

Psychological Realism in Literature:

A Comprehensive Study of Consciousness, Identity, and Narrative Technique

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ABSTRACT

Psychological realism is a major literary movement that foregrounds the inner lives of characters, emphasizing consciousness, memory, emotion, and moral conflict over external action. Emerging prominently in the nineteenth century and reaching artistic maturity in modernist fiction, this approach transformed narrative technique by prioritizing subjective experience. This paper examines the evolution and defining characteristics of psychological realism through the works of writers such as Fyodor Dostoevsky, Henry James, and Virginia Woolf. It also considers the influence of psychological theories developed by thinkers like Sigmund Freud and William James in shaping literary representations of the mind. Through close analysis of narrative strategies such as stream of consciousness, interior monologue, and free indirect discourse, the study demonstrates how psychological realism deepens readers' understanding of identity, perception, and moral ambiguity. Ultimately, the paper argues that psychological realism marks a crucial shift in literary history, redefining fiction as a medium for exploring the complexities of human consciousness and subjective reality.

Keywords: Psychological realism, Interior monologue, Identity, Subjectivity, Psychoanalysis.
