THE PRESENTATION OF THE 'DIVIDED SELF' IN JOHN BANVILLE'S NOVELS.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the writing style of John Banville and, more particularly, on one of the major narrative features in his works, that of the 'divided self'. As one of the recognised masters of style of our time, John Banville has honed his own unique style of writing. The typical Banville novel is a first-person retrospective narrative of an aging male character troubled by his painful memories of failure and loss. In a struggle to cope with their traumatic life experiences, Banville's protagonists attempt to find answers to haunting existential questions and rediscover their identities in the face of emotional fragmentation. This sense of dislocation and displacement thus emerges as a major theme of Banville's fiction and his works generally revolve around the internal conflicts of a 'divided self'.

Although critics generally recognise the importance of the 'divided self' as a topic in Banville's fictional work, they hardly devote any attention to how the theme of splitting is embodied in his narratives. The aim of this thesis therefore is to fill this research gap in existing literature on the topic by investigating how the language of the novels reflects the inner split of the characters and what linguistic mechanisms Banville exploits to create the 'divided self' effect. My analysis surveys the presentation of the 'divided self' through the lens of three different overarching linguistic categories: sensory modality, tense shifts and pronoun alternations. Each category will be explored in a separate chapter and its examination will be supplemented with a large collection of textual samples form Banville which will be closely analysed in

terms of consciousness presentation. In my discussion of the use of sensory modality, I investigate the function of particular modal stances for constructing the image of the split personality and for conveying self-detachment in retrospective novels. My analysis of tense shifts explains how spatio-temporal oscillations facilitate the expression of self-division by creating a destabilised reality in which the speakers' consciousness constantly fluctuates between the present and the past. By exploring pronoun alternations in the novels, I show how pronominal variations can act as an effective tool for embedding self-alienation and identity dissociation in the narrative composition.

The exploration of the 'divided self' phenomenon in Banville's novels provides valuable insights into both the literary studies of John Banville and the narratological investigations of fictional consciousness in first-person texts. From a literary perspective, this analysis reveals the linguistic means through which the stylistic effect of division is achieved. From a narratological perspective, the main questions that are addressed concern the complex interactions between the narratological and ontological manifestations of the self in retrospective fiction – a significant, but not fully explored, aspect of consciousness presentation in first-person narratives. Thus, this research brings the two-fold benefit of providing an in-depth linguistic exploration of the theme of splitting in Banville's works, while also deepening narratological knowledge of the construction of point of view and consciousness in first-person texts.

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Chapter 1

The First-person Novel

1.1 Retrospective narration

Retrospective novels possess a number of specific features that make them fundamentally different from other types of first-person narration. This is acknowledged in the earliest scholarly works devoted to first-person narrative fiction such as Romberg's *Studies in the Narrative Technique of the First-Person Novel* (1962) in which the author classifies first-person narration into three categories: the memoir novel, the epistolary novel and the diary novel. Each type represents a different novel format and constitutes a distinct genre with its own qualities. The fictitious memoir, which has proved to be the most basic and most common form, depicts the protagonist's life experience in retrospect, while the method of telling in the diary and the epistolary genre is almost simultaneous with the events. Since a central concern of this thesis is to examine Banville's intricate mechanisms of reproducing memory in his novels, a review of the existing scholarship on point of view and consciousness presentation in retrospective narratives will introduce the basic concepts and frameworks in this field and will provide a background for the more specific discussions of some problematic areas.

An indispensable feature of the first-person retrospective novel is the act of memory, hence its crucial significance for the progression of the narrative. Memory is the mental reconstruction of the narrator's past that goes inside his/her head and that he/she lays out on the page. The moment of remembering

usually takes place in the narrator's present and marks the time of the narration in contrast with the time of the narrated which belongs with the past. The difference between these two temporal planes is called 'temporal distance' by Prince (1982: 29) or 'narrative distance' by Stanzel (1984: 95). Temporal distance can be either short, if a narrator recounts events which have recently happened, or long, if a narrator recalls experiences from the more distant past. In the latter case, the speaker has undergone a much greater psychological transformation which allows him/her to have a more mature outlook and to show deeper wisdom when reflecting on the past experiences. As Stanzel (1984) observes, memory then acts as a 'catalyst capable of clarifying the substance of experience' (214) and the greater the distance, the wider horizon of knowledge the character will have attained.

At the same time, however, a long temporal distance can affect the accuracy of the recollected story because depending on the time that has lapsed since the story and the act of its remembering, the authenticity of the vision may vary. If we are describing an event which has happened in the near past, it is highly likely that our account of it will be more accurate. But in case we are travelling far back in time, the chances are that, in the words of Bal (1977), 'the 'story' the person remembers is not identical to the one she experienced' (147). Thus, the more time passes, the hazier the memory becomes. Yet, contrary to this, there are novels in which the narrators demonstrate such perfect and superhuman memory that the narration becomes unconvincing. This 'mnemonic overkill', as Cohn (1978: 162) names it, allows the protagonist to give a lucid account of the events and reproduce past dialogues and thoughts with extreme precision. The implausibility of this narrative situation is expressed by Romberg

(1962) in the questions ‘how can the narrator recall these past events so accurately and reproduce them with claims to be believed?’ (97). This shows that memory narration is inextricably linked with the question of reliability.

Another fundamental question about memory narratives concerns the interaction between the voices of *narrator* and *character*. Compared to the third-person novel which draws a functional distinction between *narrator* and *character*, first-person narratives weave these two conceptual entities into one existential whole. While a third-person narrator typically tells someone else’s story with the omniscience of a god-like figure, a first-person narrator speaks for himself and reports his own life experiences from his spatially and temporally limited point of view. Since narratives are inherently structured on two temporal planes – the time of the telling of the story and the time of the actions being reported, which Fleischman (1990) calls respectively *speaker-now* and *story-now* – first-person narrators assume the double role of *narrator* and *character*. As Cohn (1978) puts it, ‘a first-person narrator's relationship to his past self parallels a narrator's relationship to his protagonist in a third-person novel’ (143).

Despite this correspondence in functional role, however, a first-person narrative situation exhibits one essential difference from a third-person text – the narrative entities in it remain ‘yoked by the first-person pronoun’ (Cohn, 1978: 144) because the relationship between them is existential and ontological. The first-person narrator remains ‘bound to his earlier self by numerous existential threads despite his manifold transformations’ (Stanzel, 1984: 213) and the narrative process is very much dependent on the ‘psychological integration of the experiencing and the narrating self’ (Stanzel, 1984: 213).

This temporal continuity between the two selves has also played an important role in the development of the narrative technique of free indirect style, according to Adamson (1995). She has found out that attributing subjectivity to one's past self in 17th-century conversion narratives has provided a natural prerequisite for the occurrence of *linguistic empathy*:

> Canonically (and indeed factually) subjectivity is a property of the speaking-I not the referent-I, but given our normal (western) assumptions about the continuity of personal identity, we readily attribute subjectivity to our past self, especially if the events we are narrating are acts of consciousness or states of feeling. It is in these circumstances that linguistic empathy most naturally arises, transferring deictic, epistemic, and expressive terms from the *I* who narrates to the *I* who is at the centre of the narrated experience. (204)

Thus, the identification with one's past self leads to the transference of deictic, epistemic and expressive linguistic features that constitutes the underlying principle of free indirect style. This shows how subtle the relationship between the remembering self and the remembered self is.

The subject that has generated the most debate in existing scholarship on the first-person has been namely focalisation and perspective. It would be erroneous to assume that just because an I-narrator is present in the fictional world, first-person narration should be equated with internal focalisation. This supposition does not capture all possibilities open to personal narrators based on their conceptual splitting into experiencing self-narrating self. Genette's (1980) original typology of *focalisation*, which consists of zero, external and internal

focalisation depending primarily on the degree of knowledge that a narrator displays in relation to his/her characters, postulates that in internal focalisation the narrator is maximally withdrawn and precedence is given to what the experiencing character is perceiving. When adapted to homodiegetic narration (Genette's term for first-person narration), this assumption, however, automatically excludes the reportive function of the narrator and accounts only for his/her focal vision.

Although first-person narration rendered entirely from the internal standpoint of the narrator's past self is possible, it presents only a portion of all cases. A notable example of this is Hamsun's *Hunger* where the past self speaks only what he thinks and sees and the present self's subsequent knowledge is totally suppressed. Retrospective narrators, however, typically speak from their position of grown-ups who have acquired greater wisdom and who have cognitive and psychological privilege over their previous selves. This is evident from their inclination to use proleptic phrases like *We shall see later* or *I have learned since* that reveal their superiority of knowledge. But this contradicts the concept of internal by definition and, therefore, autobiographical narration should by no means be equated with internal focalisation.

The topic of focalisation in first-person texts specifically is more comprehensively treated by Edmiston (1989; 1991) who contends that if we are to adopt Genette's triadic classification of focalisation, it has to be radically reconsidered if we are to apply it in the context of the first-person novel:

> The focal possibilities offered to an FPN [first-person narrator] thus contain elements of all three of Genette's types, but clearly no type

> alone is adequate to describe them. Such a narrator can limit himself to the perceptions of his younger self (internal). He is not, however, restricted to those perceptions, and he enjoys certain spatial and cognitive advantages resulting from his temporal distance. He therefore often says more than his younger self knew at the moment of experience (a characteristic of the nonfocalised type). Finally, toward other characters his perceptions should logically be those of a spectator (external), although here again his temporal distance allows for a certain psychological privilege, as we shall see. (Edmiston, 1989: 732)

In brief, he claims that in texts in which the narrator and the character are the same individual all three types of focalisation are possible but they need to be redefined.

Stanzel's theory (1984), which makes a terminological distinction between *perspective* (internal vs. external) and *mode* (teller vs. reflector), postulates that first-person narration belongs with internal perspective because perception is located in the main character or within the events. However, based on the concept of mediacy, internal perspective is usually associated with a low degree of mediacy, while I-narration typically demonstrates a high degree of mediacy which is associated with a teller-character. Therefore, Stanzel asserts that, similarly to the third-person narrative situation which oscillates between a teller-character and a reflector-character as two different persons, a first-person narrative situation oscillates between the two modes but in the role of the speaker. I-narration is then divided into two basic forms: it is either dominated by the *teller*-mode in which the narrating self has priority and the story is

narrated with hindsight, or by the *reflector*-mode in which the experiencing self gains precedence and no foreknowledge is presented.

In her criticism of Stanzel's typological circle, Cohn (1981) proposes the elimination of the constitutive element *perspective* as, to her, the distinction between *perspective* and *mode* is not viable and convincing. She believes the two categories essentially coincide and, in fact, Stanzel himself admits that there is a close correspondence between internal perspective and reflector-mode on the one side and external perspective and teller-mode on the other, though he still insists on the advantages of making the subtle difference. In view of Cohn's re-organised narrative circle, first-person narration should no longer be associated with internal perspective alone and the designations external-internal can be adopted as synonymous to teller-reflector mode:

> Now it would seem to me that in the first type, when the 'past space' surrounding the experiencing self is present from the retrospective vantage point of the narrating self, the perspective is essentially external, not internal; only in the second type, when space is seen from the vantage point of the experiencing self (who does not yet know what he will find around the corner he is about to turn) can the term 'internal perspective' have a distinctive meaning […]. From which it follows that external perspective and the narratorial mode, internal perspective and the reflectorial mode correspond to each other in first-person no less than in third-person narration. (176)

Cohn's elaboration on Stanzel bears a twofold significance: first, it asserts the terms internal-external perspective in relation to first-person narration as

they can be similarly applied in third-person texts, and, second, it consolidates a dual model on focalisation rather than a triple model. It seems that the dual model is better supported among narratologists. Bal (1977), for instance, eliminates Genette's external focalisation and replaces it with the introduction of the *focalised object*. Chatman (1978) also discusses the retrospective novel in terms of his dual standpoint of *conception* and *perception*. He sees the act of memory as a conception, no longer a perception, and for this reason attributes the conceptual point of view to the narrator, whereas the perceptual point of view belongs to the younger self. Rimmon-Kennan (1983), following Cohn, adopts the terms internal-external for first-person narration as well and sees external focalisation as belonging with the narrating agent which in first-person texts is the role fulfilled by the narrating self.

Thus, this dualistic view of perspective in first-person novels has become a dominant paradigm and it is generally accepted by narratologists that first-person narration can sometimes give precedence to the voice of the *narrating self* (external perspective/focalisation) and sometimes can adopt the perspective of the *experiencing self* (internal perspective/focalisation). As Fludernik (2009) briefly confirms:

> …when events and actions are reported from the perspective of a now older and wiser narrator, this narrating self often indulges in retrospection, evaluation and the drawing of moral conclusions. Conversely, the text may eschew retrospection and concentrate on the action as it takes place, at any one particular moment in time. In such cases, the focus is on the narrator as protagonist, the experiencing self. (90)

Moreover, according to Fludernik, the two processes, that of *experience* and *evaluation*, should ideally be in equilibrium. In fact, the two viewpoints can occur in close succession to each other and shift from sentence to sentence, as Adamson (1995) illustrates with the following example:

> a. It *must* have been the crowd that did it for me.
>
> b. I suddenly got the feeling that *this time* I wasn't going to fade in the last lap. (204)

In this case, sentence *a* reflects the current thinking of the narrating self signalled by the epistemic modal *must*, while sentence *b* rather evokes the emotional state of the experiencing self marked by the proximal time deictic *this time*. As we can see, the narrative can consecutively alternate between the two perspectives but the role of memory, according to Adamson, is more important for the experiential rather than the reportive mode of narration:

> …although the functions of memory could be fulfilled by a set of propositions about the past, we more commonly think of memory as an experiential mode which works, as in (5b) [example b. above], by reactivating the past in our mind. (204)
>
> The task for memory […] is to recreate the past in all its experiential vividness… (208)

By referring to Locke's philosophy of the mind, Adamson contends that by memory an actual perception of the past can be made actual perception again and, for this reason, she proposes the designation 'experiential memory' for it.

