

**IN THE NAME**

**OF GOD**



**Vali-e-Asr University of Rafsanjan**  
**Faculty of Humanities and Literature**  
**Department of English Language**

**Comparing William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and  
Houshang Golshiri's *Shazdeh Ehtejab*, by Exploring Stream of  
Consciousness Technique**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts (MA) in English Language and  
Literature**

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**A Comparative Study of William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and Houshang Golshiri's *Shazde Ehtejab*, By Exploring Stream of Consciousness Technique of Writing**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
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- The world we see that seems so insane is the result of a belief system that is not working. To perceive the world differently, we must be willing to change our belief system, let the past slip away, expand our sense of now, and dissolve the fear in our minds.

**William James**

I

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## **Abstract**

This project is a comparative study of William Faulkner's *The sound and the Fury* and Houshang Golshiri's *Shazdeh Ehtejab*. The goal is to explore the stream of consciousness technique of writing in these novels by examining William James's theory of consciousness which provides a valuable, and rather unique, source of analysis of consciousness. The focus is on the sense of time in these novels and shows how the past time is fused with the present to make a new technique of presenting the story. Moreover, this study can be used in order to make readers familiar with Houshang Golshiri as one of the first Iranian writers who used modern literary techniques such as stream of consciousness. Working on Persian and English sources, the study explains how the stream of consciousness technique of writing affects the two novels. This study examines whether using the stream of consciousness technique of writing is the same in these works or not. It concludes that the authors have not used the same technique in their works.

Key Words: Stream of Consciousness, the Interior Monologue, Psychoanalytic Theory, Consciousness Theory, Time.

## Chapter I

### Introduction

*"Let anyone try, I will not say to arrest, but to notice or attend to, the present moment of time. One of the most baffling experiences occurs. Where is it, this present? It has melted in our grasp, fled ere we could touch it, gone in the instant of becoming."*

*William James*

#### 1.1 General Overview

The modern period has different styles of writing; the most important of them was the use of stream of consciousness technique. The researcher attempts to examine the meaning of stream of consciousness narrative technique and also the psychoanalytical theory of William James in this study.

The term "Stream of consciousness" refers to a narrative technique of writing whereby the flow of thought and emotions and the mind of the character is reflected in text directly and without any mediation of the author. Since the mind of an ordinary person is not fixed and jumps from one scene to another, the author attempts to present this phenomenon as it is, while before the twentieth century, he simply revealed to the reader whatever the character was thinking about and the reader became aware of the mind of the character by him.

Indeed this technique seeks to present the character's viewpoint through presenting the writing equivalent of the character's thought process. Moreover, this literary technique of writing is related to the modernist movement by some novelists like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. In fact, Stream of consciousness as a narrative device is strongly associated with the modernist movement.

In other words, "Stream of consciousness" is a technique through which the author writes as if he is inside the mind of the narrator. This technique is the

advancement and outcome of literary investigation in the twentieth century and reflects its research and interest in the psychology of “free association”.

“Stream of consciousness was a phrase used by William James in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890) to illustrate the unbroken flow of perceptions, memories, thoughts, and feelings in the waking mind; it has been applied to describe a narrative technique in modern fiction. Therefore, “stream of consciousness” is the name applied specifically to a mode of narration that assumes to reproduce the full range and continuous flow of a character’s mental process, in which sense perceptions merge with conscious and half-conscious thoughts, memories, expectations, feelings and random associations” (Abrams, *Glossary of Literary Terms*)

William James, the American psychologist who posed the term stream of consciousness in his book, *Principles of Psychology*, for the first time, provides a definition for this term; he believes that stream of consciousness is a certain moment in which a person's mind confronts to a train of thoughts and ideas without a pause. Based on this view, stream of consciousness is the description of the association of ideas, impressions, sensations, and memories in a freeway that can pass through someone’s mind at any given time.

