

# Discourse structure in James Joyce's "Penelope"

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## **Abstract**

This article presents a stylistic analysis of the last episode "Penelope" in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and explores the discourse structure underneath the illusion of conflation between textual linearity and the continuous flow of consciousness. Against the background of the graphological presentation and the colloquial use of language in the text, the discussion focuses on the prominent uses of the connective 'and', aiming to better understand the technique of representation in stream-of-consciousness writings and explain its literary significance.

## **Keywords**

Discourse structure, *and*, flow of consciousness, James Joyce, "Penelope"

## **1 Introduction**

The last episode of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), known as "Penelope" or Molly Bloom's interior monologue, is a 25,000-word text, consisting of eight 'blocks' of unpunctuated paragraphs, which, according to Joyce, should be understood as 'eight sentences' (Gilbert, 1966 [1957]: 168). The second paragraph, which is composed of 4,404 words, is considered to be 'the longest sentence in English literature'<sup>1</sup>. Its graphological presentation and colloquial style both help to foreground the visual effect

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of textual linearity, creating a sense of continuous flow. This deceives us into regarding Molly's unfolding thoughts as uncontrolled and undirected, blinding us from being able to see the hierarchisation underneath. Having noticed the *trompe l'oeil* in this text, I seek to explicate the shaping of its discourse structure by examining the most-used connective 'and'.

The use of 'and' has been explored mainly from two perspectives, namely, linguistics and discourse analysis. In theoretical discussions, there are three basic concerns: (1) the discrepancy between the truth-functional logical operator  $\wedge$  and 'and' in natural language; (2) the unlimited scope of semantic and pragmatic meanings of 'and'; and (3) the difference between asyndetic and syndetic connection (see Grice, 1975; Posner, 2004). The three issues all point to the special and complicated phenomenon of the use of 'and' in natural language. This context-dependent use of 'and' is examined in discourse analysis in terms of its role as a cohesive device (Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Quirk et al., 1985) and as a discourse marker (van Dijk, 1977; Schiffrin, 1987). Drawing from the useful discussions of 'and' in these studies, stylisticians deal with the function of 'and', or connectives in general, as a point-of-view marker, signaling the viewpoint shift between one character and another, and also between the character and the narrator (van Peer, 1985; Sotirova, 2004 & 2010; Ikeo, 2014). This function of 'and' is frequently applied to the experimentation of Free Indirect Thought representation in stream-of-consciousness writers such as Lawrence and Woolf, but is less prominent in Joyce (Sotirova, 2013: 88), who gave obvious priority in *Ulysses* to the continuous representation of single character's flow of consciousness.

These studies suggest that the order of the components conjoined by the connective 'and' is, in most cases, irreversible with covert logical-semantic relations such as temporality and causality. In the case of Joyce's "Penelope", these invisible hierarchical relations are represented in two aspects: (1) the chronological order of narration in relation to the plot progression; (2) the free association of memories in relation to the construction of fictional world.

By applying a functional approach to explore the manifold discourse structure in “Penelope”, I am able to focus on the use of the connective ‘and’ on each layer of the structure and its role in between the layers. I also borrowed two concepts from narrative theory —the experiencing ‘I’ and the narrating ‘I’. They were first introduced to the tradition of narrative studies to categorize point of view and narrative genre (Stanzel, 1984), and are applied to the type of first-person retrospective fiction. The notion of the narrating ‘I’ refers to the older self recalling the experience of a younger self, while the experiencing ‘I’ the younger self in the memories of the past. The distinction of the two allows me to separate the character Molly’s crucial stages in life and helps to mark the layers of the discourse structure.

## **2 Discourse structure in “Penelope” and the flow of consciousness**

In the “Penelope” episode, Joyce abandoned the conventional structural units, namely, punctuation and paragraphing, delivering the whole text in Molly Bloom’s Free Direct Style with the maximized effect of visual linearity and lack of structure. Literary critics have tended to equate this visual fluidity, what Cohn (1978: 220) called ‘the relentless continuity’ of the text, with the nature of ‘flow’ of human consciousness (See Attridge’s 2004 [2000] review of the key word ‘flow’ in critical arguments on this text.), emphasizing on the association between this formal innovation and the literary purpose of representing the unrestrained releasing of consciousness (Cohn, 1978; Wales, 1992; Smurthwaite, 2006). Molly’s soliloquy has thus been described as ‘some profound sea’ (Wilson, 1931: 204), ‘an oleaginous, slow-moving stream’ (Budgen, 1972 [1934]: 93) and ‘a cathartic outpouring’ (Hayman, 1970: 121). This metaphorical connection is pushed further to allude to the lack of logic in Molly’s mind (Tindall, 1950: 42; Goldberg, 1961: 296; French, 1976: 245), which symbolizes the typical ‘female mind’ (Wales, 1992: 92).