The two-fold differentiation of perspective in memory novels is also well supported in Shigematsu (2017; 2019) who invokes Nigro and Neisser's cognitive psychological framework of remembering (1983) and Warner's stylistic and narratological story-telling schema (2009). According to the first, a person can render a memory either through the position of a detached observer ('observer' perspective/'observer' memory) or through the eyes of the experiencer in the original setting ('field' perspective/'field' memory). Similarly, Warner's natural story-telling schema postulates that there are two distinct modes of remembering: remembering as *recounting* and remembering as *reliving* and they are basically determined by the narrative distance between the narrating and the experiencing self. In *recounting* the speaker dissociates from the experiencing self and represents a memory through the consciousness of the narrating self, whereas in *reliving* the speaker identifies with the experiencing self and represents the consciousness of the same experiencing self. Shigematsu summarises this succinctly in the following table:

Point of view	the narrating self	the experiencing self
REMEMBERING schema	RECOUNTING	RELIVING
Narrative distance	dissociation	identification
Mode of consciousness representation	indirect (mediate)	Direct (immediate)

(Shigematsu, 2017: 34)

The distribution of these two perspectives within a first-person text depends on the type of content that is being transmitted as they serve different purposes. According to Shigematsu's review of the remembering schemas,

‘observer perspective tends to be found in memories with a high level of emotional self-awareness or self-consciousness’, whereas ‘field perspective is more likely to occur when one attempts to recall emotions and feelings’ (2017:69). Therefore, the external perspective of the narrating self is typically used to render a report of objective circumstances like actions, physical appearances and spatial layouts contrasted to the internal perspective of the experiencing self which is better suited to convey emotions, psychological states and physical sensations at the time of the original events.

Ultimately, point of view in the first-person novel is regarded as a duality with the events either focalised through the perspective of the narrating *I* or through the perspective of the experiencing *I*. Although this dichotomy has been given different names by different narratologists such as conception – perception, teller-mode – reflector-mode, evaluation – experience, observer memory – field memory or recounting – reliving, they essentially correspond in meaning with each other.

1.2 Models of consciousness presentation and their use in first-person texts

While first-person narration is well classified in terms of perspective, it has not been so extensively studied in terms of consciousness presentation. One of the earliest taxonomies dealing with the transcription of fictional consciousness that specifically includes narrative techniques in the first-person is proposed by Cohn (1978). Her study, which employs basic grammatical (mainly person and tense) and lexical criteria to differentiate modes of narration,

distinguishes between three types of narrative techniques in the third-person which have their direct analogues in the first-person. According to Cohn, the process of '*retro*spection into a consciousness' which is characteristic of first-person narration can be paralleled to the process of '*in*spection of a consciousness' (14) that is observable in third-person fiction and, for this reason, the narrative techniques identifiable in the third-person are mappable in the first-person. Consciousness in third-person contexts she classifies into *psycho-narration*, *quoted monologue* and *narrated monologue*, with their first-person equivalents being *self-narration*, *self-quoted monologue* and *self-narrated monologue*:

Narrative techniques in the third-person	**Narrative techniques in the first-person**
psycho-narration	self-narration
quoted monologue	self-quoted monologue
narrated monologue	self-narrated monologue

Like psycho-narration, self-narration renders inner states of consciousness and is typically signalled by either 'verbs and nouns of consciousness' (Cohn, 1978: 32), or 'phrases denoting inner happenings' (Cohn, 1978: 31). Depending on the distance that the narrator exhibits from the consciousness that he/she narrates, Cohn divides self-narration into *dissonant* and *consonant*. A dissonant self-narrator shows greater spatio-temporal or ideological distance from the self experiencing the events and views his/her past self with hindsight displaying a cognitive privilege over his/her past experiences. A *consonant* self-narrator, by

contrast, shows a near cohesion with his/her former self without demonstrating any superiority of knowledge.

Self-quoted monologue, which corresponds to quoted monologue, is a more direct way of rendering consciousness. While quoted monologue utilises a first-person pronoun and present tense in the third-person novel to give direct access to the character's thoughts, self-quoted monologue would be distinct from it only in the use of the present tense – as there would be a continuity of pronoun in the first-person novel– and would be revealing the immediate thoughts of the past self. Such immediate quotation of past thoughts, however, raises a question about the credibility of their content, since we can't normally reproduce exact thoughts at a past moment in an identical way.

And the last technique, that of narrated monologue in third-person and respectively self-narrated monologue in first-person, presents a mixture of the previous two modes. It contains many subjectivity signals of the character's consciousness (e.g. deixis, idiom, verbal aspect, etc.) but falls under the overarching command of the narrator's discourse which includes the use of the past tense to designate the narrated moment and the third-person pronoun for narrated monologue. Self-narrated monologue, as its pronominal framework presupposes, retains the first-person pronoun. The (self-)narrated monologue is more typically known in narrative literature as free indirect style or free indirect discourse.

Cohn also explores the relationship between these three narrative techniques and the levels of consciousness that they represent arranging the

different modes on a continuum ranging from more unconscious to more conscious states. Schematically, this looks as follows:

	Unconsciousness	Consciousness
Psycho-narration	----------	----------
Quoted monologue	----------	----------
Narrated Monologue	----------	----------

(Cohn, 1978: 140)

Cohn's tripartite model has proved influential and subsequent narratological studies are based on its premises. Its major usefulness is in identifying the linguistic basis for differentiating narrative techniques as well as in providing the first insight into the distinction between degrees of conscious awareness and pre-conscious states in fictional texts. But probably the greatest merit of Cohn's taxonomy as regards studies of the first-person lies in its equal consideration of first-person and third-person contexts as not many studies of fictional consciousness have explored these two basic narrative frameworks in equal measure.

Yet, despite the significance that it has had with its engagement with both first-person and third-person narratives, Cohn's categorisation has been found to have some drawbacks as well. One weakness is that the category of *quoted thought* is assumed to be much the same as *interior monologue* but later studies (Leech and Short, 1981; Sotirova, 2013) have proved that the two must be differentiated both historically and formally. Sotirova (2013) explains that Cohn's theoretical formulation of quoted monologue stems mainly from pre-

nineteenth century writings which despite giving direct access to the character's thoughts are 'compromised by an element of dramatic posing' (43). In contrast, interior monologue is a hallmark of Modernist literature and originates from the 'natural disintegration of *free indirect style* into forms that erase completely the voice of the narrator' (46). Therefore, their historic origin is different.

Leech and Short (1981) who devise a model for speech and thought presentation in literature clearly differentiate the two and view them as two separate categories. Cohn's quoted thought features as *direct thought* and interior monologue as *free direct thought* in their scalar model reproduced below:

				Norm ↓	
Speech presentation:	NRSA	IS	FIS	DS	FDS
Thought presentation:	NRTA	IT	FIT	DT	FDT
		↑			
		Norm			

NRSA: Narrator's Report of Speech Act
NRTA: Narrator's Report of Thought Act
IS: Indirect Speech
IT: Indirect Thought
FIS: Free Indirect Speech
FIT: Free Indirect Thought
DS: Direct Speech
DT: Direct Thought
FDS: Free Direct Speech
FDT: Free Direct Thought

As regards the linguistic make-up of these two categories, Sotirova further specifies that the points of similarity between the two are confined to the use of

the first-person and the present-tense only as interior monologue additionally exhibits ‘grammatical markers of spoken language and a degree of grammatical incoherence and incompleteness’ (48).

Secondly, psycho-narration, as defined by Cohn, is no less problematic. On the one hand, it appears to correspond to several categories when mapped onto Leech and Short’s model, especially its revised version (Short, Semino and Culpepper, 1996; Semino, Short and Culpepper, 1997; Semino and Short, 2004, Short, 2007) which adds two more categories:

Speech presentation:	N	NV	NRSA	IS	FIS	DS	FDS
Thought presentation:	N	NI	NRTA	IT	FIT	DT	FDT

In the fully developed model, which also includes N (Narration) on both clines and NV (Narrator’s Presentation of Voice) on the speech presentation cline and NI (Narration of internal states) on the thought presentation cline, thought is captured more adequately. Thus, what Cohn categorises as psycho-narration, or ‘narrator’s discourse about a character’s consciousness’ (14) can be split into NI, NRTA or IT on Leech and Short’s continuum.

On the other hand, the subtype of consonant psycho-narration has been viewed by recent narratologists (Sotirova, 2013; Rundquist, 2017) as exhibiting more prominent markers of figural subjectivity which questions its place within the narratorially-mediated categories. This point is strongly advocated by Sotirova (2013) according to whom sentences of Internal Narration can be

‘coloured by the character’s own perception and carry the characteristic linguistic imprint of the character’s voice’ (31), hence ‘they are likely to be interpreted as more subjective and evocative of the character’s point of view than for instance sentences of Indirect Thought where the presence of a reporter is clearly signalled by the reporting clause’ (38-39). Moreover, Rundquist (2017) points out that the linguistic features that characterise psycho-narration, such as verb aspect, deictic adverbs, unsubordinated subjective language together with abstract nouns and mental verbs, have the same effect as in free indirect style – ‘they semantically orient the language to the character’s subjectivity’ (36). Therefore, consonant psycho-narration should be more accurately classified as character-oriented, hence as a mode within free indirect style.

Altogether, Cohn’s modes, when mapped onto Leech and Short’s model, appear to cover the whole spectrum of categories on the thought presentation cline, though in Leech and Short they are better differentiated and more precisely split grammatically. So despite the fact that they do not have one-to-one correspondence, they still correlate with each other. It shouldn’t be ignored, however, that the basis of Leech and Short’s thought cline is the co-existing speech cline. The fact that Leech and Short transfer the speech variants directly onto thought has raised questions among narratologists as to whether thoughts should be treated only as a verbal form (Fludernik, 1993; Palmer, 2002). Mapping speech onto thought obviously imposes limitations on the presentation of consciousness as ‘verbalised mental discourse comprises only a small proportion of mind’ (Cui, 2016: 15).

A more important question for this study is whether first-person narration fits on this cline. At first glance, it appears that the discourse categories developed by Leech and Short should be applicable in first-person narratives as well. Leech and Short themselves have commented on the use of free indirect speech and free indirect thought in I-narration novels. They claim that these two categories are identifiable in first-person narratives too and third-person pronouns will simply drop out as a definitional grammatical marker for free indirect discourse since the pronoun use will remain consistent with the primary discourse situation, which in this case is the first-person. The examples of FIS and FIT in first-person contexts which Leech and Short (1981) give are indicative of this:

> Hardly had the Farlows gone than a blue-chinned cleric called – and I tried to make the interview as brief as was consistent with neither hurting his feelings nor arousing his doubts. Yes, I would devote all my life to the child's welfare. Here, incidentally, was a little cross that Charlotte Becker had given me when we were both young. I had a female cousin, a respectable spinster in New York. There we would find a good private school for Dolly. Oh, what a crafty Humbert! [my emphasis] (264)

> Three years. Long in the aggregate, though short as they went by. And home was very dear to me, and Agnes too – but she was not mine – she was never to be mine. She might have been, but that was past! (271)

The first passage comes from *Lolita* and the underlined sentences render Humbert's reply to the cleric. The free indirect speech of the character is indicated by the past tense and the initial affirmative particle *Yes* which signals a response in a dialogue. The second extract taken from *David Copperfield* illustrates the free indirect thought of the hero recognisable from linguistic features such as the past tense, the syntactic discontinuity and the exclamation in the last sentence. But Leech and Short see a problem with the interpretation of this passage, which they express as follows: 'it is impossible to tell by the use of formal linguistic criteria alone whether one is reading the thoughts of the character or the views of the narrator/author. The tense and pronoun selection are appropriate to either, and as we have an I-narrator, the interpolation, exclamation and truncated sentences could all indicate his emotional involvement.' (271).

Therefore, according to Leech and Short, a free indirect evaluation in a first-person narrative is hard to unambiguously differentiate from an evaluation that is stemming from the narrator as due to the continuity of self in the first-person the thought might be coming from both. The interpretation in this case would depend on context rather than on formal discriminating features as, for instance, the thought presented above is more plausibly attributable to young David due to the limited knowledge displayed. Leech and Short, however, seem to have minimised the significance of one grammatical marker of subjectivity here and this is the future in the past (*was never to be mine*), which expresses hypothetical modality and is a crucial feature revealing the perspective of the experiencing self. So, the limited knowledge of the future in this particular example is not judged only by the context but also has as a grammatical correlate

the future in the past. But even though Leech and Short fail to spot this, their comment about the ambiguity of free indirect evaluation in first-person texts remains valid and I will elaborate on it more in the next section.

Leech and Short thus acknowledge that their model holds true for first-person narration as well, even though they don't explore its use in first-person contexts as extensively as they do in third-person narration. An attempt to better show how Leech and Short categories apply in the first-person is made by Shigematsu (2017) who provides the following comparative variants displayed in a table format:

	Third-person Narrative	**First-person Narrative**
N	He was with her.	I was with her.
NV	He shouted.	I shouted.
NRSA	He promised his return.	I promised my return.
IS	He said that he would be with her the following day.	I said that I would be with her the following day.
FIS	He would be with her tomorrow.	I would be with her tomorrow.
DS	He said, "I'll be with you tomorrow".	I said, "I'll be with you tomorrow".
FDS	I'll be with you tomorrow.	I'll be with you tomorrow.
NI	He was confused.	I was confused.
NRTA	He wondered about her feelings for him.	I wondered about her feelings for me.
IT	He wondered if she was happy with him.	I wondered if she was happy with me.

FIT	Was she happy with him?	Was she happy with me?
DT	He thought, "Is she happy with me?"	I thought, "Was she happy with me?"
FDT	Is she happy with me?	Is she happy with me?

(142)

However, despite Cohn's insight into the different categories of consciousness discernible in narrative texts and despite the advances made by Leech and Short in determining the formal linguistic criteria for speech and thought presentation, their models suffer from one fundamental deficiency. Neither of these scholars allocates any space to perception, each for different reasons: while Cohn disregards it quite purposefully, Leech and Short overlook it because their focus is on more verbal categories. Yet, perception is an essential feature of narratives and cannot be ignored. Initial studies of fictional perception determine this category as being part of *non-reflective* consciousness and place it in opposition to *reflective* consciousness. The distinction reflective–non-reflective consciousness was originally made by Kuroda (1976) and further elaborated on by Banfield (1977) who classifies represented speech and thought under the category *reflective* consciousness and represented perception – under *non-reflective* consciousness. But it is Brinton (1980) who undertakes a more profound analysis on the mechanics of represented perception and reaches the conclusion that categorising is not so easy as Banfield suggests and that represented perception per se can be separated into reflective (reflective thought about a perception) and non-reflective (pure perception). Moreover, Brinton formulates the difference between represented thought and represented

perception and claims that ‘they show linguistic and functional differences and indeed have different contents. Represented perception deals with the world outside, whereas represented thought deals with the inner world of a character’s feelings and thoughts’ (369).