William Faulkner used this writing technique, in order to show the inner confusion in the mind of the character who strives to adjust to life in the post war era. The stream of consciousness is an efficient technique to exhibit personal effects that post-Civil war created. Generally, the feelings of hopelessness and distrust toward the world around him in the years between the two world wars, caused the author to crawl into himself and try to discover different angels of this unknown world; so, stream of consciousness grew from the heart of the horror, disorder and insecurity in society. This technique has used the findings of psychologists in a broad domain, as the definition, stream of consciousness is a literary technique in narrative whereby a character's mental flow, which is a combination of memories, sensations and free associations, is presented as it is. In this way, the author can penetrate into the depth of unconscious mind of the characters and present it to the reader without any mediation, with the help of stream of consciousness technique.

Robert Humphrey compares the consciousness with an iceberg and states that the whole iceberg should be considered in this comparison and not just the small surface of it. So, he believes that stream of consciousness fiction deals with what is under the surface. Bearing this concept of consciousness in his mind, he defines stream of consciousness fiction as: "a type of fiction in which the emphasis is placed on the exploration of the prespeech levels of consciousness for the purpose, primarily, of revealing the psychic being of the characters." (Humphrey 4)

### 1.1.1. Interior monologue

Interior monologue is a specific kind of stream of consciousness writing which is also called as "quoted stream of consciousness", it presents characters' thought streams entirely in the form of silent inner speech, as a stream of verbalized thoughts. It represents characters speaking silently to themselves and quotes their inner speech, often without speech marks. It is presented in the first person and employs deictic words, and also attempts to mimic the unstructured free flow of thought.

### 1.1.2. The General Characteristics of the Modern Period

Cuddon has given the following definition of modernism:

A very comprehensive term applied to international tendencies and movements in all the creative arts since the latter end of the 19th c. Professor Kermode has made a distinction between Palaeo-modernism and Neo-modernism. Paleo-modernism refers to early manifestations of new movements concluding, perhaps, c. 1914- 20, while neo-modernism refers to movements (like surrealism [q.v]) since that time. As far as literature is concerned, modernism reveals a breaking away from established rules, traditions and conventions, fresh ways of looking at man's position and function in the universe and many ( in some cases remarkable) experiments in form and style. (1977, p. 399).

“Major works of modernist fiction . . . subvert the basic conventions of earlier prose fiction by breaking up the narrative continuity, departing from the standard ways of representing characters, and violating the traditional syntax and coherence of narrative language by the use of *stream of consciousness* and other innovative modes of narration.” (Abrams, *Glossary of Literary Terms*).

The above-mentioned citation can be supportive for clarifying and revealing the characteristics of the movement. The modernist movement is “a breaking away from established rules” of the previous eras and considers “man's position” and “function” from a view point which is quite strange to the eyes of traditionalists. Modernism as “the literature of technology” displays “introversion, technical display, internal self-skepticism” (Bradbury et al) to reflect “experiments in form and style” as man's roles and intellectuality change enormously because of technological developments.

There are so many definitions for modernism, in its broadest definition, it is modern thought, character, or practice, or we can define it as the modernist movement, its cultural tendencies and associated cultural movements, it originally arose from vast changes that occurred to Western society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries .This movement was also a revolution that was against the value of realism, especially its traditions. The most important

motives of modernism were the rejection of any tradition incorporation, rewriting, recapitulation, revision and parody in new forms.

Works in the modern period reflect the changing social, political, and cultural climate and are diverse, experimental and nontraditional. Modern writers are known for the themes of alienation, disconnectedness and experimentation with new literary techniques in fiction and poetry.

Moreover, modernism is a special period in which the interior representations of life are more controversial than the exterior world as a physical experience. In this view, time is considered as psychological, not the historical time of realism.

