

The Art of Poetry

Stress and Rhythm

Rhythm is based on metre, that is to say on the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in the lines. Lines can be divided into a number of feet. A foot is made up of two or three syllables, one of which must be stressed.

Types of Metrical Feet

- The **iamb (U/)**. It is the basic rhythm of English poetry.
- The **trochee (/U)**. It has a striking quality and is often found in nursery rhymes.
- The **spondee (/ /)**. It is very slow, heavy and forceful.
- The **pyrrhic (UU)**. It is very rare.
- The **anapest (UU/)**. It is light and rapid.
- The **dactyl (/UU)**. It usually creates a jaunty rhythm.

A rhythm based on two-syllable feet is called a **binary rhythm**. If based on three-syllable feet, it is called a **ternary rhythm**. Ternary rhythms are more dancing and tend to speed up the rhythm.

- **Anacrusis** is the use of one or two unstressed syllables at the beginning of a line, before the start of the regular rhythm.
- **Catalexis** is the opposite of anacrusis, i.e., an incomplete or truncated last foot. It is usually the final unstressed syllable which is dropped.

The Line

The line is measured by the **number of feet** it contains:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| – One foot: monometer | – Five feet: pentameter |
| – Two feet: dimeter | – Six feet: hexameter (or alexandrine) |
| – Three feet: trimeter | – Seven feet: heptameter |
| – Four feet: tetrameter | – Eight feet: octameter |

When two metrical patterns intertwine (e.g., alternate lines of binary and ternary, or of iambic and trochaic rhythms), one speaks of **counterpoint**.

PAUSES. When there is a pause or break at the end of the line, i.e., when a phrase, clause or sentence ends at the end of a line, this line is said to be **end-stopped**. There can be a pause in the middle of the line, after the **caesura**. Some lines, on the contrary, carry over to the next lines: they are called **enjambments** or **run-on lines**. A half-line of verse is called a **hemistich**.

ENDINGS. Lines which end on stressed syllables have **masculine endings**. However, sometimes, an extra unstressed syllable appears at the end of the line, opening it up and making it seem longer. Such endings are called **feminine endings**. If, for metrical reasons, the stress falls upon a grammatical word, one speaks of a **weak ending**.

Types of Consonant or Vowel Repetition

A **syllable** consists of a vowel that may be preceded or followed by consonants – (C)V(C). The most common types of **parallelism** are:

- **Rhyme** (phonemic parallelism between two stressed syllables)
- **Alliteration** (when the initial consonants are the same)
- **Consonance** (when the final consonants are the same)
- **Assonance** (when the vowel sounds are the same)

By creating echoes between two words, these parallelisms have **musical effects**, while at the same time **underlining relationships** (counterpoint, contrast, parallelism) between different words and different lines, thus bringing **cohesion** to the poem. Such parallelisms can take various forms:

- **True rhyme** is the final sequence vowel + consonant which is the same in the two syllables (e.g., *tries / eyes*).
- **Half-rhyme** is when only the end consonant is repeated. It is an instance of consonance.
- **Slant-rhyme** or **apophony** is when only the consonants are repeated, but this time both the initial and final consonants.
- **Alliteration** is when only the initial consonant is repeated.
- **Reverse rhyme** is when the initial consonant and the vowel are repeated.
- **Assonance** is when only the vocalic sound is repeated.

A **backward rhyme** is one in which the order of the first word is inverted in the second one (e.g., *tip / pit*). The use of the same words for rhyme is called **identical rhyme**. **Apocopated rhyme** described two words whose stressed syllables rhyme, but one of the words has a feminine ending (e.g., *cart / parted*).

Position of the Rhyme

Rhyme is usually found at the end of metrical lines (**end-rhyme**), but it can occur within the line and is then called **internal rhyme** when the last word in the line echoes that which just before the caesura.

