use of stream of consciousness in three selected novels ("The Portrait of a Lady" and "The Turn of the Screw" and "The Wings of the Dove".) More specifically, it answered the following objectives: to determine the dimensions of interior monologue technique; to identify interior monologue analysis in the three selected novels.

## **METHOD**

The researcher used content analysis in three selected novels namely: "The Portrait of a Lady" and "The Turn of the Screw" and "The Wings of the Dove". They were chosen based on their models of the genre under the study. This paper attempted to present how the selected novels prove the dimensions of interior monologue as a literary technique.

Henry James was born in 1843 in New York City. He spent much of his childhood and adolescence in Europe, an experience that profoundly shaped his fiction, as well as his transatlantic, cosmopolitan world view. After a stint at Harvard school, James took to writing. By 25<sup>th</sup> year, he had published more than 53 reviews and 12 short stories. During the 1870s and 1880s, James divided his time between Cambridge MA, the continent and England becoming familiar with leading men and women of letters including Ivan Turgenev, Gustavo Flaubert, and Emile Zola. By the age 35, he had published several novels. James story of adolescent love on the grand tour made him a household name, propelled to the notice of British and American audiences. James was celebrated by William Dean Howells as the creator of the international novel and heir of Charles Dickens, make peace Thackeray, Nathaniel Hawthorne and George Eliot and the future of Anglo-American literature. "An Enlightened" criticism will recognize in Mr. James fiction a metaphysical genius working to aesthetic results Howells proclaimed. Despite a number of personal setbacks including the death of both his parents in quick succession and unsatisfactory earnings from his books, James remained highly productive during 1880s. He refined his artistic philosophy, famously advising aspiring authors to try to be one of the people on whom nothing is lost in "the art of fiction". His engagement with aestheticism became more palpable and he began to experiment with a style that would incorporate realism and literary impressionism. The experience of stage

production no doubt influenced his decision to begin composing by dictation a method that altered his style significantly and endowed it with an elliptic, impressionistic, rhythmic, colloquial and digressive quality that is recognizable as "late James". James's first dictated novel, "a cake becomes a wonderful delectable mountain with geological strata of jam and a beloved stepfather's hand is encased in a pearl-grey glove ornamented with the thick black lines that her mother's always used to strike her as connected with the way the best itched fists of the long ladies carried with the elbows well out their umbrellas upside down. It is suitable that the sensitive child-heroine of what Maisie knew should think of baked goods as summits of pleasure, and that she should remember the details of the hands that have scolded her". What made these phrases uniquely Jamesian was not entirely their descriptive thickness or what cynics would call difficulty for difficulty sake, but a style that exploits the ambiguity of meaning, perceptive and narrative point of view. By the early 1900s, James had been resident in England for several decades returning to the U.S.A in 1904-1905. He was struck by the way his native land had grown and disappointed at the ways in which it had degenerated. He received the British order of merit in 1916 and died the same year in London. He buried alongside his family in Cambridge.

### **James's fiction**

- The portrait of a lady.
- Roderick Hudson
- F.O Matthiessen
- The wings of the dove
- Heiress
- The turn of the screw

### **James's shorter narratives**

- The aspen papers

- The beast in the jungle
- The figure in the carpet
- The lesson of the master
- A passionate pilgrim
- The story of a year
- A tragedy of error

## **HENRY JAMES'S NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES**

He tended to reflect the conscious, subconscious and unconscious sources that appear to take the form of a set stylistic patterns and represent the author's predisposition and idiosyncrasies for arbitrary actions or thoughts can be explained through a painstaking reconstructing of unconscious motives. The psychological mapping of these stylistic domains enabled him not only to vivify action but also produce certain thematic propositions and psycho stylistic collage. His world was symbolic of two directions was inward, or centripetal. The inward direction in James led to a world of consciousness where he artistically unfolds the mystery of human existence in relation to varied dimensions of life, love and death.

He used the technique of an impersonal narrator and the very first sentence of the narrative announces the subordination of the narrator to the central character. The impersonal narrator pay attention not only to the events and situations as a detached observer also narrated them in direct speech to provide the narrator instantaneous access to the characters. James juxtaposed the past with the present in a conspicuous manner, thus conventional distance in relation to time and space has been disfigured. He formulated a sequence of events and situations from the fractions of a panorama rather than depicting and following a chain of events from the beginning to the end.

He used analepsis or flashback which referred to perception after the fact or retrospective allusions, in order to

add to a feeling or event the whole past of the person experiencing it. He used perfect to refer to recent events that have current relevance to a more recent event than the simple past. The occurrence of the perfect has not been abandoned by James with a time adverbial referring in directly to a time point in the past. He took the implied reader into a highly psychological and imaginative dimension where reality outside mind became paler. The discourse focused on mind or psyche in relation to the process of vision rather than exterior reality. The traces of which have been depicted through the means and medium of the center of consciousness technique. He used metaphor for repetition and also indispensable for repletion as it provided chance to play of other words.

