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## COMMON FEATURES OF SPONTANEITY AND STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN PROSE, POETRY AND SONG LYRICS

*Abstract.* The article deals with basic techniques and means of expression in literature like spontaneity and stream of consciousness. Taking into consideration different literary devices of expressing and depicting thoughts, experiences, moods, the author focuses on those two phenomena in language of prose, poetry, music lyrics of well-known authors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The author has deeply studied different researches on the topic, fulfilled particularly by prominent philosophers and psychologists of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Spontaneity is defined as human quality, which determines as well as influences the reaction on changing of certainty or unusual lifetime conditions. Within this connection the author mentions the theory for researching concepts of spontaneity and creativity. Attention is paid to spontaneity and creativity as different categories, but strategically linked. After all, he claims that a high degree of spontaneity does not mean creativity. Both categories can be applied in literature or song writing, in a skillful manner in particular.

The author proposes the definition of the phenomenon of stream of consciousness as a stylistic device for the linguistic organization of the written text, which shows the complicated process of mental thinking with deep concentration on thoughts and feelings. Also, it is necessary to add that some authors determine several parts of this process (the stream): the pre-impulse to think, the thought, and the external circumstances at present time, that is simultaneously, evoking some reactions and changing the thinking process, closely connecting it with the concept of spontaneous poetry and prose.

The attention has been emphasized on the spiritual life of the individual, the spontaneity of the emergence of thoughts and images, combination of the conscious and the unconscious, the rational and the sensual, increased emotionality, etc.

Special attention is also paid to spontaneity and stream of consciousness as essential concepts in order to differentiate synonymous of lexemes denoting behavioral traits of a person's character, which look

alike at first glance only: impulsivity, improvisation and quick burst of emotionality. These characteristics of human actions have also been distinguished and differentiated.

As a result of analysis of both concepts, the author concludes to support the idea of common features for spontaneity and stream of consciousness, taking into account that in literature these concepts are implemented in poetic texts as literary devices. That is why the necessity to explore literary works in further scientific investigations is signified by the represented research.

**Keywords:** spontaneity, stream of consciousness, techniques, expression, artistic means, literary device.

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## СПІЛЬНІ РИСИ СПОНТАННОСТІ ТА ПОТОКУ СВІДОМОСТІ У ПРОЗІ, ПОЕЗІЇ ТА ТЕКСТАХ ПІСЕНЬ

**Анотація.** У статті розглядаються такі основні прийоми та засоби вираження в літературі, як спонтанність і потік свідомості. Зважаючи на різні літературні засоби вербалізації думок, переживань, настроїв, автор акцентує увагу на цих двох явищах у мові прози, поезії, музичної лірики відомих авторів XX століття. Автор проаналізував сучасні дослідження з цієї проблематики, зокрема філософами та психологами XIX – XX століття.

Спонтанність розуміється як характеристика людини, яка впливає на зміну визначеності / невизначеності обставин життя. У цьому зв'язку автор аналізує теорію понять спонтанності та креативності. Увага приділяється спонтанності та креативності як різним категоріям, але стратегічно пов'язаним. Стверджується, що високий ступінь спонтанності не означає креативності. Обидві категорії є актуальними в літературознавстві та в цілому в гуманітаристиці, а також виявляють свої інтенції в художній творчості.

Автор розглядає феномен потоку свідомості як стилістичний прийом мовної організації художнього тексту, який виявляє складний процес мислення з глибокою концентрацією на думках і почуттях. Зauważено й на тому, що деякі автори виділяють кілька етапів цього процесу: передімпульс до мислення, думка та зовнішні обставини в конкретний час, тобто одночасно йдеться про певні реакції та зміни у процесі мислення, тісно пов'язуючи його з поняттям спонтанної поезії та прози.

Акцентовано увагу на духовному житті особистості, особливостях думок і образів, поєднанні свідомого і несвідомого, раціонального і чуттєвого, підвищений емоційності в художньому слові тощо.

Також особлива увага приділяється спонтанності та потоку свідомості як суттєвим поняттям для розмежування синонімічних лише на перший погляд схожих лексем, що позначають поведінкові риси характеру людини: імпульсивність, імпровізація та стрімкий сплеск емоційності. Ці характеристики дій людини також проаналізовані у статті та диференційовані.

Схарактеризувавши названі поняття, автор приходить до висновку про спільні риси спонтанності та потоку свідомості, що в поетичних текстах є формами творення художнього слова. Тому репрезентоване дослідження свідчить про перспективу щодо необхідності аналізу описаних явищ у подальших наукових розвідках.