*The Sound and the Fury* emerged in the situation that the Civil War completely changed the everyday life of the South. The slavery was destroyed, but many of its social values remained. It was a confusing time in which blacks were legally freed, but socially unequal to whites, they were not able to continue their education or to have equal economic opportunities. Faulkner creates the Compson family to manifest the economic troubles of the South and their effects on the people of the region. The economic degeneration of the family becomes worse throughout the years, eventually Mr. Compson is forced to sell his land to afford Caddy's wedding and Quentin's education.

Houshang Golshiri is an Iranian fiction writer, critic and editor who were born in Isfahan in 1937. He is known as one of the most influential writers of Persian prose of the twentieth century. He published his novel *Shazdeh Ehtejabin* 1974. Golshiri was awarded Germany's Erich Maria Remarque Prize in 1999 for his efforts to fight oppressions and to promote democracy and human rights.

In *Shazdeh Ehtejab* time is one of the prominent elements of stream of consciousness technique. The encounter of time in reality with the time in the mind of the characters has a basic role in the foundation of this novel. The real time of the novel (calendar time) is limited to the determined hours of the present time (from night to morning) but in this short period of time, each of numerous parts of Shazdeh's mind opens a window to the time in the mind of the character and each window recreates the history of four generations of ancestors in his mind.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Concentrating on the consciousness of the individual mind has become one of the significant characteristics of the modernist novel that is identified as both its principal theme and dominant technique. The term Stream of consciousness is derived from William James' description of the way in which thoughts, perceptions, memories, associations and sensations are experienced by the human mind.

Many scholars have examined the stream of consciousness technique of writing on famous literary works to explore the characteristics of this technique in them, it helps the readers to get more familiar with this technique; however, comparing two literary works from different cultures, *Shazdeh Ehtejab* and *The Sound and the Fury* and exploring the stream of consciousness technique in them is a fresh study. This research compares two works of Golshiri and Faulkner base on stream of consciousness technique.

Stream of consciousness is a new style of writing at the modern period. This technique is applied by many novelists like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner. Examples of this technique can be seen in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Katherine Porter's *Flowering Judas*, William Faulkner's *The sound and the Fury*, and Houshang Golshiri's *Shazdeh Ehtejab*.

This study intends to introduce William James and his psychoanalytic theory, particularly the formal features of narrative and the interior monologue. Specifically, the study seeks to explore the stream of consciousness technique within two prominent novels written by William Faulkner and Houshang Golshiri.

The main focus of this thesis is an attempts to introduce William James' role to develop the stream of consciousness and gives the character's consciousness and shows how William Faulkner and Houshang Golshiri use the narrative style as regarded to the "stream of consciousness in their novel *The Sound and the Fury* and *Shazdeh Ehtejab*.

William Faulkner and Houshang Golshiri, both have employed stream of consciousness technique in writing their novels. The fictional style of their writing is a narrative technique which deals with the flow of ideas, thoughts, feelings, and sensation. They tried to move deeply into the characters 'consciousness and this will finally provide a new way of looking to the two literary works by Golshiri and Faulkner.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The present study attempts to present reasonable answers to the following questions:

1. What is the stream of consciousness technique of writing and what were the causes and effects of using this technique?
2. What are the similarities and differences of Golshiri's novel and Faulkner's novel in employing this technique?

#### 1.4. Methodology

This study is basically library oriented. Hence, a primary reading of William James' theories and William Faulkner and Houshang Golshiri's selected works are a matter of great importance. Exploration of *The Principles of Psychology* makes it possible to have an in-depth study of stream of consciousness in literary works.

The examination of stream of consciousness and its elements in *The Principles of Psychology* is based on William James' theories of consciousness, and psychoanalytic theory. Thus, a series of studies of James are made to comprehend his theories of consciousness, psychoanalytic theory and concepts of time as well as his justification of thought's constant continuity. This study, however, mainly focuses on his theory of consciousness and two works written by Faulkner and Golshiri in which the stream of consciousness technique of writing has been applied.

