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Free Indirect Discourse. German and Russian
Literature

Wolf Schmid

University of Hamburg

Abstract – The paper first gives a definition of *free indirect discourse* (FID) and then characterizes the two main directions of its research. The more traditional one is based on the application of the three modes of speech representation to the representation of characters' minds (direct, indirect, and free indirect discourse). The text interference model is an alternative to the tripartite approach. It goes back to Mixail Baxtin's description of FID as a "hybrid construction" that "contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two 'languages', two semantic and axiological belief systems" ("Discourse in the Novel" 304). The following essay examines the development of *free indirect discourse* (FID) in German and Russian literature.

Keywords – Free Indirect Discourse; Three Modes of Speech Representation; Text Interference Model.

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Free Indirect Discourse. German and Russian Literature¹

Wolf Schmid

University of Hamburg

1. Definition

The term *free indirect discourse* (FID) designates a segment of a narrative that in the form of the narrator's text actually represents the character's text. That is: the inner speech, thoughts, feelings, perceptions or the evaluative position of a character. Whereby the reproduction is not marked, either graphically or by any kind of explicit indicator.

FID is not specific to fictional literature, as postulated by some of its theorists (e.g. Banfield). Furthermore, FID is most importantly characteristic of everyday oral narratives. As soon as a narrator in everyday life reports the experiences of a third person, his narration tends to take over the perspective of this person. This can be at some or even at all levels of narrative point of view, starting with (1) the perceptual point of view, through (2) the ideological or evaluative point of view, to (3) the linguistic point of view (on the distinguishable levels of point of view, cf. Uspenskij; Schmid, *Narratology* 99–117). Such everyday narratives “infected” by the point of view of third persons can be regarded as the real origin of FID.

Among the various ways in which the structure of FID has been modelled, two should be mentioned. The more traditional one, (A), is based on the application of the three modes of speech representation to the representation of characters' minds (direct, indirect, and free indirect discourse). The text interference model (B) is an alternative to the tripartite approach. It goes back to Mixail Baxtin's description of FID as a “hybrid construction” that “contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two ‘languages’, two semantic and axiological belief systems” (“Discourse in the Novel” 304). Baxtin's concept, already published under the name of Vološinov (*Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*) was taken up by the Czech structuralist Lubomír Doležel (“Polopřímá řeč v moderní české próze”; *O stylu moderní české prózy*; “Nejtralizacija protivopostavlenij v jazykovo-stilisticheskoy strukture épičeskoy prozy”) and integrated into a model of distinctive features of narrator's and characters' texts. In *Der Textaufbau in den Erzählungen Dostoevskys* as well as in *Narratology* I further developed model B by redefining the characteristics, status, and possible neutralization of its oppositions and introducing the category of “interference of narrator's and character's text” or, more simply, “text interference”. Text interference is based on the fact that in one and the same segment of narrative, some features refer to the *narrator's text* (NT) and others to the *character's text* (CT) as their origin. As a result of the distribution of features to both texts, narrator's and character's texts are simultaneously realized in one and the same segment.

Approaches A and B differ in three main respects.

(1) Approach A tends to regard FID as a “purely grammatical device of objective and obvious speech and mind representation” (Bally, “Le style indirect libre en français modern”; “Figures de pensée et formes linguistiques”), without any evaluative accents. Approach B on the one hand emphasizes the ambiguity of the assignment of segments to narrator and character. That means, it takes into account the possibility that the narrator's voice and context

¹ This article is an abridged version of Schmid, “Free Indirect Discourse in German and Russian Literature.”

overlay the depicted content of consciousness with evaluative accents. This overlay with accents means the possibility to produce humorous, ironic, satirical, and other effects.

(2) Approach A tends to ascribe to FID *univocality*, while B basically assumes *bivocality*. Since the first scholarly description of FID, there has been a dispute between *univocalists* and *bivocalists*. The univocalists say FID serves more for empathy than for ironic distancing.

(3) Approach A tends to see the narrator “leaving the stage” in FID, thus yielding his narrative function to the character (Bally, “Figures de pensée et formes linguistiques”; Lerch; Banfield; Padučeva). Approach B recognizes traces of the narrator even in the most figural FID, if only in the use of the personal pronouns of the third person instead of the first and second.

2. FID in German Literature

2.1 Mind Representation in the Middle High German Courtly Romance

In the Old French epic, especially the Arthurian romances by Chrétien de Troyes, FID seems to be documented (on possible cases of FID in Old French and the problems of their identification: cf. Stempel; Lebsanft; Marnette). In the Middle High German courtly romance, although it adheres closely to the French models, FID that can be clearly identified does not occur (cf. Hübner).