- **Linked rhyme** is when the last syllable of a line is echoed by the first syllable of the next line.
- **Crossed rhyme** is the rhyming of one word in the middle of a long verse line with a word in a similar position (before the caesura) in the next line. Crossed rhyme has the effect of making the couplet sound like a quatrain rhyming *abab*.
- **Broken rhyme** is a type of rhyme in which the word which rhymes is broken at the end of the line, to allow the rhyming part of the word to remain at the end of the first line.

Number of Rhyming Syllables

Masculine rhyme involves single stressed syllables. However, unstressed syllables (in polysyllabic words) can also rhyme, providing weaker ending to the lines. When the rhyme thus affects two consecutive syllables – usually a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable – one speaks of **feminine rhyme**. If it affects three consecutive syllables, one speaks of **triple rhyme**.

False Appearances

Where two syllables are spelt in the same way but pronounced differently, this is termed **eye-rhyme**. Sometimes, what looks like eye-rhyme is only **historical rhyme** since the words truly rhymed in the poet's time. When the two rhyming words have the same sound but different meanings, one speaks of **rime riche**.

Rhyme Schemes

- **Couplet rhyme** – AABBCC
- **Alternate rhyme** – ABAB
- **Introverted or enclosing rhyme** – ABBA
- **Ballad metre** or common metre – ABAB or ABCB
- **Terza rima** – ABA, BCB, CDC
- **Rhyme royal** – ABABBCC
- **Ottavia rima** – ABABABCC
- **Spenserian stanza** – ABABBCBCC
- **Petrarchan sonnet** – ABBA ABBA + CDCDCD
CDECDE
CDEDCE
- **Shakespearean sonnet** – ABABCDCDEFEGG
- **Spenserian sonnet** – ABABBCBCCDCDEE
- **Rondeau** – AABBAAA refrain, AABBA refrain
- **Triolet** – ABAAABAB
- **Villanelle** – ABA, ABA, ABA, ABA, ABA, ABAA
- **Analysed rhyme** – A complex form in which several types of rhyme interlock, usually consonance and assonance.
- **Alliterative metre** is a type of metre in which one or two of the stressed words in the first hemistich alliterate with the first stressed word in the second hemistich.
- **Free verse** does not respect any particular rhyme scheme.
- When one or more lines are repeated at the end of each stanza, this is called a burden or **refrain**.

The main effect of **regular rhyme patterns** is to bind lines together and give **unity** to a group of lines. It also creates anticipation in the reader's mind. A **complex or irregular rhyme** scheme makes for more **subtle correspondences and echoes**.

Poetic Diction

Definition: poetic diction refers to the use of words and syntactic patterns which do not belong to the language of common speech and are supposed to have a graceful, poetic quality.

Effect: the excessive use of poetic diction leads to conformity and a hackneyed and clichéd language.

Mains forms:

- **Archaisms** (words / obsolete structures)
- **Poetic periphrases:** abstract nouns qualified by descriptive epithets, used to avoid more commonplace words which are too 'low' for poetry
- **Latin words**
- The **personification of concepts and objects**
- **Apostrophes**

Poetic Licence

Definition: poetic licence is the departure from conventional rhyme, diction, word-order or logic sometimes found in poetry to respect the metrical pattern or achieve an aesthetic effect.

Effect: poetic licence implies innovation.

Mains forms:

- **Hyperbaton:** changing the conventional word-order
- Shortened forms: **aphesis** (deletion of the beginning of a word) / **apocope** (deletion of the middle of a word) / **syncope** (deletion of the end of a word)
- Word coinages / **Neologisms**
- **Eye-rhymes**
- Distorted pronunciation for the sake of rhyme or metrics: **diaeresis** (one syllable -> two syllables) / **synaeresis** (two syllables -> one syllable)
- **Anachronisms**

The Art of Drama

The Elizabethan Theatre

Elizabethan theatres were **octagonal**, with a **projecting stage** thrusting into the audience area. Above the stage, a **balcony** could be used for battlements. There was probably an **inner stage** underneath this balcony, where actors could hide. Under the stage, a **cellar**, accessible through a trap door, housed the machinery for ghosts and devils, or made sudden disappearances possible. There were **no painted sets** and **only a few props** would point to the change in setting.