The whole process consisted of several stages. A general reading of related literature was done. A thorough understanding of all elements and a deep reading of William James' view toward Stream of consciousness, and of course a precise understanding of the novels of two writers and analysis of the main characters of stories. Then a study of modern period and stream of consciousness technique of writing was done that would be suitable for the study. It was determined that William James's views toward this technique of writing would bring a new perspective toward the study of *The Sound and the Fury* and *Shazdeh Ehtejab*.

#### 1.5. Review of Literature

Erwin Ray Steinberg is a writer who studied stream of consciousness in his book *The Stream of Consciousness and beyond in Ulysses*. In subsequent chapters, Steinberg gives a very detailed description of Joyce's methods, based chiefly on analysis of three chapters of *Ulysses*. He also brings together a great deal of interesting material about artistic experimentation in the early twentieth century, establishing Joyce's rapport with the literary revolutions.

Barry Dainton is another writer who examined the stream of consciousness technique in his book (*Stream of Consciousness: Unity and Continuity in Conscious Experience*. London ; New York : Routledge, 2000.) Despite the recent increase of interest in consciousness, most of this has been focused on the relationship between consciousness and the brain. This has meant that



significant and fascinating questions concerning the fundamental characteristics of consciousness itself have not received the attention they deserve. Stream of Consciousness is devoted to these questions by presenting a systematic, phenomenological inquiry into the most general features of conscious life: the nature of awareness, introspection, phenomenal space and time-consciousness. Barry Dainton shows us that a stream of consciousness is not a mosaic of discrete fragments of experience, but rather an interconnected flowing whole.

In his book (*Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954) Robert Humphrey has examined the work of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy Richardson, and William Faulkner to provide a clear understanding of stream of consciousness in literature, its techniques, purpose, and its significance. He points to the various means novelists have used to express the unclear psychic life of their characters. He discusses the purpose and usefulness of free association- - the chief device for depicting and controlling both the movement and the privacy of consciousness. Humphrey analyzes the various structural patterns that stream of consciousness writers have used in conventional plots and shows how they have managed the unities of space and time.

Hosein Baiat is another writer who studies the stream of consciousness technique. In his essay (Bayat, Hossein(1383) *Time in the Stream of Consciousness Stories*, Tehran: pazuheshadabi.) he examines the western stories of stream of consciousness and tries to study the intend of different writers in this field and compare them with each other. His main focus is on the issue of time in Stream of Consciousness novels. At the end of this article some Persian novels are investigated.

Arash Moshfeghi and Nader Alizade Khaiat are other researchers who have investigated the stream of consciousness technique in the stories of Persian writer Mostafa Mostoor. In their article(Moshfeqi, Arash(1389) *Stream of Consciousness in Mastur's stories*, Tehran: pajuhesh.) they have tried to examine the elements of stream of consciousness technique in several stories of Mostafa Mostoor and study the intensity of these elements in his stories, whether they are strong or not.

Maryam Sidan studied *Shazdeh Ehtejabin* her article (Sidan, Maryam(2009) *Analyzing and exploring Golshiri's Shazdeh Ehtejab* by employing structuralistic view, SID Archive, 2009) and analyzed it by employing the views of poststructuralist critics such as Roland Barthes, Tzvetan Todorov, and some other critics. She examines point of view, narrative structure and structural analysis of *Shazdeh Ehtejab* in her article.

Masoud Forouzandeh studies stream of consciousness in two stories: *Be Ki Salam Konam?* written by Simin Daneshvar and *Shohare Amrikaei* by Jalal Aleahmad . In his article (Investigating the stream of consciousness in *Be Ki Salam Konam?* and *Shohare Amrikaei*, Boostan Adab magazine of Shiraz University, 2011) he examines narrative techniques, time, language and punctuation procedures in these two stories and finally concludes that the stream of consciousness technique is employed in both stories.