The linguistic signals of represented perception include, in the first place, ‘perception indicators’, as Fehr (1938) calls them. These might be verbs like ‘watch’, ‘gaze’, ‘look’, ‘see’, etc. which serve as lexical designations of the process of perception as in ‘she watched their flight’, ‘she gazed back over the sea’, ‘he looked at his mother’. Alternatively, the act of perception may be expressed in an indirect way as, for instance, in the example *Fred turned round. Jack was coming across the street towards him.* (Fehr, 1938: 98) where Fred’s physical movement of turning round would act as a perception indicator presupposing that the description in the following sentence is focalised by him. Just like sentences of represented speech and thought can contain verbs of speech and thought like ‘said’ and ‘thought’ or sentences of psycho-narration can contain verbs of emotion like ‘felt’, ‘hoped’, ‘loved’, etc., so can sentences of represented perception be introduced by such perception indicators.

Different subjectivity cues are also frequently encountered in sentences of perception the most important of which being the past progressive, modals (*seem, look, evidently, obviously*), and deictic words (*now, here*). The use of evaluative and emotive language has been more controversial. According to Banfield, it belongs with reflective consciousness, i.e. speech and thought, and cannot be indicative of perception. Brinton, however, is of the opinion that evaluative adjectives and verbs abound in represented perception and their emotive quality expresses the character’s point of view and not the narrator’s.

In addition, represented perception is strongly characterised by certain syntactic features like omission of subjects, verbless constructions, incomplete sentences, interjections or strings of related structures.

An issue of utmost importance then concerns the place of represented perception within existing frameworks. A rigorous treatment of this problem is provided by Sotirova (2013) and Rundquist (2017) who contend that free indirect style is a category broader than verbal discourse which does not encompass only fully articulated thoughts but applies to consciousness in a more general sense. As postulated by Sotirova (2013), 'the drift away from speech in *free indirect style* in the Modernist period results in a different kind of transformation of the technique' (36). Rundquist (2014) further explains that 'analysed as a *consciousness* presentation category, the style can be identified in the representation of a range of mental activities at different levels of consciousness, including reflective thought, perceptions and states of mind' (160).

As a result, they propose a taxonomy of free indirect style according to which the category can be broken into three subtypes, each one presenting different aspects of a character's consciousness: free indirect thought, psycho-narration (in its consonant form, as already explained above), and represented perception. Free indirect thought falls into the realm of the more conscious and reflective mind, whereas psycho-narration and represented perception stem from the unreflective, unarticulated and deeper recesses of consciousness. Rundquist has even proposed to unify these submodes as *free indirect psycho-narration* (FIPN), *free indirect thought* (FIT) and *free indirect perception* (FIP) in an attempt to clarify their 'hyponymic relationship' to free indirect style (31). Their

consciousness category approach gives us a more adequate account of the different levels of consciousness by capturing those states of the mind which can't be easily translated into articulated thought.

But how the discourse categories, the modes of consciousness presentation and point of view interrelate in first-person texts is further discussed by Shigematsu (2017). She states that as far as first-person narration is concerned, those categories which are found on the left-hand side of Leech and Short's cline are evocative of the narrating self's perspective, while those placed towards the right represent the viewpoint of the experiencing self. In her words:

> When the better informed narrating self remembers its past experiences from the detached observer perspective, it can tell what happened with its own language by using indirect modes of consciousness representation, such as speech report (NV, NRSA, IS), thought report (NI, NRTA, IT) and perception report. (155)

> When the experiencing self's point of view is foregrounded in this kind of remembering, its consciousness is represented partly through FI(S)T and NP, and partly through direct modes such as D(S)T, FD(S)T, and perception replica with the present tense. (15)

It is noticeable that in this differentiation of categories Shigematsu also includes perception which she splits into three subtypes: perception report, NP – which refers to narrated perception, and perception replica. The following classification of perception she calls 'perception presentation categories' and illustrates these with the following examples:

	Third-person Narrative	**First-person Narrative**
Perception Report	(He looked out of the window.) He saw her waving at him.	(I looked out of the window.) I saw her waving at me.
Narrated Perception	(He looked out of the window.) She was waving at him.	(I looked out of the window.) She was waving at me.
Perception Replica	(He looked out of the window.) She is waving at him./ She waves at him.	(I looked out of the window.) She is waving at me./ She waves at me.

(151)

According to Shigematsu, by explicitly referring to the act of seeing through the verb *see* the perception report sentence shows a high degree of narratorial mediation. Narrated perception and perception replica, on the other hand, are more immediate forms of perception, with the first corresponding to an indirect rendering of perception and the latter to a direct way of representing perception through the use of present tense.

But this typology is problematic in two ways. First, it is not linguistically accurate. Shigematsu seems to use the term *narrated perception* as interchangeable with *represented perception* but narratologists make a difference between the two. Narrated perception, as claimed by Pallarés-Garcia (2012), is a category that should be viewed separately from free indirect style since it stands closer to a narratorially-mediated description. Represented perception, on the other hand, displays features of figural subjectivity and is

considered to be character-oriented. This terminological issue is well-explained by Rundquist (2017):

> Both Pallarés-Garcia (2012) and Fludernik (1993) use the term "Narrated Perception" for FIP. I will retain the term Narrated Perception (NP) to refer to non-FIS descriptions of characters' perceptual experiences that are subordinated to narratorial discourse (as in "he saw that the chair was on the table"). In such cases, perception is described or 'narrated' as pure diegesis, whereas when events are depicted from the character's subjective point of view without syntactic subordination, their perception is represented mimetically as FIP. (33)

So, the category *narrated perception* that Shigematsu attributes to the experiencing self should be more precisely designated as *represented perception*. The example sentence that she supplies in the table above *I looked out of the window. She was waving at me.* is clearly cast in free indirect style, hence it is character-oriented and goes against the concept of narrated perception. This is clearly signalled by linguistic markers such as the perception indicator *looked out of the window* and the past progressive *was waving*.

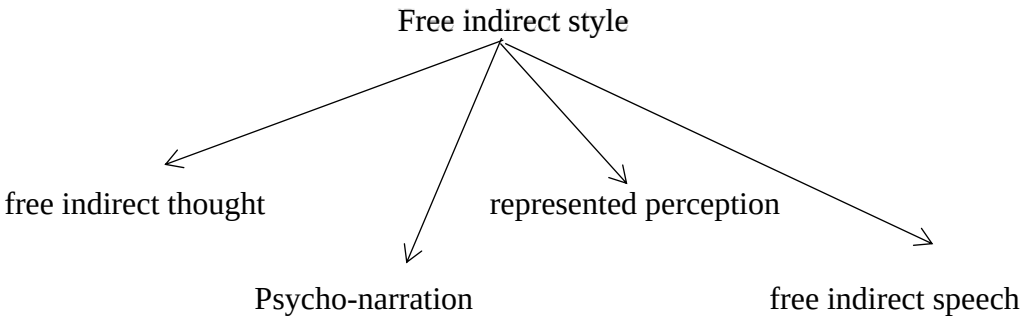
My second critical point concerns the way Shigematsu tries to map perception onto Leech and Short's continuum. As is known, Leech and Short's model tends to be verbally based and even the thought cline in it is formed under the assumption that thought is speech. Therefore, it is impossible to treat a non-verbal category like perception in the same way as speech. In fact, Shigematsu seems to have realised that this handling of perception is not very precise and in

a later article (2022) she proposes a more adequate account of this consciousness category. In it, she states that ‘perception does not have the same grammatical system as speech and thought representation’ (47) and, for reasons of its nonverbal nature, it is unjustified, ‘difficult as well as illogical to apply the ‘direct/indirect’ grammatical distinction of speech and thought representation, which presupposes (possible) articulation, to perception representation’ (51). Where this category still allows for certain degrees of directness or indirectness, they are not to be equated with the direct and indirect categories of speech or thought but rather seen only as a ‘formal and functional variety’ within the representation of perception that makes this category ‘capacious and flexible’ (51).

Therefore, if we are to come up with a more accurate adaptation of the modes to the first-person, a refinement is needed. Shigematsu has made a useful attempt to differentiate the modes between those that can be attributed to the narrating self and those that are aligned with the experiencing self. But the contradictory way in which she treats perception does not allow her classification to be validated and even though she later corrects herself as to the categorisation of perception, she does not mention how her newly-adopted view changes her previously-stated arrangement of categories in first-person narration.

For this reason, when analysing free indirect style, I will adopt Sotirova and Rundquist’s model as their taxonomy is more fine-grained and more sensitive to how consciousness operates. Despite the fact that they do not specifically address first-person narration, their differentiation of consciousness categories is valid and applicable in first-person contexts as well and provides a

more adequate tool for analysing consciousness in the novel. As already stated, their model regards free indirect style as an umbrella term that encompasses further subtypes of character-oriented consciousness categories and is schematically represented as follows:



Considering all this, I propose that the modes that can be viewed as aligned with the narrating self in a first-person text would be speech report (NV, NRSA, IS), thought report (NRTA, IT) and narrated perception as far as there are descriptions of the hero's perception that do not evoke subjective experience. The modes that can be assumed as aligned with the experiencing self would cover, on the one hand, free indirect style in its extended version which apart from FIS and FIT also includes represented perception and psycho-narration, as illustrated above, and, on the other hand, DS/DT and FDS/FDT.

1.3 Problematic aspects of consciousness presentation in the first-person

Although first-person texts evoke a distinction between the voice of *narrating self* and *experiencing self*, in practice not all texts exhibit it in a straightforward and clear-cut manner. These two perspectives can often intertwine and it can be very difficult to tell them apart. The main reason for

their fusion is the ontological relationship that binds the two temporal manifestations of the self. In addition, in memory novels the process of retrospection often goes concurrently with a process of introspection, i.e. the speaker not only resurrects past events but also reflects on them. In this line of thought, evaluation in the retrospective novel, as briefly mentioned in the previous section, poses a particular challenge because compared to deixis, for instance, which more clearly signals the perspective of the experiencing self, evaluative language cannot be so unambiguously separated. In memory narratives specifically an evaluative comment can often be attributed to both the narrating self and the experiencing self. Things get even more complicated when an ambiguous evaluative comment appears not as a separate sentence but only as a single clause in a sentence, as in the example from Banville below:

> Next, a muscle-bound young man in tight blue swimming trunks appeared, I do not know from where, he seemed to materialise out of the very air, and without preliminary plunged into the sea and swam out swiftly with expert, stiff strokes. By now Rose was pacing back and forth at the water's edge, three paces this way, stop, wheel, three paces that way, stop, wheel, like poor demented Ariadne on the Naxos shore, still clutching to her breast the towel, book and bathing cap. (Banville, *The Sea*, 245-246)

The passage presents Max's memory of how he as a child and Rose witnessed the drowning of the twins, his childhood friends. The scene is focalised through Max-the-child as he experienced it back then in the past. The free indirect style of the extract shows many subjectivity markers such as progressive aspect (*was pacing*), verb of modality (*seem*), time deixis (*by now*;

still). In addition, the syntax of the second sentence portrays the boy's represented perception of Rose's actions and has a very strong mimetic quality (*three paces this way, stop, wheel, three paces that way, stop, wheel*). Most surprisingly, however, the next clause of the sentence containing the simile *like poor demented Ariadne on the Naxos shore* gives a strong impression that the account so far seemingly rendered through the boy's consciousness is now relocated to Max-the-adult's mind who upon narrating makes this comparison. It is highly unlikely that the boy at the scene of action would have come up with this analogy and would have possessed this knowledge of mythological figures to be able to make this comparison. Moreover, we know from the novel that the narrator is a retired art historian, which means that this is knowledge that he must have acquired later in life and can't be truthfully stemming from the boy at the age he is at the time of the represented actions. So, the clause is more plausibly attributable to the narrator's consciousness who is intruding and taking over the experiencing self's discourse. But the two perspectives remain strongly connected through the syntax of the sentence and therefore superimpose on one another.

Such superimposition of the perspectives of the narrating self and the experiencing self in first-person fiction is called by Phelan (2001; 2005) *dual focalisation*, although Phelan demonstrates it with the opposite dynamics – when the narrator's focalisation contains the character's focalisation and not when the narrator's focalisation is subsumed under the character's focalisation, as in the example from Banville. But the underlying assumption is the same. Searching to find an answer to the question of 'why narrators can be focalisers' posed in the telling title of his article *Why narrators can be focalisers – and why it matters*

(2001), Phelan infers that a narrator-dominated stretch of text can incorporate a character-focalised segment, thus making the narration simultaneously focalised through the narrating *I* and the experiencing *I* at a certain point. The example selected by Phelan to demonstrate this phenomenon comes from Nabokov's *Lolita*:

> And so we rolled East, I more devastated than braced with the satisfaction of my passion, and she glowing with health, her bi-iliac garland still as brief as a lad's, although she had added two inches to her stature and eight pounds to her weight. We had been everywhere. We had really seen nothing. And I catch myself thinking today that our long journey had only defiled with a sinuous trail of slime the lovely, trustful, dreamy, enormous country that by then, in retrospect, was no more to us than a collection of dog-eared maps, ruined tour books, old tires, and her sobs in the night—every night, every night—the moment I feigned sleep. (Nabokov, *Lolita*, 281-282)

The first three sentences hereof come focalised through Humbert the character (experiencing self) and portray the scene as he saw it once. But at the beginning of the fourth sentence the perspective switches to Humbert the narrator (narrating self) who presents his current evaluation of the past journey as defiling the country. Phelan, however, claims that the sentence does not maintain the narrator's perspective until the end because at the point when he says 'by then, in retrospect', the focalisation transitions back to Humbert the character. What he finds problematic here is that in the second part of the last sentence where the perspective of young Humbert is resumed, the voice of

Humbert the narrator is not fully abandoned. The two perspectives remain linked, first, through the syntax and, second, by the temporal phrase ‘in retrospect’. In Phelan’s view, ‘although it is only the narrating-I who draws the conclusion that their journey had defiled the country, it is both the narrating-I and the experiencing-I who envision Lolita sobbing’ and in this process ‘the narrator’s focalisation contains the character’s’ (Phelan, 2005: 118). It is this merging of the voice and the vision of the two selves that he designates with the term *dual focalisation.*

While Phelan is right to claim that the voices of narrating self and experiencing self can merge in first-person fiction, as I have also shown in Banville, he misinterprets the stretch of text belonging to Humbert-the-character. The evaluative adjectives *dog-eared* and *ruined* cannot be unambiguously attributed to a figural subjectivity as they may well be the evaluative comments of the narrating self. In narratology, the narrator can also be talking about the internal state of the past self without necessarily adopting an experiential perspective. The only part that can possibly be viewed as evocative of the perspective of the experiencing self is the parenthetical remark *every night, every night* with the emotive charge that it carries rendering the past self’s state of being overwhelmed, although this is disputable as well.