Dramatic Conventions and Structure

The Structure of the Play

- An **expository scene** is a scene whose chief purpose is to disclose details about events, settings or characters.
- A **climactic scene** is the most important or exciting point in a play or situation.
- An **obligatory scene** is a scene that has been prepared and has to take place.
- A **recognition scene** is a scene in which a character discovers some important information which changes the course of events for them.

The Actor's Performance

- A **soliloquy** is a device whereby the spectators discover the character's inner thoughts and motives.
- An **aside** (or stage whisper) is when a character's thoughts are expressed for the audience only (often in a lower voice) in a scene where other characters are present on stage.
- A **direct address** is a speech openly addressed to the audience when other characters are present in the scene.
- A **harangue** is a long and serious speech, usually addressed to a public assembly in a declamatory manner.
- A **confession** is when a character reveals his or her mind to a confidant.
- A **tirade** is a long and formal speech delivered in a passionate tone of voice, but with the character standing still.
- A **curtain speech** is a speech delivered in front of the curtain after the end of the play.

Irony and Comic Relief

- **Dramatic irony** is when the audience is aware of something that one or several characters are not aware of. Thus, the situation means something for the character(s), but something else beside for the audience.
- **Tragic irony** is a form of dramatic irony in which characters use words without being aware that they have an ominous significance.
- **Comic relief** is the use of humorous characters or scenes to alleviate the tension of a tragedy. It also serves as counterpoint to the tragic action since the comic scenes often echo the patterns or motifs of the play and heighten its tragic dimension.

The Unity of the Play

The three **unities of action, time and place** are often discussed in relation to **tragedy**.

- **Unity of action (one main action only)** was the only unity Aristotle considered as essential, which explains why the use of subplots or the mixture of tragic and comic elements was often criticized.
- **Unity of time** advocated that tragic time should be confined to a single day.
- The same concern for verisimilitude, for creating the illusion of reality, led critics to consider that there should be **unity of place** too: the whole action of the play should take place within the same town or city.

Another element which contributes to unity is **decorum**, or harmony. It refers to the style as well as the acting, which should be appropriate to the speaker as well as to the time and place.

In renaissance drama, both prose and verse were used in the same play. **Verse** was generally used for the **higher social ranks** and conveyed **noble feelings**. **Prose**, reserved for people of **low birth**, sometimes also expressed **vile and low feelings**.

Ancient Tragedy

According to Aristotle, a **tragedy** should represent the different stages of a dramatic conflict:

- **Exposition** or protasis
- **Rising action** or epitasis (also called complication): it is set in motion by an exciting force.
- **Climax**
- **Falling action** or catastasis: here, it is the tragic force which starts the falling action and the reversal of fortune (or peripety) for the protagonist;
- **Catastrophe**

At the basis of the hero's downfall, there is a defect in his character, or an error of judgment. It is called **hamartia** or tragic flaw. This is why a tragic character can **never be entirely good or bad**. A common type of tragic flaw is **hubris**, that is to say overweening pride or ambition.

- A play or a scene is **pathetic** if it presents a sad or affecting situation which arouses the audience's pity and fear and leaves them purified through catharsis.
- A play or a scene is **dramatic** if the audience witnesses the struggles and conflicts of the heroes.
- A play or a scene is **tragic** if the final catastrophe that engulfs the hero is brought about by his own actions and faults.

In Greek mythology, the goddess of **retributive justice**, often seen as fate and bringing divine punishment at the end of the play, was called **Nemesis**. It is to be related to the critical phrase '**poetic justice**', which describes the necessity of rewarding virtue and of punishing evil.

The expression '**deus ex machina**' refers to the god who, at the end of some Greek plays, was lowered on to the stage by a mechanical apparatus in order to unravel the plot and solve the characters' problems. The phrase now refers to **any improbable device** (a huge inheritance, the reappearance of someone who was thought to be dead) used to resolve the plot.

