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# **Narrative Models of Intersubjectivity.**

Magdalena Rembowska-Płuciennik

Przeł. Marta Skotnicka

# Magdalena REMBOWSKA-PLUCIENNIK

## Narrative Models of Intersubjectivity

This article concerns the relation between narration as artistic creation and the functioning of the human consciousness. What will interest me most is the interdependence between the poetics of narrative prose, and cognitive procedures enabling us to identify and share internal states of other people: real in the social environment but also the fictional ones. I define narration not – as it was the case in formal, structuralist narratology or after the so called narrative turn – in reference to abstracted linguistic-textual units, constructivist structures organizing knowledge about the world or cultural practices of identity creation. I analyze it with regard to the elementary mode of human consciousness, to its intersubjective nature,<sup>1</sup> which equips us with a capacity to operate with various perspectives (spatiotemporal, cognitive, emotional, or sensual), separate from the one we currently use. In this mode of consciousness, I find sources of narration resulting from a human ability to construct a story about another human subject: from sentences such as “Peter is looking at Eva” up to literary narratives. Out of the empirically understood consciousness (or more widely: out of the embodied mind) I create cognitive architecture essential to enable storytelling about the other and reflected in main elements of both narration’s morphology (for instance in constructing its characters) and narrative communication.

Adopting someone else’s perspective establishes the narration’s basic frame: “I speak about someone else/myself from the past,” or “I speak as someone else about someone else.” This cognitive operation facilitates constructing fictional beings (a narrator, characters) and organizes their representation in the reader’s mind. In

<sup>1</sup> P. Gärdenfors, “Evolutionary and Developmental Aspects of Intersubjectivity,” *Consciousness Transitions. Phylogenetic, Ontogenetic, and Physiological Aspects*, ed. by H. Liljenström, P. Århem, Elsevier, London-Amsterdam 2008. 281-305.

his or her reception of narration, the reader activates cognitive strategies applied in interactions with real people – the fundamental one is drawing conclusions about motives and goals (even not verbalized in the text) of fictional characters as well as comprehending their emotions, acts of perception and internal states.<sup>2</sup> In the narrative, the storyteller and those about whom the narrator speaks are constructed (on the grounds of linguistic and textual solutions), both by the author and by the reader, as existents<sup>3</sup> – anthropomorphic beings whose mental representation (the author's and the reader's) constitutes a system of interrelated subjective perspectives.

My proposition is, therefore, to introduce a model of cognitive plurality as a method of describing literary narration. The assumption is that literary narration emerges from the intersubjective cooperation between the author and the reader who (in different moments in time) perform a similar cognitive operation. Mentally, they both represent the anthropomorphic subject (the narrator) who speaks of other anthropomorphic subjects: narration characters. This is why narration (and in a multiplied way – literary narration) is inalienably intersubjective. It comprises various mental spaces assigned to fictional beings and produced by non-textual participants of the narrative communication thanks to their ability to identify and share mental acts of the other. In my view, this element of narration is the core of the problem of consciousness in literary narration. Due to the intersubjective nature of narration, in every of its historical varieties it is presupposed that there are patterns of access to someone else's inner experience because mechanisms of attributing mental states to another subject are a mode of functioning of the consciousness and the language.<sup>4</sup>

I would like to show that in various types of literary narration, access to the character's inner experience is an invariable element of storytelling regardless of existing presentations of the character's thoughts or speech. Narrative models of intersubjectivity are located "across" the established divisions into narration types and varieties (e.g., omniscient, author's, personal, first-person or third-person, objective, and subjectivized), because it is not the presence of traditional literary forms of consciousness' representation that is responsible for creating a link between the problem of consciousness and narration. Insight into the other is a primary activity of the human mind, not derivative of the applied literary means of expression; it is not annihilated by the contemporary withdrawal from "emphatic narration"<sup>5</sup> or such literary devices as the stream of consciousness.

<sup>2</sup> A. Graesser, K. Millis, R. Zwaan "Discourse Comprehension," *Annual Review of Psychology* 1997 vol. 48; M. Gernsbacher. B. Hallada "How Automatically Do Readers Infer Fictional Characters' Emotional States," *Scientific Studies of Reading* 1998 vol. 2 issue 3. *Forms of Active Mind: A Cognitive Approach, Vol. 1: Emotions, Perceptions, Identity, and Vol. 2: Evolution and Complex Cognitive Structures*, ed. by A. Klawiter, Warsaw 2008-2009. Publication contains translations of the most important Western works with commentaries.

<sup>3</sup> Term used by M. Fludernik in *Towards a "Natural" Narratology*, Routledge, London 1996.

<sup>4</sup> A. Verhagen, *Constructions of Intersubjectivity: Discourse, Syntax, and Cognition*, Oxford 2005.