Thus, even though Phelan is not very precise in his linguistic interpretation of the narrative passage, he calls attention to a specific phenomenon in first-person fiction that needs more research, namely the syntactic bonding of the two perspectives into one sentence. This once again shows how difficult it can be for first-person narrators to draw an absolute distinction between their past and present beliefs, thoughts and feelings in the process of retrospection. No matter

how hard they try to eschew their present wisdom and knowledge to resurrect a past event, their perspective of grown-ups keeps encroaching on their experiential representations of the past and they can't always observe a strict boundary between the two spatio-temporal worlds. This comes to confirm Bray's comment (2003) that 'In first-person narrative the narrating self can thus never completely hand over the narrative to the past, experiencing self' (27). One of the ways in which this is linguistically expressed is through the syntactic embedding of experiential features within narratorial discourse and vice versa.

New problems concerning focalisation in the first-person novel emerge if we look at the distinction narration-experience in the context of passages presenting entirely the consciousness of the present self. The problem then is how to define such focalisation – as external or internal. It appears that the existing theoretical distinction of focalisation in first-person texts is centred on the past self as a guiding principle, with internal focalisation giving a close look of the past self and external focalisation giving a distant view of the past self. Thus, the present self's current emotional and mental experiences happening as he/she narrates tend to be overlooked. But since a significant number of novels have shifted their focus from a plotline full of events to the current ruminative monologues of the narrator, we may frequently encounter passages of the following kind:

> Storm today, the elements in a great rage. Furious gusts of wind booming against the house, shivering its ancient timbers. Why does this kind of weather always make me think of childhood, why does it make me feel I'm back there in those olden days, crop-haired, in

> short trousers, with one sock sagging? (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 6)

> Midnight. My leg has gone to sleep. Wish the rest of me would go with it. Yet it is not unpleasant to be awake like this, awake and alert, like a nocturnal predator, or, better yet, the guardian of the tribe's resting place. (Banville, *The Untouchable*, 19)

These two examples present the internal contemplations of the narrators of the respective novels in their immediate speaker-*now*. The language is highly subjective and reveals the protagonists' direct thoughts. This spontaneous, interiorised communication of his fictional heroes, which Banville himself calls 'inward rhetoric' (Barry, 2005, interview with Banville), gives us a glimpse of the direct thought process that goes on in the heads of the adult narrators and refers entirely to the present situation around them. The question is whose consciousness is adopted - that of the narrating self or that of the experiencing self. Since the passages are aligned with the mind of the grown-up and are set in the present time-frame, we might be inclined to qualify them as externally focalised but at the same time the large number of subjectivity markers such as deictic expressions (*today*, *midnight*), present progressive verb forms (*booming*, *shivering*), emotive expressions (*great rage*, *furious gusts*), similes (*like a nocturnal predator, or, better yet, the guardian of the tribe's resting place*) and self-questions (*Why does this kind of weather always make me think of childhood, why does it make me feel I'm back there…?*) are evocative of internal focalisation but one that is not deictically aligned with the past self but with the present self.

This makes the narrators experiencers of their present, hence the narrators become focalisers but in a very different sense from the idea conveyed by Phelan when he argues that narrators can be focalisers. What Phelan means is that the narratorial discourse of the present self can sometimes overlap with the experiential discourse of the past self, as in his example from *Lolita*, but obviously the problem of whether narrators can be focalisers is much more complex than he outlines and there are other dimensions of narrator's focalisation in first-person texts that he does not foresee. As I have pointed out above, there are cases when the present self does not behave like a narrating self but rather like an experiencing self and the two discourses do not simply superimpose on each other but become equated.

A more extreme form of this interiorised monologue of the present emanation of the protagonist is one that contains metafictional elements. Metafiction, defined by Hutcheon (1980; 1988) as 'fiction about fiction – that is, fiction that includes within itself a commentary on its own narrative and/or linguistic identity' (1980: 1), basically places significance not only on the content of the novel but also on the process of narration. Yet, despite Hutcheon's seminal work in the theoretical exploration of metafictional writing, a question that still requires further research is how metafiction intersects with the study of focalisation. A few extracts from Banville are revealing of this complex issue:

> Now, at this moment, in this late afternoon, as my pen scratches away crabbedly at these futile pages, somewhere outside on Hangman's Hill a solitary bird is singing, I hear its passionate song, limpid and bright […] As I squat here, vainly flapping my tinsel wing, I feel like putting down the heading *A Treatise on Love*, and

> following it with a score or so of blank pages. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 150)
>
> Outside, in the overcast yet strangely radiant day, a soft uncertain rain began to fall. I note, by the way, how rain punctuates my narrative with a suspicious regularity. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 113)
>
> But wait, no, that is not it. I am being disingenuous […] I said somewhere already – no time to go back and look for it now, caught up all at once as I am in the toils of this thought – that what I found in Anna from the first was a way of fulfilling the fantasy of myself. (Banville, *The Sea*, 215-6)
>
> I hesitate, aware of a constraint, as if the prudish past were plucking at my sleeve to forestall me. Yet that day's little dalliance—there is the word!—was child's play compared with what was to come later. (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 26)

These examples not only give the direct thoughts of the present narrating self but also make a note of the physical act of writing or thinking. In extracts 1 and 2 the narrator experiences the very act of writing; in extract 3 he experiences the process of thinking, while in extract 4 he experiences the linguistic verbalisation of his thoughts. Obviously, all these narrators are focalisers but compared to the previous set of examples in which the narrators portrayed their direct experiences of the surrounding world, here the narrators are focalising and experiencing the current act of narration.

The situation of a narrator taking on the role of focaliser takes an even more radical form in pictorial representations of the past. This is a technique often encountered in Banville's novels and consists in scenes that portray the past as still pictures or tableaux as the following episode from *The Sea*:

> Memory dislikes motion, preferring to hold things still, and as with so many of these remembered scenes I see this one as a tableau. Rose stands bent forward from the waist with her hands on her knees, her hair hanging down from her face in a long black shining wedge dripping with soap suds. She is barefoot, I see her toes in the long grass, and is wearing one of those vaguely Tyrolean short-sleeved white linen blouses that were so popular at the time, […] The neckline is deeply scalloped and inside it I have a clear glimpse of her pendent breasts, […] Mrs Grace wears a blue satin dressing gown and delicate blue slippers, […] Her hair is pinned back at the ears with two tortoise-shell clasps, or slides, I think they were called. It is apparent she is not long out of bed, and in the morning light her face has a raw, roughly sculpted look. (Banville, *The Sea*, 221-222)

Again, as in the last two sets of examples that I have analysed, the events are focalised through the perspective of the grown-up who is speaking from his present moment, yet the narration is highly experiential with the narrator portraying his current subjective perception of the scene. But a differentiation should be made here between this type of narration and the mode known as *represented perception* as represented perception is part of free indirect style and is most certainly not utilised in this passage. The perception presented above relates to the present discourse of the narrating self because of the present tense

maintained throughout the whole passage which is aligned with the narrating self. However, the scene described is not unfolding in the speaker's present surroundings but is an imaginary visualisation of a past scene resurrected in the mind of the speaker and observed by him as a still picture in his mind's eye.

In this configuration, the narrator is adopting an external position in both spatio-temporal and cognitive terms. First, his role of observer makes him spatially distanced from the scene. Second, as time has passed from the events, he is temporally distanced from them now and cognitively more mature. His cognitive privilege is evident from phrases like *that were so popular at the time* and *I think they were called*. At the same time, his perception of the scene is directly experienced and occurs co-temporally with the time of the narrative act. The current process of observation is highlighted by perception indicators in the present tense like *I see, I have a clear glimpse, It is apparent.* Therefore, narration and focalisation in this passage coincide and the perception portrayed in it is neither *represented perception* as evoked by as an experiencing self, nor does it seem to be *narrated perception* as the latter is basically an indirect reportive mode. What we actually have here is the direct perception of the narrating self. Besides, the language and imagery used by the art historian to construct the tableaux of his memory is available to him only after the event.

This conceptualisation of the blurring of the boundaries between internal and external focalisation resonates with the theoretical debate on *simultaneous narration* (Cohn, 1999). This type of narration, initially accepted as a deviation of the norm, is now regarded as an autonomous narrative situation. While autobiographical novels typically utilise the past tense to mark certain events as remembered and structure the plot in two temporal domains, first-person

present-tense novels cannot maintain this distinction and the lack of temporal distance produces ‘a narration from within the incidents’ (Hansen, 2008: 319). Cohn (1999: 105) outlines three main consequences of simultaneous narration. First, it produces an incongruous narrative situation which leads to the ‘reconceptualisation of the natural story telling frame (Fludernik, 1996: 223). Second, its semantic implications include tension, instability, flexibility and ambiguity. And third, the zero temporal distance between narration and experience leads to an absolute focalisation of the narrative experience. This sometimes creates narrative oddities such as the following: ‘I doze and wake, drifting from one formless dream to another’ (J. M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, 102) where the narration of sleeping cannot possibly take place while one is sleeping.

In another instance the first-person present tense storytelling framework generates abnormal statements like ‘I walk into that frame, not noticing the black limousine parked across the street’ (B.E. Ellis, *Glamorama*, 168) where the narrator transcends his epistemic field and provides information that he can’t possibly have access to. How can we report what we have not noticed? The superior knowledge displayed by this narrator is attributed by Nielsen (2004) to an ‘impersonal voice in first-person narrative fiction’ (133), which is similar to the first-person omniscient voice found in novels like *Moby Dick* that earlier narratologists designate as ‘I-as-witness’ or ‘peripheral first-person narrator’ (Stanzel, 1984; Fludernik, 2009). Heinze (2008), however, disputes the impersonal voice hypothesis in such texts because the voice of the all-seeing narrator is difficult to qualify as ‘impersonal’ as it is, in fact, tightly weaved into the highly ‘personal’ discourse of the first-person character and retains the

distinct markers of his idiolect, idiosyncrasies, prejudices, etc. Heinze rather explains these 'violations of mimetic epistemology' (288) with paralepsis following Manfred Jahn's use of the term defined as an 'infraction caused by saying too much; a narrator assuming a competence he/she does not properly have' (Heinze, 2008: 280) and calls these narrators paraleptic narrators.

Simultaneous narration is, therefore, a complex phenomenon that fuses the conceptual realms of narrator and character into one 'unnatural combination of immediacy and mediacy' (Mäkelä, 2011: 212) and the theoretical argument surrounding it can help explain the complex narrative structure of the above present-tense passages from Banville which also show a merging of the voices of narrating self and experiencing self. The essential difference is that simultaneous narration refers to novels written entirely in the present tense, while in Banville it is only episodic.

In brief, many problematic aspects arise when focalisation in retrospective narration is considered more closely. Typically, a first-person retrospective novel gives us the protagonist's past experience filtered either through the consciousness of the narrating self or that of the experiencing self and these two narrative schemas are well described in narratology despite their different designations. But the functional duality between a memory report of the past done by the narrator as a grown-up and an experiential recreation of the past through the consciousness of the younger self cannot always be unambiguously distinguished and in certain narrative dynamics the two perspectives show much more complex and intricate interactions, as when the internal perspective of the experiencing self can overlap with the external focalisation of the narrating self and one can be found embedded in the other. At other times, as in narration that

is focused on the current experiences of the narrating self, the perspective of the narrating self can demonstrate very strong experiential features and it can be very difficult to define what really is internal and what is external in it in terms of focalisation. In such stretches of text the boundary between the narrating self and the experiencing self becomes practically erased and the processes of narrating and focalising go hand in hand.

1.4 Potential for exploration

As evidenced above, the first-person retrospective novel is a specific narrative genre that possesses features of its own and as such poses challenges that correspond to its unique nature. The main difficulty of viewpoint attribution and differentiation in memory novels arises from the conceptual splitting of the self that occurs during retrospection and the complex interactions that occur between each version of the self when we consider factors like spatial positioning, temporal manifestation, psychological maturation, cognitive awareness and linguistic expression of each self. Another reason for these complicated relations is the fact that despite the split between narrating and experiencing self, these two entities remain ontologically connected in the first-person and this connection plays a major role for the merging and ambiguity of perspectives that can sometimes occur.

Since the traditional approach of distinguishing internal and external focalisation is based on the 'past self' as a differentiating criterion, a better categorisation can be achieved if the 'present self' is more fully incorporated. In my analysis of Banville I make a better differentiation between *past self* and

present self and explore to what extent these two conceptual manifestations are mappable to the narratological entities designated as *experiencing self* and *narrating self*. This is a question that needs to be subjected to more thorough scrutiny if we want to come to a deeper understanding of consciousness presentation in the first-person.

Therefore, I undertake to elucidate rigorously the ways in which these conceptual and narratological constructs interrelate with and interpenetrate each other at various levels in the text. Conceptualising the 'divided self' in Banville's novels is particularly suitable for the purpose as it provides a favourable ground for exploration of the issue of splitting. My analysis of Banville's narratives will show that his first-person retrospective novels exhibit some extraordinary peculiarities that stem from the interplay of selves in memory narratives. Thus, my overall discussion of the presentation of the 'divided self' in Banville will also consider intricate aspects of voice and perspective in first-person narration.

Chapter 2

John Banville's Fictional World

2.1 John Banville: Writing style and literary influences

John Banville's fiction is representative of a trend in literature that emphasises the primacy of language over plot, which is considered 'a vote for inventiveness over control' (Reynolds, 2005). His prose is consistently defined as perfectly crafted, inventive and rhythmic to the point of music and honoured with the Franz Kafka Prize for its exceptional artistic quality. Banville's commitment to language transforms the narrative in a way that favours thoughtfulness and self-reflexivity and allows the individual to meditate deeply over the nature of the human condition.

In his literary themes and style, the author has been frequently compared to Samuel Beckett and often described as an heir to Proust and Nabokov though he personally claims to be most influenced by W.B. Yeats and Henry James. McMinn (1999) sees the imprint of Beckett in Banville's work mainly in the 'curiosity about the workings of the nostalgic mind, its grief over lost love, lost opportunity, lost self…' (162). In his tribute to Beckett, Banville himself admits that 'It is Beckett's supreme achievement to have shown us that the horror and cruelty of the world…can be redeemed through the beauty and power of language — language and nothing more, not progress, optimism or delusion, but words alone.' (Imhof, 1997: 17). Exploring in detail Beckett's presence in Banville, Duffy (2003) outlines many analogies between the two writers but sees

the Beckettian resonances mainly in the 'thematic and philosophical' (87) affinities which Banville's prose shares with his predecessor.