According to Aristotle's poetics, the main objective of **tragedy** is to arouse **pity and fear** in the audience, thus producing a **purgation or purification** of the emotions which he called **catharsis**. By undergoing strong emotions, the spectator corrects his own personal imbalance; it is also possible to see the actors as scapegoats who take upon themselves the audience's excess of emotions.

The term **Apollonian** (from Apollo, the god of youth and light) was used by Nietzsche to describe the forces of **order, control, discipline and rationality**. He used the word **Dionysian** (from Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility) to describe the contrary principles of **creativity, spontaneity and irrationality**. Nietzsche saw Greek tragedy as a result of the tension between these two forces.

The Art of Narrative

Plot

Protagonists

In most plots there is a **protagonist** (the main character), and often an **antagonist** (the character he or she is in conflict with). The word **antihero** is used to describe a protagonist who lacks the heroic and noble qualities usually associated with a hero. The **conflict** which the protagonist is involved in, and which constitutes the basis of the plot, can also be a struggle against fate, society, nature or his/her own self.

Unity of Action

According to Aristotle, all the different incidents, events or episodes should contribute to the artistic effect of the whole, which should have **a beginning, a middle and an end**. The plot should 'imitate one action and that a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that, if anyone of them is displaced or removed, the whole will be **disjointed and disturbed**'. Yet many plays or novels have **DOUBLE PLOTS** or **SUBPLOTS** (e.g., the **Laertes-Hamlet conflict**).

The plot can also contain an **inset or interpolated play or story** (a play or story within the main play or story). The terms 'embedding', 'framing' and 'nesting' are also used when a story or a sequence of events is inserted into another. Sometimes, a novel (then called a **frame story**) can be made up of a succession of **framed stories**. The effect of the subplot or of an embedded story can be of:

- **Counterpoint** if it provides a contrasting idea, theme or plot which can set off the ideas, themes or plot of the main story.
- **Parallelism or analogy** if there are similarities between the subplot and the main plot so that the theme is enlarged.

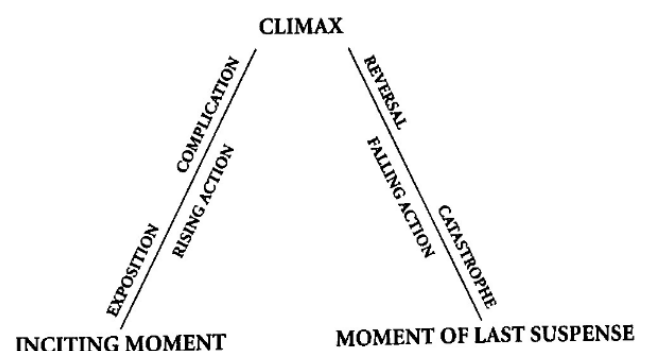
Many works of fiction also contain long **digressions** which can undermine the unity of the work. **Gap** or **ellipsis** in the narrative occurs when some elements (for example, a sequence in the action) are omitted.

The Pattern of the Plot

The pattern of the plot, that is to say the structure of the actions, can be:

- **Linear or episodic** if it consists of a sequence of events following each other in what may seem a loose and haphazard way, without any sense of necessity, as in many picaresque novels.
- **Dramatic** if, as Aristotle advocated, there are strong causal links between events which move towards a climax, then towards the denouement (i.e., the resolution of the plot, when the action comes to a conclusion and all the loose ends are finally tied up).

The plot is generally built around the following structure:



- **The exposition** gives information about the characters and their situation.
- **The inciting moment** is the event that sets the action in movement or triggers it off. It is also called the initiating event or catalytic event.
- **The climax** is the point of highest interest in which tension or emotional response reaches its peak. It is also used as a synonym of crisis, the decisive action which will turn the plot in a given direction.
- The word **catastrophe**, describing the final stages of the plot, resulting from the climax, is mainly used for drama but is sometimes applied to fiction as well.
- The period of falling action often contains one or several **obligatory scenes**, that is to say climactic moments which are expected by the reader because they have been announced or prepared.

But this pattern is not universal since many stories begin **in medias res** in order to catch the reader's interest. It is an instance of a narrative hook to create suspense or arouse interest. Many modern narratives also avoid the traditional denouement or catastrophe and end in an **ambiguous way**, or even suggest **double endings**.

