ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This research paper analyzes the relationship between Literature and Psychology and how they are connected with each other in order to portray the characters more beautifully. Psychology plays a very important role in the literature whether we talk about the one who writes the story or the one who reads it. It makes a strong connection between a writer and a reader. The author is not just influenced by society, he influences society. This study explores the significant role psychology plays in literature, the relationship between these two subjects, and how psychology helps an author to write a piece of literature that is more interesting to read. It also focuses on the different features and elements which the writer chooses to make the story more captivating. The study has been conducted by researching different journals, e-books, books, and websites. Undoubtedly, psychology helps the writers to present the characters successfully, expressing their feelings, moods, emotions, and especially their thoughts and how the different events affect the mental lives of the characters. Some examples are given from different novels for reference that how the characters are portrayed and how deep the author depicts his/ her characters.
Keywords: Realism, Stream of Consciousness, Fiction, Psychology, Interior Monologue, Characterization, Literature, Modernism.

INTRODUCTION

There are many narrative writing techniques and features that a writer uses in order to truly engage a reader. By using these techniques, the characters became completely real to the reader. The writers use such techniques to bring the story to life and the soul of the character. The author uses different psychological techniques while writing which invokes multiple senses in readers. The readers want to know more about the characters and their lives. They feel sympathy, love, hatred, empathy, and many more emotions for the characters. The strong emotions and intense feelings in psychological novels keep the reader interested in the plot and what will happen to the characters in the future. The writers who use psychological features like a stream of consciousness or interior monologue evoke sympathy and compassion for characters among the readers. An engaging and well-written scene plunges the reader right into the heart of the story. Psychology helps in creating compelling characters. According to Jonathan Kellerman, Psychology and fiction are quite synchronous and psychology is a field that lends itself to fiction. He further says both psychology and literature attempt to better understand people. Psychology helps the author to depict how the characters think, act and why they behave in a certain way. Psychology has been given importance since Greek Literature where the philosophers like Aristotle gave importance to psychology to a great extent. There is a very strong relationship between both Psychology and Literature as both disciplines deal with people, their lives, feelings, thoughts, reactions, fear, loss, love, hatred, worries, miseries, wishes, desires, conflicts, and so on. Good writers are keen observers of human nature and successfully convey it through their characters and narratives. They demonstrate, how people behave, think, and interpret their experiences and events in order to provide thought-provoking entertainment. Psychology helps in bringing the reader into the psychological aspect of human reality. Psychology focuses on human behavior and its causes while literature represents human behavior through fiction. Both branches of social sciences are interrelated and study human behavior. Through literary work, an author depicts the inner world of humans with all its aspects. Jane Austen, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, and many other great novelists possess a quality of mind that is rarely matched.

Relationship between Literature and Psychology

The psychology in English Literature or any other literature will provide insights into why people think, act, and behave the way they do. English Literature allows you to investigate a diverse range of literary perspectives across different cultures and historical periods. In contrast, Psychology promotes all that we are and everything we do, from biological influences and social pressures to environmental factors. Both Literature and Psychology study the human soul. Psychology tells us about human behaviors and their causes while Literature portrays human behavior through fiction. Literature is a means to gain insight into human experience. Studying human behavior in Literature and Psychology together is interrelated and mutually beneficial. In Literature, language is used as the medium of expression so one can interpret man, life and culture, personality, mindset, and individual differences that have continually been studied and mentioned with the aid of writers, artists, philosophers, psychiatrists, and psychologists. There is a strong relation between Literature
and Psychology because both of them deal with human beings, their behaviors, reactions, wishes, miseries, fears, desires, conflicts, culture, individual differences, reconciliations, and social concerns. It uses some methods and approaches to deal with the situations. According to E.M. Forster, “What is wonderful about great literature is that it transforms the man who reads it toward the condition of a man who wrote.” Literature has the magic to evolve oneself. Psychology helps in understanding more deeply about the emotions, relations, the message it conveys, characterization, and other elements of the novel.