Apart from the absence of punctuation and paragraphing, the use of coordinate structure is also regarded as a source of this shared impression. According to Wales

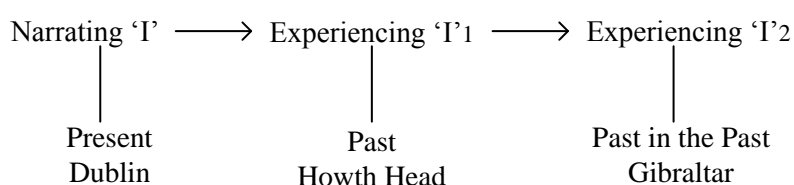
(1992: 93), Molly's monologue, 'unlike Bloom's and Stephen's, is markedly characterized by coordinate structure, with or without explicit *and*, which helps to keep a sense of "flow", while joining apparently quite disparate ideas'. I believe that the use of coordinate structure indeed helps to keep a sense of 'flow', but to a certain degree this is only one side of the stylistic effect. This article will demonstrate that the textual smoothness is merely an illusion, a visual trap that takes place at the lowest level of the reader's text processing. The more crucial function of 'and' is to challenge the constraints of textual linearity, push the limits of working memory in discourse comprehension and disturb the operation of text processing. In other words, 'and' both helps to keep a sense of 'flow' and deconstructs the 'flow' in the name of keeping it. Previous studies have tended to use Molly's colloquial and self-contradictory speech, and even her vulgar concerns as a proof of the defects in her characterization. I intend to reveal that this view has missed the essence of Joyce's experimentation in the 'clou'<sup>2</sup> (Gilbert, 1966 [1957]: 170) of *Ulysses*.

In the eight 'blocks' of Molly's flow of consciousness, the use of connectives becomes a significant marker of possible structuring. Quantitatively speaking, 'and', which is repeated for 646 times in "Penelope", is the most used connective in the 25,000-word text. In particular, it appears 54 times in the 2,000-word final section—more than 4 times the average frequency in the entire episode. Based on this deflectional use, I have chosen this part of the text to showcase the complexity of discourse structure in "Penelope", highlighting the potential logical-semantic relations of 'and' structure.

The uses of 'and' to conjoin 'quite disparate ideas' disguise the logical-semantic relations between these 'ideas'. This lack of clarity produces two contradictory effects: on the one hand, it strengthens the feature of linear unfolding and the literary effect of 'flow', alluring the reader to see only the horizontal expansion of text and ignore the hierarchisation at the vertical level; on the other hand, it can serve as the very entry to shatter the illusion of textual fluidity and shed light on the complicated local and global

coherence of this text. I would like to stress that the representation of the flow of consciousness by means of piled-on ‘and’ structure markedly overloads the process of discourse comprehension, stretching the normal operation of working memory. The discussion of ‘and’ in theoretical linguistics and discourse studies informs us that in many cases the components in ‘and’ structure are in an irreversible and unequal relation. Behind their juxtaposed order lies causality or temporality. In the case of “Penelope”, the logical-semantic relations of ‘and’ structure are represented in two aspects. First, ‘and’ is used to conjoin two narrative units that are in a relation of temporality. This function is closely related to the plot progression and the shift between different layers of the manifold discourse structure. Second, ‘and’ links components that are not semantically relevant. This reveals the freely associative unfolding of Molly’s memories and shapes the peculiar logic of her mental activities, allowing us to tap onto her emotions and attitudes that the character herself is unaware of.

The end of Molly’s monologue is about her reminiscence of the day when her husband Bloom proposed to her 16 years ago. Molly, who was lying on Howth Head then with Bloom, recalls her adolescent life in Gibraltar. The three stages of her life, i.e., adolescence, before marriage and after marriage, are intertwined and conflated<sup>3</sup>. The discourse structure in the text has three levels (shown in Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** The discourse structure in the ending of “Penelope”.