Most plots contain **peripeteia** (reversals of events or situation – especially the protagonist's reversal of fortune) and **discovery** of something previously unknown. Some sequences of events are so predictable in certain types of writing that they follow a **formula**, or **stereotyped plot**. Such plots usually contain a number of **stock situations**. In most plots, events (or **process**) alternate with state (or **stasis**).

The Sequence of Events

The main differences between **story-time** (the chronological story, or plot) and **text-time** (the sequence of events presented in the book) can be described as:

- **Analepsis**: a flashback, or retrospective narration within a story, an incursion into the past.
- **Prolepsis**: the narration of an event before it should appear chronologically, an incursion into the future. Prolepses are often the privilege of omniscient narrators.

Analepses and prolepses can be **external** (if they refer to a time which is outside that of the main narrative) or **internal** (if they allude to a time which is within that of the main narrative). They should not be confused with two other ways of referring to past and future time which, however, **involve no time shift** in the narrative:

- Events, words or actions can **foreshadow** or announce later events. An atmosphere, certain actions or words can prepare what is to come.
- Events, words or actions can **echo**, or be reminiscent of, past scenes. Reminiscences or memories can take place in one of the characters' minds and do not disturb the sequence of the narrative.

Genette defines the following three types of **temporal relations with events of the story**:

- **Ulterior narration**, in which events are related after they took place.
- **Anterior narration** (or extended prolepsis), in which events are related before they took place.
- **Simultaneous narration**, in which the narration and the actions are simultaneous.

One also speaks of:

- **Real time** when the time it takes to report an event corresponds to the amount of time it took for the event to occur.
- **Felt time** when the illusory sense of the passing of time is conveyed through the narration.

An **achrony** is an event which cannot be precisely situated in time. It is also possible to speak of the **achronicity** of such events.

The Pace of Events

The study of time is also concerned with the pace of the narrative. It amounts to studying the **relationship between narrated time and narrating time**. The 'normal' pace of the narrative can be affected by:

- **Acceleration**: few words are devoted to a long period of time.
- **Deceleration**: dwelling on a short period of time (e.g., a descriptive pause).

The background of a narrative work is usually referred to as its **setting**. It covers both:

- The **general environment**, or larger setting, which is the way of life of the characters, the social, religious, economic background, anchored in a particular time or year.
- The **locale**, which is the spatial environment, the physical location. It can be the **scenery** or the **topography** of an area, of a house, ...

The physical setting contributes to the sociological, psychological and symbolic meaning of the work, as well as to its **atmosphere**. For instance, the wild natural settings, the ruins, abbeys and tunnels of Gothic novels contribute to their sombre atmosphere. In fact, setting functions both as:

- An **influence on the characters** (e.g., the way the characters' lives are conditioned by the values of the Victorian town in which they live in *Middlemarch*).
- A **metaphor for the spiritual dimension of the narrative** (e.g., the pervading fog, in Dickens's *Bleak House*, is not the cause of the character's plight – it reflects it).

When the way of life of a given community or region (customs, mannerism language, dress, opinions, ...) are dwelt upon, one can speak of **local colour writing**, or of **regionalist literature**. The use of such terms implies that the emphasis is on the geographical background rather than on wider human issues. Local colour writing sometimes insists on **verisimilitude** of detail (making sure the details have the appearance of truth) to the detriment of a realistic view of human nature. When the narrative is built around a space which determines the structure and development of the world, one says that the book has **spatial form** (e.g., *Ulysses*).

The **description of the setting** can be structured in different ways, for example:

- **Spatially**, as the eye would discover the scene: from left to right, top to bottom, or near to far.
- **From what is most striking to less important features.**
- **From a general view to a gradual focus** on one element, generally the most important one.

Telling and Showing

Character traits can be revealed through **telling** or **showing**. The narrator can either tell us what the characters are like, or show us how they behave, what they say or think, and let us draw our own conclusions.