However, the absence of FID does not mean that there was no representation of consciousness in German medieval narrative. Gottfried von Straßburg makes ample use of direct interior monologue in a form that can be described as dialogized inner monologue, i.e., a monologue the addressee of which is either the absent beloved person or the alter ego (cf. Schmid, *Mentale Ereignisse* 116–26).

Gottfried was by no means the first to introduce direct inner monologue into European courtly prose. Already in his source, the Anglo-Norman French *Tristan* (second half of the twelfth century) by Thomas d’Angleterre, extensive soliloquies can be found. And they definitely had a dialogized character similar to the soliloquies in Gottfried.

To emulate FID in Chrétien de Troyes’ romances, the Middle High German poets used various techniques. With respect to Hartmann von Aue, Gert Hübner mentions the following equivalents:

- (1) Chrétien’s *style indirect libre* is usually represented by direct or indirect discourse (Hübner 52).
- (2) Hartmann creates transition phenomena that are close to FID: continuation of indirect speech or of psycho-narration (sensu Cohn).
- (3) Functionally, the use of certain techniques of perceptual point of view, which Hübner (54) assigns to “focalization” and “filtering,” broadly understanding them in a Genettean sense, is close to FID.
- (4) Another replacement for FID is “nestling” the narrator’s voice in the characters’ evaluative point of view. According to Hübner (394–397; cf. the enlightening but not uncritical review by Schulz), the narrator of Gottfried’s *Tristan* tends to support the characters’ evaluative point of view authoritatively in his generalizations and in the representation of the characters’ inner worlds, also in their soliloquies. This method brings about a figuralization that is otherwise only known from FID.

2.2 Emergence of FID in Modern German Literature

FID appeared in German literature only around the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1774 in his *Versuch über den Roman* the critic Friedrich Blanckenburg demanded that the reader of a novel should see the whole “inner being” of the characters “with all the causes that set them in motion” (265, translation mine). The emergence of FID corresponds to the tendency to explore inner life, which had already led to the development of the sentimental epistolary novel. However, the depiction of the unconscious and the auto-introspection designed to be communicated to an external addressee overtaxed the diegetic (first-person) narrative. Restricted to what the character was aware of and to what he could say in words, the letter was not capable of expressing the unclear and the unconscious. A different narrative mode was required for the expression of hunches and the wavering and indeterminate in the life of the soul. This means was developed by the non-diegetic (third-person) narrator, who in hybrid modes of mixing character’s and narrator’s text presented a more or less concrete image of the deeper, not clearly fixable processes of his figures’ consciousness. It is significant for this development that the early master of FID, Jane Austen, wrote her first works as epistolary novels and after a few years changed them to third-person novels with an increasing proportion of FID (Schmid, *Mentale Ereignisse* 153–88).

Supported by Werner Neuse’s (1980) detailed historical investigations of the German FID, we can state the following tendencies in the form and function of FID in the eighteenth century.

(1) FID is still used relatively rarely, but when it occurs it serves to depict inner doubts and uncertainty in questions regarding life. Self-questions which show the character in mental turmoil are the most reliable signs of FID in novels of the epoch: “Sollte man wohl glauben, dass eine Frau, die da wusste, dass ihr Mann ihr Bruder war, noch auf einen solchen Verdacht fallen könnte? Allein was ist in der Liebe und in dem Traume wohl unmöglich?” (Gellert 102-3). Christian Fürchtegott Gellert’s *Life of the Swedish Countess of G*** (Das Leben der schwedischen Gräfin von G****, 1748) is one of the first German novels to use FID. Influenced by Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela*, this sentimental family novel in the first-person form shows an interest in representation of the inner world new for the times and thus paves the way for the development of the psychological novel in Germany.

(2) FID is, as a rule, more or less distinctly marked by its figural context, such as indirect discourse, or by contiguous thought report. The second question of the above quote implies a certain ambiguity. Its universality, underlined by the gnomic present, suggests both the narrator and the character as thinker. But for the reader at that time, who was not yet familiar with the device, the authors of the eighteenth century usually did not shy away from making clear through *verba dicendi* and *credendi* who is responsible for the content in a given narrative segment. Uncertainty about the thinking authority was not a goal that the authors of the time were striving for.