The first level, at which the narrating Molly lies in bed with her husband in their home in Dublin at the end of the day on which *Ulysses* takes place, is not reported directly in the text. The reader is trusted to recognize and construct this layer of fictional world through bits and pieces of information. The second level, at which the major plot progression occurs, includes narrative units that advance in chronological order. The

third level, which is inserted in the middle of the second level, puts a pause on plot resolution and replaces it with description of images that are not temporally linked, foregrounding the associative releasing of thoughts.

The lack of temporal order and the want of clear logic, as manifested in the interruption of narration, have triggered a negative response to Molly's style of narration. According to Cohn (1978: 228), who singled out "Penelope" as the *locus classicus* of the type of 'autonomous monologue', Molly keeps turning 'a reflective gaze back on each narrative sentence' and therefore whenever 'she comes closest to narrating her life to herself', as showcased by the love-scene on Howth Head, her narration can 'never gain sufficient momentum to yield more than briefly suggestive vignettes'. I believe that Cohn underestimated the value of Molly's helter-skelter montage of events and the significance of this ending. I seek to demonstrate how the closure of Molly's flow of consciousness highlights the whole episode and the entire novel. The shifting of time and space, which reflects the condensation of the key moments in Molly's memory, and the sharp contrast between the character's static state and the dynamic scenes in her consciousness, help to shape the complicated textuality of Molly's monologue and pushes the story telling to its climax, making *Ulysses* 'one of the most concluded books ever written' as Joyce's authoritative biographer and critic Ellmann (1986: xiv) remarked.

Reflected on the patterns of language use, the three-fold discourse structure can be described from two aspects: the level of the experiencing 'I'1 is mainly composed of 'and' structure which conjoins clauses with relatively complete syntactical structures; that of the experiencing 'I'2 consists of polysyndetic 'and' structure which links multiple verbless phrases. These two issues will be the focus in the rest of the discussion.

### 3 Plot progression in chronological order

#### 3.1 *The opening of the flow*

The episodic memory of marriage proposal opens with Molly's direct quoting of her husband's words:

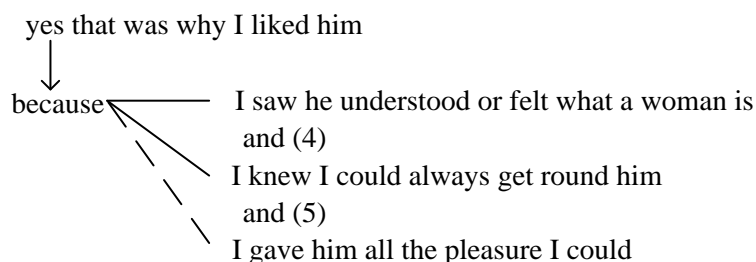
Ex. (1): the sun shines for you he said the day we were lying among the rhododendrons on Howth head in the grey tweed suit and (1) his straw hat the day I got him to propose to me yes first I gave him the bit of seedcake out of my mouth and (2) it was leapyear like now yes 16 years ago my God after that long kiss I near lost my breath yes he said I was a flower of the mountain yes so we are flowers all a womans body yes that was one true thing he said in his life and (3) the sun shines for you today (U 18.1571-8)

There is a twofold meaning for Bloom's words to appear as the introduction of the episodic memory and then be reiterated in the form of repetition: First, it is his speech that activates this episodic memory. The word 'the sun' in the pretext 'they might as well try to stop the sun from rising tomorrow' (U 18.1571) triggers in Molly's storage of memory her husband's words 'the sun shines for you', which in turn opens the curtain for the episodic memory. Second, the repetition of her husband's words reminds Molly of the reason why she chose to marry Bloom sixteen years ago. This reflective epiphany carries a symbolic meaning in the whole episode and the novel. It has always been the critics' concern and the reader's curiosity to guess the possible future of the couple as the story in *Ulysses* ends without producing a resolution to their marriage crisis. The ending of the book with the moment of proposal, a symbol of their happiness in the past, can be understood as the author's indirect response to this issue.

Ex. (2): yes that was why I liked him because I saw he understood or felt what a woman is and (4) I knew I could always get round him and (5) I gave him all the pleasure I could leading him on till he asked me to say yes and (6) I wouldnt answer first only looked out over the sea and the sky I was thinking of so many things he didnt know of (U 18.1578-82)

Molly's narrative tempo shifts with an alternation between narrating and commenting. Reflected on the reading process, it means suspending our expectation for new information and going back repeatedly to preceding text. The text itself demands constant guessing and retracing. Therefore, while 'and' seems to be speeding up the reading by pushing the reader forward to the next line, it in fact hinders the smoothness of discourse comprehension. The reading process is not as smooth and easy as it appears to be.