TELLING can be done:

- Through **direct exposition** or description by an authoritative voice in the novel.
- More indirectly, through **associations**: the name of the character, his/her external appearance, his/her direct environment may reflect upon his/her character. Proper names (their study is called **onomastics**) can reveal character semantically, acoustically, or visually.

SHOWING consists in describing **speech characteristics, actions and/or thoughts**. No comment is given, and readers have to deduce the personality traits from what they are shown.

- **Speech mannerisms** are the manners of speaking typical of a character and often reflecting his or her social class or circle. The use of **idiolectal forms** reveals the characters' idiosyncrasies.
- A **malapropism** (a form of **catachresis**, or incorrect use of words) is a particular type of speech mannerism, the use of one word for another, the confusion coming from the similarity of the two words.
- **Skaz** is the name given to a **first-person narrative which reflects oral speech**.

Character traits can also be revealed through the use of **confidants or confidantes** to reveal the characters' minds. They are secondary characters, to whom the main protagonists they confess their thoughts and feelings.

Types of Characters

The characters thus defined can be described as:

- **Round or flat**. Characters with one prevailing feature, and therefore without any depth, are also called caricatures, especially when there is distortion or exaggeration.
- **Humours**. The word refers to the Elizabethan theory of humours according to which characters were classified. The four main liquids in the body were seen as linked to the natural elements and therefore as determining temperament. A perfect mixture of the four humours led to an ideal temperament.
- **Stock characters**. They are conventional types of character that can be found in certain literary works.
- **Stereotypes**. They are characters who conform to fixed and oversimplified mental figures.
- **Archetypes**. They are recurrent character types in literature.
- **Static or dynamic**. Static characters do not change in the course of the book; dynamic characters are capable of change and development and are modified by the events in their lives.
- **Consistent or inconsistent**. Consistent characters behave in keeping with their temperament; inconsistent characters will act in unpredictable and haphazard ways.

Humour	Dominant part of the body	Element	Quality	Temperament
Blood	Heart	Air	Hot and moist	Sanguine: active, determined, happy, often lustful
Phlegm	Kidneys	Water	Cold and moist	Phlegmatic: fat, heavy, dull, capricious
Yellow bile	Bladder	Fire	Hot and dry	Choleric: sensitive, impulsive, envious, vengeful
Black bile	Spleen	Earth	Cold and dry	Melancholy: often stupid, reserved, solitary, sentimental

Point of View

The point of view is the **angle of vision** through which the story is focused. It is usual to distinguish between:

- **1st-person point of view**, in which we enter a character's mind. It often makes for more dramatic narration since we follow the secret thoughts of the character and can identify with him or her. But it gives us a restricted view of other characters (we only see what the narrative 'I' can see) and what we are told may well be biased or unreliable.
- **3rd-person point of view**, in which the narrator seems to be privileged and to know everything about the characters' thoughts and feelings.

It may be useful to turn to the terminology used by Genette, who calls point of view **focalization**:

- With **internal focalization**, the events are seen from inside the story, most of the time through the subjective angle of vision of one of the characters in the story (the focalizer). The interior monologue is one form of inner focalization. Internal focalization means that the vision of space is limited to what the focalizer can see. The fact that the vision is internal usually makes it a subjective one. Many modern novels have multiple focalization: the point of view shifts from one character to another or others in the course of the narrative. If we are given simultaneous points of view, we can speak of synchronicity.
- With **external focalization**, the events are seen from the point of view of someone who is exterior to the story. External focalization implies observation from a distance, from far above the object which is perceived. It is called a panoramic view. An external focalizer can also have unrestricted knowledge of the world that is described. The vision is then an objective one. Genette calls it zero focalization.

If the passage can be rewritten in the 1st-person, there is internal focalization; if it is not possible, then the focalization is external. **Focalizers** are also called **reflectors**, **mirrors**, or **centres of consciousness**.

Narrator

The **narrator** is the one who speaks, but is not necessarily the focalizer. It is therefore necessary to distinguish between what Genette calls '**vision**' (who sees) and '**discourse**' (who speaks).

