

Prose
Lecture 11

Representation of consciousness
Interior monologue, Interior psychonarration, and
Narrated monologue

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- Representation of consciousness:
- Interior monologue,
- Interior psychonarration, and
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Think!

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- Representation of Consciousness

Narrative Modes

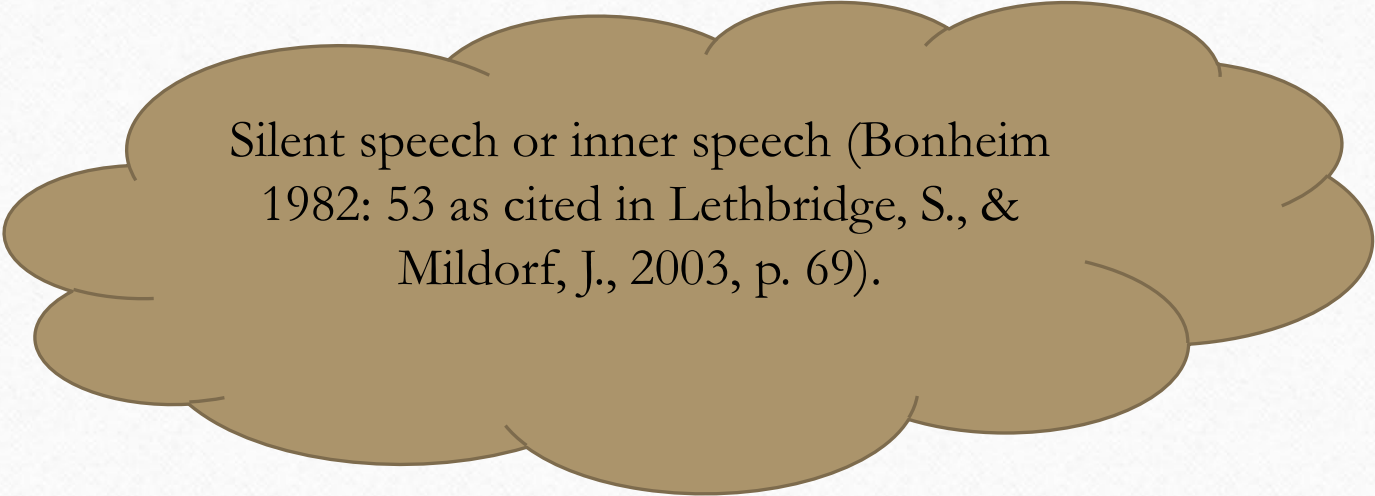
- Narrative modes → Utterance's style
- Diegesis, or the verbal portrayal of events, and mimesis, or the direct presentation of speech and action. Aristotle adopted this distinction, and Henry James, much later, continued it when he distinguished between telling and showing.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p. 63)

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- Drama (and film) is the most mimetic literary genre → direct presentation of voice and action
 - Verbal representation → narrative prose or poetry.

What about . . . ?