**LITERATURE**

The first question that comes to mind is what is Literature? Different scholars have different perceptions and views on Literature. According to Noam Chomsky, the father of modern linguistics ‘Literature is one of the most significant means to gain knowledge, which concerns man and his life, his different experiences and the idiosyncratic values.’ Literature is considered to be an art form. It is a collection of written work. Wellek and Warren (1963:22) say that “the term literature seems best if we limit it to the art of Literature. Literature is also produced by the imagination of the author. It is not just a document of facts; it is not just the collection of real events though it may happen in the real life. Literature can create its own world as a product of the unlimited imagination.” Literature is a form of human thoughts and expressions. Literature is derived from the Latin word ‘Littera’ which means ‘Writing’. According to this point of view, whatever is in writing form is Literature. This definition of literature is quite narrow as it covered only the written material and left out the oral one. This notion of Literature has faced a lot of criticism because many scholars, authors, and writers believed that not only written material is a part of Literature but oral literature should have the same worth. Literature is a body of written works (Hancock, 2006). According to Encarta (2009) Literature is the use of carefully selected words to tell a story through narrative, involving characters in conflict, or to express an emotion or idea through artfully arranged images. Literature is also a means to transmit values and cultures from one generation to another. According to David Lodge an English author and critic, the richest and most comprehensive record of human awareness that exists is found in the literature.

**Psychology**

On the other hand, it is not easy to define psychology. Psychology in broader terms is the scientific study of the human behavior and mind. It involves the study and understanding of mental processes, behavior and how the brain functions. It comprehends the biological influences, environmental factors, and social pressures that affect how people feel, act and think. It helps in the understanding of why people behave in a certain way. It aids in understanding different factors that can impact the human mind and behavior. The word Psychology is derived from the Greek word psyche, which means life or breath. Carl Jung in his famous work Psychology and Literature(1912), enlightens that the human mind is the source of all sciences and arts, it should be clear that psychology, which is the study of psychic processes, can be used to the study of literature. According to Kagan and Havemann psychology is described as “the science that systematically studies and attempts to explain observable behavior and its relationship to the unseen mental processes that go on inside the organism and to external events in the environment (1968:13). The earliest origin of psychology can be seen in the writings of Greek philosophers such as Aristotle. Aristotle explains psychology as a part of natural philosophy. He wrote a lot
about the psychology of the mind. William James in his famous book ‘The Principles of Psychology states that psychology is the study of mind, description and explanation of the state of consciousness (James, 1890). It is the study of how people behave, feel and act towards others and how the individual’s behavior and thoughts are affected by others.

**Psychological Elements in Literature**

In literature, there are many significant works that include psychological features in it. Almost every piece of literature has some psychological elements in it. Psychology is the science of human behavior which covers both external action and internal thoughts. In literature when we talk about psychology, the writer deals with the inner person and his feelings, thoughts, and emotions rather than the outer actions of a person. The psychological novel deals with the inner life of characters which focuses on the thoughts, desires, emotions, and feelings of a character. The term "psychological novel" can be used to describe any work of narrative fiction with a significant emphasis on complex characterization in its broadest sense. These types of novels which include psychological features in it are related to literary movements like a stream of consciousness, nineteenth-century psychological realism, and twentieth-century literary modernism. And there are some narrative techniques that are highly used in psychological novels such as interior monologue and free indirect discourse. The core interest lies in the emotional and mental aspects of the characters. The way a psychological novel is written does not allow the author to point out the multitude of characters portrayed in a memorable and powerful way. The author has to identify with his one character at a time.