<sup>5</sup> It is a term coined by A. Lebkowska in *Empathy: About Literary Narratives of the End of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, Cracow 2008.

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What indicates adopting someone else's perspective are solutions concerning the character's description and presentations of perception, body, intersensory, and emotional communication, formation of the character's motivation, and the relationship between the character's actions and mental states. These solutions are functional equivalents of linguistic means of representation of the character's internal speech and thoughts. Even in view of the absence of the two, the character's consciousness may be entirely transparent for the narrator thanks to other narrative figures. Thus, I distinguish projection, simulation, identification, separation, and externalization as implied patterns of the character's "mind reading" (performed by the narrator) that are present in various historically defined types of narration.

Projection includes such artistic means of expression that serve presenting the narrator's full access to the character's thoughts and internal states. Traditionally, this range of phenomena is subsumed to so called omniscient narration, both in its first-person and third-person version. However, projection also constructs narration deprived of the complete knowledge of the character and the world in favor of exploring a limited fragment of reality registered in the character's individual experience. It is possible to distinguish several linguistic and textual means of presentation from outside the repertoire typical of omniscient narration, which give the same cognitive effect of representing complete and efficient insight into the character's mental states and acts.

Such strategy is, for instance, a precise language describing integration of internal states with corporeal reactions developed by Zofia Nałkowska. Each emotion and thought is linked with a – visible from the outside – signal revealed in the character's behavior, appearance or gesture, whereas the narrator's commentaries contain descriptions of the characters' psycho-corporeal reactions. As one of the characters in *The Romance of Teresa Hennert* states, "there is a soul in a human being and in an animal. But the body itself is the soul."<sup>6</sup> This rule is valid both for a description of the character from the narrator's perspective and in the characters' mutual perception of each other. Here is a quote from *The Frontier*:

She [Elżbieta] made on him [Zenon] bad impression. And the gesture asking him to sit down and the way she sat down herself, fixing something on her dress and placing her feet in a specific manner. She was anxiously nervous, insecure, the old charm of her gloomy strength disappeared without a trace....She suddenly became serious. With visible distress and in a lowered voice, as if she was making sure that nobody heard her, she started to inquire about her cousin.<sup>7</sup>

Momentary insight into the other's experiences based on perceptual data is a literary equivalent of everyday human cognitive strategies related with using

<sup>6</sup> Z. Nałkowska, "The Romance of Teresa Hennert," *The Romance of Teresa Hennert: The Frontier*, Warsaw 1995. 128. <http://rcin.org.pl>

<sup>7</sup> Z. Nałkowska, "The Frontier," *The Romance of Teresa Hennert: The Frontier*, Warsaw 1995. 128.

so called theories of mind.<sup>8</sup> In my view, this type of description functionally corresponds to other literary devices representing the character's consciousness such as free indirect speech, internal monologue – both serving as registers of the verbal level of thoughts.

A close connection between the description of corporeal reactions and their psychological interpretation is a historically known phenomenon stemming from cultural changes of people's attitude towards physicality as a component of human subjectivity.<sup>9</sup> Among various types of narration, it is possible to notice evolution of such presentations – it begins with exposition of the narrator's precise interpretation of observed gestures, appearances, and behavior up to gradual elimination of such clarifications. It is not enough to ascertain that this narrative phenomenon is analogical to the transition from psychologism to behaviorism. Both in prose close to psychologism and in behaviorist works, the character's consciousness is represented by assigning to him or her emotional states and perceptive acts on the basis of data available solely to the observer's senses. The behaviorist technique (among others) only eliminates interpretation of the above data, shifting the need of their identification and their interpretation onto the reader. A similar claim was put into effect in other literary programmes that reshaped (for various reasons and due to diverse artistic objectives) the model of realistic prose. As Bruno Jasiński wrote in *Exposé to The Legs of Izolda Morgan* (1923):

Today, the novel must stop being a story about certain facts that only subsequently evoke the reader's states of mind that correspond to those facts....The contemporary novel indicates to the consumer certain fundamental states of mind on the basis of which the reader constructs for himself a number of facts that correspond to those states.<sup>10</sup>

Projection as a model of "mind reading" often includes statements that universalize the narrator's interpretation of someone else's behavior and physical actions:

His voice was seductively soft and nice, revealing a good, pure man. However, it seemed bizarre. The dropped corners of his lips and unpleasant, motionless eyes forced everyone to think about a harsh and irksome voice.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> There is much literature on the subject of a so called theory of mind: *Natural Theories of Mind: Evolution, Development and Simulation of Everyday Mindreading*, ed. by A. Whiten, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1991; *Other Intentions: Cultural Contexts and the Attribution of Inner States*, ed. by L. Rosen, School of American Research Press, Santa Fe 1995; *Understanding Other Minds: Perspective from Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience*, ed. by S. Baron-Cohen, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York 2000; *Mindreading: An Integrated Account of Pretense, Self-Awareness, and Understanding Other Minds*, ed. by S. Nichols, Oxford 2003.