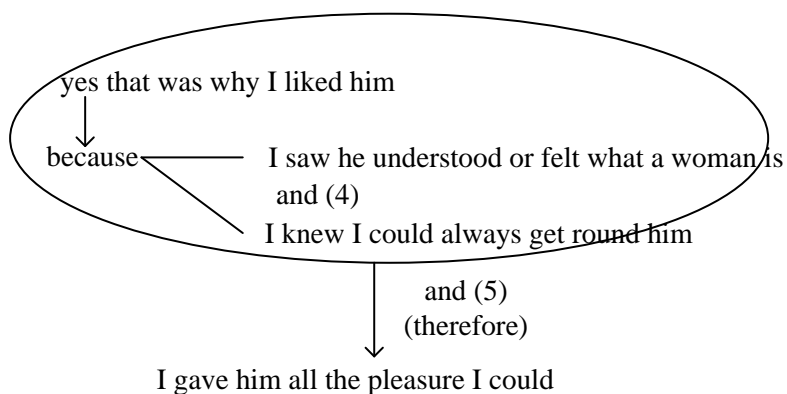
As shown in Figure 2, the consecutive use of 'and' (4) and 'and' (5) produces the impression that the three clauses are juxtaposed and the third clause is added to the preceding two as another reason for the main clause ('that was why I liked him').



**Figure 2.** The illusion of juxtaposition.

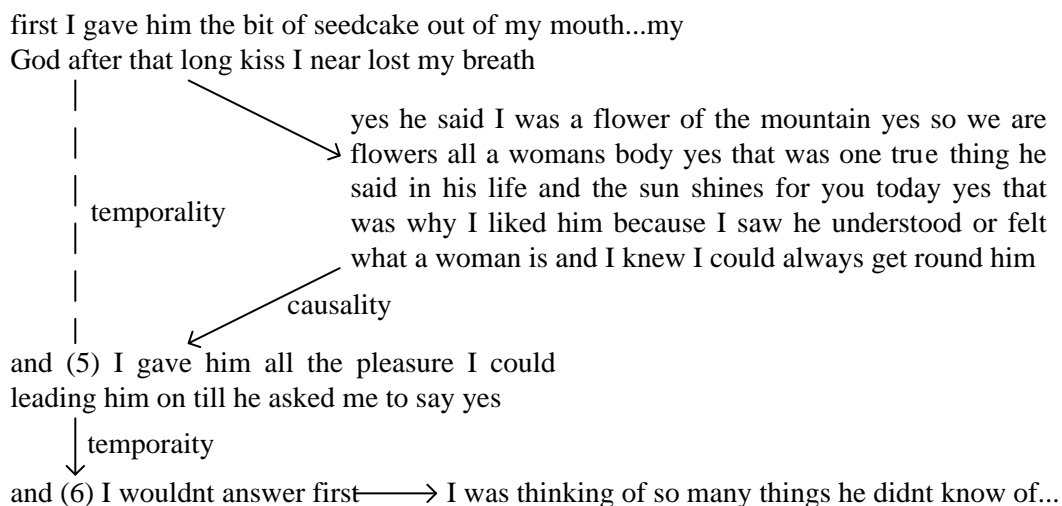
However, the logical-semantic meaning of 'and' (5) is different from that of 'and' (4) as Figure 3 indicates. 'And' (5) carries two contradictory functions at the same time: reinforcing the illusion of linear continuation of structure on the one hand and producing the incongruity of logical-semantic relation on the other hand. The former highlights the constant flow of consciousness while the latter reflects the leap and simultaneity in the working of consciousness. From a perspective of discourse structure, the clause led by 'and' (5) does not belong to the same level of discourse structure as the two preceding clauses do. 'And' (4) is positioned at the first level as the comment of the narrator; 'and' (5) is at the second level as the restart of plot narration. The clause led by 'and' (5) is in a relation of causality with the preceding two clauses.





**Figure 3.** The logical-semantic relation of ‘and’ (5) in the immediate co-text.

‘And’ (5) is not only in a relation of causality with the immediate preceding text, but also in a relation of temporality with earlier text as shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4.** The logical-semantic relation of ‘and’ (5) in the larger context of discourse structure.