**Stream of Consciousness**

Stream of consciousness is one of the unique features of psychological novels. The term "stream of consciousness writing" is a storytelling approach in which the thoughts and feelings of a narrator or character are expressed so that a reader may follow the characters' changing emotional states. It is an interior monologue. This technique tries to capture the natural flow of a character’s thought process. In 1890, William James a psychologist used the term stream of consciousness for the first time in his work The Principles of Psychology (James, 1890). The psychologists use the stream of consciousness to describe the continuous stream of subjective thoughts, feelings, memories, and observations that all human beings experience. This technique in writing is objective-oriented and character-specific. Stream of consciousness does not follow the ordinary rules of syntax and grammar. It means it does not follow a word order. This is due to the fact that thoughts are frequently not fully formed, they diverge and end up being "run-on sentences," or they are cut off by another thought. For example, in Death in Venice (1921), Thomas Mann gently varies the syntax and grammar to show how his main character's steady decline into lunacy by using stream of consciousness: "For beauty, Phaedrus, take note! beauty alone is godlike and visible at the same time." Writers often use punctuation in unusual ways when using stream of consciousness technique. Associative thought is also used in stream of consciousness. The writers use loose connections for generating ideas that consist of characters' personal memories and experiences. It helps the writer to convey the experience of human thoughts. The writer describes the thoughts of characters to the readers in response to sensory impressions as to what the character hears, feels, sees, tastes and so on. Repetition is usually used in stream of consciousness by the writers to indicate that the characters keep coming back to or sticking to a particular thought or feeling.
Nonlinear plot structure is also used in stream of consciousness technique. Some authors quickly switch between different characters' perspectives, allowing the reader to experience the stream of consciousness of multiple people. For instance, Ken Kezy, in his novel Sometimes a Great Notion (1964), alternately displays the thoughts, feelings, and impressions of multiple characters (including a dog), using italics and various styles of punctuation to indicate which character is thinking of each sentence, phrase or word. Virginia Woolf is well known for her use of steam of consciousness technique. Mrs. Dalloway (1925) a well-known novel by Virginia Woolf is a great example of stream of consciousness where she portrays the experiences, thoughts, and memories of various characters on a single day in London. Toni Morrison uses stream of consciousness in her work Beloved (1987). T.S. Eliot uses this technique in his famous poem, The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock (1915).

**Psychological Realism**

Another significant feature of psychological writing is Psychological Realism. Psychological Realism is also known as Psychological Fiction. It is a narrative genre. It highlights the inner characterization and motivation that explores the mental, emotional, and spiritual lives of the characters. Psychological fiction usually uses stream of consciousness and flashbacks. This genre came to prominence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is an extremely character-driven novel genre, as it focuses on the motivations and inner thoughts of the characters. The author of psychological realism portrays not just what the characters do but additionally give an explanation for why they take such actions. Some of the authors who use psychological realism are Henry James, Arthur Millers, and Fyodor Dostoevsky. Henry James (1843-1916) was impressed by his ideal George Eliot (1819-1880) and the way she look into the minds and souls of her characters. Henry James work focused on the inner lives of prosperous characters. His famous works include The Portrait of a Lady (1881), The Turn of the Screw (1898), and The Ambassadors (1903). In these novels, he portrays such characters that have some unfulfilled desires and lack self-awareness. Edith Wharton an American author wrote The Age of Innocence (1920) and it was her best well-known novel. She won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1921 because of this novel. She was the first woman to win this prize. In The Age of Innocence, she focused on the upper-class society of New York and the way the people live their lives. It is the finest example of psychological realism. The work focused on the motives of people and how the impact of events on them.

**Interior Monologue**

Another narrative technique used by modern writers is ‘Interior Monologue.’ A French writer, Valery Nicholas Larbaud uses the term ‘Interior Monologue’ for the first time in his essay on James Joyce. Interior Monologue is used for presenting a subject matter. It reflects a character’s thoughts directly. It is used by authors both in fiction and non-fiction writing. Interior Monologue includes imagined dialogue, rationalization, self-analysis, and inner conflicts. ‘The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock’ by T.S. Eliot is the finest example of imagined dialogue. An interior Monologue may be either direct or indirect. In a direct way, the author is not in control. The author with his writing reflects a character’s thoughts directly. The inner self of the character is given directly. In an indirect way, the author serves as a selector, presenter, guide, and commentator.
Stream of Consciousness versus Interior Monologue

The interior monologue is often used interchangeably with a stream of consciousness. Interior Monologue is used for presenting a subject matter and on the other hand stream of consciousness is the subject matter. In stream of consciousness, the character’s thoughts are blended with impressions and a sense of perception. In contrast, interior monologue the thoughts of characters are not mingled with impressions and sense perception. A character's thoughts are expressed through an interior monologue in the form of whole, logical phrases as if the character were speaking to themselves. In contrast, stream of consciousness aims to capture the turmoil and distraction of thinking as it actually occurs. Ezra Pound, the great poet used interior monologue in his famous work Cantos (1922). Samuel Richardson and Ernest Hemingway similarly use the interior monologue technique in their works. Another famous author, Dorothy Richardson (1873-1957) in her autobiographical novel Pilgrimage used stream of consciousness technique. Pilgrimage is a sequence of thirteen semi-autobiographical novels published between 1915 and 1967. In comparison, James Joyce in his famous work Ulysses (1922) used stream of consciousness technique to portray the sense of perception and impressions of Molly Bloom. Thus, interior monologue and stream of consciousness are the two narrative techniques and methods used by modern authors.