<sup>9</sup> A. Lebkowska, *Empathy*, pp. 19-20. Some of the historical aspects of mind theory as partially a cultural product are touched upon by D.R Olson in *The World on Paper: The Conceptual and Cognitive Implications of Writing and Reading*, New York 1994. 234-156.

<sup>10</sup> B. Jasiński, *The Legs of Izolda Morgan and Other Works*, selection and introduction by G. Lasota, Cambridge-New York 1966. 17.

<sup>11</sup> M. Choromański, *White Brothers: The Novel*, Poznań 1990. 7.

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This strategy almost entirely organizes the narration in Tadeusz Breza's *Adam Grywałd* (1936). The first-person narrator usually recognizes with no difficulty what happens inside of the people he observes:

She talked rapidly, at first Grywałd was silent. Then he started to utter specific cries of surprise, joy and disappointment, whereas Mossowa did not cease to ramble on with astounding vehemence and excitement. In her tone, there was something familiar that sounded like disclosed secrets. I scrutinized this scene, amused for some reason. They, on the other hand, did not pay any attention to me.<sup>12</sup>

This example shows that projection, as a matrix of access to the character's consciousness inscribed in the narrative form, does not overlap with the anonymous narrator's unlimited knowledge. The character telling Grywałd's story does not usurp to himself the full knowledge of the presented world and other characters. The formal inability to apply such means of representation of the characters' thoughts as indirect interior monologue, internal speech or standard introspection does not deprive the narrator of methods to identify and describe things happening in the others' psyche. The narrator's abilities in this area are completely brought to light via the basic mode of presenting interaction – the mode I would call an intersubjective event. It means the automatic and pertinent attribution of mental acts, intentions, aims, and emotions to the participant of communication followed by immediate adjusting to them the narrator's own participation in the act of communication:

She expected that I would deny. This would put an end to the whole thing. I could spare Irenka complications and say that I didn't know him. It would be the truth, after all. However, not take make any other decision, I quickly shouted:

I know, it's the poet who was in love with Iza!

Irenka smiled. Although it wasn't what she wanted to hear, her indiscretion was completely shattered.<sup>13</sup>

Figures typical of projection can be encountered in works other than psychological novels. The function of the character's perspective representation may also be performed by grammatical solutions: e.g., related with the shape of the syntax or the use of grammatical tenses. Jan Brzękowski employed such means of in his novel *Psychoanalyst on a Trip* (1929). The interesting aspect of this example is that in this experimental and formally heterogeneous novel – filled with several metanarrative and metafictional elements – there are numerous signs of the distance towards the characters. However, in the stream of narration conducted by the storyteller who rules the presented world, there are fragments that sharply stand out due to their functions and forms. For instance, digressive inclusions in the form of elliptical sentences reflect the characters' sensory observations and decipher emotional reactions of the other characters ("Feverish trembling of the shoulders. Cuddling with

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<sup>12</sup> T. Breza, *Adam Grywałd*, Warsaw 1977. 32.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* 19.

strength and passion"<sup>14</sup>). The notation of the character's sensual sensations excluded from the stream of narration plays a similar role ("lips=fleshy, gutta-percha hulls of ruby beans, you can chew them, like rubber and nibble them like sweets"<sup>15</sup>).

Another narrative model of intersubjectivity may be called simulation. It is indicated by such shape of narration that brings the narration closer to unrepeatable, most intimate, unique and private experiences of the chosen character. In this model, the fluidity of the narrative perspective is not as extensive and unrestrained as in the case of projection, where narration freely circulated between various aspects of the overall vision and narrative centers of consciousness (between the unrevealed narrator or the author-narrator and the characters). The privileged position of one character (described by such narratological categories as the point of view, personal narration or the narrative center of consciousness) is related with prevailing narrative methods of representation of the character's thoughts and internal speech. Undoubtedly, the most traditional form in this context is free indirect speech,<sup>16</sup> exposing the narrator's presence but also giving a wide range of nuances in terms of the narrator's distance towards the characters and building intimacy with them. These means are skillfully applied by Włodzimierz Odojewski in his *Podolian Cycle*, or lately, by Inga Iwasów in *Bambino* (2008) and *Towards the Sun* (2010). Only seemingly, this type of narration represents an individual, private, and the most intimate level of inner experience: among its presentations, we might find numerous figures helping the character identify other people's internal states. These are presentations of mechanisms of sensual perception (therefore non-verbal processes), rules according to which the characters perceive each other and draw conclusions about their motives, intentions, and emotions (therefore, elements of the "mind reading" poetics). In the case of personal narration, we encounter more sensual media than the narrative ones (thanks to, for example, sensory focalization<sup>17</sup>), and it is the constantly changing distance between them (not simple substitution or alleged elimination) that constructs this narrative form. What plays an important role is also the process of establishing links between observed events by the character who perceives the environment; the process depends on his or her position in space,

<sup>14</sup> J. Brzękowski *Psychoanalyst on a Trip*, Warsaw 1929. 29.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 32.