Representations of thought

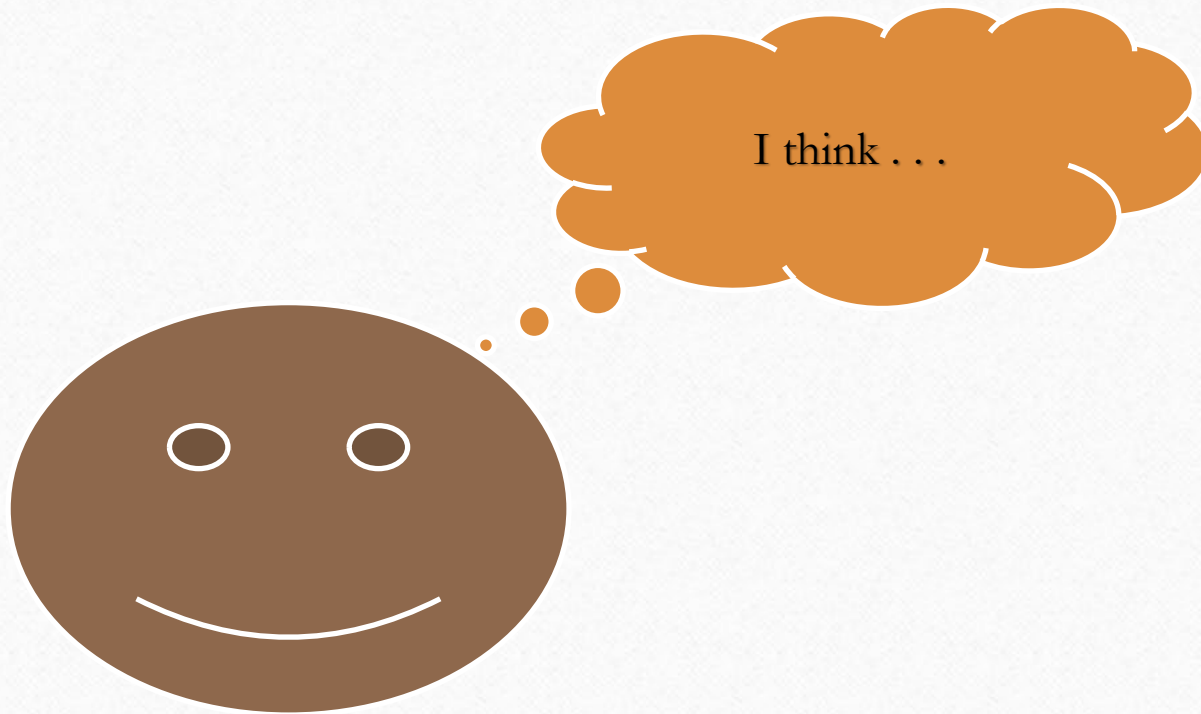


Silent speech or inner speech (Bonheim
1982: 53 as cited in Lethbridge, S., &
Mildorf, J., 2003, p. 69).

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- “How hot it is today,” he thought. (direct discourse)
 - He thought the weather in this city was very hot. (indirect discourse)

How can you convey a character's thoughts and feelings to readers without having the character speak directly?

How does it benefit you?



What's next?

- A realistic effect is achieved
- Firsthand and inside knowledge of the character
- The reader feels as though he is privy to insider information about the character

How to do that?

- Three major methods of thought representation have been identified, depending on the level of noticeable narrator interference (Cohn, 1978 as cited in Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p. 69):
 - Interior monologue
 - Psychonarration
 - Narrated monologue or free indirect discourse

Interior Monologue

- Direct presentation of thought = Direct speech.
- Monologue

Interior Monologue

- A longish passage of uninterrupted thought.

Consider an excerpt from Douglas Adams, *The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

Er, excuse me, who am I?
Hello?
Why am I here? What's my purpose in life?
What do I mean by who am I?
Calm down, get a grip now ... oh! this is an interesting sensation, what is it? It's a sort of ... yawning, tingling sensation in my ... my ... well I

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p. 69-70):

Characteristics

- The thoughts are presented in the first person,
- Several perceptions merge into consciousness, many thoughts conflict with each other.
- Instead of using standard written language syntax and punctuation, strive to imitate spoken (or thought) language.

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- Presenting a character's ideas directly while trying to replicate how the character '**really**' thinks.

Interior Monologue

- One narrative technique
- Limited to verbal representation
- To reproduce non-orderly and associative patterns of thought.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.70-71)

James Joyce's last chapter in *Ulysses* (1922)

[...] if his nose bleeds you'd think it was O tragic and that dying looking one off the south circular when he sprained his foot at the choir party at the sugarloaf Mountain the day I wore that dress Miss Stack bringing him flowers the worst old ones she could find at the bottom of the basket anything at all to get into a mans bedroom with her old maids voice trying to imagine he was dying on account of her to never see thy face again though he looked more like a man with his beard a bit grown in the bed father was the same besides I hate bandaging and dosing when he cut his toe with the razor paring his corns afraid hed get blood poisoning [...]. (Joyce, *Ulysses*, 'Penelope')

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.70):

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- The idea that one's thoughts are actually a disorganized series of associations rather than well-organized and structured thought became popularized by the psychology term "**stream of consciousness.**" (see James 1892).

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.70)

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- An attempt is made to replicate the natural flow of a character's thoughts, emotions, and perceptions in a story. The interior monologue of the character is frequently conveyed in this format, uninterrupted or and unhindered.

The stream of consciousness

- Other sensuous experiences, particularly visual ones, were included in the stream of consciousness in addition to spoken words or verbal one.

What's the importance?

- With the use of this technique, readers are able to experience the thoughts and feelings of the characters in real time, delving deeply into their minds.
- The disorganized and disorderly flow of awareness can resemble the impulsive and haphazard nature of human thought.
- Authors can create a more intimate and engaging reading experience by employing this strategy, which helps readers relate to the characters more deeply.

More. . .