Few Examples of Psychological Novels

The beginning of psychological novels may date back to the eighteenth century and can be seen in the works of Samuel Richardson. His novel Clarissa is the best example. The innovative findings in the field of psychology by Jung and Freud laid the foundation of psychological novels. In the first half of the 1900s, psychological novels co-evolved with psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysts believe that all people possess unconscious desires, feelings, thoughts, and emotions. The aim of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious conscious. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was the founder of the psychoanalysis approach to psychology. Freud emphasized the importance of the unconscious mind. According to Sigmund Freud, the unconscious mind directs behavior to a greater degree than people suspect. Henry James was one of the first authors to emphasize his characters’ psyche and motivations over their actions. The best-known example of the relationship between literature and psychology is the novel Crime and Punishment (1866) written by Fyodor Dostoevsky. The novel focuses on the mental state and actions of a character named Rodion Raskolnikov. He frames a plan to kill a lady for the sake of money. He thought that the money could save him from poverty and he could live happily. And after he killed her, he spends the rest of the time in guilt for what he did. Here is a quote from the book: “And the more I drink the more I feel it. That's why I drink too. I try to find sympathy and feeling in drink.... I drink so that I may suffer twice as much! (Dostoevsky, 1866) ” The book is well-known for its illustration of crime and the way this event of killing affected a person mentally. Most literary works are created by the imagination of the authors. Pamela (1740) by Samuel Richardson is an early example of psychological fiction. Samuel Richardson in this novel focuses on the story of a girl who is trying to adjust in his life after marriage as a wife and who faces things like sexual abuse, class struggle, and sexual assault. There is another example of a great writer Henry James and his work The Turn of the Screw which is a psychological thriller. The story centers on a woman who wanted to protect the children from a ghost. But in the second phase of the novel the story shifts and focuses on the
mental state of the woman. It has both the elements of psychology and the supernatural. Here is a quote from the novel: “No, no—there are depths, depths! The more I go over it, the more I see in it, and the more I see in it, the more I fear. I don’t know what I don’t see—what I don’t fear!” (Richardson, 1898) Agatha Christie’s notable works like And Then There Were None (1939) and Murder on the Orient Express (1934) are well-known examples of novels that include high elements of psychology in it. She is well-known for her psychological plot twists and page-turners. Another great example includes the work of Charles Dickens novel ‘Great Expectations (1860).’ It was Charles Dickens (1812-1870) thirteenth novel. It portrays the character of an orphan boy nicknamed Pip. The novel illustrates personal development of Pip. It was one of his classical novels. It depicts the dangers of false perceptions. The famous quote from Great Expectation is: "Suffering has been stronger than all other teachings, and has taught me to understand what your heart used to be. I have been bent and broken, but - I hope - into a better shape (Dickens, 1860).” These are some striking examples from the works of renowned authors which help in understanding how psychology is used in narration.

**CONCLUSION**

Literature and Psychology together play a significant role in depicting the relationship between the human body and soul. Psychologists of today research the same behaviors, ideas, and emotions that fascinated the Greek philosopher Aristotle. The paper explains deeply how psychology helps the author in depicting the characters in literature and how their lives affect and transforms gradually. The best way to comprehend characters' behavior is through their thoughts and psychology helps in portraying what a character is thinking in a particular situation. Both literature and psychology focus on the understanding of overt behavior of humans and their mental lives. There are many such examples given for reference. There are many psychologists and literary critics who put their efforts to study the relationship between psychology and literature. Without a doubt, Psychology aids in depicting human experiences through literature. It portrays the private and public lives of characters very beautifully. The paper further explains how psychology and literature are interlinked. One of the most important ways to learn about the man and his life is via literature. Literature is the product of human thought. It is a work of art. In addition, it is further enlightened that how certain features make the narration more beautiful. It appeals to the readers and makes the work more significant. There is no other way to portray the inner thoughts and feelings of a character but the use of psychological elements. Both psychologists and authors often benefit from these two branches of science in their works.

**References**