Other 'Voices' in the Narration

Besides the narrator, one should also distinguish:

- The **real author** is the person who wrote the story and whose ideas in real life may have little in common with the ideas expressed in his work.
- The **implied author** is the author who addresses us directly in the work or whose ideas provide norms that are felt in the book.
- **Other characters** in the story.
- The **implied reader** is the reader sometimes directly addressed in a work of fiction, or the type of reader for whom the book seems to have been written. For instance, some texts presuppose a learned, intellectual reader, while others seem to be written for a more average intelligence.
- The **real reader**.
- The **narratee**. In some works of fiction, the narrator directly addresses someone. The narratee can be someone who participates in the story, or someone who is exterior to it.

Levels of Narration

A story may contain other stories within the story (e.g., when a character in the narrative relates a story), thus creating an effect of **embedding or nesting**. The French expression *mise en abyme* is also used to describe a mirror effect in the narrative (e.g., stories within stories). Genette calls the highest level of narration the **extradiegetic** level, and the lower level (narration by a character inside the story) the **hypodiegetic** level. Hypodiegetic or embedded narratives often create **analogies between the shorter narrative and the longer one**, with mirroring effects of *mise en abyme*.

Participation of the Narrator in the Action

Narrators can be the heroes of the stories they tell, as in many 1st-person narratives. They can also be totally detached and exterior – above the story: they are then called **omniscient**. An omniscient narrator knows everything – even what the characters are doing when no one watching them – enters the characters' minds, knows their feelings, and has knowledge of past and future events. It has **narrative authority**.

Genette uses the following terminology to describe the narrator's participation:

- Depending on the **level of narration** (cf. section above):
 - **EXTRADIEGETIC** narrators remain superior to the story they tell and their story constitutes the major narrative level.
 - **INTRADIEGETIC** narrators tell a story which is embedded in the main story. They belong to the hypodiegetic level.
- Depending on **whether or not they are participants in the story they tell**:
 - **AUTODIEGETIC** narrators are first-person narrators who tell their own stories.
 - **HETERODIEGETIC** narrators are omniscient ones, who are not participants in the stories they tell.
 - **HOMODIEGETIC** narrators are narrators who are also, in some way, participants in the stories they tell.

From Covert to Self-Consciousness

Narrators can be discreet and **unobtrusive or unintrusive** (giving the reader the illusion that there is no narrator), or on the contrary they can make their presence felt quite clearly. Mere dialogue, for instance, leads us to forget the narrator behind the story, but as soon as we find the summary of events, the description of a landscape or of a character, the presence of the narrator becomes obvious. It is even more so if there is a comment on the characters' actions or on the narration itself, as with metalinguistic or metafictional comments.

Degree of reliability

Narrators can be:

- **Reliable**, if what they report to us is the fictional truth.
- **Unreliable or fallible**, if they lack objectivity and view things in a biased or partial way that the reader cannot trust.
- **Deluded or lucid**.

Dramatic Monologue

The speaker **addresses someone whose response we are not given.**

Interior Monologue

We see a character '**thinking aloud**'. This is usually done through the extended use of **free indirect speech**, in which the character's point of view and the narrator's voice become one. Although we follow the character's inner thoughts, they remain at an **articulated level**.

Stream of Consciousness

The expression 'stream of consciousness' describes the **free association of ideas, impressions, sensations and memories** that can inhabit someone's mind at any given time. The problem was to try to render such a flow of thoughts – thoughts which are not always verbalized, not always coherent, sometimes fully developed, sometimes half-conscious. Compared to interior monologue, the stream of consciousness therefore has a more **rambling or disjointed structure** and contains freer associations (**associational logic**) to try to reflect the **pre-speech level**.

A variety of methods can be used to convey the stream of consciousness. It can be:

- **Direct:** it is as if we overheard the character's thoughts without any intermediary.
- **Indirect:** we are conscious of a narrator selecting information and controlling the narrative.
- Expressed through **short, often nominal, sentences, without logical links.**
- Expressed through **long, rambling sentences without any full stops.**