<sup>16</sup> On the topic of formal and semantic features of this narrative form and their theoretical-literary interpretation see: D. Hopensztand, "Free Indirect Speech in the Context of 'Black Wings,'" *Theoretical Stylistics in Poland*, ed. by K. Budzyk, Warsaw 1946, 299-330; K. Wóycicki, "On the Border of Grammar and Stylistics: Direct Speech, Indirect Speech, and Free Indirect Speech," *ibid.*, 161-191; W. Tomasiak, *From Bally to Banfield (and Further): Six Theses about Free Indirect Speech*, Bydgoszcz 1992; M. Ron, "Free Indirect Speech, Mimetic Linguistic Games and the Subject of Fiction," trans. by M.B. Fedewicz *Pamiętnik Literacki* 1989, issue 4; B. Cerquiglini, "Free Indirect Speech and Modernity," trans. by M. Abramowicz, *Pamiętnik Literacki* 1990 issue 4 and A. Banfield, "Narrative Style v. Grammar of Direct and Indirect Speech," trans. by P. Czaplński, *ibid.* <http://rcin.org.pl>

<sup>17</sup> M. Rembowska-Płuciennik, "In Someone Else's Skin: Sensory Focalization v. Literary Presentations of Sensual Experiences," *Ruch Literacki* 2006 issue 6.

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knowledge of the world, the pertinence of judgments and observations. This is how concluding mechanisms are represented in narration and as these mental acts are a function in theories of mind, their literary representations should be treated as an ingredient of artistic presentations of consciousness as well. Here is an example where “reading the others’ minds” becomes a narrative event:

Zygmunt was really moved. At times he took Dola by the shoulder, leaned towards her and explained something with excitement....Her smile was reflected in his face like in the mirror – but her gloom changed his expression into dispirited anxiety...Klara, still feeling on her face an involuntary muscular equivalent of Dola’s smile, looked at Zygmunt and her smile immediately disappeared stricken by an expression of such suffering and such helpless relaxation on his face.<sup>18</sup>

We are, thus, in the character’s very “center of consciousness” without being acquainted with her interior monologue and without the presence of free indirect speech or other kinds of psychological analysis.

A separate question is how, within the reconstructed model, it is possible to voice a modernistic thesis about unrecognizability of another human being. In many works, pessimism related with this recognition is subjected to thematization but it should be underlined that the sphere of this declaration does not have to be followed by the narrative implication of inability to access someone else’s experience. Mind “reading” is not the same as thoughts’ recognition, therefore it is not restricted to forms of quoting thoughts and internal speech.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century prose contributed to creation of another significant figure: simulation of being someone else. This function is performed by the second-person narration. This innovative form – one of rare cases of multi-person storytelling<sup>19</sup> – became popular in Poland in the 1960s triggered by assimilation of the new French novel.<sup>20</sup> Such narration includes – not possible to be fully regulated – relations between non-textual real world and the presented one, between the real reader and the recipient inscribed in the convention, and finally between the narrator and the character<sup>21</sup>.

When the cooperative model of second-person narration appears in a literary work, introduction of the narrative “you” obliges the narrator to adopt a cognitive perspective of another subject. It is most frequently the protagonist but the form might also refer to the narrator depicted in a different phase of his or her biography (the autobiographical past) or in a specific moment of auto-reflection (as in the case

<sup>18</sup> A. Gruszecka, *An Adventure In an Unknown Country*, Warsaw 1933. 108-109.

<sup>19</sup> B. Richardson, “I, etcetera: On the Poetics and Ideology of Multi-personed Narratives,” *Style* vol. 28 no. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Z. Bieńkowski, *The Beauty and Orpheus: Essays on Western Literature*, Warsaw 1960 and *Mouldings: Literary Essays*, Warsaw 1966, also M. Głowiński, *Order, Chaos, Meaning: Essays on the Contemporary Novel*, Warsaw 1968 and L. Wiśniewska, *The World, the Creator, the Text: The Problem of the New Novel*, Bydgoszcz 1993.