Henry James theory of the novel and especially that of the point of view played a considerable part in the definition of the new conventions of the modernist novel. At the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the novelists developed a sense of self-awareness considering it their task to depart from the tradition of the novel as an overflow of story-telling gift on the part of the writer, or as entertainment, on the part of the reader. Novelists like Henry James considered it necessary to approach fiction as art, by casting a glance at the mystery of storytelling. He pleaded in favor of fiction being autonomous, entitled to exist in its own rights and by its own rules and not as an offspring of reality whose complexity was far greater than whatever a work of fiction could presumptuously assume it possible to express. James initiated a tradition of novel writing that presupposed, first and foremost a sense of self-awareness underlain by the writer's express to assume the responsibility of seeing the novel both as practice and as theory.

He tried to contradict the view that the novel is a novel as pudding is a pudding adopting the position of the creator with complete knowledge and in perfect control of his art. This was the main heritage that he bestowed upon his fellow modernist writers. The distinctiveness of modernism in line

with the tradition set up by Henry James, resides in the novelists determination to approach fiction as art less than in his – her stubborn intention to depart from literary conventions of previous centuries.

The definition of modern art from James' point of view is underlain by the idea that any form of novelty is perceived as such only against the background of the existing forms. Novelty is not to be judged in absolute terms, newness is the point that James accused of ignoring his audience and is dependent on the reader's perception.

The modern mind as characterized by inquisitiveness and it was the power to question and challenge that made all the differences between the literature of the turn of the century and the Victorian one. He considered the nature of literature restoring it to a dignified status among other cultural manifestations. Reference was made. It was true that just in passing to the old dispute between Plato and Aristotle regarding the wicked nature of fiction. He drew attention to the fictional character of the fiction. The art of fiction existed only to the extent to which it could create the illusion of reality. The only problem that the writer faced was that concept of reality. The innovation in form rather springs from a conscious understanding of the fact that reality has changed and it requires new moulds in which to be cast. The novelist who aimed at producing an art object must according to James have the sense of reality. He was expected to invent forms and methods able to contain the reality's meaning. He referred to the quality of experience and emphasizes the indispensability of the novelist's contribution to the investigation of life's complexity; he stated that the inner reality was far more complex than the outer one. He opened the way to a new type of literature centered on consciousness with all the modifications of form required by the necessity of rendering the mind transparent and foregrounding consciousness. He insisted on the fictional nature of fiction and he considered that the task of

the novelist was to find the way of access to the essence of life. Literary form was the instrument the writer needed to make his way towards the substance of reality beyond appearance. From James' point of view was not supposed to offer only the likeness of life, it should be life. He theoretically expresses and practically proved by his novels was that the novel represented a structure and in consequence.

It could be properly approached only in its integrity character, incident, narrator, point of view, plot were relevant only to the extent to which they contributed to the interpretation of the novel as a whole. The integrity of the novel as the expression of the writer's intention. James felt it the duty of the modern novelist to free the novel form the restrictions imposed on it by sense of public value translated into the much too limiting novelistic conventions.

Henry was a modern of the moderns both in subject matter and in method. He was entirely loyal to contemporary life and reverentially exact in his transcription of the phase. His characters were for the most part people of the world who conceived of life as a fine art and had the leisure to carry out their theories. Rarely were they at close quarters with any ugly practical task.

They were subtle and complex with the subtlety and the complexity that came from conscious preoccupation with themselves. They were specialists in conduct past masters in casuistry and are full of variations and shadows of turning. They were expressive of milieu. Each belonged unmistakably to his class and his race, each was true to inherited moral tradition and delicately illustrative of some social code. To reveal the power and the tragedy of life through so many minutely limiting and apparently artificial conditions and by means of characters who were self conscious and were apt to make of life only a pleasant pastime seem an impossible task.

He was pre-eminently successful. The essential human was what he really cared for the preoccupied with the technique

of his art or with the mask of conventions through which he made the essentially human reveal itself. His method was as modern as his subject matter. He early fell in love with point of view and the good and the bad qualities of his work all follow from his literary passion. He was very sensitive impressionist with a technique that could fix the most elusive phase of character and rendered the most baffling surface. The skill was succession their continuously varying facets.

James as an agent accuses action by assuming and setting in motion an emblematic function in extrapolation that unifies the narrative or psychological plan for the story as the mind style was concerned with the construction and expression in language of the conceptualization of reality in a particular mind.