**Ключові слова:** спонтанність, потік свідомості, прийоми, виразність, художні засоби.

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The concept of *spontaneity* was initially introduced in psychology, and had been widely used by philosophers as extra-linguistic device before introducing into literature and establishing as consolidated literary device. Taking into consideration that mentioned spheres have always been interwoven, it is worth taking a look at the term under consideration through the lens of other human sciences which would help us to review this concept more deeply and broadly.

Cambridge Dictionary gives definition for spontaneity as "the quality of being natural rather than planned in advance" [2]. Many

authors consider, that spontaneity is connected with the feeling of freedom and absence of any limiting factors for an action or person's certain conscious (or unconscious) response, while improvisation is about cooperation between the members of conversation or any other lifetime situation. Consequently, the former is based on subjective experience of an individual; the latter refers to the rules of engagement in society.

According to Romanian and American psychiatrist, psychosociologist J. Moreno, spontaneity is "an appropriate response to a situation or a new response to an old situation" [11, p. 120]. Within this theory the scientist also examined the concepts of spontaneity and creativity in their ratio. This study is of great importance for our research as we deal with poetry and prose being creative process, where the spontaneity as artistic means can influence the development of the plot. To sum up J. Moreno's ideas regarding the topic, it is worth mentioning that he emphasized that spontaneity and creativity are different categories, which are strategically linked. Moreover, he developed the claim that one may have a high degree of spontaneity being uncreative at the same time and quite opposite [11, p. 120].

Alfred Adler, the founder of a new social and psychological approach to the study of the human psyche, addressing the issue pointed out that indicators of developed spontaneity are adequate perception of reality, creative side of the personality, empathy, and interpersonal relations. He believed that a sense of community with other people is the main force that determines a person's behavior and life [1]. Those affirmations make quite close the notion of spontaneity to the *stream of consciousness* expressions.

The term "stream of consciousness" and its first theoretical grounding appeared in the works of the American philosopher and psychologist William James, particularly in his book "The Scientific Foundations of Psychology" (1890). In the work the researcher says: "We see, then hear, then think, then wish, then remember, then expect, then love, then we hate... Each thought that we have at the moment about a given fact is, strictly speaking, the only one and has a similarity of kinship with our other thoughts

about the same fact" [18]. V. Jeme denied the existence of objective reality, affirming the priority of human consciousness, which appears in the form of the flow of a river, which is ceaseless and in which thoughts, feelings, sudden associations are constantly changing and whimsically intertwined [18].

Stream of consciousness as a writing technique is an illogical internal monologue that reproduces the chaos of thoughts and experiences, i. e. the smallest movements of consciousness. This is a free associative flow of thoughts in the sequence in which they arise, interrupt each other and are crowded with illogical piles. It developed the idea that consciousness "is not a chain where all the links are connected in series, but a river". Consequently, there is some other form of connection in it, another principle of cohesion, in which, according to James, the true essence of man should be sought. Not in external life and actions, but in internal, emotional life, which by its nature is irrational and does not obey the laws of logic. By the way, William James believed that "in practice, every person has as many different social personalities as there are different groups of people whose opinions he values," and was one of the first to express the idea of a "mask" [18].

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English gives definition of *stream of consciousness* as the expression of thoughts and feelings in writing exactly as the pass through your mind, without the usual structure they have in formal writing [9, p. 1641]. This is a quite agreeable statement, furthermore keeping in mind that poetry and prose are written speech where authors can spontaneously represent activities of characters they depict in their works.

The most prominent author of the 20<sup>th</sup> century who represented classic stream of consciousness was Irish writer James Joyce. Since publication of "Ulysses" the novel has been characterized quite controversially for its stream of consciousness technique, structuring, experimental usage of puns, parodies and allusions, which led this book to the interpretation as one of the greatest literary works in history.

Here is a perfect example from J. Joyce's "Ulysses" of the way a restless person tries to fall asleep at night:

*"A quarter after what an unearthly hour  
I suppose they're just getting up in China  
now combing out their pigtails for the day  
well soon have the nuns ringing the angelus  
they've nobody coming in to spoil their  
sleep except an odd priest or two for his  
night office or the alarm clock next door at  
cocks shout clattering the brain out of itself  
let me see if I can doze off 1 2 3 4 5 what  
kind of flowers are those they invented like  
the stars the wallpaper in Lombard street  
was much nicer the apron he gave me was  
like that something only I only wore it twice  
better lower this lamp and try again so that  
I can get up early."*

[6, p. 642]

Stylistically, stream of consciousness manifests itself in the syntactic disorder of speech, the use of inappropriately direct language, narrative manner, reminiscences, lyrical digressions, associations, etc. [18].