<sup>21</sup> M. Cornis-Pope, “From Cultural Provocation to Narrative Cooperation: Innovative Uses of the Second Person in Raymond Federman’s Fiction,” *Style* 1994 vol. 28 no. 3.



of soliloquy). Ireneusz Iredyński applied second-person narration in this shape and with this purpose in his *Crook's Day* (1962), while Tadeusz Konwicki used it to (re) construct various episodes of the first-person narrator's biography in *A Dreambook for Our Time* (1963). Second-person narration might also appear in order to regain oral directness of narration and involve the listener in it as much as it is possible because it underlines full community of experiences and feelings, such as in Wiesław Myśliwski's novel *Stone Upon Stone* (1984). A characteristic overview of artistic possibilities offered by second-person narration is Dorota Masłowska's *The Queen's Peacock* (2005). The author uses these forms in a confrontational manner – in opposition to the cooperative aspect of the second-person narration model. The confrontational function is visible, for example, in rants directed against some of the characters in the novel but it always guarantees insight into the perspective of the accused and ridiculed “you.” There are both apostrophic expressions directed towards the implied recipient (“And this may seem uninteresting to you but MC Doris is riding the bike along Jagiellońska...<sup>22</sup>) and the narrator's apostrophes to herself.

Among narrative models of intersubjectivity, there is a special place for the identificational model subsuming forms which imply the narrator's direct, full and free access to the character's thoughts and internal speech, but only in such a perceptive and/or linguistic form that they have when appearing in the area of the character's represented consciousness. A necessary indicator is, therefore, either maximal proximity between the narrator's perspective and the point of view of the character who is allowed to verbalize his or her own thoughts in the form of a first-person monologue characterized by individualized organization of the language,<sup>23</sup> or signals

<sup>22</sup> D. Masłowska, *The Queen's Peacock*, Warsaw 2005. 31.

<sup>23</sup> D. Cohn redefines the stream of consciousness in *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J. 1978) by classifying conventions of the psyche representation depending on a degree of proximity between the narrator and the character and rejecting theses about “disappearance, absence” of the narrator in some literary forms. R. Humphrey, “The Stream of Consciousness - Techniques,” trans. by S. Amsterdamski, *Pamiętnik Literacki* 1970 issue 4. On the stream of consciousness in Polish research, see: M. Czermińska, *Time in Parnicki's Novels*, Wrocław 1972; Z. Lewicki, *Time in the Stream of Consciousness Prose: An Analysis of James Joyce's Ulysses and William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury and As I Lay Dying*, Warsaw 1975; W. Tomasiak in review of Cohn's book *Pamiętnik Literacki* 1986 issue 4; E. Szary-Matywiecka, “Internal Monologue,” *Dictionary of 20th Century Polish Literature*, ed. by A. Brodzka and others, Wrocław 1995, 666-669; T. Cieślukowska, “Selected Compositional Functions of Internal Monologue in Contemporary Narrative Prose,” *In the Field of Genealogy, Intertextuality, and the Theory of Suggestion*, Warsaw-Łódź 1995, 262-280; B. Chamot, “Stereotypical Elements of Internal Monologue Structure in Light of Literary Communication,” *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis* no. 240; E. Wiegandt, “Identity in the Stream of Consciousness,” *Narration and Identity*, ed. by W. Bolecki, R. Nycz, Warsaw 2004, vol. 2, 350-359; M. Rembowska-Pluciennik Stream of consciousness in novel, entry for *Dictionary of Literary Genres and Techniques*, 2008 vol. 51 issue 1-2.

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proving that grammatically homogenous narration – third-person account – concerns reality experienced by the character. The stream of consciousness assumes a great need of imaginative “entering into someone else’s self” and relativization of the data about the world to the level of perception and cognitive abilities of a fictional person who is “not-me.”

Particularly interesting narrative events happen between intermediate third-person account of the narrator speaking of his or her character and first-person narration where the level of the character’s thoughts is directly dependent on representation. Analogically, in a “story within a story” construction, within one character’s stream of consciousness, another character’s perspective is subordinate to representation. Indicating similar examples will allow analyzing figures of transition between various mental spaces within which the reader is forced to simultaneously coordinate the content coming from the narrator and the character/s. In my view, this makes narrative identification one of the intersubjectivity models as it requires both the subject identifying (himself or herself) with the other (the narrator) and the subject whom the storyteller identifies with. One of the types of the stream of consciousness is the stream of perception that goes beyond the problem of the character’s internal speech in order to represent non-textual and non-rational psychophysical states: a sensual and emotional component of mental processes.<sup>24</sup> A good historical example illustrating this phenomenon may be Zbigniew Grabiński’s novel *The Silence of the Forest and Your Silence...* (1931) where, apart from mostly applied first-person narration, there are series of associations and memories reflecting current flows of thoughts and content of the consciousness. Interior monologue in first person and third-person narration coexist in many parts of Grabiński’s work. They are used alternately which is motivated by a clear area of “competence” division. The character is given an opportunity to verbalize his or her current thoughts or memories, while the narrator represents mental images, sensual experiences and physical reactions that are not verbalized concurrently with thoughts, or elements such as the view of the surroundings, register of activities and behavior whose verbalization would be blatantly improbable:

