EXPLORING STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS AS A NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE IN MODERN NOVELS

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Abstract

This paper provides various discussions and opinions on stream of consciousness in general and how it has flourished from its origins until modern times and its appearance in modern novels. The present paper includes several parts: stream of consciousness according to critics, how the concept has flourished in the history of the modern novel and its sources, including the novelists who developed it. In addition, psychoanalytical discussion is considered according to the Freudian theory of dream work and its relation to this research. The main aim in this paper is to make readers understand the modern concept of stream of consciousness in the context of modern novels and its psychological consequences according to Freudian psychological theory. In discussions of stream of consciousness, Joyce’s contributions should be emphasised because he developed the technique (Steinberg 7). Joyce and his brother, Stanislaus, worked on a type of writing employing stream of consciousness. This paper also touches on some other authors connected to stream of consciousness, such as Woolf and Richardson, and briefly discusses their impact on the literary world.

KEYWORDS: STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS, PSYCHOANALYSIS, INTERIOR MONOLOGUE, MEMORY, LITERARY TECHNIQUE

Introduction

Definitions of stream of consciousness (SOC)

At a first glance, stream of consciousness is of much benefit when it is applied to a mental process. Thus, its meaning becomes metaphorical. That is, the words “consciousness” and “stream” are figurative, yet it is called “stream of consciousness” since it is established as a literary approach. Stream of consciousness is identified by its subject matter rather than by its forms (Humphrey 254). The subject matter is the “atmosphere of the mind” — the uncompleted and endless flow of emotion and ideas in the psyche of the characters. Psyche, in this sense, means the total sequence of awareness and emotional responses of the mind.

The stream of consciousness technique, originated as a psychological term, was introduced and coined by James (1890). The term was most probably used for the first time by Sinclair in an article she wrote on Richardson (Thrall and Hibbard 471). According to critics, a series of terms is used to refer to stream of consciousness, such as “stream of consciousness,” “stream of thought,”
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“monologue interieur,” “internal monologue,” “interior monologue,” “soliloquy,” and “silent soliloquy.”

Yet, the question arises here as to whether these terms are quite appropriate when some such as “silent” and “soliloquy” are unusual terms to apply to thought. Souvage, in his book *Introduction to the Study of Novel* (1965), offered the following view:

May I, by qualifying Mr. Edel’s statement, propose that the terms ‘internal,’ (or interior) monologue and “stream of consciousness” be reserved for, respectively, cases where the inner flux is being released and those where sensory experience is superimposed upon the inner flux in the process of release and...” (46)

He argued that Edel makes an attempt at clearing up the confusion which has arisen around the terms “stream of consciousness” and “internal monologue.” He finally draws the following tentative distinction between the terms: the term ‘internal monologue’ becomes merely a useful designation for certain works of fiction of sustained subjectivity, written from a single point of view, in which the writer narrows down the stream of consciousness and places readers largely at the centre of the character’s thoughts — that centre where thoughts often use words rather than images.

Dujardin, regarded as the innovator of the technique, wrote in *Le Monologue Intérieur* (1931), *Les Lauriers Sont Coupés*, which was translated into English as *We’ll to the Woods No More* by Stuart Gilbert, and appeared first in *La Revue Indépendant* in 1888 (Modern Novel, 14). Dujardin was quite interested in tricks of technique — an experimenter in poetry and prose, as well. He explained that the interior monologue, in the case of poetry, is speech without a listener; it is not pronounced. It is in this way that a character expresses his or her intimate thoughts.

Furthermore, Dujardin quotes an earlier enthusiast of the stream of consciousness, Larbaud as saying the ‘monologue interieur’ is the expression of “the thoughts, the most intimate, most spontaneous, those which appear to form in the unknowingness of the conscience and which seem previous to speech organization” (154). The term is essentially taken from French, and one can see that the full definition is originally from the French language. Dujardin and Larbaud have extensively influenced the development of the technique in literature over a considerable length of time.

