NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REALISM IN JAMES JOYCE'S A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

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Annotation. This article examines how narrative perspective in James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man creates a sense of psychological realism. By tracing the gradual shift from external to internal narration, the paper shows how Joyce develops the reader's access to the protagonist's consciousness. The study draws on modernist narrative theory and close reading of the text to illustrate how free indirect discourse, interior monologue, and symbolic imagery form a single artistic system. It argues that Joyce's innovation lies in portraying the growth of self-awareness through language itself, making the novel both a story of artistic formation and an experiment in human perception.

Keywords: narrative perspective, psychological realism, modernism, James Joyce, free indirect discourse, stream of consciousness, interior monologue, consciousness, identity, prose style.

Main text. James Joyce stands among the most influential innovators of twentieth-century fiction. His first novel, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916), traces the spiritual and intellectual maturation of Stephen Dedalus from early childhood to the threshold of adulthood. The power of this work lies not in external events but in its method: Joyce gradually replaces an omniscient narrator with the shifting perspective of Stephen's inner life. Although James Joyce's novel belongs to early twentieth-century modernism, its narrative techniques continue to shape the methods and theoretical focus of modern literary studies. Understanding how narrative form itself conveys psychological truth is essential to grasping the novel's modernist vision.

Theoretical Background. Traditional realism in nineteenth-century prose relied on an objective narrator who described the world from a single, external viewpoint. Modernist writers such as Henry James, Virginia Woolf, and Joyce rejected this stability, turning instead to the fluidity of perception [3, p. 25].

According to Genette's narratology, A Portrait demonstrates a progressive movement from an external to an internal mode of narration [2, p. 71]. Dorrit Cohn defines this blend of narrator and character voice as "transparent minds," where the reader enters a consciousness rather than merely observing it [1, p. 22]. Joyce achieves precisely this effect: the narrator's language echoes the rhythms of Stephen's thought, letting us experience the world through a mind in formation [4, p. 103].

Development of Perspective in the Novel. Joyce's art lies in letting the style grow with the boy.

Childhood. The novel opens in the voice of infancy: "Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road…" [5, p. 3]. The sentence is simple, musical, and repetitive. It belongs to the world of sound rather than logic, so the reader perceives reality as a child might - directly and without commentary.

Adolescence. When Stephen is unjustly punished at Clongowes, the language already blends narration and thought: "It was cruel and unfair, and he had told himself that he would tell the rector on Father Dolan" [5, p. 47]. This is free indirect discourse in practice: a third-

person voice carrying first-person emotion. We sense Stephen's indignation without quotation marks or explanation - a hallmark of psychological realism.

Adulthood. By the final chapter, narration becomes pure interior monologue: "Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience…" [5, p. 252]. Now the boundary between narrator and character has disappeared. The novel ends inside Stephen's consciousness, and language itself becomes the medium of self-creation.

Techniques of Psychological Realism. Joyce achieves depth of inner life through several interrelated techniques.

1. Free indirect discourse. In the Christmas dinner scene, emotion is transmitted through detail rather than commentary: "They were shouting across the table and Uncle Charles was trying to make peace between them. Dante's white face quivered with passion" [5, p. 36]. The reader hears the family's tension through Stephen's frightened perception - realism of feeling, not of fact [3, p. 90].

2. Stream of consciousness. Joyce often records thought as it occurs: "The faint smell of the grease still clung to his fingers… Why did he always feel this strange ache of pity?" [5, p. 119]. The syntax follows association, not grammar, capturing the irregular pulse of emotion [3, p. 132].

3. Symbolic imagery. Symbols of water, light, and flight accompany each turning point. When Stephen sees the bird-girl on the beach, sensory beauty fuses with revelation: "A girl stood before him in midstream, alone and still, gazing out to sea. Her long slender bare legs were delicate as a crane's…" [5, p. 185]. The vision becomes both erotic and spiritual - the language of awakening rather than description [4, p. 157].

Through these devices Joyce constructs a living psychology on the page, giving form to consciousness itself.

Joyce's Modernist Innovation. In A Portrait, perspective is not only a stylistic choice but a statement about freedom. As Stephen declares, "I will not serve that in which I no longer believe" [5, p. 240].

The disappearance of the authorial voice parallels this rebellion: both artist and character seek autonomy. Joyce's narrative experiments paved the way for later modernists - Woolf, Faulkner, and others - who continued exploring the limits of representing thought [2, p. 88]. His psychological realism replaced external observation with the drama of inner life.

Conclusion. Joyce's manipulation of narrative perspective transforms the traditional novel into a study of consciousness. From the innocent rhythm of childhood to the complex introspection of adulthood, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man reveals how language can chart the formation of mind. Through free indirect discourse, stream of consciousness, and symbolic structure, Joyce discovers a new kind of realism - one that sees truth not in events but in perception itself [4, p. 184].

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