(3) FID occasionally depicts struggles of the soul in correspondingly disconnected syntax with a strong expressive function. The novel *Woldemar* by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi contains examples of this presentation which seem very modern:

Henriette wusste nicht, wie ihr geschah. Bisher hatte sie ihrer Freundschaft für Woldemar weder Maß noch Ende gewusst: nicht der entfernteste Gedanke an dergleichen war ihr je in die Seele gekommen: *und nun auf einmal – Was? – Schranken! Grenzen! – Einer solchen Freundschaft – Woldemars und Henriettens Freundschaft! — Grenzen? – Schranken? – Wie? Warum? Welche?* Sie glaubte von Sinnen zu kommen. (Jacobi 74-5)²

² Here and in the following FID is marked by my italics.

(4) An early example of FID is the pietistic-idyllic “Robinsonade” *Wunderliche Fata einiger See-Fahrer...* by Johann Gottfried Schnabel, which in 1828 Ludwig Tieck re-edited in an abridged version under the title *Die Insel Felsenburg*. (*Palisades Island*). It is a traditional novel with a diegetic narrator (first-person novel): “Allein was konnten mir nunmehr alle diese schönen Reden helfen? Der Kaufmann Julius war fort, und ich konnte nichts weiter erfahren [...]” (Tieck 218). This quotation shows the fundamental ambiguity of FID in first-person narration: the self-questions can be related to the narrating “I” and his distanced temporal-evaluative point of view as well as to the narrated “I” involved in the event. In this quote there is sufficient reason to opt for FID. But the example shows a characteristic trait of FID. Unless numerous striking markers are present, the assignment of a segment to the narrator’s or character’s text is largely dependent on interpretation.

(5) As far as grammatical forms (tense, mode) are concerned, FID is amazingly well canonized in the eighteenth century. The majority of texts contain a shift of tenses. However, there are cases of FID in the present tense, as in Jean Paul’s *Titan* (1803):

Augusti und die Ministerin sahen, man müsste in der Abwesenheit des Ministers doch etwas für Liane tun; und beide trafen wunderbar im Projekte zusammen.—*Liane muss auf Land in dieser schönen Zeit—man muss ihre Gesundheit rüsten für die Kriege der Zukunft—sie muss den Besuchen des Ritters entzogen sein—die nun der Geburtstag vervielfältigen wird—der Minister muss sogar gegen den Ort nichts einzuwenden haben—Und wo kann dieser liegen?* (82-3)

(6) On the other hand, we can already observe the use of the preterit to express future or planned events. Such is the case in the following quotation from Johann Martin Miller’s sentimental novel *Siegwart: A Monastery Story* (*Siegwart, eine Klostergeschichte*, 1776): “Oft wünschte er sie in Lebensgefahr, rettete sie, und nun gab sie ihm zur Dankbarkeit ihre Hand. Aufs lebhafte fühlte er die Wonne, mit der er sie ans Herz drückte; den Blick der Dankbarkeit und Liebe, den sie auf ihn warf; dann eilte er zu ihrem Vater, zeigte ihm die befreite Tochter, und ward ihr Bräutigam” (Miller 589). In the passage, all preterites refer not to what has happened but to the future, to the fulfilment of his wishes.

(7) The first systematic use of FID in German literature can be seen in Christoph Martin Wieland’s novels *The Adventures of Don Sylvio of Rosaha* (*Die Abenteuer des Don Sylvio von Rosaha*, 1764) and *The History of Agathon* (*Geschichte des Agathon*, 1767). Significant for the development and dissemination of FID is that Wieland, in the third version of *Agathon*, adds text segments in FID and now even presents a thought report of the first version in this device. Those changes testify to the authors’ assumption that their audience is familiar with the device.

2.3 Goethe

An early highlight in the emergence of FID is Goethe’s novel *The Elective Affinities* (*Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, 1809). In FID in *The Elective Affinities*, two peculiarities can be observed which at first glance seem to exclude each other.

FID is difficult to identify because the characters are scarcely differentiated by their linguistic behaviour. Their language remains in lexis and syntax in the narratorial sphere, and the narrator interferes again and again with subjective statements. In the following example, where Eduard is rereading his letter in which he is announcing his renunciation of his love for Ottilie, only the expressive language function with its exclamations points to the character’s text: “Diese letzte Wendung floss ihm aus der Feder, nicht aus dem Herzen. Ja wie er sie auf dem Papier sah, fing er bitterlich zu weinen an. *Er sollte auf irgend eine Weise dem Glück, ja dem Unglück Ottilien zu lieben, entsagen! Jetzt fühlte er was er that!*” (Goethe 268).