Loneliness – I’ve had enough of it. I started to live on it. My pain monsterized me. Now I need communication. With someone close, someone constant, who won’t destroy it the next day....The sun permeated through him and wandered through his veins. He saw the shape of his house, the lights in the windows – he heard laughter of the child running on its tiny feet in the hall.<sup>25</sup>

One of the most frequently applied methods of transition from third-person narration to direct quotation of the character’s thoughts or internal speech is a metaphor of listening to a voice, allowing an automated, diversely conceptualized psychological instance to be voiced (thoughts, fear, conscience, suspicions, the real

<sup>24</sup> See: L. Brinton, “Represented Perception,” trans. by M. Adamczyk-Grabowska, *Pamiętnik Literacki* 1990. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Z. Grabiński, *The Silence of the Forest and Your Silence...*, Cracow 1931. 193

“me”). Formal and grammatical demarcation is sufficiently outlined for the reader to be able to distinguish the content coming from the narrator from the content within the character’s consciousness. Consequently, a more important question concerns motivation of transition to first-person monologue. It seems that this figure implies oppressive nature of thoughts emerging in the field of consciousness. It also accompanied the history of introducing first-person monologue to the Polish literature. In Grabowski’s novel or in Adam Tarn’s *Portrait of father in four frames* (1934) it was associated, among others, with the subject of sexuality.

In the simulative model of intersubjectivity, verbalized suspicion towards access to someone else’s perspective takes forms that are more radical formally and declaratively. As works belonging to this thematic circle stand out thanks to many other artistic solutions, I classify them within another model of narrative intersubjectivity called separation. It is visible in works characterized by emphatic negation of the narrator’s or the character’s access to another subject’s experiences or in works where this barrier is considered the main cause of communication misunderstandings, existential loneliness of a human being, cognitive and anthropological pessimism. In the area of formal solutions, those theses mean giving up techniques of thoughts and internal speech representation, reluctance towards psychological analysis as a tool of describing human psyche and conscious separation from explaining “opacity” or mystery of the other. In this model, access to someone else’s consciousness occurs, above all, through description of perceptual data: ways of performing activities, body language, gestures and behavior, proxemic and kinaesthetic relations, any elements of non-verbal and intersensory communication. In order to make it possible for the narrator (or the reader) to recreate mental states of the observed/described subject based on the above data and co-feel together with the character, there is no need to apply traditional techniques of the third-person narrator’s penetration of the character’s consciousness.

What is more, in first-person narration, which has been dominant in the Polish prose for the last few decades, this problem is taken up equally frequently. Statements uttered by the – revealed and personal – narrator always reflect a certain model of access to mental states of the described character. They also uncover mechanisms explaining the character’s actions and behavior, exposes signs through which the narrator (biographer, witness, observer, events participant) draws conclusions about internal motivations of other people, represents their acts of perceptions, emotional states and sensual experiences.

A perfect example of separation as a “mind reading” model may be *A Premeditated Crime* (1933) by Witold Gombrowicz. Creating a situation which, in terms of communication, enables closer relation between the narrator and the narration’s addressee, the former constantly questions potentially shared (predictable, presupposed) methods of drawing conclusions about the observed characters. Breaking the rules of social perception (shared by the reader but not by the narrator) evokes cognitive uncertainty and leads to piling up absurd behavior. Gombrowicz, therefore, offers his own “mind reading” poetics not affected by psychology or the dominant at

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the time psychological literary method. Attributions of internal states are, however, an unchanging element of stories about characters suspected of committing a crime; the narrator draws conclusions about what happens with them on the basis of their behavior, automatic somatic reactions, voice intonation and gestures. What causes complications is the fact that the narrator also questions their straightforward meanings, openly reading them with bad intentions and treating them as proofs of guilt in a private investigation. These are the only data about the separate being available to the observer and the concluding one – this is everything we can learn and very little at the same time<sup>26</sup>.