Dujardin explains his definition of interior monologue as follows:

[…] a speech by the character portrayed, and is intended to introduce us directly to the interior life of this character, without intervention by the author with explanations or commentaries, and, like any monologue, is a speech without a listener and a non-pronounced speech, concerning its form, it is produced in direct phrases reduced to the minimum of syntax. (1931)

From the definition above, one may realise that Dujardin’s analysis indicates that interior monologue is always in the first person, which is not satisfactory for some critics such as Bowling. A good example is taken from Bloom’s monologue in Joyce’s *Ulysses*:

Yes because he never did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs since the City Arms hotel when he used to be pretending to be laid up with a sick voice doing his highness to make himself interesting to that old faggot Mrs. Riordan that he thought he had a great leg of and she never left us a farthing all for masses for herself and her soul greatest miser ever was actually afraid to lay out 4d for her methylated spirit telling me all her ailments. (723)
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However, Dujardin calls his method ‘monologue interieur’ and intends to include “the whole of consciousness” including that “nearest the unconsciousness.” This makes a psychological issue for Dujardin as he has been criticized by Bowling for using such terms as *discourse* and *pensee* and describes the interior monologue as identical with spoken monologue in addition to putting all consciousness under the heading of interior monologue. Bowling suggests that the definition should be revised. The notion is that if Dujardin intended to include all conscious mental process, then it is more accurate to include images and sensations, and thus, the technique should be called stream of consciousness, not interior monologue.

One of the significant errors, Bowling adds, about Dujardin’s definition and application of his method is that the whole of consciousness can be presented in the form of monologue, making a distinction from traditional monologue used by such writers as Dostoevsky and Balzac. As a result, Dujardin criticizes Dostoevsky for “interrupting” what is in the character’s mind, and maintains that what may be assumed to be Dostoevsky’s interior monologues are not actually interior monologues (Bowling 339).

Bowling has provided his own definition of stream of consciousness:

> The stream of consciousness technique may be defined as that narrative method by which the author attempts to give a direct quotation of the mind — not merely of the language area but of the whole consciousness. The only criterion is that it introduces us directly into the interior life of the character, without any intervention by way of comment or explanation on the part of the author. (What is the Stream of Consciousness Technique? 345)

Dujardin is nearer than Dostoevsky to Joyce’s use of interior monologue. Dostoevsky, like most of his predecessors and many modern writers, presents only intermittent excerpts from a character’s mind. Dujardin, like Joyce and certain other twentieth century novelists, focuses primary attention upon the meanderings of the mind, not as means to an end, but as an important end in itself. (What is the Stream of Consciousness Technique? 341)

The aforementioned definition may be derived from Joyce’s notions, as Joyce said, “I have recorded, simultaneously, what a man says, sees, thinks, and what such seeing, thinking, saying does to what you Freudians call the subconscious” (Steinberg 154). Thus, Bowling’s own definition appears more distinguishable and supportive from Dujardin’s and Joyce’s to study and analysis as the quotes are directly given from the mind of the characters without further clarification from the authors. Moreover; Sang confirms that Dujardin’s definition is not quite precise saying,

> The definition is not slandered and accurate enough to be relied on...particularly, it should be noted that it is a technique of representing the psychic content and processes at various levels of the conscious control; that is, of representing consciousness...it should be noted also that it is partly or entirely unuttered, for it represents the content of consciousness in its inchoate stage before it is formulated for deliberate speech. (173)

Furthermore, Humphrey (4) states that “we may define stream of consciousness fiction as a type of fiction in which the basic emphasis is placed on exploration of the pre-speech levels of consciousness for the purpose, primarily, of revealing the psychic being of the characters.” He concludes that stream of consciousness is concerned with “mental and spiritual experience” with ‘whatness’ and ‘howness.’ The ‘whatness’ includes mental processes such as memory, imagination, etc., while ‘howness’ includes feelings and symbolization. This linkage can by no means be separated.
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In brief, Humphrey proposed four basic techniques for depicting stream of consciousness: the direct interior monologue, the indirect interior monologue, description by an omniscient author, and the dramatized unconscious (Dobie 409). In light of his definitions of direct and indirect interior monologue, he described direct interior monologue as direct quotation from a character's mind and indirect interior monologue as monologue with authorial intrusion. Interior monologue can be subdivided into direct and indirect interior monologue. Woolf's novels, such as Mrs Dalloway and To the Lighthouse, have indirect monologues in which the thoughts of characters differ from those in Joyce's novel, The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man, in which Joyce uses a direct interior monologue — the thoughts and talk coming directly from the character's mind, and a tremendous ability to denote how thoughts quickly enter and leave human consciousness.