- The way our thoughts and cognitive processes happen rather than a storytelling device.
- It is a technique for comprehending and expressing the stream of ideas and sensations in a character's head rather than a particular writing style or format.
- With the use of this literary device, readers are given access to the character's inner thoughts and feelings in an unadulterated and unfiltered way.
- Authors are able to produce a reading experience that is more intimate and engaging by capturing the unbroken stream of consciousness.

Interior monologue & Psychonarration

- Interior monologue is obviously a method that requires the reader to exert some effort.

We rely on the narrator to share the ideas of a character with us. This is particularly valid for classic novels. Sharing the character's consciousness with the reader is the narrator's responsibility.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.71)

Psychonarration

“Finding a place that fits his way of life is something he strives to do as he feels more and more compelled to confront the environmental circumstances surrounding him. Continue attempting to alter the situation in search of a more lucrative opportunity. He was becoming more and more excited, and he was filled with unstoppable hope, despite his rising bewilderment. But when he dared to act fast and make his decision, it was all over very quickly. His fall brought him to the filthiest, most abhorrent land.”

Psychonarration

- The text makes clear that even if we learn about the character's feelings and ideas, the narrator's voice and writing style are the only means by which they are expressed. The character's inner monologue is not depicted directly.

Psychonarration

- The impression is noticeably different, the reader is still quite removed from the character's mind, and the degree of mediation is still prominent.

Narrated Monologue

- A mixture between psychonarration and interior monologue.
- In a narrated monologue, the narrator both describes the scene and gives the audience direct insight into the character's thoughts. The narrator keeps the viewpoint third-person, but the character's thoughts are delivered in a way that matches their own cognitive process. This keeps the narrator in the background while allowing the listener to see inside the character's head.

(Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.71)

More

- Exclamations, broken sentences, and other less formal terminology are used, and the character's mentality is more accurately mimicked.

More

- For a brief while, the narrator's and the characters' voices blend together. This might give the sense of immediacy, but it can also be used to introduce irony—that is, when the reader realizes a character is wrong without the narrator explicitly telling them so.

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- The man integrates into this isolated group in an intriguing way. There were first doubts and questions about his existence. As time went on, society and the man coexisted and were compelled to get to know and accept one another. **How come he's here? He is who? That is not who he is. He needs to... oh! Yes, that's correct. It might be. Nope. Out of place. Possibly? He felt he ought to leave. He is lost and confused.** And then things began to quiet down for the others. They hesitated for a while before speaking and becoming friends.

See this!

- Given in narrated monologue
- The third person and past tense continue to identify the narrator.

Wrap up!

direct discourse / direct thought	direkte Gedankenwiedergabe (analog zu direkter Rede)	quotation marks, inquit formulas (optional, dominating tense is present tense)	mimetic reproduction of actual thought event
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- (Nünning 1996: 223 as cited in Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.73)

Wrap up!

interior monologue, (direct thought in longer passages)	innerer Monolog	refers to the character in first person, uses narrative present, syntactical conventions and punctuation partly or completely dispensed with	high degree of immediacy, can reproduce character's stream of consciousness
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- (Nünning 1996: 223 as cited in Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.73)

Wrap up!

indirect discourse	indirekte Gedankenwiedergabe (analog zu indirekter Rede)	grammatical structures of reported speech	can create a feeling of distance, but need not, consciousness of character who gives the report interposed
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- (Nünning 1996: 223 as cited in Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.73)

Wrap up!

narrated monologue / free indirect discourse	erlebte Rede, freie indirekte Gedankenwiedergabe	narrator refers to the character in third person and narrative past, syntax less formal: uses exclamations, ellipses, etc.	narrator reports character's thoughts but using the character's mind style: 'dual voice', can create immediacy but can also be used to create ironic distance, can reproduce character's stream of consciousness
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- (Nünning 1996: 223 as cited in Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.73)

Wrap up!

psychonarration, narrative report of thought	Bewußtseinsbericht, Gedankenbericht	narrator reports and refers to the character in third person, usually uses narrative past, syntax mostly complete and ordered, one hears the narrator's voice	usually summarises thought processes using the narrator's and not the character's syntax and diction; can create distance.
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- (Nünning 1996: 223 as cited in Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J., 2003, p.73)

SO WHAT?

- In fact, it seems to make a fairly marked difference to our perception of a character whether we are told about their thought in psychonarration or, say, in narrated monologue

Reference

- Lethbridge, S., & Mildorf, J. (2003). Basics of English Studies: An introductory course for students of literary studies in English. Freiburg University, Freiburg im Breisgau.

Thank you!