Molly’s thought strays from event narration to emotional reasoning, and then returns to event narration through ‘and’ (5), bringing the reader back to the happenings after ‘that long kiss’. The narration of the major plot line at this moment is again disrupted by the clause ‘I was thinking of so many things he didnt know of’, which introduces us to the third level of the discourse structure. The past progressive aspect has the stylistic function of slowing down the narrative tempo and introducing an up-coming digression—the cluster of memories which is united in the temporal-spatial

dimension of Gibraltar.

### ***3.2 The closure of the flow***

Before coming to the embedded third level of the discourse structure, I will analyse the last few lines of Molly's monologue when she returns to the plot progression at the second level of the discourse structure.

Ex. (3): and (48) I thought well as well him as another and (49) then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and (50) then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and (51) first I put my arms around him yes and (52) drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and (53) his heart was going like mad and (54) yes I said yes I will Yes (*U* 18.1604-9)

After the digression of Gibraltar memories, the chronological structure of the major plot is resumed. 'And' (48) pushes us out of the third level of the discourse structure back to the fictional world of the experiencing 'I', pointing back to the two clauses in Example (2), which are conjoined by 'and' (4). The three clauses all signal the reasoning process of Molly, who is justifying her affirmative answer to what she calls 'the greatest earthly happiness' (*U* 18.743). The other uses of 'and' (49-54), whose successive occurrence builds up to the climax of the plot, can be grouped into the type of temporal relation.

Ellmann (1972: 172), the authoritative biographer and critic of Joyce, insightfully commented that this last section 'joins activity to passivity, aggression to surrender'. This mixture of conflicting emotions on Molly's part is embodied in the disturbed structure of event narration, the constant shift between external action reporting and internal reasoning. The merging effect is achieved by means of the shift between reporting of the mental reasoning, the goings-on in the character's mind, and that of her physical behaviors. The plot is pushed forward to a completion, both a climax and a coda to this episodic memory and to the entire monologue. The six uses of 'and' (49-54) resonate with eight uses of 'yes'. If each instance of 'and' symbolizes an action of reloading an emotional gun, 'yes' is the bullet that releases Molly's affection and the last

capitalized 'Yes' is the final shot at the bull's-eye. Molly, who has been absent in previous seventeen episodes in *Ulysses*, is having her own saying now at the end of the story and taking the whole floor throughout the episode. Her uses of 'yes' exceed in every possible way the submissive 'Yes, sir. I will, sir' (*U* 10.323) by the blonde girl in the fruit shop and the habitual uses of 'yes' by Miss Dunn, the secretary of Boylan (*U* 10.389-392). In this *denouement*, the adolescent Molly in Gibraltar, the younger Molly 16 years ago and the middle-aged Molly are compressed together through the pairing of 'and' and 'yes', the constant reloading and releasing of her deeply-buried emotions. Without the triggering of 'and', Molly's 'yes' would lose its ultimate force. 'And' is the question that Molly asks herself while 'yes' is her self-possessed answer. This layer of symbolic and aesthetic meaning enriches how we might interpret the ending of Molly's monologue. Scholars have tended to read the uses of 'yes' as indicative of Molly's sexual agitation. I believe that it is insufficient to attribute the force of the whole episode to the theme of sexuality. The existence of tension between 'and' and 'yes' can shed light on our understanding of the cadence of this famous ending, and consequently associate stylistic analysis with literary interpretation.

#### **4 Free association of memory**

Halfway through the proposal memory, the narrative scene shifts from the young couple on Howth Head to the panoramic landscape in front of them. Before answering Bloom's proposal, Molly the experiencing 'I' looks at 'the sea and the sky'. Then her mind goes into the space of Gibraltar, with a quick succession of images linked by forty instances of 'and' (8-47).

The most direct effect of this sequence of 'and' is an unlimited association of memories and thus the lack of possible semantic coherence. Joyce manipulates the stacking of verbless phrases with no apparent logic to simulate the flow of consciousness and also to build up the character's emotions which lead to her outburst in the climax of plot narration at the end.

The view of ‘the sea and the sky’ (*U* 18.1581) before the experiencing ‘I’<sub>1</sub> at Howth Head overlaps with that of ‘the sea and the sky’ (*U* 18.795) which the adolescent Molly once saw during a date with Mulvey in Gibraltar. This similar spatial orientation fires up the distant memories in her mind. It explains why the cluster of memories on Gibraltar starts with Mulvey and also ends with the kissing scene between Molly and Mulvey, which is symbolically blended with the same kissing scene between Molly and Bloom on Howth Head.