These oft-given definitions and discussions primarily share the same idea that stream of consciousness is not a soliloquy, whether spoken or unspoken. Second, stream of consciousness writers must not disagree by way of explanation or comment, and must agree to provide "as little mixture of the external and alien as possible" (Humphrey 155). Edel (1955) points out that the term "monologue" (or "soliloquy") is associated with theatre, and has a different literary function, which indicates total disagreement with Dujardin's definition of interior monologue.

Third, they agree that the stream of consciousness technique expresses or deals with a pre-speech level of consciousness. Here, the question of pre-speech arises and what is meant by this term. Korzybski (1948) concluded that there are four major levels that help to understand exactly what is meant by stream of consciousness:

"... the event, or the scientific object, or the submicroscopic physico-chemical processes. The ordinary object manufactured from the event by our lower nervous centres. The psychological centres and finally the verbal definition of the term." (179)

He calls these events or physico-chemicals, which are functions of the human lower nervous centres. This leads to the issue of psychological centres and the verbal vivid explanation of the term. According to novelists who employed the stream of consciousness technique, such as Joyce, Woolf and Richardson, stream of consciousness deals with the levels at or below Korzybski's verbal level because it is impossible to go through the first level — physico-chemical, which deals with the physiology of the characters.

Bentley, in her book, Some Observations on the Art of Narrative (1947), states that a novelist is not able to provide details of physical nerve processes, and that these processes are not even quite clearly understood in contemporary science. As a result, Bentley refuses the first pattern regarding level one of Korzybski's division. Furthermore, she criticizes Joyce for being unable to provide details about the physical nerve processes of characters (9). Therefore, the stream of consciousness technique is considered to be concerned with levels two and three, where psychological images and sensations can be found, such as with "Proteus" and "Lestrygonians" in Ulysses in which these functions or thinking are in a character's "psychical interaction."

There are other devices which provide for further analyses of the concept of stream of consciousness in addition to interior monologue, such as internal analysis. Internal analysis focuses on the impressions of the character in the words of the author. This is intermingled with elements of consciousness. James's later novels and Richardson's novels deal with internal analysis. Another device is sensory impression, which, according to Dahl (1970), is closer to interior monologue than to internal analysis. It is limited to an area farthest from the concentration of attention and the mind is
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presented as passive, unlike interior monologue. A good example of this is “The Sirens” episodes in *Ulysses*.

In a modern sense, a stream of consciousness novel is a product of Freudian psychology, Steinberg argues, with its structure of psychological levels. It is worth mentioning that in drama another concept concerning stream of consciousness is audible thinking. O’Neill uses several types of soliloquy to represent audible thinking, particularly in his play *Strange Interlude* (1923), introducing stream of consciousness into a play through asides techniques. This indicates possible influence from the use of interior monologue in *Ulysses*.

Whatever the definitions and the employment are, stream of consciousness writers share certain assumptions regarding the establishment of the technique in novels. The first of these assumptions is that the significant existence of a human is to be found in his mental-emotional processes and not in the outside world. Secondly, a human’s mental-emotional life is disjointed and illogical. Finally, a pattern of free psychological association rather than of logical relationship determines the shifting sequence of thought and feelings (Steinberg 6).

Stream of consciousness in earlier literature

Most scholars agree with the fact that stream of consciousness is not a new invention in modern novels. It appeared long ago with Shakespeare and his soliloquies, where it is identified by brokenness of syntax (Dahl 12).