Abolfazl Horri is another researcher who investigates the stream of consciousness technique. In his article “Vojuhe Baznamaei Goftemane Ravaei: Jaryane Sayale Zehn Va Takgooeie Darooni, Pajooresh Adabiate Moasere Jahan, 2011) he compares the stream of consciousness and interior monologue, by studying some western and Iranian literary works.

### **1.6. Objectives and the significance of the study**

This study aims at discussing different issues related to both novels; the study analyzes two works in using Stream-of-Consciousness technique and analyzing the character's psychic life in order to show the factors that contributed to their psychological decline.

The importance of this study lies in showing "the stream of consciousness" as a writing technique which can reflect war and the chaos in the twentieth century and its influence on the writers of that time, how the writers focus on the inner life of the characters rather than the outer side, and present a satirical view of society. The study also presents two novels as very prominent examples of employing this narrative technique which is a great reaction of modernism that is against the value of realism of the Victorian period.

The role of stream of consciousness in literature is typically as a character study. The character is not speaking to the audience in this literary device, as he or she is in a monologue, but is rather speaking to himself. Though the character may be analyzing events that happened in the story, and moving the plot along in that way, typically the character is examining his or her response to the events. Usually, this is aliterary technique that the author will dip into and out of throughout the story, though some writers will produce an entire novel in this stream of consciousness format, with the character acting as the narrator.

### 1.7. Outline of the Thesis

The present study is designed in five chapters to provide a comprehensive picture of stream of consciousness technique of writing and its features, in the well known novel of William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and Houshang Golshiri's *Shazdeh Ehtejab*. Chapter one introduces the study as regards its statement of the problem and research questions. In addition, a brief review of studies concerning literary works on the issue at hand is provided for the reader.

Chapter two offers a detailed analysis of William James' ideas concerning psychoanalysis and its permanent effects, theory of consciousness and Psychoanalytic theory, and the interior monologue. Chapter Three gives the in-depth analysis of William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* in the light of James theories and ideas, and provides his stylistic innovations in writing and his very use of stream of consciousness technique. In addition, Faulkner's representation of the human experience by showing events and images subjectively. Chapter four gives the comprehensively analysis of Houshang Golshiri's *Shazdeh Ehtejab* concerning James theories and ideas, and provides his creation of memorable psychological characters through interior monologue and stream of consciousness technique and his new style of narration and his use of the element of time in his novel. In addition, Golshiri's presentation of character's thoughts and emotions through interior monologue is outstanding. The researcher tries to answer the questions posed at the beginning of the thesis in chapter three and four. Finally, in Chapter five the concluding remarks are given, embracing the main points of the four preceding chapters.

## Chapter II:

### Theoretical Considerations

*"Individuality is founded in feeling; and the recesses of feeling, the darker, blinder strata of character, are the only places in the world in which we catch real fact in the making, and directly perceive how events happen, and how work is actually done."*

*William James*

James' ideas and theories as the theoretical considerations of this study are brought in details in this chapter. The chapter includes various categories: the first deals with formal features of narrative, the second stream of consciousness and the third interior monologue. The other one is about James theories of consciousness and his psychoanalytical theory.

Pioneering American psychologist and philosopher, William James, was the first to introduce the term stream of consciousness to denote the continuous flow of thoughts, feelings and impressions that makes up our inner lives. His theory of emotions is very well known to the readers of his works. It suggests that emotions are different from other positions of mind, they have physical reactions that lead to internal sensations, and on the other hand, different emotions are different from one another because they go along with different physical responses and sensations.

Since the 1880s philosophers and psychologists had been admiring a philosophical approach to the analysis of mental life, likewise, the psychologist William James described it in his groundbreaking and extremely popular *Principles of Psychology*: 'the looking into our own minds and reporting what we there discover' (James, 1981: 185).

James discovered a new aspect of the human mind which was different from that of his contemporary scholars. While Freud's most eminent work focused on the unconscious processes, James was praised for his popular theory of