The memories of Gibraltar begin with five specific characters in Molly’s life:

Ex. (4): Mulvey and (8) Mr Stanhope and (9) Hester and (10) father and (11) old captain Groves (*U* 18.1582-3)

It is unclear whether she is merely verbalizing the names or picturing images about these figures in her mind because this involves the subtle relation of language and thought. The appearance of these figures set the temporal-spatial parameter for this level of the discourse structure. That is why we can locate the coming figures to Gibraltar in the next three examples:

Ex. (5): and (12) the sailors playing all birds fly and (13) I say stoop and (14) washing up dishes they called it on the pier (*U* 18.1583-5)

Ex. (6): and (15) the sentry in front of the governors house with the thing round his white helmet poor devil half roasted (*U* 18.1585-6)

Ex. (7): and (16) the Spanish girls laughing in their shawls and (17) their tall combs (*U* 18.1586-7)

Even though ‘and’ (12) seems to be juxtaposed in equal structural relation with ‘and’ (8-11), the element after ‘and’ (12) is incongruous with the preceding five characters’ names. What shows up here is not any specific person, but a type of people (‘the sailors’) in a particular location in Gibraltar (‘on the pier’) engaging in certain activity. This dynamic event is realized in the participle ‘playing’ and a sequence of three game names as the complement, which are linked by ‘and’ (13, 14).

The two occurrences of ‘and’ (15, 16) bring together three seemingly unrelated

pictures about three types of young people in Gibraltar. It is not clear whether the elements joined by 'and' (8-11) are verbalized or visualized in Molly's mind, but here the dynamic processes in the three elements joined by 'and' (15, 16) can be pinned down as the non-verbal aspects of her consciousness.

As the unfolding of memories continues, the vision zooms out to represent three large scenes:

Ex. (8): and (18) the auctions in the morning the Greeks and (19) the jews and (20) the Arabs and (21) the devil knows who else from all the ends of Europe and (22) Duke street and (23) the fowl market all clucking outside Larby Sharans (*U* 18.1587-90)

In the background of the busy and bustling scene, a group of close-up shots is foregrounded in the following text:

Ex. (9): and (24) the poor donkeys slipping half asleep and (25) the vague fellows in the cloaks asleep in the shade on the steps and (26) the big wheels of the carts of the bulls (*U* 18.1590-2)

The silence and stillness in these scenes shape strong contrasts to the noise and motion in the market in the background. The swift change of perceptual distance creates a special rhythm for the flow of consciousness. This is generated through the piled-on 'and' structures, which also prevent us from seeing the relation of these memories and the latent coherence of the text.

This spatial transition continues and is further heightened in the following lines:

Ex. (10): and (27) the old castle thousands of years old yes and (28) those handsome Moors all in white and (29) turbans like kings asking you to sit down in their little bit of a shop and (30) Ronda with the old windows of the posadas glancing eyes a lattice hid for her lover to kiss the iron (*U* 18.1592-5)

The alternation of distant and close-up, still and moving scenes is carried on as Molly falls deeper into the flow of consciousness. There is an associative link between the stacking of elements conjoined by 'and'. Their fast succession blurs the distinction

between verbalized and non-verbalized, conscious and unconscious aspects of consciousness.

The mere naming of a certain character or location does not give us any clue to what Molly actually sees in her mind, but it does not prevent the activation of inference in the reader. These inferences might come from our knowledge of the world, the preceding text, or even other literary texts. The following ‘and’ (32), in which only the name of a musical instrument ‘the castanets’ appears, is a good example for this:

Ex. (11): and (31) the wineshops half open at night and (32) the castanets and (33) the night  
we missed the boat at Algeciras the watchman going about serene with his lamp  
(*U* 18.1595-7)

Molly’s mentioning the name of the gadget not only brings into the reader’s mind a ‘thing’, but also an ‘event’ it involves, with visual and aural effects. By leaving out the possible syntactical structure, Joyce has lifted the constraint of linearity and foregrounded the simultaneous loading of information (verbal and non-verbal) in the character’s mind. This Spanish instrument triggers naturally the image of a female dancer and the possible location and time of this dance in association with ‘the wineshops at night’ in the preceding text. It might also trigger the reader’s intertextual imagination to relate this possible dancer to the Gypsy woman Carmen in Georges Bizet’s opera, who dances to the beat of this instrument at night in a tavern.