Among early stream of consciousness writers, Samuel Richardson, an eighteenth century writer, is regarded as the first writer of stream of consciousness. In addition, Laurence Stern, a famous Anglo-Irish writer, is considered to be the best early stream of consciousness writer, especially for his masterpiece *The Life and the Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759). This story is a narration of Tristram’s own life in which he cannot simply narrate his story because readers do not even know of his birth until the second volume. There is a series of soliloquies where the characters think aloud, besides the short sentences, punctuation and single words found in the work. The passage below is taken from the novel:

My father – a man of deep reading- prompt money- with Cato, and Seneca and Epictetus, at his fingers' ends. -The corporal – with nothing – to remember of a deeper reading than his mater-roll – or greater name at his fingers' end, than the contents of it. The one proceeding from period to period, by metaphor and allusion, and striking the fancy as he went along (as men of wit and fancy do) with the entertainment and pleasantry of his pictures and images. The other, without wit or antithesis, or point, or turn, this way or that way; but leaving the images on one side, and the picture on the other, going straight forwards as nature could lead him, to the heart. O Trin! Would to heaven thou hadst a better historian! -Would thy historian have a better pair of breeches! - O ye critics! Will nothing melt you? (324-25)

Stream of consciousness is also recognizable in the works of Bergson and Browning, although Browning’s style of monologue is more to do with traditionalist (i.e., it is not much influenced by the psychological world). Dahl also focused on Russian writers such as Tolstoy’s *The Story of a Yesterday* (Stories and Dramas, 1926) in which there is a state of wakefulness from sleep and shows some sort of stream of consciousness. Furthermore, Dostoevsky’s *Crime and the Punishment* (1866) is quite famous for its psychological monologue, which resembles stream of consciousness. Finally, it is important to note that Richardson, Stern, Bergson, and Browning had roles in establishing stream
of consciousness; however, the technique might not have been as popular as it has been more recently in modern novels.

Psychological background

Stream of consciousness basically refers to a psychological school rather than any other concept. James succinctly discussed the details of the essence of stream of consciousness in Chapter IX, *The Stream of Thought*, in *The Principle of Psychology* (1890), in which he categorized thoughts into the following five points:

1. Every thought tends to be part of a personal consciousness.
2. Within each personal consciousness thought is always changing.
3. Within each personal consciousness thought is sensibly continuous.
4. It always appears to deal with objects independent of itself.
5. It is interested in some parts of these objects to the exclusion of others, and welcomes or rejects — chooses from among them in a word — all the while. (p.225)

James and Bergson share the same idea that consciousness is a process of endlessness with continuous change. That is exactly what Joyce, Woolf, Faulkner, and other stream of consciousness writers have worked to represent in their writing. Furthermore, James (1890) describes consciousness specifically, as follows:

[…] consciousness, then does not appear to itself chopped up in bits. Such words as ‘chain’ or ‘train’ do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instance. It is nothing jointed; it flows. A ‘river’ or a ‘stream’ is the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. In talking of it hereafter, let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life. (p.239)

James further argued that psychology, the science of the mind, has embodied facts. Indeed, in everybody’s mind there is a kind of consciousness going on while awake or asleep. There is a stream or wave, etc., that continuously comes and goes (passes or repasses) that means we have fields of consciousness. However, with all James’s effort in the field of psychology, historians of psychology and psychiatrists consider James a philosopher rather than a psychologist because they do not deem his psychological efforts are scientifically legitimate (Taylor 7).

Stream of consciousness is sometimes confused with Freud’s free association. These two terms, however, are different in the sense that stream of consciousness psychologically describes an event (phenomenon) — the constant flow of ideas, memories and sensations. On the other hand, free association is random data collected by a subject, which forms connections among the pre-conscious, sub-conscious, and unconscious minds. It is, on closer inspection, an element to signify stream of consciousness.

Furthermore, free association has a vivid aesthetic importance in application to the stream of consciousness technique. First, free association breaks the traditional narrative structure as it helps characters in thinking about others, and recalling memories. Furthermore, consciousness can freely shift from the past, present and future, from one subject to another or from one person to another. During the process of association, there would be a mixture of objective time and psychic time. That is to say, past memories, present thoughts and future expectations are all brought together. Secondly,
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the free association technique has an influence of satire and contrast in making certain examples in different places and different times by the authors.