Yet, despite the similarities in themes and motifs, Banville's exuberant style and vibrant language brings the writer closer to Nabokov and Proust. McMinn (1999) states firmly that stylistically Banville is 'worlds apart' from Beckett and that while Banville absorbs ideas from Beckett, he translates them into 'a style which is positively baroque when seen alongside Beckett' (162). Duffy (2003) also sees Banville and Beckett as following two different 'stylistic paths' (87). According to him, it is Banville's fascination with the beauty and power of language that positions him as an inheritor of Nabokov and Proust: 'Banville's prose has unfurled into a sensuous, imbricated, evocative weave, inviting the parallels with the lavish prose of Nabokov and Proust' (87). Imhof (1989) is even more precise in defining Nabokov's traces in Banville which, in his opinion, can be found in the 'indefatigable interest in shape, in patterning' and in the 'magnificent mastery in using words […] in a most precise and dense, poetic manner' (153). In Imhof's view, Banville's works have always possessed 'a Nabokovian side to them' (153).

Interestingly, Banville himself holds a different view on the matter. While not rejecting the similarity between himself and Nabokov, he rather stresses the difference between their styles – a distinction that no other scholar has pointed out:

> Nabokov and I differ very much in the sense that I have a very Irish approach to language. Irish writers are very aware of the wind, of the musicality of language. Nabokov was tone-deaf, and all his work is pictorial. He said himself he should have been a painter. His work

> is very painterly. The rhythm doesn't matter too much. I'm not saying he writes ugly sentences; he just doesn't write musically. (Delistraty, 2015, interview with Banville)

Banville's musical language is indeed a prominent feature of his writing. In another place the writer also describes his own style as 'rhythmical chanting': 'my style strikes me as a form of inward rhetoric, a rhythmical chanting that is very close to the way in which we all speak inside our heads' (Barry, 2005, interview with Banville). This definition excellently describes the melodious interiorised communication of his fictional heroes. Thus, Banville's specific manner of narration proves to be a peculiar linguistic hybrid of prose and poetry.

As noted above, Banville's personal view is that it is Henry James and W. B. Yeats that have actually shaped his artistic endeavours. In a recent study examining the precursors of John Banville, Borg (2019) claims that Banville owes to Henry James the impressionistically oriented presentation of consciousness which 'conveys most accurately the 'fog' of consciousness' (66). Henry James is considered to be the originator of this impressionist trend in Modernism which departs from the experimentalist direction taken by James Joyce. Compared to James Joyce's *stream of consciousness*, Henry James's style is rather viewed by Banville as a portrait of the 'drift of consciousness' (Tracy, 2020: 295). An impressionist narrative is thus characterised by a lack of certainty and an inherent obscurity of the consciousness of the individual. Such novels that portray objects caught in their own unknowable mystery of life Banville also qualifies as 'closed', opposing them to 'open' novels in which authors interpret the object for the reader (Borg, 2019: 56). But 'closed' novels with their

preoccupation with the meaning-making process impart a sense of uncanniness and create self-alienation.

Banville's aesthetic additionally draws much of its inspiration from Wallace Stevens's ideas. As an admirer of Stevens, Banville has been strongly influenced by the poet's concept of *supreme fiction* which sees fiction as a parallel world in which the artist, like a little god, creates his own reality with the power of the imagination. Imhof (1981) assesses Banville's exquisite narrative style as also being supreme due to both the thematic parallel to Stevens's ideas and the superb craftsmanship of his novels. In Imhof's own words:

> Banville's fictions are supreme because they demonstrate an exceptional mastery of style, an uncannily purposeful sense of construction, an immensely successful interdependence of form and content, a rich variety and, especially in the context of present day Irish fiction, but also on an international scale-a dazzling originality of theme, and, lastly, a unity of artistic design and purpose only rarely observable in the oeuvre of a writer, specifically of a writer as relatively young as Banville. (53)

As evidenced above, Banville's fiction is a curious amalgamation that integrates aspects of the literary trends, fictional themes and narrative styles of some of the greatest names in literature but, at the same time, the writer manages to 'fashion a singular voice' (Carlini, 2021, interview with Banville). In this way, the writer establishes a style of writing that is remarkable, innovative and unique and bears traits that are peculiar to himself. With the intense self-reflexive quality of his narratives, Banville moves the retrospective novel to a

new stage of development. Consequently, his ability to narrate the past, to reorder it, to swing back and forth between the past and the present brings new dimensions to the presentation of consciousness in first-person texts which are worth exploring.

2.2 Towards a definition of the 'divided self': Approaches to Banville

Banville's writing is almost primarily concerned with 'the individual soul, with the individual consciousness' (Butler, 2019: 209). His conception of the self as an acutely self-conscious being refers not only to the self-conscious way his characters reflect on their actions and thoughts but also on the very process of remembering and narrating. That is why he is frequently examined through the lens of Postmodern theory. In her theoretical exploration of Postmodern literature, Linda Hutcheon (1980; 1988; 1989) develops the concept of *narrative narcissism* to account for this textual self-awareness of metafiction, which she additionally qualifies as 'introspective', 'introverted', 'self-conscious', 'self-reflective', 'self-informing', 'self-reflexive', 'auto-referential' and 'auto-representational' (1980: 1).

Furthermore, Hutcheon outlines a new trend of representing history in Postmodernism that she names *historiographic metafiction* and singles out Banville's first four novels, the so-called Science Tetralogy, as an illustrative example of this new form of writing. The novelty of historiographic metafiction is that it comprises 'novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages' (1988: 5). The paradox inherent in this new literary form, therefore, lies in the fact that the representation of historical facts done in such an introverted fashion questions

the validity of both history and fiction. Although Banville's later novels leave out the historiographic element by placing an ordinary man rather than a famous scientist in the centre of the narrative, they preserve the metafictional aspect of being self-reflexive, self-centred and inward looking. Since these qualities have far-reaching significance in Banville's fiction, their importance is considerable even if the novel does not strictly focus on historical events and personages. The main stylistic implications created by the self-awareness of the narrative form, according to Hutcheon, include the construction and deconstruction of the self. Such representation of the self done with intense self-consciousness she sees as 'revealing the problematic relation of the private person writing to the public as well as personal events once lived' (1989: 157). Novels like these 'all work to present a portrait of an individual and yet to subvert any stability in or certainty of ever knowing – or representing – that subject' (1989: 111). Metafictional writing then deconstructs the reality of the self and undermines the veracity of the events portrayed.

Hutcheon's ideas become very influential and subsequently occupy a central place in much of the later scholarship on Banville, especially her concept of *narrative narcissism* which is consistently mentioned in relation to Banville's fiction. In a recent study on Banville, significantly titled *John Banville's Narcissistic Fictions* (2013), O'Connell, for instance, undertakes to explore further the notion of narcissism specifically with regard to Banville's prose. His book-length analysis takes into account both Freud's psychoanalytic theory of narcissism and Hutcheon's framework of narcissistic narrative, thus combining the thematic, stylistic and formal dimensions of the notion of narcissism. O'Connell parallels the conflict of Banville's narrators to Narcissus's tragedy,

which lies in Narcissus's inability to 'attain a unity with himself. Each time he tries to grasp himself, he seems to cease being there. […] He is indeed obsessed with himself, but that obsession does not contain any assurance that its object has any solidity' (9-10). Likewise, Banville's narrators are simultaneously filled with an acute sense of doubt as to the very reality of the self and, at the same time, with a desperate desire to know themselves and understand their place in the world. As O'Connell puts it:

> Banville's narcissists are similarly unsure of themselves, and similarly obsessed with themselves. These novels are, amongst other things, a meeting place of self-absorption and self-doubt. […] It is this friction between, on the one hand, the desire for self-knowledge and, on the other, a rigorous scepticism about the very notion of selfhood which constitutes one of the most fascinating elements of these novels. (13)

This continuous internal discord generates a fluid, fragile and insubstantial sense of self in Banville's protagonists. O'Connell additionally relates the disharmony of the self in Banville to Winnicott's psychoanalytic notions of True self and False self in order to better explain the fictitious and fraudulent identities of his narrators. According to his Winnicottian reading of Banville (2011b), the tension between these two constituents of the psyche generates a pronounced self-division of his characters, as corroborated by O'Connell's own words in the preface to his research:

> I present the self-division and fraudulence of Banville's narrators as resulting from an elemental fear of connection and communication,

> and I analyse the fictions they narrate from a psychoanalytic perspective. I argue that the theories of the British psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott, in particular his notions of the True and False Self, are especially useful in illuminating Banville's complex – and, as we shall see, frequently paradoxical – view of the self and its interactions with the world. (329).

Just like in Winnicott, human experience in Banville is lived through the profound contradictions between self and world, truth and falsehood and memory and imagination. The self-division of Banville's characters is most palpable in the polarised nature of the self who is split between the conflicting aspects of outwardly-directed communication and inwardly-directed isolation. Moreover, it is through the narrative that the troubled selves of the protagonists strive to make sense of the world and to restore their inner peace. But the construction of a fictional illusion and the subsequent disclosure of that illusion so typical of metafictional writing creates a structural tension that O'Connell estimates as 'doubly narcissistic' because 'the reader is led to reflect upon his or her role as reader by the novel's reflections upon its own role as fiction' (O'Connell, 2013: 157). Thus, O'Connell's work addresses narcissism in Banville as both narrative technique and literary theme and shows its manifestations both in the form and the content of the writer's prose.

A different framework for interpretation of Banville is proposed by McMinn (1999) whose study titled *The Supreme Fictions of John Banville* reveals the significance of Stevens's ideas about *supreme fiction* in Banville's works. Compared to other scholars who rather place the writer in the postmodernist tradition, McMinn also regards the modernist and romantic

tendencies in Banville's prose which he finds in 'the kind of idealism, sometimes associated with the aesthetic of modernism and its celebration of art for art's sake' that 'recalls and reveals the romantic theory of the imagination' (163). The drama of Banville's heroes consists in the battle between imagination and intellect with imagination reaching 'a dramatic form of self-consciousness':

> Most of his leading characters are engaged in an intellectual and emotional conflict with a violent and senseless world in which they feel like strangers or aliens: in nearly every novel the imaginative life of those characters, usually presented in a dramatic form of self-consciousness, even self-delusion, is the subject of the essential drama. (2)

This quote reveals the crucial role that McMinn attributes to the imagination in relation to the self-estrangement and alienation of Banville's characters. The writer's human subjects who feel abandoned by God can only overcome their personal crisis by means of 'the transcendent, the divine powers of the imagination', hence 'the creative necessity for imaginative perception' (3). In all his definitions of division, McMinn clearly underscores the fundamental role of the imagination:

> The typical Banville protagonist is deeply damaged, split between what he can understand and what he can imagine, between being and potential. (2)

> Banville's fiction works with a divided sense of self, intellect struggling for definition and knowledge, imagination yearning for wholeness of being. (16)

> This is a sustained narrative drama about the divided self, one which is caught between past and present, dreaming and writing: in Seamus Deane's phrase, it is 'a war of attrition between imagination and time. (5)

The central motif of the 'divided self' finds expression in the opposing forces between understanding and imagination, intellect and imagination and imagination and time. Being polarised between these major forces of antagonism, the heroes experience an emotional conflict. Due to the immense gap between these oppositional elements, Banville's personalities lack internal stability and wholeness.

A similar dualistic conception of the 'divided self' in Banville is also maintained by D'hoker (2010) who regards the writer's fiction as a 'dualistic universe' in which the reason for division arises from the 'tension between a romantic quest for wholeness and an ironic awareness that such harmony does not exist; between a fundamental awareness of the gap between self and world and a defiant attempt to overcome this gap; between a postmodern understanding of self-division and multiplicity and a profound yearning for a single, true self' (346). In a previous study, which also recognises duality as a central theme in Banville's fiction, D'hoker (2004) has been even more thorough in examining the wide spectrum of manifestations of this theme. Thus, researching the writer's prose from the perspective of the concept of representation as viewed by literary theory and philosophy, she locates the issue of division in certain metaphors of splitting and images of otherness that she calls 'visions of alterity'.

D'hoker addresses the problem of representation by considering four binary oppositions whose selection is determined by the primary thematic layers

identifiable in Banville's prose, namely self vs world, self vs art, self vs other and self vs self. The first opposition she views in epistemological terms, the second from an aesthetic perspective, the third is seen in its ethical consequences, while the fourth is analysed through the discourse of self-representation. In this framework of analysis, D'hoker recognises a different form of division in Banville which can be traced to a varying degree in the context of all four oppositions. This form of division lies in the continuous oscillation between two basic representational forms, that of *shaping* and *making strange*. The *making strange* mode is a representational activity by which the self alienates himself from ordinary reality and regards it as something unfamiliar and strange. *Shaping* is an artistic process through which a protagonist extends his sense of self by pretending to take on bigger roles or to assume grander personae than the I naturally possesses. It is the swinging back and forth between these two modes of representation that makes the subject split:

> In short, in Banville's novels visions of alterity are also visions of mortality. They are liminal moments in which the protagonists are confronted with their own mortality and finitude, an experience so threatening that it has to be resolved, recuperated or violently repressed. Representation especially is called upon to deal with this otherness, to overcome this loss of self, by mediating between the two poles that stand opposed: subject and object, same and other, self and world. (D'hoker, 2004: 217)

In their interactions with the world, the characters are so disturbed by the otherness of reality, that they disengage from this encounter. But by shaping themselves into more solid and more certain individuals, they strive to achieve

the unity and wholeness that they lack. So the alternation between self-effacement and self-manifestation that the two artistic processes entail offer a means of balancing between the dangerous extremes of excess of self and loss of self. With this, D'hoker also outlines some of the psychological aspects of division.