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FID bears the main burden in the representation of the unclear, often illusionary thoughts, hopes, and musings of the heroes. Goethe prefers his initially unobtrusive and then double-voiced FID to marked and reliable representation, since ambiguity in the use of FID corresponds to the indeterminate movements of the soul.

Goethe's novel of relationships is characterized by a multiple perspective: the thoughts and feelings of not only one main character but all four main figures are represented in FID. This multiperspectivism has served as an example for the representation of complex configurations of people up to the present day.

In summary, it can be said that FID has not changed grammatically and structurally in German literature since its emergence in the eighteenth century. The changes essentially concern narrative motivation and thematic embedding. And under the sign of an increasingly complicated perspectivism, FID expanded its role in narrative. Representing the consciousness of the characters up to their most secret movements, FID increasingly fulfilled a narrative function by carrying the story forward.

2.4 German Realism: Otto Ludwig

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, FID was a widely used method in German literature that also played a major role in popular literature. The artistic novel with the undoubtedly densest and structurally most relevant use of FID is Otto Ludwig's *Between Sky and Earth* (*Zwischen Himmel und Erde*, 1856), which many consider to be the first German novel of consciousness. But this is not a figural novel, as one might assume. Notwithstanding the dominant figural point of view and the great role of FID, there is a strong narratorial element here. The omniscient narrator interferes in the narrative text again and again with emphatic exclamations, rhetorical questions, subjective judgments, and generalizations. So Stuart Atkins comes to the conclusion: "it is sometimes difficult to decide whether one is reading narrative or the thoughts of a character" (352).

The novel is a roofers' tragedy. On the roof of the church tower, Apollonius, a pure and rather hypochondriac soul, must realize that his envious brother Fritz, after taking his beloved Christiane away from him and marrying her himself, now strives for his life. After dodging the brother's deadly attack on the roof, whereupon Fritz himself fell into the depths, Apollonius is torn between love for Christiane, who is now free, and the false feeling of guilt. His absurd argument is first presented in FID, after which the narrator describes his aporetic situation in thought report:

Nimmt er des Bruders Weib, die frei wurde durch den Sturz, so hat er ihn hinabgestürzt. Hat er den Lohn der That, so hat er auch die That. Nimmt er sie, wird das Gefühl ihn nicht lassen: er wird unglücklich sein, und sie mit unglücklich machen. Um ihret- und seinetwillen muss er sie lassen. Und will er das, dann erkennt er, wie haltlos diese Schlüsse sind vor den klaren Augen des Geistes, und will er wiederum das Glück ergreifen, so schwebt das dunkle Schuldgefühl von neuem wie ein eisiger Reif über seine Blume, und der Geist vermag nichts gegen seine vernichtende Gewalt. (Otto 283)

In the interplay of NT and CT, the novel leads us into complex states of consciousness, into the depths of resentment and the narrowness of obsessions. The author stages fierce struggles in the heroes' souls to reach decisions, the reflection directed toward self-knowledge showing the development and rejection of mental events.

2.5 Post-War Literature: Dieter Wellershoff

In German postrealism and modernism, there are many masters of FID using the device for the representation of characters' unconscious or half-conscious movements, among them

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Arthur Schnitzler, Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Robert Musil, Franz Werfel, Franz Kafka, and Alfred Döblin. Forms and functions have changed little since the beginning of the nineteenth century (cf. Neuse 553–68). Depending on the stylistic and ideological difference between NT and CT, FID is more or less close to the poles of narratoriality and figurality respectively, and the ambiguity of FID is more or less strong.

Against the background of the politically committed and ideology-critical novel of the post-war period, a purely psychological novel attracts attention: Dieter Wellershoff's *The Love Desire (Der Liebeswunsch)*, 2000). In a sense this is a variation of Goethe's *Elective Affinities*: there are two couples changing partners with a catastrophic outcome, the suicide of the younger woman. What makes this novel special is its multiperspectivity. The story of the relationships between the four people is told in some sections by a non-diegetic narrator, and in other passages the four protagonists act as primary narrators. In each of their four narratives, in which direct interior monologue and FID play a large part, the respective narrator focuses on himself and the partners. Self-analysis takes the form of first-person narrative in FID. In the following quotation, Anja, the young victim, who changes from Leonhard, an older man, to Paul, Marlene's husband, analyses herself: "Mit mir stimmte etwas nicht. Ich, die dieses beneidenswerte Leben führte, war unsicher, konfus, unausgeglichen, undankbar—das machte mich mir selbst fremd. Wer war ich eigentlich, dass ich so wenig aus meinem Leben zu machen verstand? Was war los mit mir. Ich wusste es nicht, sah nur, dass ich mein Glückssoll nicht erfüllte, und gab mir Mühe es zu erreichen" (Wellerschoff 83).