Humphrey observes that all streams of consciousness are highly dependent on the contributions of free association as a strong influence in guiding the characters’ streams. Furthermore, free association is of importance in representing that “the quality of movement in the psychic process is most clearly represented by the interior monologue technique in Joyce’s work” (p.43).

Freud also followed James’ and Bergson’s insight concerning the conscious and unconscious of the human mind by working hard to scientifically establish his psychological approach and successfully put it into practice. Freud believed that the “real psyche” is the unconsciousness, as he stated in his Interpretation of Dreams (1900):

[...] the unconsciousness is the larger circle which includes the smaller circle of the conscious; everything conscious has a preliminary unconscious stage, whereas the unconscious can stop at this stage, and yet claim to be considered a full psychic function. The unconscious is the true psychic reality; in its inner nature it is as much unknown to use as the reality of the external world, and it is just as imperfectly communicated to use by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the reports of our sense-organ. (p.542)

Freud also asserts in General Psychological Theory (1997) that the human psyche has the “conscious” in which the human is aware, and this is presented to consciousness. The “unconscious” is something that humans are not aware of. He further detailed more about the “unconscious” by confirming that the “unconsciousness is a regular and inevitable phase in the process constituting our mental activity; every mental act begins as an unconscious one, and it may either remain so or go on developing into consciousness, according as it meets with resistance or not” (p.53).

Later, Freud introduced the new term “dream work,” which is a good example of elaborating the complicated process happening in the deeper layers of the mind. Symbolism is another factor in representing the persistence of the unconscious. Jung denotes the same idea in his early work (Friedman 101).

However, Hoffman in Freudianism and the Literary Mind (1967) suggests that readers can speak of “stream of preconscious” instead of stream of consciousness. New writing “used for material the perceptual flux and is little concerned with the presentation of deeper sources of thinking” (p.24). On the other hand, Freud seemed not to be interested in this idea and, as a result, distinguished various types of unconsciousness in The Interpretation of Dreams:

There are consequently two kinds of unconsciousness, which have not as yet been distinguished by psychologists. Both are unconscious in the psychological sense; but in our sense the first, which we call Ucs., is likewise incapable of consciousness; whereas the second we call Pcs. because its excitation, after the observance of certain rules, is capable of reaching consciousness; perhaps not before they have again undergone censorship, but nevertheless regardless of the Ucs. system ... The system Pcs is like a screen between the system Ucs. and consciousness. (p.544)

Jung started his own method of psychological investigation, which is different from Freud’s in certain aspects. Jung shares his support of James, that human thought consists of a “series of images, and prefers the ‘merely associative’ thinking to the ordinary kind.” Jung, in Psychology of Unconsciousness (1916), states that:
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We can, in the following manner, complete these definitions of William James. This sort of thinking does not tire us; it quickly leads us away from reality into phantasies of the past and future. Here, thinking in the form of speech cases, image crowds upon image, feeling upon feeling; more and more clearly one sees a tendency which creates and makes believe, not as truly is, but as one indeed might wish it to be. The material of these thoughts, which turns away from reality, can naturally be only the past with its thousand memory pictures. The customary speech calls this kind of thinking “dreaming”. (p. 21)

Jung appears to reconcile James’s and Freud’s differences, and, in any case, took steps with the aim of tracing his own method. Freud explicated the original insight of dream analysis, but Jung appears responsible for introducing dream symbols and their significance to the arts (Friedman 111).