Adam Ciompa in his *Capital Letters* (1933) formulates – to some extent – similar theses: everything that we have access to is sensual reception of someone else's embodied psycho-corporal states. Ciompa developed a method depicting presentations of psychological processes to the verge of being linguistically comprehensible as he considered them as sensual qualities autonomously revealed to our consciousness. Narration dominated by the nominal style almost exclusively represents acts of perception,<sup>27</sup> which do not build either a continuous experience or knowledge of the other. Ciompa's astute narrator is a master of identifying what happens inside of co-participants of the interaction:

The other one parted his lips with a smile showing embarrassment and understanding... he brushed his coarse voice against me and fixed upon me a freezeed glance – despite the slight upward move of the smiling corners of his lips into his cheeks – of sad helplessness of his pupils<sup>28</sup>.

Stylistic techniques applied by Ciompa trigger substantialization of psycho-corporal states or even their spatial expansion which in terms of functionalities relates to the strategy of *synecdoche body imagery*. In Ciompa's artistic version, specificity of the separative model of intersubjectivity lies in consequent emphasis on dysfunctionality of "mind reading" practices or adopting the other's perspective. In *Capital Letters*, there is much place devoted to opaqueness of the others, to the exclusiveness and separateness of the "I" against their experiences.

In prose of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a similar opinion (motivated by metaphysical issues) was consequently expressed by Gustaw Herling-Grudziński. In most of his short stories, he applied first-person narration stylized as autobiography imposing inability to access internal states of other characters taking part in presented events. However, in Herling-Grudziński's works there appear original fictional motives mediatizing the other's experience and being a mediated equivalent

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<sup>26</sup> On somatic communication in Gombrowicz's works, also see: A. Woźny, "Communicational Relations in the Presented World in Witold Gombrowicz's Novels," *Introduction to Semiotics of a Novel Character*, Wrocław 1988. 7-38.

<sup>27</sup> See: W. Bolecki, "Point of View and the Consequences of Nominal Style in the Novel *Capital Letters* by Adam Ciompa," "The Poetic Model of Prose in the Interwar Period: Witkacy, Gombrowicz, Schulz, and Others," Cracow 1996. 195-217.

<sup>28</sup> A. Ciompa, *Capital Letters*, Cracow 1933. 57, 68

of this experience.<sup>29</sup> It is a journey to a place where events interesting to the narrator happened and where he or she comes into irrational contact with environment impregnated with someone else's previous presence and permeated with tangible suffering (*The Tower, The Funeral Madrigal*). Mediumistic experience is dreamed of (*The Noonday Cemetery*), by means of "other type of sight" (*The Silver Casket*), in a mysterious illness (*The Ruins*) and plays a role of the equivalent of a momentary experience of someone else's experience. At the same time, the author maintains functionalized forms of presenting intersensory and non-verbal communication. Those "emanations" of someone else's emotional states, motivations or feelings are intriguing for the narrator who perceives them as helpful traces in his search of the Mystery. The writer also introduced vivid images of embodied psychophysical states which were simultaneously personifications of the character's existential situation: stigmas of suffering ("the silence of stone" after facing the collective experience of death and destruction visible in *The Ruins*).

In separation, referring to common personification frequently becomes a guarantee of sharing someone else's perspective. Various sensual apostrophes are designed to release readers' associations with elementary psychosomatic experiences, and consequently break the barrier of cognition and description appealing to the experience that was primarily somatic. A wish to "use the body to recreate someone else's existence" or "sensual telepathy" can be seen, for instance, in Andrzej Stasiuk's *Dukla* (1997) as a remedy to inability of communication and interpersonal existential abyss.

A mechanism of drawing conclusions about the character's internal states can be entirely transferred onto the reader. Increasing the reader's cognitive activity is a basis for the last of the models of narrative intersubjectivity discussed in this article called externalization. It embraces behaviorist narration<sup>30</sup> and works inspired by existentialism. In both cases this formal negation of the need or possibility to represent psychological phenomena is justified both artistically (by the search of a new language), as well as historically and literarily (it was related with the retreat from the dominant psychological method in literature; it was an answer to wartime experiences and new philosophical trends). This easily constructed and established opposition of "psychologism in literature of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century" and "behaviorism of the 1940s and 1950s" implied a specific type of interpretation of works being more or less explicitly connected with American authors' output. Within the approach characterized by cognitive mechanisms encoded in narration, behaviorist narration – similarly to other narrative forms – does not include representation of the character's and the narrator's consciousness, but it does include their qualitatively

<sup>29</sup> A. Łebkowska analyzes empathic strategies found in Herling-Grudziński's works, e.g. his passion for exposing in narration cognitive procedures connected with gaining knowledge of the character, functions of the portrait (literary and painting-related) as a sign of flashes of what is shown and what is hidden. A. Łebkowska, *Empathy*. 97-99, 107.

<sup>30</sup> This is how behaviorism is defined by Ł. Budrecki in *Dictionary of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Polish Literature*. 95-100.