The protagonists' inner speech is often dialogized. Marlene, who leaves Anja and Paul alone because she has to go on night duty as a doctor, rejects her suspicions: "Aber warum sollten sich Anja und Paul nicht noch eine Weile unterhalten, wenn ich in die Klinik fuhr? Wir waren schließlich miteinander befreundet" (136).

After Anja's mother congratulates her on her acquaintance with Leonhard, Anja is plagued by doubts and self-reproaches: "Jetzt hatte sie schon Erwartungen geweckt, ohne zu wissen, was sie wirklich wollte. War das für sie nicht voraussehbar gewesen, oder hatte sie auf diese Weise über ihre eigenen Zweifel hinwegkommen wollen? Sie konnte sich das Leben mit diesem Mann nicht vorstellen. Es war, als nehme sie eine Schuld auf sich, die sie nicht kannte" (37).

In summary, it can be said that FID has not changed grammatically and structurally in German literature since its emergence in the eighteenth century. The changes essentially concern narrative motivation and thematic embedding. The lexical-syntactic profiling of NT and CT is further advanced. And under the sign of an increasingly complicated perspectivism, FID expanded its role in narrative. Representing the consciousness of the characters up to their most secret movements, FID increasingly fulfilled a narrative function by carrying the story forward.

3. FID in Russian Literature

3.1 Aleksandr Puškin

Aleksandr Puškin makes the first conscious use of FID in Russian literature. In his "novel in verse" *Eugene Onegin* (1833), at the end of chapter 5, the narrator depicts the dialogue between Ol'ga and Lenskij (as it is perceived by Lenskij!) and Lenskij's thoughts in FID:

But no, she cannot. Cannot? But what is it?
Why, Olga has given her word already
to Onegin. Ah, good God, good God!
What does he hear? She could...

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How is it possible? Scarce out of swaddling clothes.
And a coquette, a giddy child!
Already she is versed in Guile
already to be faithless has been taught! (Puškin 224)

The quote shows how Puškin can already deal with the device in a complex implementation. Puškin must have known the device from Western literatures, especially from French, which he knew excellently. His predecessor, the Sentimentalist Nikolaj Karamzin, who was the first in Russian literature to immerse himself in the souls of his heroes, was far from FID.

3.2 Mixail Lermontov

Mixail Lermontov's first attempt at prose, the novel *Vadim* (1834), could not yet break away from the lyrical-pathetic style the poet had used in his Romantic verse narratives. The narrator's and the character's texts are largely in the same style and contain the same expressiveness. The two discourses are also not noticeably differentiated in their evaluative positions. The narrator expresses his solidarity with both the angelic Ol'ga and the demonic Vadim. The following interior monologue of Vadim, held in the mode of FID, corresponds in its language completely to the rhetorically elaborate style of Lermontov's early, still verse-oriented prose.

But a third woman approached the holy icon, and—he knew this woman! ... Her blood was his blood, her life—was a thousand times more valuable to him than his own, but her happiness—was not his happiness; for she loved another, a beautiful young man; but he, ugly, limping, hunchbacked, could not even gain fraternal tenderness; he, who alone loved her in God's wide world, only her, he, who for the first unfeigned, sincere "I love you" would have enthusiastically placed at her feet everything he possessed, his treasure, his idol—his hatred!—Now it was too late. (Lermontov 502, translation mine)

In *Vadim*, FID serves the Romantic fusion of narrator and hero.

3.3 Ivan Gončarov

Ivan Gončarov's prose is the battlefield of two styles. The Romantic expression moves into the characters' sphere clearly delimited by the narrator. In FID, the narrator no longer expresses his solidarity with his figures, but ironically represents their inappropriate way of speaking.