Having been conceived and apprehended in literature of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in one hundred years after the first W. James' definition of stream of consciousness was presented, this phenomenon penetrated into all spheres of social life, and it became popular in musical lyrics either, especially in rock music. Thus, German heavy metal group released an album in 1989, where there is a song titled "Stream of Consciousness". The lyrics are not flowing just like the stream of consciousness as it is, but the text tells about feeling and emotions, resulting into thoughts and ideas of this condition followed by fatal actions, dread and deadly deeds that may

be caused by this special emotional state of mind. Here is the fragment of this lyrical content:

... *In the stream of consciousness*  
          *We cannot see the truth*  
          *Play your role so perfectly*  
          *No matter which life we choose*  
          *Emotional terror confusing our minds*  
          *Love and hate keeping us blind*  
          *Pretend death is the end of the line*  
          *Expect reward in paradise*  
          *In the stream of consciousness*  
          *We cannot see the truth*  
          *Play your role so perfectly*  
          *No matter which life we choose... [8]*

However, this is obviously not how we perceive these states of the being of the object in ordinary perception, i. e. not as one state merely following the other in a contingent order. Only application of the category of cause, Kant claims, can afford the more complex (yet ordinarily achieved) causal judgment: Ship is moved from upstream to downstream, without there being any content of the relation between the two states of the ship grasped by consciousness. Yet, as Kant says, such "a rule is always to be found in the perception of that which happens, and it makes the order of perceptions that follow one another (in the apprehension of this appearance)" [3, p. 5].

As a result of investigation of the studies on the topic, we understand the notion stream of consciousness as a stylistic device for the linguistic organization of the written text, which shows the complicated process of mental thinking with deep concentration on thoughts and feelings. As for this study some authors determine three parts of this process: the pre-impulse to think, the thought, and the external circumstances at present time, which evoke some reactions and change the thinking process, that is closely connecting it with the concept of spontaneous poetry and prose.

Concerning this text of the song presented above, it is righteously to assume, that this is the closest moment when *stream of consciousness* meets *spontaneity* acquiring a great number of

common features, psychological, linguistic and literal as well. *Impulsivity* which is clearly tracked through the whole song is obvious. *Spontaneity* and *impulsivity* are technical synonyms, nevertheless they can be rarely used interchangeably. That is because of the connotation of these terms. When acting spontaneously, one can easily adapt to a changing situation, become more flexible, thinking about possible consequences or an outcome. But when acting impulsively, the doer (doers) of the action succumbs to a kind of emotion, putting himself into a situations or conditions, just without prior forethinking. That is why impulsivity is to be considered as to say untrustworthy. So, these words (terms) are synonyms with antonymic features in semantics [14].

Relationship between spontaneity and impulsivity upon examples of written poems, songs, lyrics, verses etc. can coexist with deliberately written poems or slogans on purpose where their direct meanings may contradict each other. Further examination is needed to analyze the way they are being distinguished in their means of expression and in readers' perception of them as well.

In psychology spontaneity is human quality, which determines and influences the reaction for changing or unusual lifetime conditions. Through this theory the author researched the concepts of spontaneity and creativity in their ratio. J. Moreno mentions, and it is better to say emphasizes upon spontaneity and creativity as different categories, but are strategically linked. After all, he claims that a high degree of spontaneity does not mean creativity. It can be easily applied into the literature, poetry and song writing, where being spontaneous does not mean becoming a good author, and being creative is not just using knowledge and skills in a right way [11, p. 120].

Zh. Yang in her work "Dialectics of Spontaneity" looked into the issue through the lens of dialectical movement. She explained how the phrase "spontaneous art" may sound as an oxymoron from the etymological point of view, considering that the term 'art' means 'skill, craft' which is very opposite to 'spontaneity', but referring to philosophy of the combination of these words acquire new meaning. 'Thus, the contrast between etymology and philosophy suggests a tension between the two ideals of artists. One ideal type, the "spontaneous artist" being the void of self-consciousness or intentionality is propelled by a sheer force of creativity that controls

the making of his work. The opposing ideal is the image of the artist as a craftsman, who methodically composes his work after careful design, following rules learned from his training' [20, p. 17]. Zh. Yang also emphasized that any piece of art produced is always a combination of the artwork itself, artist and all the cultural and social features determined by epoch they live in.