### **Interior monologue in *The portrait of a lady* novel**

“I wish I were there”. (The portrait of a lady, Page 33)

The text's analysis: Isabel was speaking with herself when her aunt asked her to go to bed and not to stay with Ralph and Lord Warburton at late hours of night. She wished to be in America the real source of liberty and independence. In America anyone could do what he or she wanted without hesitation. The society was open and free. Her aunt became conservative because she was living the majority of her life in England.

The society in England totally different from the society of America because they had traditions and customs. They forced to obey their traditions and their customs. Isabel wished to be there in that moment to enjoy liberty and independence with all their meanings.

She looked all about her; she listened a little; then she put her hand on the latch. She had not known where to turn; but she knew now. There was a very straight path. (The portrait of a lady, page634)

The text's analysis: Isabel was talking to herself in her room in Court Garden in England; she was listening to the voice of

independence and freedom. It was calling her. She hesitated to reply at the beginning but at the end she decided to be submissive and to be under its influence and authority to recover old Isabel. She said to it at your proposal. She knew her way and her destiny.

### **Interior monologue in *The Turn of the Screw* novel**

I remember the whole beginning as a succession of flights and drops, a little see- saw of the right throbs and the wrong. After rising in town to meet his appeal, I had at all events a couple of very bad days. (The turn of the screw, page12)

The text's analysis: Henry James created this expression as an interior dialogue to portray deep and profound conversation, the governess was speaking to herself. She discussed some affairs connected with her early bad days in her life and an unknown destination which would wait her in her new place, new situation and new responsibility. She was full of apprehension.

To watch, teach, form little Flora would too evidently by the making of a happy and useful life. (The turn of the screw, page14)

The text's analysis: the author was strolling inside the governess to reflect some gloomy and sad perspectives of her personality. She had a deep conversation with herself that there was blink of hopes began to appear for her. She would teach and live with Flora that beautiful angel and innocent creature. She deprived of honest feelings and any kind of love so she would find it at Bly with a new society.

I forthwith expressed that the proper as well as the pleasant and friendly thing would be therefore that on the arrival of the public conveyance I should be in waiting for Him with his little sister; an idea in which Mrs. Grose concurred so heartily that I somehow took her manner as a kind of comforting pledge—never falsified, thank heaven! (The turn of the screw, page15)

The text's analysis: the author portrayed the sensation of the governess towards Miles. She was talking to herself if Miles would be refined and good like his sister. She was busy of that thing. She attempted to persuade herself with a beautiful picture which Mrs. Grose drew for him. At last, she convinced that he would be tranquil and refined. She wished everything to be intact and good.

### **Interior monologue in *The Wings of the Dove* novel**

Miss Condrips [her nieces] were offered her by fate as a warning for her own future—to be taken as showing her what she herself might become at forty if she let things too recklessly go. What was expected of her by others—and by so many of them—could, all the same, on occasion, present itself as beyond a joke; and this was just now the aspect it particularly wore. (*The wings of the dove*, page 43)

The text's analysis: Kate was speaking to herself. Her conflict was to live under a control of her aunt to guarantee good life or to be free and became without money which would form her completely life. She planned for her future.

such moments in especial determined in Kate a perception of the high happiness of her companion's liberty. Milly's range was thus immense; she had to ask nobody for anything, to refer nothing to any one; her freedom, her fortune and her fancy were her law; an obsequious world surrounded her, she could sniff up at every step its fumes (*The wings of the dove*, page 119)

The text's analysis: Kate was speaking to herself of her friend Milly's liberty. She had everything. She did not need anyone. She had liberty and money which created happiness for every person. She wished to be in her place.

Now she is dead, dead, dead<sup>2</sup> (*The wings of the dove*, page 143)

The text's analysis: the author reflected a concept of death through a portrait which was shown by Lord Mark to Milly. She obsessed of that concept inside herself. She said these words to herself to remember the truth that she would die soon. She felt taste of a portrait's beauty. She enjoyed it but with a poignant feeling.

"Except of course that we're doing our best for her. We're making her want to live." And Kate again watched her. "Tonight she does want to live." She spoke with a kindness that had the strange property of striking him as inconsequent—so much, and doubtless so unjustly, had all her clearness been an implication of the hard. "It's wonderful. It's Beautiful." (The wings of the dove, page 317)

The text's analysis: Kate was speaking to herself that they gave Milly a chance to live a real happiness. She liked to enjoy her life with moments of true love. They helped her to get her wish; it was wonderful to give a person what he or she wished. She had strong justifications for each attitude without shame of what she was planning and doing to obtain her target through dirty and rascal way.

She turned her face to the wall. (The wings of the dove, page 378)

The text's analysis: Milly had a dialogue with herself at the last stage of her life. She discussed a trap which Kate and Merton had done to get her money. She was living real sorrow and torture to find like these people who pretended kindness and morals. She shocked to face that situation in her last days. She wanted to depart happy and quite.

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