

# The Representation of Speech and Thought in Literature

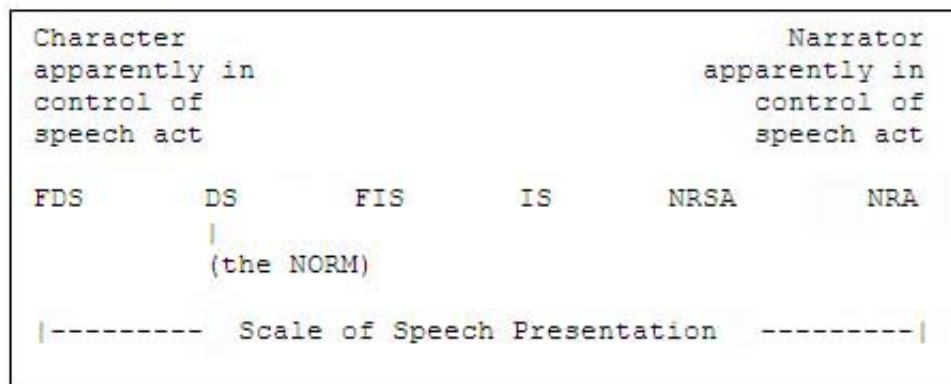
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## Part 1: Speech Representation

Besides the categories of Direct Speech (DS) and Indirect Speech (IS) that a writer has available, s/he also has the possibility of representing speech using Free Direct Speech (FDS), Free Indirect Speech (FIS), a Narrative Report of a Speech Act (NRSA), or a Narrative Report of an Act (NRA). Examples of the six types are:

- (1) He said that he liked it there in Bognor. (IS)
- (2) He said, "I like it here in Bognor!" (DS)
- (3) I like it here in Bognor! (FDS)
- (4) He liked it there in Bognor! (FIS)
- (5) He expressed his pleasure at being in Bognor. (NRSA)
- (6) He liked Bognor. (NR)

These six categories vary in the degree of control posited by the character or the narrator.



Note that NRSA (e.g., Mary swore at Bill) is functionally equivalent to a Narrative Report of an Act (NRA), e.g., Mary hit Bill.

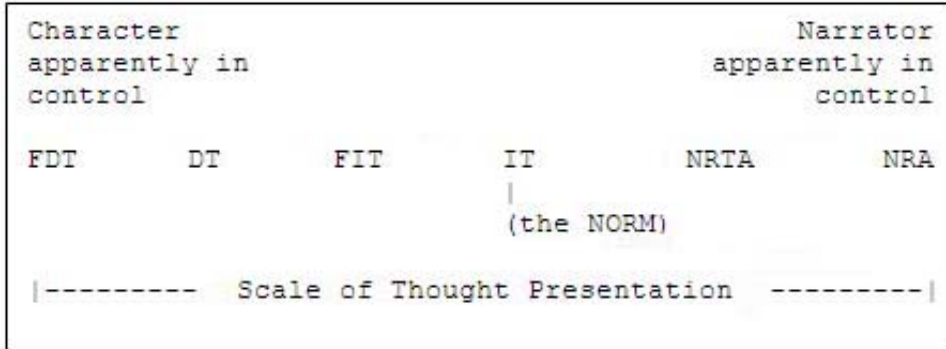
Henry James and James Joyce (along with such other notable nineteenth and early twentieth century writers as Woolf, Ibsen, and Chekhov) were deeply concerned with the portrayal of 'inner speech.' [Joyce's narrative style is often called an 'internal monologue', especially in "Eveline", a style that is necessary to make 'stream of consciousness' narration work.]

## Part 2: Thought Representation

The representation of a character's thought is essentially the same as that for the representation of speech. Again, it seems to me that a writer

can represent grammatically a character's thoughts through Direct (DT) or Indirect Thought (IT), Free Direct Thought (FDT), Free Indirect Thought (FIT), a Narrative Report of a Thought Act (NRTA), or a Narrative Report of an Act (NRA). The representation of speech and thought are the same except for one important difference, namely that the norm for thought representation is not DT but IT, because it is implausible to suggest that we can directly observe the thoughts of others:

- (7) Does she still love me? (FDT)
- (8) He wondered, "Does she still love me?" (DT)
- (9) Did she still love him? (FIT)
- (10) He wondered if she still loved him. (IT)
- (11) He wondered about her love for him. (NRTA)
- (12) He felt unsure of her love for him. (NR)



Note also that a NRTA (e.g., He wondered about Mary's love for Bill) is functionally identical to an NRA (e.g., Mary loved Bill).

By shifting our attention as readers to the right on the scales above, shifting them to the point that narrative reports blend/merge functionally with representations of speech and thought, the effect is to merge a character's thought and speech, thereby drawing us readers into the heads of the characters in ways that cannot be achieved by simpler, more straightforward representations of speech and thought, because in the simpler representations, the narrator's voice becomes too obvious, therefore distancing.

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