Jung coined a new term, Collective Unconscious, which is proposed to be a part of the unconscious mind. He defined the term as “a part of psychic which can be negatively distinguished from a personal unconscious by the fact that it does not, liken the latter, owe its existence to personal experience and consequently is not a personal acquisition.” He explains further that personal unconsciouness has disappeared from being repressed (i.e. it is no more conscious). Yet, the collective unconscious has never been in consciousness (Campbell 59-60). He discriminates this term from personal unconscious, as it is clearly explained in his Modern Man in Search of a Soul (1934), suggesting:

If it were permissible to personify the unconscious, we might call it a collective human being combining the characteristics of both sexes, transcending youth and age, birth and death, and, from having at his command a human experience of one or two million years, almost immortal. If such a being exists, he would be exalted above all temporal change; the present would mean neither more nor less to him than any year in the one-hundredth century before Christ; he would be a dreamer of age-old dreams and, owing to his measurable experience, he would be an incomparable prognosticator. He would have lived countless times over the life of the individual, of the family, tribe and people, and he would possess the living sense of the rhythm of growth, flowering, and decay. (p.215)

Jungian psychological application is more problematic than Freud’s concerning Joyce’s work, according to Friedman (1954), especially in Ulysses because of his archetypal collective unconscious. The basis of the writing of Ulysses refers to Freud and his dream symbols more importantly than the complicated idea of Jung’s archetypes.

Stream of consciousness, besides its strong association with psychology, is also interrelated with the philosophical views of Bergson and James. Therefore, West (1963) has confirmed that James and Bergson fundamentally focus on “the streamingness of life” and that “duration” is associated with memory. They both value its significance, although the observance of passivity may be seen in their theories (7-8).

Dahl agrees with “Bergson’s idea of life as unceasing flux ... the measure of existence, the invisible progress of the past, which gnaws into the future” (15). Kumar emphasizes in his book, Bergson and the Stream of Consciousness Novel (1962) that Bergson’s philosophical thought, theories, memory, and unconsciousness help us to understand the technique. Another fundamental factor in the mental process, according to Bergson (1906), is Memory, which is a core concept of stream of consciousness. This is analysed from an aesthetic point of view rather than only metaphysically.
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For Bergson, memory is of two types — “memoire involontaire” and “memoire volontaire.” He further distinguishes these two kinds of memory: the memoire involontaire has an aesthetic use because it shapes the raw material of art, while the latter, memoire volontaire, is “the creature of reason and will,” which provides images from the past that are made for practical living.

In Bergsonism, “Time” has a crucial place concerning stream of consciousness. He prefers calling it la dure, which enters the creative thought and cannot be measured. Bergson’s idea, la duree reelle, “contains space-time notion that most philosophers have borrowed from the mathematicians … while la duree is much closer to epistemology or perhaps metaphysics” (Friedman 82). Most novelists have dealt with time, such as Woolf in Orlando with “time in the mind,” which is like a flowing river for these writers (Kumar 8).

Kumar (1962) additionally mentions that stream of consciousness has been analysed as “impressionistic painting” and referred to as “post impressionistic novels.” In the discussion, he observes, as was proposed by Isaacs concerning the phraseology and imagery of Woolf’s Modern Fiction, that there are similarities with Steven’s exposition of Velasquez’s art. Therefore, in the critical analysis of Joyce, Woolf, and Richardson, based on the impressionistic school of painting, a closer inspection of this theory proves that it cannot provide a satisfactory explanation of the technique of characterisation. Kumar concedes that stream of consciousness has some elements in common with post-impressionistic painting, symbolist modes of expression, and the cinema; however, none of these can give a satisfactory or exact description and the scope of the technique. Additionally, he refers to the basis of the technique of monologue interieur, philosophically and literally, of Victor Egger in his La Parok Intérieur (1881), defining it as “one of the most important … elements of our actions; the series of interior words that forms a continuous succession … the me … and the duration of ideas are equivalent ideas … it’s me, I am a pure succession” (118).

Main representatives of stream of consciousness

There would be no stream of consciousness technique without mentioning the impact of Joyce, a creative Irish writer, a talented and gifted writer with his linguistic uniqueness and musicality (Friedman 1954). Stream of consciousness is one of Joyce’s styles of writing, as can been seen in his outstanding works, Ulysses (1922), The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man (1916), and some passages from Dubliners (1914).