Since the topic of the 'divided self' carries a strong psychological dimension with its key concern for issues of identity, it is no surprise that literary critics frequently resort to a psychoanalytic framework when analysing Banville. Their preoccupation with the psychological make up of self leads them to explore Banville through the lens of different notions of selfhood and theories of psychoanalysis. Apart from O'Connell's earlier engagement with the notion of narcissism and Winnicott's theories, Schwall (2006), for instance, approaches Banville through Freud's ideas of the uncanny. According to her, the uncanny in Banville's fiction can be traced in the representation of the supernatural which Freud sees through his categorisation of the 'sublimating', the 'ordinary' and the 'subliminal'. Schwall argues that it is the subliminal in which 'the normal and supernatural are mixed in rather plausible terms' (117) that best captures the atmosphere of Banville's narratives and further adds that all three aspects of the uncanny, as described by Freud, are discernible in Banville – these being their narcissistic over-evaluation, the repressed affects of childhood and the impossibility of distinguishing between inner and outer worlds or between self and other. As a result of this, Schwall contends that division is so deeply ingrained in the psyche of Banville's individuals that even the word 'individual' is not entirely appropriate for them:

> In short, it seems the whole of Banville's oeuvre is one big enterprise to deconstruct the illusion of (id)entity. His fiction is a laboratory in which he tries to split the subject suggesting a possible massive explosion of the concept of the subject, which could energise philosophy. Each of the author's 'in-dividuals' are utterly dividual, their split is their essence. (120).

Identity is so radically compromised that it leads to a 'massive explosion of the concept of the subject'. The subject with its complex psychological relations between inner and outer, material and spectral, chaos and harmony is torn to the point of fragmentation. This problematic sense of self threatening with disintegration, which Schwall calls massive explosion of the subject, Ghassemi (2016) calls *precarious subjectivity*. Ghassemi's investigation of Banville through the perspective of Lacan posits that the feeble and unstable identities of Banville's protagonists can be viewed as stemming from a psychological disharmony involving the constitution of the Lacanian triad. The scholar argues that 'Banville creates a narrative universe in which his protagonists are in oscillation between the Lacanian triad (the Symbolic, the Imaginary and the Real) where the power of the Real (and at times the Imaginary) wins over the Symbolic, resulting in a precarious sense of self and reality' and this is the way in which 'Banville creates split subjects of narration and uncanny narrative universes' (24).

What emerges from this overview of the critical literature on Banville is that the theme of the 'divided self' occupies a central place in the writer's prose and that 'this sense of a split or divided consciousness is a staple feature of the majority of Banville's narrators…' (Butler, 2019: 203). But while critics

acknowledge the key significance of division in Banville's prose, they typically approach the problem from the standpoints of literary, psychoanalytic or philosophical theory and do not consider how this division is embodied in the language of the novels. The way they describe the 'divided self' then is based mostly on an impressionistic assessment, i.e. they perceive the effect of division without engaging with the linguistic make-up of the text that sustains this effect. Yet, language is the ultimate medium through which the writer channels all the literary, psychological or philosophical ideas into his narratives. As Stockwell and Whiteley (2014) point out, 'any approach to literary study that does not engage closely with the language in which the literary work appears is by definition indirect, distracted, partial and improper' (1). Therefore, linguistics can give us the methodology to explore how a certain effect is achieved and opens new perspectives for interpretation. As Traugott and Pratt (1980) also explain:

> Linguistics can […] help us become aware of *why* it is that we experience what we do when we read a literary work, and it can help us talk about it, by providing us with a vocabulary and a methodology through which we can show how our experience of a work is in part derived from its verbal structure. [...] Linguistics can give us […] a way of looking at a text that will help us develop a consistent analysis, and prompt us to ask questions about the language of the text that we might otherwise ignore. (19-20)

Consequently, a linguistic analysis of Banville's works will contribute greatly to our understanding of the 'divided self' and, more particularly, to the exact ways in which it is set up in the narratives and exerts this stylistic effect.

The linguistic mechanisms that the writer uses to construct memory, point of view and spatio-temporal relations between the past and the present are no less important when assessing the effect of division and can reveal aspects that critics may otherwise miss. The question of splitting then requires a closer look at these textual strategies as an unstable sense of self inevitably correlates with instabilities in these narrative constructs.

2.3 Narrative expression of the 'divided self'

As the foregoing survey shows, Banville's fiction has hardly been studied stylistically and no previous academic has shown sustained interest in researching Banville from a linguistic and narratological perspective by engaging closely and consistently with the text and analysing the methods of consciousness presentation in his novels. The fact that the problem of the 'divided self' in Banville has not yet been thoroughly examined is confirmed by McMinn (2000) who states that Banville's prose has been well studied on the literary side but not so in terms of its narrative composition:

> Surveying the body of critical commentary upon that fiction, it strikes me that certain analyses (including my own) have probably said enough about the literary provenance and intertextual character of the novels. […] The games that Banville likes to play with his readers through coded references, anagrams, puns, epigraphs and quotations have been well-documented, almost to the point of exhaustion. […] In the remainder of this chapter I would like to indicate some issues which studies of Banville have largely

> neglected, and which may offer fresh insights into his work. Despite the frequent, self-conscious warnings to readers from Banville's characters to avoid jumping to Freudian conclusions about their strange attitudes or behaviour, this remains a fiction about states of disturbed and heightened consciousness which might well reward an imaginative analysis of one of its major narrative features, that of the divided self. (91)

What stands out from McMinn's statement is that the key topic of Banville's works, that of the 'divided self', continues to be understudied and requires further analysis. But although the scholar points out the significance of the issue of division in Banville and identifies the analysis of the divided self as a theoretical gap, he himself does not engage with a comprehensive narrative investigation of the writer's prose. McMinn rather indicates areas for potential research. An analysis of the narrative presentation of the divided self, therefore, is a task which this study undertakes to accomplish. In addition, I will keep the designation 'divided self' as elucidated here although it is not a unique term and other scholars use synonymous variants.

An important note to make is that what McMinn calls 'states of disturbed and heightened consciousness' – and what other scholars whom I have already cited also name 'massive explosion of the concept of the subject', 'precarious subjectivity' or 'dramatic form of self-consciousness' – can often be found explicitly stated in Banville's fiction. Since Banville's narrators exhibit extreme self-consciousness during the process of thinking and remembering, it is not uncommon for them to verbalise their sensation of feeling split. Preoccupied with intense introspection and reflection, they become painfully aware of their

internal fragmentation and would often express their feeling of inner division in a most explicit way:

> And even years before that again, standing for instance with Mrs. Grace in that sunlit living room, or sitting with Chloe in the dark of the picturehouse, I was there and not there, myself and revenant, immured in the moment and yet hovering somehow on the point of departure. Perhaps all of life is no more than a long preparation for the leaving of it. (Banville, *The Sea*, 35)

> But I was different. I was someone else, someone I knew, and didn't know. I had stepped into the mirror. I frightened myself. That mad face. Those eyes. (Banville, *Mefisto,* 132)

> In those echoless caverns of empty time, being unobserved, unnoticed, I became increasingly detached from myself, increasingly disembodied. At moments I seemed to have become a phantom, and felt that I might walk up to people and pass straight through them and they would not even register a breath. (Banville, *Ancient Light,* 351)

> When I searched inside myself I found nothing finished, only a permanent potential, a waiting to go on. At the site of what was supposed to be my self was only a vacancy, an ecstatic hollow. And things rushed into this vacuum where the self should be. (Banville, *Eclipse*, 33)

As these examples show, the psychological dissonance expressed by the heroes problematises their sense of unified consciousness. They are either torn

between opposing forces (*there and not there*; *myself and revenant*; *someone I knew and didn't know*) or tormented by a profound absence of self (*disembodied*; *phantom*; *vacancy*; *ecstatic hollow*). The lack of personal integration hereof expressed is a direct rendering of the 'divided self' in the narratives, which mainly underscores the semantic significance of this question.

However, there are other, more intricate, mechanisms in the narratives that also lead to this interpretation. The narratives do not rely solely on the explicit statement of the narrator's feeling of division to create the 'divided self' effect but also utilise some implicit ways for its enactment which are embedded in Banville's 'special narrative ways of recalling and inventing the past' (McMinn, 2000: 92). These ways are even more powerful because of their indirectness and the subliminal impression of division that they leave. It is this impression that critics usually identify without tracing the linguistic mechanisms that give rise to it. Yet, language is the medium that Banville uses to enact the theme of division that his novels embody. Since the clearest way through which narrative expresses subjectivity is through the portrayal of consciousness, Banville's preoccupation with problematic issues of selfhood will inevitably be reflected in the consciousness presentation in the novels.

Thus, unravelling the writer's linguistic choices will allow us to better elucidate their stylistic significance. What merits further exploration then are the particular narrative techniques that Banville deploys to present the troubled consciousness of his protagonists. Narratology gives us a useful tool to explore the stylistic enactment of the split self because the issue of division, apart from its psychological significance, which other scholars have extensively illustrated,

can also be integrated with the linguistic study of representing consciousness in fiction – a poorly investigated aspect of Banville.

Considering how the 'divided self' phenomenon is laid out in Banville's narratives, the first-person mode of narration so strongly preferred by the writer is the first step towards achieving this effect. Banville is well-known for his devotion to the first-person novel. Many critics have already commented on the writer's predilection for it and Banville himself has often expressed his mistrust of the omniscient third-person narration. Famous is his quote taken from an interview with *The Paris Review*: 'I suspect that the reason I don't really believe in the third-person mode is due to the fact that I'm such an egomaniac. Unless it's me speaking, it's not convincing – to me, that is' (McKeon, 2009: 147–8, interview with Banville). Even though this quote allows for 'a certain amount of self-ironisation' (O'Connell, 2013: 180), O'Connell admits that it nonetheless reflects the writer's aesthetic priorities. O'Connell furthermore makes an analogy between Banville's disregard for third-person narration and his characters' inability to emotionally reach others:

> As a writer, his faith in the third-person mode is subject to the same kind of crisis as his narrators' faith in the possibility of knowing other people, in the possibility of representing otherness through narrative. The self is the central problem, which must be solved before the mystery of the other can be addressed, but it is a problem without a solution' (O'Connell, 2013: 199).

That is to say that the choice of narrative technique that Banville makes already plays an important role in the problematisation of the self by placing too strong a focus on the individual.

Besides, I have already pointed out Hutcheon's view that metafictional narration has the effect of deconstructing the self by means of the intensely self-conscious quality of the first-person discourse. The way self-regarding confessional memoir achieves this is by the introspective linguistic orientation of the text. But while Hutcheon describes metafictional first-person writing as a means of deconstruction, D'hoker underscores the effect of defacement that autobiography has in Banville. She explains that the two principles of the autobiographical mode, that of authenticity and referentiality, have been challenged in modern times and that 'Twentieth-century writers and critics further dismantled this illusion of wholeness and identity, by emphasising either the constructed nature or the inherent division of the autobiographical self' (D'hoker, 2004: 202). In this sense, writers like Proust, Banville, et al. employ autobiography as defacement. Therefore, the way Banville utilises first-person narration is very disintegrative and the overall narrative technique acts as a means of promoting the divided self.

In the rare cases when third-person narration is applied, as, for instance, in parts of *Shroud* or *Ghosts*, this is interpreted by O'Connell (2011a) as an 'empathic paradox', which is to say a 'problematic overlap of solipsism and empathy' or an attempt on the part of the narrators to 'transcend their narcissism and advance towards a more empathic, less self-centred position in relation to others' (428). Thus, the switch to a third-person perspective is seen as a fictive device by means of which the narrators seek to overstep their narcissistic self-

absorption and attain a more empathic engagement with the other. O'Connell's reading of this viewpoint shift is largely based on Heinz Kohut's psychoanalytic theories about the relationship between narcissism and empathy.

Excluding the studies examining the general mode of narration, the number of studies that look at the narrative construction of the 'divided self' phenomenon and, especially such that identify specific linguistic features facilitating this effect, is still only limited. Some attempt to address this problem has been made by Kucala (2016) in her article exploring memory and the splitting of the self in *The Sea*. Although this small-scale research is not specifically defined as a linguistic reading of Banville's work but rather discusses in a general sense the thematic, philosophic and linguistic parameters of the novel, it points out some important linguistic features that are related to the topic of splitting. According to Kucala, the narrative implications of the 'divided self' arise from the novel being 'marked by an unresolved contradiction between the narrator's need to establish himself at a suitable vantage point in his narrative and his inability to adopt a definitive perspective' (11). Thus, she sees the narrator's inability to take up a stable narrative position as directly related to the protagonist's unstable sense of selfhood.

Adopting Ricoeur's insights about factors which determine individual identity, Kucala points out that both proper names and pronouns in Banville are problematic as individualising operators. On the one hand, a person's name as a fundamental constituent of identity is subverted in *The Sea* by the protagonist calling himself a name that is not his own, a fact that we learn indirectly from a conversation with his mother in the novel. On the other hand, the reference to oneself through personal pronouns in the text constitutes a problem in a number

of ways. Firstly, there's a thematic interplay with the personal pronoun *I*. The protagonist reveals that his typewriter lacks the letter *I*, which contrasts sharply with his continued employment of the pronoun *I* and marks an obvious contradiction between him asserting and denying his own identity. Kucala concludes that 'the profusion of first-person pronouns, combined with their uncertain referent' (12) is a clear illustration of a self that is hard to define. At other times, the protagonist refers to his younger self as another being utilising a distinction between the first-person (*I*) and the third-person (*that child*). Kucala explains this diversity of pronouns as showing a two-fold split: 'On the level of narration, the diverse pronouns signify the difference between the narrating self and the subject of narration; on the ontological level, they expose the divergence between stages in the protagonist's personal development.' (14). This distinction is particularly important in first-person retrospective narratives and I will deal with it more profoundly as more intricate relations exist between the different manifestations of the self along these two lines.

In addition, Kucala pays attention to the role of memory in constructing a coherent narrative identity considering the works of philosophers like Ricoeur and Locke and, more specifically Ricoeur's distinction between identity as self (*ipse*) and identity as sameness (*idem*) and Locke's view that it is the continuity of consciousness that shapes our sense of identity. As far as the building of fictional identity in the narrative is concerned, its construction depends crucially on memory. But in Banville memory fails to provide this continuity and the narrative flow is so disrupted that it presents 'an array of disconnected episodes that constitute a collection of images rather than a story' (Kucala, 2016: 16). The writer's inclination to tableaux-like scenes, as, for instance, in 'I see the game

as a series of vivid tableaux, glimpsed instants of movement all rush and colour' (Banville, *The Sea*, 125), which typically involve rapid shifts between past and present, makes the account 'disjointed and fragmentary' and the connection between the different selves thus based on 'simultaneity rather than continuity' (Kucala, 2016: 16). Employing Genette's distinction between *subsequent narrating*, which is basically a narrative of past events, and *simultaneous narrating*, which constitutes a current report of actions, she explains that the corresponding shift between the past tense and the present tense produces a 'disregard for chronology' that 'reinforces his [the protagonist's] inner division' (Kucala, 2016: 17). In this regard, Kucala recognises the important role that the change of grammatical tenses plays in disrupting the linear temporal sequence.