The instance of ‘and’ (33) can also be well explained by inference. The reason why ‘we missed the boat’ could be that ‘we’ danced too long and lost track of time. This vague causal relation is also implied by the incomplete structure of ‘and the castanets’. The possible logical-semantic relation between the three elements conjoined by ‘and’ (32, 33) is never endorsed by Joyce. In this sense, this is an open text and the book itself an open book.

The tempo in the rest of this reminiscence speeds up:

Ex. (12): and (34) O that awful deepdown torrent O and (35) the sea the sea crimson  
sometimes like fire and (36) the glorious sunsets and (37) the figtrees in the

Alameda gardens yes and (38) all the queer little streets and (39) pink and (40) blue and (41) yellow houses and (42) the rosegardens and (43) the jessamine and (44) geraniums and (45) cactuses (*U* 18.1597-601)

What we have here is a series of landscape scenes without the participation of characters. It could be read as an ode to nature in the form of synecdoche. This explains why Molly the character is often been interpreted as the symbol of the earth goddess Gaea-Tellus and this ending as ‘a litany of the universe, encompassing flowers and fields, seas and rivers, the sun and the mountains’ (Tolomeo, 1973: 452). The effect of polysyndetic coordination here, which links overabundant and associative information, is an evidence of the shared impression of unstoppable and unlimited flow of consciousness.

The use of successive ‘and’ structure to represent the quick succession of memories sheds light on the issue of the relation between language and thought. By using the technique of interior monologue, Joyce successfully conjured up a perfect illusion, conveying all the non-verbal aspects of mind into words and laying bare the intangible world of human consciousness on the pages.

The words in Example (12) must have triggered specific visual, aural or olfactory images in the character’s head. We do not know what specific type of house emerges in Molly’s mind when she describes the ‘houses’ as ‘pink and blue and yellow’; and we would never know how appalling ‘that awful deepdown torrent’ was, or how strange ‘all the queer little streets’ were. This kind of uncertainty does not prevent the activation of similar schemata in the reader’s mind. The different nature of these memories, still or moving, panoramic or close-up, general or specific, visual, aural or olfactory, is disguised by the unified use of ‘and’ structure. In Molly’s consciousness, these memories could not all be rendered with words as we read on the pages, just as the words will be delivered in other non-verbal forms in the reader’s mind during text processing.

The climax of this reminiscence is pushed to a more intense level when the

narrative tempo slows down abruptly by introducing clauses with complete syntactical structures. Two specific scenes are singled out:

Ex. (13): and (46) Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and (47) how he kissed me under the Moorish wall (*U* 18.1601-4)

The polysyndetic uses of ‘and’ from Example (4) to Example (12) have put too much pressure on the working memory limitation for both the narrating ‘I’ and the reader. The instance of ‘and (46) Gibraltar’ here has a conclusive function. It releases the overloading pressure of preceding information and brings a stop to the outpouring of free association. It also groups the preceding cluster of memories under the heading of Gibraltar and the complement clause (‘where I was a Flower of the mountain’) highlights the significance of this place to Molly.

The last two instances of ‘and’ (46, 47) bring out a circular closure in two senses: At the third level of the discourse structure, the pronoun ‘he’ in the last clause ‘and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall’ points back to the antecedent ‘Mulvey’ at the opening of this structure, giving a sense of full circularity to this gigantic unfolding of Gibraltar memories. At the macro level of the three-fold discourse structure, the last clause not only pins down the memories of Gibraltar to the kissing scene between Molly and Mulvey, but also subtly blends this scene in Gibraltar with the other kissing scene on Howth Head. The experiencing ‘I’<sub>1</sub>, who was kissing Bloom on Howth Head, overlaps with the experiencing ‘I’<sub>2</sub> in Gibraltar, who was kissing Mulvey under the Moorish wall, hence the deliberate use of pronominal ambiguity in the next line ‘and (48) I thought well as well him as another’, which could refer to both Mulvey and Bloom. In this case, Molly as a flower of the mountain in the eyes of Bloom is mixed up with Molly as a girl, who was also a flower of the mountain in the eyes of Mulvey and of the retrospective, narrating Molly herself.

At this point, the excitement of the experiencing ‘I’<sub>2</sub>, that of the experiencing ‘I’<sub>1</sub> and that of the narrating ‘I’ converge into one. This overwhelming emotion is



transferred in the last temporal sequencing of the proposal plot and is realized in the sequence of forceful pairing between ‘and’ and ‘yes’.