An accurate description of the personality of Stephen is given in The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man. The passage below denotes the maturity in Stephen’s personality through indirect presentation of the third person (interior monologue). This is the time when Stephen enters Clongowes Wood School:

It would be nice to lie on the hearthrug before the fire, leaning his head upon his hands, and think on those sentences. He shivered as if he had cold slimy water next his skin. That was mean of Wells, to shoulder him into the square ditch because he would not swop his little snuffbox for Wells’s seasoned hacking chestnut, the conqueror of forty. How cold and slimy the water had been! A fellow had once seen a big rat jump into the scum. Mother was sitting at the fire with Dante waiting for Brigid to bring in the tea. She had her feet on the fender and her jewellery slippers were so hot and they had a such a lovely warm smell!! Dante knew a lot of things. She had taught him where the Mozambique Channel was and what was the longest river in America and what was the name of the highest mountain in the moon. Father Arnall knew more than Dante because he was a priest but both his father and Uncle Charles said that
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Dante was a clever woman and a well-read woman. And when Dante made that noise after dinner and then put up her hand to her mouth: that was heartburn. (10-11)

Thus, the story of Stephen Dedalus is told from a terrible childhood till adulthood with all his dreams and imagination. Stephen appears again in *Ulysses*, which is a lengthy piece of writing of 768 pages, describing the personality of Stephen, Leopold Bloom, and his wife, Molly Bloom.

Friedman (1954) affirms that *Ulysses* is written with a clear use of stream of consciousness that is undeniable. Joyce creatively deals with the technique brilliantly in that his narrative and interior monologue are played from one part to another, as shown below:

They come down the steps from Leahy’s terrace prudently, Frauenzimmer: and down the shelving shore flabbily their splayed feet sinking in the silted sand. Like me, like Algý, coming down to our mighty mother. Number one swung lourdily her midwife’s bag, the other’s gamp poked in the beach. From the liberties, out for the day. Mrs. Florence MacCabe, relic of the late Pat MacCabe, deeply lamented, of Bride Street. One of her sisterhood hugged me squealing into life. Creation from nothing. What has she in the bags? A misbirth with a trailing navulcord.ushed in ruddy wool. The cords of all link back, strandentwining cable of all flesh. That is why music monks. Will you be as gods? Gaze in your omphalos. Hello. Kinch here. Put me on to Edenville. Aleph, alpha: nought, nought one. (*Ulysses* 43)

Here, Joyce links his subconscious mind with certain words, “Strandentwining” and “Kinch” by using the Greek and Hebrew alphabetical characters “alpha” and “aleph”. He extends his imagination, having a telephone conversation between Kinch, himself, and “Edenville.” It is not surprising that Joyce is familiar with the sense of pattern and balance in the human mind. In *Finnegans Wake*, Ann’s last passage shows the effectiveness:

Can’t hear with the waters of. The chittering waters of Flittering bats, fieldnicebawk talk. Ho! Are you not gone ahone? What Thom Malone? Can’t hear with bawk of bats, all thimliffeying waters of. Ho, Talk save us! My foos won’t mmos. I feel as old as yonder elm. A tale told of Shaun or Shem? All Livia’s daughter sons. Dark hawks hear us. Night! Night! myho head halls. I feel as heavy as yonder stone. Tell me of John or Shaun? Who were Shem and Shaun the living sons or daughters of? Night now! Tell me, elm! Night! night! Telmetal of stem or stone. Beside the rivering waters of, hither and thithering waters of Night! (p. 215)

Joyce’s capability and intellectuality in the modern novel cannot be measured. His sound and sense work together in creating a novel, and his words carry enormous weight. Friedman, however, argued that “*Finnegans Wake* has carried stream of consciousness to an exaggerated reach of refinement, only to destroy it entirely with elimination of everything outside of the dreamer” (p. 243).