Overall, by examining how the theme of splitting functions in Banville's novel *The Sea*, Kucala indicates a few linguistic factors that contribute to its presentation in the narrative. Although she discusses the topic of splitting in Banville in a very general sense and limited to one novel only, she makes some important points as regards the linguistic make-up of the text. But the two major linguistic categories that she outlines, that of pronouns and tenses, have yet to be studied on a bigger scale in order to assess their far-reaching significance in Banville. In this way, we can unravel deeper layers of textual meaning that will give us a bigger picture of the stylistic enactment of the literary theme of splitting. In this line of thought, a more precise assessment of the stylistic effect of tense shifts in the novels would require a much larger narratorial framework than Genette's subsequent and simultaneous forms of narration based on the temporal relationship between story and discourse. What is more, Kucala hardly mentions the alternation of pronominal forms between *I* and *he* which is another

linguistic feature of crucial significance in Banville. Compared to O'Connell who rather addresses the change of narrative mode from first-person to third-person, which occasionally occurs in Banville, Kucala indicates a different use of an I-to-he switching that also has wide application in the novels. Neither of the two scholars, however, concerns himself with a detailed investigation of the use and function of pronoun alternations in the narratives. My examination of this feature, to which I will dedicate a whole chapter, will aim at filling this gap in existing accounts.

Adopting an approach similar to Kucala's, another recent study conducted by Hertel (2021) combines the study of literary strategies with the analysis of textual markers. Hertel looks at how Banville represents the visual in the *Frames* trilogy and while mainly devoted to evaluating the literary significance of sense perceptions in Banville, it also pinpoints some linguistic correlates that have a connection to the representation of the visual. In order to assess the effect of visual scenes, Hertel examines how Banville employs the formal tool of *ekphrasis*, or the verbal description of a work of art incorporated as a rhetorical device in the narrative. Since paintings occupy a central place in the plot of the novels, their significance passes over the whole narrative and especially over the construction of visual experience. As Hertel explains, 'Banville's strategy seems to be twofold: on the one hand, his narration aspires to the condition of painting while on the other hand, the pictures in his novels acquire literary qualities' (42). The pictorialism in the trilogy, according to Hertel, is facilitated by a number of literary devices and textual markers among which the abundance of visual expressions, the symbolism of the act of looking, allusions, the use of mythology, recurring metaphors such as those of the doppleg̈anger, mirrors and

windows, as well as some ekphrastic strategies such as the use of the present tense, the incorporation of the narrator's thoughts in the process of studying the pictures and the narration of the stories behind the pictures.

What is relevant to the current research is Hertel's recognition of some linguistic mechanisms for the rendering of sense perceptions. The ones that he enumerates include visual expressions and the present tense. In the first place, he notes that 'all three texts abound with expressions of the visual. Visual verbs are so dominant throughout the trilogy that it seems the narrator perceives his surroundings almost exclusively through his eyes, and even memory comes to him almost entirely in visual terms' (33). Even more notably, Hertel provides a short list of the wide variety of visual semantics whose use he defines as 'incessantly recurring', these being 'visual expressions such as 'to see oneself', 'to see someone else', 'to picture', 'to imagine', or 'to have visions' (33-34). Some examples that he uses to illustrate this include: 'My wife. Daphne […] I see her…'; 'For an instant he saw himself clearly…'; 'This is how I see him that day'; 'She pictured herself dressed in white…' (33). Hertel also explains that the effect of 'the visual experience in *Frames* is not merely of a passive, receptive nature. Rather, the visual is frequently linked to the active construction of mental pictures' (34).

A further linguistic factor contributing to the enlivening of visual sensation, according to Hertel, is the present tense used to describe the paintings. In his words:

> While most parts of the stories are told in past tense, the description of painting is rendered in present tense - as if the narrator's own life

> was more remote and further away from the scenes on these pictures […] The present tense of the ekphrastic scenes thus creates a feeling of timelessness […] Present tense is thus used to emphasise the fact that these paintings, as all paintings, are above the flow of time. (42-43)

The timelessness that the present tense evokes thus makes the paintings develop a life of their own. An important point that Hertel stresses is that if we are to gain a better understanding of the presentation of perception in Banville, 'we must go beyond the analysis of metaphors and must engage in a study of narrative techniques' (42). For this reason, his research is not restricted solely to exploring metaphors and imagery but also pays attention to some narrative techniques and textual markers.

The linguistic mechanisms that Hertel identifies to have an important effect in Banville's narratives include the visual expressions and the present tense. He has thus picked up on some linguistic features of key significance in Banville but when these features are more fully analysed, we find that their function and importance go beyond the scope that Hertel describes. The visual expressions in Banville's fiction, for instance, have a very specific use in the narratives and a more detailed examination of them reveals that the writer's intricate mechanisms of the representation of perception serve to dramatise the narrator's internal conflicts. Moreover, Hertel's analysis of the present tense includes the pictorial form but does not extend to other possible implications of tense shifts in Banville. The full semantic range of the present can only be explicated by taking into account the narrative study of tenses. When the use of tense shifts is integrated more carefully into a stylistic analysis, we cannot but

see that their pervasive use also underscores the problematic relation between the narrating self and the experiencing self.

Altogether, both Hertel and Kucala's studies do some gesture towards language. By exploring literary themes and motifs, they identify some linguistic correlates that facilitate their expression in the texts. Yet, the range of these features can be more fully examined only by a systematic linguistic analysis. Therefore, in this research I will seek to explore linguistic mechanisms more purposefully by adopting a linguistically-oriented framework. As I have already pointed out at the end of the previous section, a linguistic analysis of a literary work affords us invaluable insights into the interpretation of a text by either adding important points that have been missed by literary critics, or disputing certain claims made by them. Since it is the task of linguistics to elucidate not only what is communicated but also how it is communicated, a linguistic approach to literature has an explanatory rather than a descriptive function and seeks to explain how a certain idea is 'captured through language rather than merely through the content and theme of the narrative' (Cui, 2016: 325). So, the studies that I have presented above can be considered as constituting a first step towards deriving a linguistic account of Banville but further study is needed to elucidate the narrative mechanisms underlying the writer's fiction and its major topic – that of the 'divided self'.

2.4 Scope of this study and methodology

In section 2.2 I have reviewed the main approaches through which Banville's prose has been explored so far and have outlined the different ways

scholars appreciate the ‘divided self’. Also there I have spelled out the lack of a thorough investigation of the linguistic mechanisms that assist in creating the stylistic effect of splitting. In Section 2.3 I have listed the main studies that point to some linguistic features utilised by the writer but have also shown that further investigation is needed in order to more fully capture their effect in the narratives.

Since my aim in this study will be to explore the narrative presentation of the ‘divided self’ and to determine the linguistic basis underlying this effect, I will examine the major linguistic structures and patterns that occur consistently throughout the texts and that contribute to the construction of the ‘divided self’ phenomenon. So, while still starting from a literary perspective by approaching how a literary theme is presented, my analysis will be more fully integrated into the framework of linguistics, hence my account will still be qualitative in nature and more empirical compared to the more literary-oriented analyses. In my exploration of the ‘divided self’ techniques I will first identify prevalent linguistic features and will then classify them under an overarching theoretical paradigm and will evaluate their stylistic significance for developing the major theme of division. The stylistic functions of these features will be examined not only on the level of the sentence but on the level of the whole narrative. Thus, by researching the problem of the ‘divided self’ in Banville’s novels in view of different linguistic categories, I will attempt to capture the complexity of the textual manifestations of the ‘split self’ phenomenon and to show the wide diversity of stylistic nuances they carry with them.

The first linguistic construction of great importance for creating the effect of splitting is the construction ‘I see myself’. This textual marker has already

been mentioned as part of the list of visual expressions identified by Hertel as 'see oneself' but surprisingly he illustrates its use in a third-person context (e.g. *he saw himself, she pictured herself*) which is only marginal in Banville compared to its massive use in the first-person. Yet, it is exactly the inherent split conditioned by the self-reflexive use of this construction combined with its extremely high rate of occurrence in the texts that turns it into an effective stylistic means of enacting division.

The first-person use of this semantic expression has been given some consideration only by D'hoker (2004), although she relates its use to Jean Paul's ideas of the Doppelgänger, Andrew Webber's discussion of autoscopy (or the phenomenon of self-seeing), as well as to Freud's conception of the ego. According to D'hoker, the characteristic construction *I saw (see, could see) myself* 'installs a curious distinction between the I who perceives and the I (myself) who is perceived. The subject beholds its other self as object, which becomes the Doppelgänger of the beholder' (175-176). This is indicative of a 'fundamentally split personality' and expresses a dualism between 'subject and object, perceiver and perceived, and, quite often, mind and body' (176). This statement makes it clear that she associates the use of this construction with the topic of division but she devotes only partial attention to it because in her categorisation of representations of the double in Banville's narratives autoscopic mode is just one instance and its other manifestations no longer utilise this linguistic structure but are expressed by different means.

Most crucially, she seems to suggest that *see myself* and *saw myself* exert the same effect but a more thorough exploration of how these patterns are set up in the narrative reveals that the use of tense in them influences the arrangement

of narrative perspective and the different variations of this construction correlate with different stylistic manifestations of the 'divided self'. Therefore, more careful consideration is needed into how the consistent employment of this linguistic construction as a narrative technique is interwoven with the presentation of consciousness in the novels. Since this linguistic structure has a complex use in the narratives and has a direct relation to the topic of splitting, I will undertake to elucidate its workings in chapter 3. To do this, I will place it in a larger linguistic framework that also takes into account parallel constructions with other verbs of perception.

Another linguistic mechanism used by Banville to construct a displaced and unstable sense of self involves shifts in tense. The basic discoveries that have been made in this direction so far include mainly Kucala's interpretation that changes of tense disrupt the linear flow of time in the narratives, thus breaking the bond of continuity between the past self and the present self and Hertel's view that because of the pictorial nature of the narrative events, the present tense is used to evoke the stasis of paintings and, for this reason, the scenes in the narratives acquire the quality of 'film stills'. This stillness that characterises Banville's novels has caught the attention of Murphy (2018) as well, who also pays attention to the ekphrastic in the novels and compares Banville's narratives to 'still life'. In a passing comment Murphy regards the role of the present tense in them as, first, placing the narrator at 'a different ontological level' to the characters in the picture, and, second, as facilitating 'the insertion of a series of still moments' (80).

But while Hertel and Murphy give a more technical explanation of the role of the present tense as a tense which the narrators use when verbally describing

pictures that they observe, Kucala comes closer to assessing the effect of the tense switches in relation to the splitting of the self. Yet, a more comprehensive study should be performed to explore the whole range of possibilities developed by the writer to destabilise the sense of self-unity and integrity of his individuals. The tense shifts in Banville are used in a complex manner that apart from portraying still pictures also enable shifts between the voice of the narrating self and the experiencing self, which fragments the narrative further and affects the process of reproducing memories. I will explore these complexities more extensively in Chapter 4.

In chapter 5, the last analytical chapter of this thesis, I will examine another linguistic mechanism that is related to the enactment of division and this refers to pronoun alternations from *I* to *he*. In my overview of the existing narrative research on Banville, I have already pointed out the work of two scholars in this respect. Firstly, I mentioned Kucala's comment on how in one instance Banville utilises the pronoun *I* to designate his current self and the pronoun *he,* or rather the third-person noun phrase *that child,* to refer to his older self. Secondly, there is O'Connell's study that explores the occasional use of third-person narration in Banville's first-person novels in which a pronominal variation between *I* and *he* is also observed. These two studies essentially relate to the phenomenon of pronoun alternations, although from two different standpoints. The phenomenon that Kucala spots refers to switches that typically follow a noun phrase and tend to be transitory, whereas the pronominal variation that O'Connell's talks about affects the overall mode of narration. Since I see both types of pronoun alternations as equally important in Banville and since no other scholar has conducted a comprehensive investigation of their use, I will

expound on their form and function by clearly separating them as two different varieties of pronoun switches. Linguistically speaking, this seems to be the least explored feature, especially the variety mentioned by Kucala which is an almost uncharted territory. That is why further research is needed in order to better understand and characterise the complex image of the ‘divided self’ that Banville constructs in his novels.

Chapter 3

Sensory Modality: Perceiver vs Perceived

3.1 Sensory modality as a linguistic sign of the 'divided self'

3.1.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I outlined that Banville's works are imbued with visual language and a major construction that linguistically represents the visual nature of memory is the self-reflexive phrase *I see myself*. In this chapter, I will explore in detail the use of this construction in Banville's narratives and its significance for the narrative presentation of the 'divided self' along with other similar sensory patterns like *hear myself* and *feel myself*. In order to assess the effect of splitting encoded in such patterns, I will start with some important aspects of division in first-person texts that have relation to the function of these expressions in the narratives.

In the introduction to this thesis, I have already commented on the major characteristic of first-person texts, namely the intrinsic split of consciousness that they carry. While third-person narration presupposes the existence of character and narrator as two separate entities, the *I* in a first-person novel fulfils both roles by default. I have also noted the fact that these two functions of the first-person have been given various designations: narrating self – experiencing self (Cohn, 1978); teller – reflector (Stanzel, 1981); narrator – focaliser (Rimmon-Kennan, 1983); speaker – experiencer (Fleischmann, 1990), remembering self – remembered self (Adamson, 2001). Therefore, narratologically speaking, a first-person text is inherently divided between the

consciousness of the narrating self and the experiencing self. Briefly defined, the narrating self is the mature present self who narrates the story and the experiencing self refers to the past self whose experiential point of view can be adopted in free indirect or free direct style at certain points in the narrative.