Immanuel Kant, a well-known philosopher, dedicated a great number of his researches to the topic of spontaneity. In his lectures on metaphysics, he contrasted absolute spontaneity to qualified one that may be related to the stream of human consciousness either, which is often called an extended internal monologue, while being characterized by emphasized attention to the spiritual life of the individual, the spontaneity of the emergence of thoughts and images [3, p. 5] unpredictably occurring in mind. The former means that a person is not determined by external principle but acts from inner principle corresponding to the power of free choice. The latter is limited by circumstances. An example of quantified spontaneity is considered by Kant to be physical mechanisms. They also act from inner principle, but in this case, they are only relatively spontaneous, because their actions are determined by external principle its creators have incorporated into it [3, p. 5].

The first who said that poetry is "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility" keeping in mind that stream of human consciousness being depicted as inner monologue, was W. Wordsworth, a famous romantic poet of 19<sup>th</sup> century. As he further explained it in his *Preface to Lyric Ballad* by claiming this, he meant that verse is perfect when written on the basis of powerful emotions and feelings, however a poet should not react immediately and compose a poetic text at the moment when this emotion exists, but later, after thinking about it deeply in a calm state of mind, when they recollect this emotion [19, p. 7].

In our opinion, it should be affirmed that stream of consciousness is connected with the phenomenon of spontaneity in literature as author's natural response without limiting factors to a certain situation that reveals the creative side of personality and adequate perception of reality which is part of self-actualization process. After all, at least we may assume that stream of consciousness can play the basic role for spontaneity in some way. On the other hand, stream of consciousness

inhabits the character's psyche, while spontaneous prose is entrenched into the idea of memory reconstruction' [7, p. 14]. However, if we are analyzing poems, it would be quite logical to assume that these two terms go together due to the fact that in spontaneous verses we deal with direct stream of consciousness, but when in prose it may be either direct or indirect. Stream of consciousness and spontaneous prose may also be mutually exclusive.

Let us take into consideration a poetry of well-known author of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Edwin Morgan's, whose verses have not been an objective of scientific research within years. Edwin George Morgan is widely recognized Scottish poet with long-writing career that resulted in a big amount of literary works.

Among his love poems one of the most popular is 'One Cigarette' (presented below), which may be the excellent example of spontaneity embodiment. In this poetic text we read about separation of two people in love. It is not clear though whether it is breakup or just interrupted intimacy, what matters for us is this recollection of the moment spent together. Here is the whole verse:

### One Cigarette

*No smoke without you, my fire  
After you left,  
your cigarette glowed on in my ashtray  
and sent up a long thread of such quiet grey  
I smiled to wonder who would believe its signal  
of so much love. One cigarette  
in the non-smoker's tray.  
As the last spire  
trembles up, a sudden draught  
blows it winding into my face.  
Is it smell, is it taste?  
You are here again, and I am drunk on your tobacco lips.  
Out with the light.  
Let the smoke lie back in the dark.  
Till I hear the very ash  
sigh down among the flowers of brass  
I'll breathe, and long past midnight, your last kiss*

[12, p. 36].

This verse is a vivid and quite typical example of spontaneity in poetry: lack of rhyme in a way causing the absence of rhythm and tempo when reading, different number of syllables in the lines, etc. A cigarette is a central figure in the text, which epitomizes a person through association with emotions that the lyrical hero feels with his loved one. Also, we may notice that the duration of reading this poem equals the approximate duration of cigarette smoldering.

Further reading gives us other sensual feelings as we start to smell, to taste, and even feel this tobacco odor when the '*sudden draught blows it's winding into my face*'. It seems as a lover becomes tangible. This imagery and stream of consciousness form of narrative plays a big part in the rendering protagonist's emotion and feelings as it blurs any boundaries between readers-poem-author.

The study reveals that spontaneity in poetry embraces different topics. Comparative analysis of contrastive literary groups has shown that they contain significant use of spontaneity as well as stream of consciousness in its different manifestations. The distinguishing features lie within different approaches to the poetry and idea to be expressed.

Analyzing on the topic of common features of spontaneity stream of consciousness the following idea is supported, that in the field of literature there is no or at least there are just a few works that contain complex explanation of these concepts and the way they are implemented in poetic texts with the help of different literary devices. Moreover, prose is more deeply being researched by modern scientists unlike poetry. The necessity to explore literary works in further scientific investigations is signified by some examples of the given research.

As it has been said above, either spontaneity or stream of consciousness both in poetry and prose have not been profoundly investigated yet; as well as literary works of the kind mentioned have not been taken up for deep scientific analysis and research. That is why we consider our study should be continued through subsequent investigations and studies.

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