## **5 Conclusion**

This article has explored the manifold discourse structure in Molly Bloom’s monologue by examining the contradictory functions of the connective ‘and’ in reinforcing the foregrounded effect of textual linearity and disrupting the smoothness of textual processing. By focusing on the prominent uses of ‘and’ in the text, I have shown that beneath the illusion of textual fluidity lies an immense web of hierarchisation. I have also explained how these double-sided effects serve the purpose of mimicking the workings of human consciousness.

I have discussed that the ending of the “Penelope” episode brings together the three critical stages in Molly’s life, i.e., adolescence, before marriage and after marriage. The three temporal-spatial dimensions correspond to the threefold discourse structure in the text. The voice of the narrating ‘I’, who recalls the proposal memory, dominates the first layer of the discourse structure; while that of the experiencing ‘I’<sub>1</sub>, who is the target of this reminiscence, shapes the second layer of the discourse structure. The embedding of the third layer of discourse structure enriches the dual focalization of the narrating “I” and the experiencing ‘I’<sub>1</sub> by introducing the voice of the experiencing ‘I’<sub>2</sub>. I have argued that the interpolation of the Gibraltar memories into the episodic memory of marriage proposal complicates the construction of discourse structure and generates a profound layer of meaning as the voices of the narrating ‘I’, the experiencing ‘I’<sub>1</sub> and the experiencing ‘I’<sub>2</sub> are compressed together.

I have discussed that the semantic opacity of ‘and’ disguises the possible temporality and causality in narration. I have also shown that the piled-on uses of ‘and’ conceal the fundamental differences between memories. At the linguistic level, the loose connection of ‘and’ structure and its consecutive occurrence suggest the weak logic of the text and the lack of planned structure. At the level of narration, the use of ‘and’

conflates different temporal-spatial dimensions in the fictional world and blends the multiple focalisations in the discourse structure. At the level of thought presentation, the use of ‘and’ reflects the quick succession of thoughts and at the meantime blurs the distinction between different aspects of consciousness. The presentation of one single character’s consciousness in continuous, long passages runs the risk of being boring, awkward and monotonous with ‘a jarring effect’ as Cohn (1978: 227) commented on the unsuccessful application of interior monologue in Dujardin’s novel *Les Lauriers Sont Coupés* (1938). My analysis of the functions of ‘and’ helps us to explain how Joyce enlivens Molly’s monologue, endowing it with rich dimensions and intricate textuality.

## Notes

1. The record of the longest sentence in English literature has now been surpassed by other works, such as Jonathan Coe’s *The Rotter’s Club*, which has a sentence of 13,955 words.  
See [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/26/books/review/Park-t.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/26/books/review/Park-t.html?_r=0)
2. Joyce is playing with the word ‘clou’: In German, it means ‘highlight’ or ‘the point (of the argument)’; in French, it means ‘nail’, similar to the meaning of ‘clé’, the French word for ‘key’; and in English, it carries the meaning of its homophone ‘clue’. Interestingly, I found out that ‘clou’ has a special meaning in archaic English (see OED online). Also spelt as ‘clew’, it means ‘a ball of thread’, with special reference to the Greek mythology: the magical ball of thread that Ariadne gave to Theseus to help him get out of Minotaur’s labyrinth (which is built by the legendary artificer Dedalus, the namesake of the protagonist Stephen Dedalus in Joyce’s *Ulysses*). We could say that “Penelope” is the magical ball of thread thrown to the reader by Joyce, so that we could exit from his labyrinthine book. This metaphor can also be extended to the visual effect of the text: the unpunctuated text with the absence of proper paragraphing resembles unfolded threads, with ‘yes’ at both ends. Another layer of meaning involves the implication of a ‘weaving’ action in association with the phrase ‘a ball of thread’. This action leads us to one of Molly’s archetypal figures—the real Penelope, wife of Odysseus in Homer’s epic, who

repeated the action of weaving and unweaving every night before the return of her husband.

3. Dancygier (2006) applied the theory of Conceptual Blending to analyze the opening scene in Woody Allen's movie *Annie Hall*. His analysis is similar to mine in the sense that the texts both involve an older self and a younger self in retrospective narration. However, in Molly's case, the situation is more complicated since I am dealing with the conflation of three major spaces and one of the three, the space in Gibraltar, covers a sequence of specific and dynamic scenes and events.

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