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different figures.<sup>31</sup> However, it is – to a much greater extent – based on the reader’s active reading of the character’s mind than on their direct and artistic presentation in a particular work. I will indicate formal solutions allowing the reader – even in narration characterized by considerably limited access to the character’s mind – to draw conclusions about the characters’ internal states with no difficulty. These are figures that in terms of functionality equal introspection. On the other hand, modernistic behaviorist narration or quasi-behaviorist narration introduces a new kind of psychological description. It suggests the character’s internal states via representation of corporal reactions and prefers concluding about mental processes on the basis of perceptive data. Representing bodily states (linguistically by the narrator and mentally by the reader) automatically means reading of the character’s states of mind. Their markers are somatic expressions of emotions and so called body language. Another important function is held by some grammatical categories, especially adverbials describing a manner of performing an activity, which are also exponents of the internal state motivating the way an activity is performed (for instance “he was looking triumphantly”). Behaviorism defined this way would be the fullest modernistic representation of the embodied mind and could be considered a proof of evolution of modernistic narrative forms in Polish literature, not as a phenomenon inspired by later influences from the outside (e.g., by the reception of American writers after 1945 and the assimilation of the new French novel<sup>32</sup>). Here is an example coming from one of early short stories by Tadeusz Różewicz (1955):

The old man moves unsteadily, rubs his face with a sleeve, looks around, now he’s looking at the coffee I’ve put aside. He’s looking at the coffee and licking his lips...The old man fingers around, looking for his cane....Now the German’s eyes are directed to the place where my coffee can is. I’m the only one to notice it...I won’t say “Boys, give him coffee” and I won’t stand up, although the coffee is right next to me and he is being carried to death and he is thirsty.<sup>33</sup>

The above fragment contains a narrative event constructed as a dynamic sequence of the narrator’s recognition of someone else’s states of consciousness. Behavioristic narration does not rule out a technique close to simulation of someone else’s experience: more limited in scope, without thematizing it, always within the frame of the first-person narrator’s perception. There is no simulation of nuanced psychophysical

<sup>31</sup> On the relation between representation of the body and the implied psychological vision in E. Hemingway’s prose, see: D. Raabe “Hemingway’s Anatomical Metonymies,” *Journal of Modern Literature* 1999 vol. 23 issue 1.

<sup>32</sup> An additional problem with the new novel is its overtly underlined (especially by A. Robbe-Grillet) “anti-humanism.” However, auto-commentaries and standard statements of authors, and at the same time, theoreticians are a different issue than the possibility to really exclude subjective categories from the field of literary presentation – even in the case of apparently the most objective “camera eye.” M. Fludernik places this category within the cognitive frame of “seeing” as a modus constituting consciousness in experimental narratives as she refers to novels of the author of *Jealousy*. See: M. Fludernik, *Towards a “Natural” Narratology*. 293, 317, 351.

<sup>33</sup> T. Różewicz, “Craving,” *Collected Works: Prose*, Vol. 1, Wrocław 2003. 42-43.

experiences but what remains is the possibility to empathize with the observed. Here is a thrilling scene from Tadeusz Borowski's short story (1948):

Sir, sir, this child is not mine, not mine! – The woman screams hysterically and runs away hiding her face in her hands. She wants to hide, she wants to be among the others who won't go by car, who will walk, who will live. She is young, healthy, pretty, she wants to live.<sup>34</sup>

Shared emotions and shared perception are exposed by rare forms of plural first- or third-person storytelling that represent a point of view of a community. Such structure is characteristic to a short story by Jan Józef Szczepański *Where New Moon Sets* (1973) whose collective main character is a partisan detachment of the Home Army.

Narrative models of intersubjectivity depicted above seem to situate themselves “crosswise” the established divisions into types and varieties of narration (e.g., omniscient, author's, personal, first-person or third-person, objective and subjectivized). Historically, these exponents are related with changing visions of subjectivity and its *non-individually shared indicators*. The historical and literary evolution of presentations of insight into someone else's experience meant gradually moving from intersubjectivity of thoughts (when the narrator could access them), through intersubjectivity of internal speech (when the narrator was the closest to the individual perspective of the feeling and speaking character), to more elementary intersubjectivity of corporal and psychophysical experiences (when the narrator relies on observation of the embodied mind). Going beyond traditional conventions of the consciousness' representation enables us to point out notions that are fundamental to contemporary narration studies: it is possible to shed light onto the relation between narration and the mode our minds work in and to indicate cognitive goals fulfilled by narration (or on a different level – literary fiction).

*Translation: Marta Skotnicka*

<sup>34</sup> T. Borowski, “This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen,” *Farewell to Maria: The World of Stone*, Warsaw 1972. 73.