3.4 Fëdor Dostoevskij and Lev Tolstoj

An unmistakable sign of the novelty of FID is the lack of understanding by the audience of the figural perspective. Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1857) caused the public's moral indignation against the author and triggered a lawsuit on accusations of immorality. The author was thought to be speaking in his own name by presenting the adulterous thoughts of the heroine in a figural presentation, which was still unusual at the time. Fëdor Dostoevskij's short novel *The Double* (*Dvojnik*, 1846) was a great failure. From the judgment of the literary critic Vissarion Belinskij (1846), we can conclude that the audience was irritated by the radically applied figural perspectivation in which FID has the main share: "The author puts himself, so to speak, in the skin of another, completely foreign being" (565, translation mine). In FID, the narrator offers what the hero perceives as objective events. That the doppelgänger is not a Romantic figure of fantastic literature, but merely the product of the subjective delusion of a

sick brain, can only be guessed from individual signs. So, it remains unclear what actually happens in the story, what is reality and what is chimera.

In *The Double*, FID often widens into extended interior monologues, not seldom interior dialogues between Goljadkin's two voices. The impression that in *The Double* the narrator reacts dialogically to the hero's speech, on which Baxtin's well-known hypothesis of *polyphony* is based, arises from the fact that the hero's interior dialogue is distributed between different patterns of thought representation. Often a speech in FID invalidates doubts, fears, or hopes that have previously been formulated in direct or indirect discourse. In the following example, direct interior speech is followed by a counter-replica in FID: “What does it mean? Is it a dream? [...] No, it was not a dream and that was all about it” (Dostoevskij 57). In FID, the narrator prefers to portray Goljadkin's downplaying voice (italics), whereupon in direct interior discourse the counter-replica of the concerned voice follows: “*So here he was, waiting now for a chance to slip in, and he had been waiting for it two hours and a half. Why not wait? Villesle himself had waited.* But what had Villesle to do with it?” thought Mr. Goljadkin: ‘How does Villesle come in?’” (35).

In contrast to Dostoevskij, whose worlds are presented figurally despite the narrator's constant presence, Lev Tolstoj is an author with a predominantly narratorial and even authorial perspective. The minds of his heroes are presented either in thought report, in indirect discourse, or in extensive direct interior monologues. And these direct monologues, in which the heroes account for themselves at turning points in their lives, are organized narrorially at the thematic and linguistic levels. FID is rarely encountered in Tolstoj's novels, but when it does occur, it carries unmistakably narratorial accents. However, these accents are seldom ironic.

3.5 Figurally Colored Narration in Russian Postrealism (Anton Čexov)

The text interference here changes from the classical FID to a form that is called in Russian *nesobstvenno-avtorskaja reč* (improperly authorial narration). I propose to call this form *figurally colored narration* in English. This term denotes the punctual and extremely fluctuating figuralization of the narrative report, for which the narrator remains essentially responsible.

How does figurally colored narration differ from FID? FID reproduces the character's text in the form of the narrator's text, with greater or lesser narratorial transformation. Figurally colored narration is, by contrast, the narration of the narrator, which takes on unmarked evaluations and terms from the character's text. In varying density being “infected” by them or reproducing them ironically. In FID, the feature choice of the theme refers to the character's text; in figurally colored, by contrast, to the narrator's text.

An example is provided by the beginning of Čexov's tale “The Student” (1894). The first sentences, in which the narrator “sees” and speaks, are nonetheless interspersed with what are clearly figural evaluations (emphasized here with italics):

At first the weather was *fine* and still. The thrushes were calling, and in the swamps close by *something alive* droned pitifully *with a sound like blowing into an empty bottle*. A snipe flew by, and the shot aimed at it rang out *with a gay, resounding note* in the spring air. But when it began to get dark in the forest a cold, *penetrating* wind blew *inappropriately* from the east, and everything sank into silence. Needles of ice stretched across the pools, and it felt *cheerless, remote, and lonely* in the forest. There was a whiff of winter. (Čexov 169)

Before introducing the protagonist, the narrator already describes the world from the hero's evaluative point of view, without, however, employing lexical or syntactic features that would indicate the character's text.

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Figurally colored narration is characteristic of the late Čexov. It is as if the entire world depicted is immersed in the character's horizon. Figurally colored narration is associated with a considerable difficulty of reception. The figural part of the narrative report is less easy to identify than in the classical FID, in which exclamations, self-questions, and adjoining direct or indirect representation suggest the presence of the character's text. The figural moments of figurally colored narration, which does not distinguish itself from the purely narratorial context by syntactic means, consist mainly in the use of certain evaluations. Their identification presupposes recourse to the mental and ethical profile of the character.

The device of figurally colored narration is by no means limited to Russian literature. It has been widespread in European and American narrative art since the end of the nineteenth century, but probably in no other literature is the device more constitutive of modern narrative prose than in Russian literature.

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