Richardson and Woolf are two other main representatives of using the stream of consciousness technique. Richardson’s famous work, *Pointed Roofs* (1915) is a good example of stream of consciousness, although she prefers internal analysis rather than stream of consciousness:

It was a fool’s errand... To undertake to go to the German school and teach ...to be going there...with nothing to give. The moment would come when there would be a class sitting round a table waiting for her to speak. She imagined one of the rooms at the old school, full of scornful girls ...How was English taught? How did you begin? English Grammar ... In German? Her heart beat in her throat. She had never thought of that...the rules of English Grammar ...Parsing and analysis. Anglos-Saxon prefixes and suffixes ... gerundial infinitive...It was too late to look up at anything. Perhaps there would be class
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tomorrow...The German lessons at school had been dreadfully good...Fraulein's grave face...her perfect knowledge of every rule...her clear explanations in English...her examples...All these things were there. In English Grammar...And she had undertaken to teach them and could not even speak German. (p. 26-7)

Friedman (1954) saw the above passage as internal analysis, though Miriam’s reaction is much nearer to consciousness. She is criticized for ignoring logic and lacking correct syntax. Kumar (1962) criticizes the technique used by Richardson. The stream of consciousness technique as employed by Richardson is a novel method representing this conception of dynamic personality and she remains its most ardent supporter. But it is surprising to note that she has never taken kindly to the use of the term “stream of consciousness”. Kumar observed that Richardson shares the use of the stream of consciousness technique with Joyce and Woolf; however, her way of writing is unique, such as its disregard of time like a day or space as happens in Mrs. Dalloway and Ulysses. “Time, according to Richardson, is a stream and therefore cannot be divided into such pure tenses as the past, present and future” (p. 45).

Woolf also had a significant role in expanding the technique, and was heavily influenced by Joyce, as she states:

In contrast with those whom we have called materialists, Mr. Joyce is spiritual; he is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickering of that innermost flame which flashes its message through the brain, and in order to preserve it he disregards with complete courage whatever seems to him adventitious, whether it be probability, or coherence or any other of these signposts which for generations have served to support the imagination of a reader when called upon to imagine what he can neither touch nor see. (Woolf 214)

One of her crucial novels regarding stream of consciousness is Mrs. Dalloway (1925), in which the focus is on Clarissa’s personality and her stream while walking one of the streets in London. Friedman gives a clear explanation that Clarissa’s consciousness is a core idea from the beginning of the novel till the end. Her monologue is given in an indirect way, which is clearly recognisable as Woolf’s well-known method. In the following passage, we are introduced to Clarissa at the beginning of the novel and her view of London.

In people’s eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June. For it was the middle of June. (Mrs. Dalloway 5)

Woolf is very adept at presenting her character’s stream of consciousness in To the Lighthouse and Jacob’s Room, as well. What is worth noting is that stream of consciousness novelists might shift “back and forth” from point to point without affecting the chronological limitations of the novel (Friedman 1954). It is obvious that, to Joyce, nothing can be alien. He is considered an analyst, while Woolf thought novels should generalize, not analysed. Dick asserts that:

Woolf’s method in Mrs. Dalloway in Bond Street also closely resembles in some important ways Henry James’s use in many of his short stories and later novels of a central intelligence, a “figural consciousness” whose experience is James’s subject. While Woolf includes some quoted monologue, she tends like James, and like Joyce in A Portrait, to prefer to employ
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omniscient narration and narrated monologue to render her characters’ thoughts, thus allowing the narrator to maintain direct control over the narration. (34)

Humphrey (1954) noted that Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway has similarities with Joyce’s Ulysses such as to “interpret the mind of the character which the author creates “and return back to the real conscious of the characters. Also, it should be noted that the time of these two stories takes place over a twenty-four hour period.

Conclusion

Stream of consciousness is not a simple term or a single perspective as close scrutiny will reveal that the more one looks, the more one discovers about this psychological literary technique. Regarding the definitions of terms, some differences are found in languages such as French and German, which may cause confusion. Moreover, the psychological discussion is also another topic which has been constantly evaluated among psychoanalysts from James to Freud.

The term “stream of consciousness” has been associated with several other terms coined by other writers such as “interior monologue,” “internal analysis,” and “sensory impression.” Since stream of consciousness is related to both philosophy and psychology, discussion on the topic has continued up to the present among philosophers and psychologists.

References


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