From a cognitive-stylistic perspective these two selves are often explored in terms of the different properties that co-referential pronouns may denote. Emmott (2002), applying cognitive studies of selfhood and conceptual metaphor in a more text-oriented framework, explores this split of the *I* in narrative texts and utilises the term *enactor* to distinguish between these two conceptual entities. Narrative enactors present different versions of a character in space and time which superimpose on one another in a story-world creating a complex and multi-layered image of a protagonist. To separate these spatio-temporal manifestations of a given protagonist Emmott proposes the distinction *present enactor* for the *I*-now and *past enactor* for the *I*-then. An example of my choice illustrating this split can be seen in the following extract from a retrospective novel:

> I remember myself carrying buckets of water on my head on Sunday morning with my Sunday best clothes and shoes, walking a long distance to fetch the water for the primary and even others. I also remember my relatives getting mad at me and throwing me out of their house for joining the church. [my emphasis] (Goodrich, *Angels on Temple Square: Missionaries to the World*, 31)

Even though the referring expressions in these sentences agree in grammatical person and number, they denote different spatio-temporal

manifestations of the protagonist – a current self recollecting an image of his/her past self. The remembering self, underlined with a single line, is exemplified by the two 'I'-s in subject position above, whereas the remembered self, marked by double underlining, is represented by the reflexive 'myself' and the object pronouns 'me'. Therefore, the grammatically same pronoun denotes different narrative enactors. Although the self-referential *I* depicts one and the same individual, it splits it into two chronologically distinct selves. Every *I* (I, myself, my, me) has its own temporal dimension and mental realisation. The *I* in first position acting as subject is clearly the mental representation of the adult self narrating the story, whereas the *I* (myself, me) acting as object refers to the mental representation of his/her young or childhood self. This overlapping of character-in-present and character-in-flashback is thus 'inherent in the narrative form, since first-person narratives generally invoke a current self reporting on a past self' (Emmott, 2002: 153-54).

The distinction between narrative enactors can also be used to render states of emotional frustration when there is a particularly disturbing contrast between the *I* in the past and the *I* in the present, as the following example demonstrates:

> My life had become divided in two, before and after … I still wonder if the 'I' who is typing this with my 'good' right hand, is the same as the 'I' who used to peck away, two-handed, at 50 w.p.m. (Emmott, 2002: 153)

This protagonist describes his life after the stroke he has suffered and, more particularly, the huge change that this has had on his perception of selfhood. Emmott calls such divisions that address problematic aspects of the

self as *the 'split self' phenomenon* and comments that 'it commonly occurs at times of personal crisis. More generally, this theme reflects the sense of fragmentation of identity in postmodern society' (153).

Emmott also proposes a categorisation of how such splits are realised in the act of narration or by what means the split self is represented in narrative. According to her, the different versions of the self can be put together by means of *narrative juxtaposition*, *double/multiple voice narration* or even *the 'special effects' technique* (170-174). The first two types are most commonly applied to memory and flashback episodes which are the most simple and accessible form of juxtaposing and splitting the self into present and past enactors, while the third technique is the most sophisticated of the three in that it literally makes duplicates out of the characters and allows them to lead a double existence in the same physical location by overstepping the boundaries of natural laws. Since this third type pointed out by Emmott has the exact same linguistic expression as the phenomenon that I am exploring in this chapter, I will look at it more closely.

Such 'special effects' Emmott recognises as being characteristic predominantly of the genres of science fiction and fantasy in which imagination is fully unleashed and time travelling made possible and, secondarily, of imaginary sub-worlds. Emmott illustrates this technique with examples from J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, where Harry and Hermione use a Time-Turner magical device to go back three hours in time and observe their earlier selves:

> ‘This is three hours ago, and we are walking down to Hagrid’s,’ said Hermione. ‘We just heard ourselves leaving…’ [my emphasis] (J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 421)

> ‘We need to keep out of sight of Hagrid’s front door, or we’ll see us! We must be nearly at Hagrid’s by now!’ [my emphasis] (J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 422)

In terms of grammar, the ‘special effects’ technique is in fact a type of *sensory modality*, as defined by Palmer (2001). Palmer’s classification of modality differentiates most basically between propositional and event modality. Propositional modality is further divided into epistemic (related to the speaker’s judgement) and evidential (related to the speaker’s evidence), with epistemic subdivided into speculative, deductive and assumptive and evidential – into sensory and reported modality. Event modality falls into two groups: deontic and dynamic. According to Palmer’s typology, sensory modality is concerned with evidence that comes from the speaker’s senses and covers propositions acquired by visual, auditory and any other perception. Some of the examples that he gives clearly contain visual and auditory markers like the ones presented above – *I hear/heard someone running along* and *I see it coming* (45). Emmott’s ‘special effects’ technique, in which the speaker acts as both subject and object of the proposition, can be viewed then as one particular, and rather unusual, instantiation of sensory modality. And since my study deals specifically with this type of sensory modality which has co-referential subject and object pronouns, I will also refer to it as ‘special effects’ because this designation more precisely describes the particular linguistic phenomenon that I am researching.

In her study, Emmott focuses primarily on fantasy and science fiction as the main source of 'special effects' and basically sees this technique as serving various plot functions in time-travel stories. Hence, the double self in them is part of the unreality of the genre and the unrealistic context of these stories explains and even justifies the characters' ability to duplicate themselves. But the 'special effects' technique can also be effected at a narratological level and when used in memory narratives especially, the doubling of the self that is produced will act on the narrative structure and on the interaction between the narrative manifestations of the hero, which leads to complex patterns of representation of memory and of the self. So, while the 'special effects' examples that Emmott identifies are all framed in the direct speech of the characters and therefore part of their verbal discourse, in Banville these instances are embedded into the narratorial discourse, which changes the way consciousness is presented. Thus, compared to their significance in time-travel stories where the division appears to be more material, in Banville they are used to split the narrative action and, through this, carry psychological implications. For this reason, the use of this specific type of sensory modality benefits further exploration and in the remainder of this chapter I will explore how the 'special effects' technique functions in the genre of retrospective fiction, by paying closer attention to its use in terms of narrative voice and perspective.

In this respect, it is important to note that the oppositional terms narrating self – experiencing self and present enactor – past enactor do not exactly map onto each other and it shouldn't be assumed that there is one-to-one correspondence between them. The separation between present and past enactor is more mechanical and is mainly a temporal distinction, while the division

between narrating and experiencing self in narrative terms is much more subtle. Therefore, not every time a past enactor is mentioned, his/her experience is internally represented because past experience in first-person narration can be stemming from the narrating self, as well. For instance, in the example from Goodrich above beginning *I remember myself carrying buckets of water…*, the conceptual division between two enactors does not induce a shift of perspective from narrating *I* to experiencing *I* as the whole passage is rendered from the viewpoint of the narrating self. In the course of my discussion, I will explore this idea further.

3.1.2 I see myself…

The first, and most widely-spread, type of 'special effects' that can be discovered in Banville is duplication in the field of vision. I argue that this type of narrative composition does not merely divide a protagonist into current self and past self, juxtaposing the adult and the child versions of the protagonist, but also creates a detached representation of memory, as demonstrated in this passage from *The Sea*:

(1) In fact, I do not recall under what circumstances exactly I managed eventually to get inside the Cedars. I see myself after that initial encounter turning away frustratedly from the green gate with the twins watching me go, and then I see myself another day within the very sanctum itself, as if, by a truly magical version of Myles's leap over the top bar of the gate, I had vaulted all obstacles to land up in the living room next to

> an angled, solid-seeming beam of brassy sunlight, with Mrs. Grace in a loose-fitting, flowered dress, light-blue with a darker pattern of blue blossoms, turning from a table and smiling at me, deliberately vague, evidently not knowing who I was but knowing nevertheless that she should, which shows that this cannot have been the first time we had encountered each other face to face. (Banville, *The Sea*, 85-86)

Here Max, the narrator, recalls the first time he got inside the Graces' house, the Cedars. As can be seen, he does not give a coherent narrative account constructed in linear time and evoking a precise memory, but rather presents random episodic visions of himself. He does not remember the exact circumstances around entering the house, whether Mrs Grace invited him or he himself asked to get inside. What he recalls is being right inside 'the sanctum' as if he magically landed up there. So, apart from the enactor split between character-in-present (*I*) and character-in-flashback (*myself*), the effect of division is more strongly reinforced by the pictorial presentation of the past. The observational stance of the I-narrator is signalled twice – once by the very verb and once by the pronominal expressions. Firstly and more obviously, the verb 'see' directly reveals the visual nature of the protagonist's memory. He sees the events from his past as if they are unfolding in front of his eyes, with him being a mere spectator. Secondly, the use of the pronoun 'myself' can also reinforce the position of the speaker as an eyewitness.

Proof of the latter can be found in Lyons (1982) who sees the addition of 'myself' in memory reports as a semantic contrast between the *subjective*

experiencing self and the *objective observing self* and illustrates this with the following examples:

(1) I remember switching off the light.

(2) I remember myself switching off the light. (107)

According to Lyons, the difference between these two sentences lies in the subjective agency conditioned by the deictic use of *I*. The first case introduces an experiential memory and gives a subjective perspective of the event. In the second case we have a descriptive account of an event observed objectively. In Lyons's own words:

> (1) exemplifies the normal subjective mode of reference to what is necessarily a personal and incommunicable experience, whereas (2) is not only closer in grammatical structure to (3) *I remember you switching off the light*, but can also be interpreted, like (3), as reporting the memory of something observed, rather than experienced. (107)

Therefore, if the first sentence foregrounds the subjective experience of the speaker, the addition of *myself* in the second sentence generates a more distanced perspective on the self. Of course, Lyons's distinction between *subjective experiencing self* and *objective observing self* shouldn't be blindly equated to the concepts of *experiencing self* and *narrating self* in narratology. Lyons's argument holds true about language in a more general sense and the sentences that he uses as an illustration may also be complicated by the type of narrative technique used in the fictional text. If we map his statements onto the study of narratorial report and free indirect style, they won't correspond fully

because both statements can be used in both modes depending on the context of the narrative. In other words, the use of the pronoun *myself* will not always automatically evoke the perspective of the narrating self as this matter is defined by other linguistic features as well. What it seems to achieve, rather, is a pictorial presentation of the memory when compared to the first statement which is more integrated in terms of the self.

Similarly, in the afore-mentioned example from *The Sea* the narrator does not present the child's experience as something that he has gone through but rather as something that he is observing at the moment of speaking. So, instead of the internal perspective of the experiencing self, we are given the external perspective of the narrator-observer. The spatial distance between the two selves is additionally supplemented by the phrase 'with the twins watching me go'. Obviously, the character-in-flashback cannot have an external view of what happens behind his back. Rather the protagonist Max watches his past life from outside and has a panoramic vision of himself, i.e. of his boy self, turning away from the green gate and the twins watching after him.

It is exactly this visual presentation of the memory that creates division. A more reportive account of the past (e.g. *After that initial encounter I turned away frustratedly…*) generates a completely different stylistic effect from a pictorial presentation of the past (e.g. *I see myself after that initial encounter turning away frustratedly…*). In the first case there is a temporal gap between the time of occurrence and the time of narration of the events which signifies a continuous existence of the two spatio-temporal manifestations of the hero, while in the second case the process of observation and the actions being observed happen synchronously which indicates a simultaneous existence of the

two selves. Since seeing yourself in the outside world is only credible if you are looking at yourself in a mirror, the mental images of the past evoked by the narrator remind of a mirror in which he is observing not his current self but his past self. Thus, the past is brought to the present and the construction 'I see myself' contributes to the creation of these frames in the narratives.

The use of this semantic pattern, however, shows further complexities which can only be accounted for if we perform a grammatical analysis of it. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (2014) is particularly suitable in this respect because it can help us explain a subtle viewpoint shift that can sometimes be observed with the use of this construction in the narratives. According to Systemic Functional Grammar, which discriminates between six different transitivity processes, the construction 'I see myself' is a mental clause containing the verb of mental process 'see' and the pronoun *I* is both subject and object or both *senser* and *phenomenon* in Halliday's terminology. Thus, the narrator is a senser, hence the reminiscences are narrator-mediated because they happen in the narrator's consciousness which evokes *here* and *now* what happened *there* and *then*. The narrator's position in his immediate speaker-*now* is affirmed by the use of the present tense in the initial introductory phrase 'I see myself'. But the extension to this sensory modality pattern stands out as very important too and the use of present participle forms and type of transitivity process encoded in them also deserve attention. The following memory episode from *The Untouchable* is especially illustrative:

(2) I see myself as a little boy sitting head on hand in the bay window in the parlour, looking out at the rain falling on the sloping lawn and the faroff, stone-grey waters of the Lough,

> hearing poor Freddie wandering about upstairs crooning like a dreamy banshee. (Banville, *The Untouchable*, 27)

As indicated by wavy underlining, the construction used after the phrasal unit 'I see myself' is that of the present participle, which is a non-finite verb form (e.g. *sitting, looking, falling, hearing, wandering, crooning*). In Hallidayan terms, the phenomenon in mental clauses is not always an object but can also denote an act – *macrophenomenon,* or a fact – *metaphenomenon*. While an object is linguistically represented by a noun phrase (e.g. *He saw the car.*), a macrophenomenon is typically realised by a non-finite verb form (e.g. *He saw the car speeding.*) and a metaphenomenon – by a *that*-clause (e.g. *He saw that they had left.*) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014: 256). In the above sentence from Banville, the phenomenon of the perception process is a macrophenomenon which denotes an act and is realised by a non-finite verb form.

The use of a present participle (e.g. *I saw him crossing the street*.) instead of a bare infinitive (e.g. *I saw him cross the street.*) in such perception verb complements is traditionally explained as expressing first and foremost a semantic difference between incompletion-completion of the action (Hornby, 1949: 172). An alternative theory proposed by Kirsner and Thompson (1976) frames the distinction between a present participial clause and an infinitival clause in terms of 'boundedness' in time summarised by Halliday as follows: 'The difference between them is a temporal one: the participial clause represents the process as unbounded in time, while the infinitival one represents it as bounded in time' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014: 252). A more recent study (Ono, 2004) approaching the subject from a pragmatic and cognitive perspective even suggests that 'the do-form ('pure perception') represents the perceiver's

pure perception of an event with which the perceiver does not experience psychological concern', whereas 'the doing-form ('cognitive perception') represents the perceiver's instantaneous cognition of an event with which the perceiver experiences psychological concern' (424). In other words, according to this hypothesis, the bare infinitive complement reflects a weaker form of perception which is more passive and neutral compared to the present participle complement which indicates a stronger, more active and more engaged type of perception. Therefore, the use of the present participle in the macrophenomenon suggests an ongoing action that the speaker is strongly involved in observing. But since the present tense in the main clause suggests the direct perception of the narrating self taking place as he narrates (as theorised in section 1.3) and the present participle in the macrophenomenon suggests an action still unfolding, it seems that senser and phenomenon are both simultaneously experiencing the event right now.

To return to the example from Banville, we can see that there are three long strings of macrophenomena all linked to the verb of perception *see*: 1. *myself as a little boy sitting head on hand in the bay window in the parlour*; 2. *(myself) looking out at the rain falling on the sloping lawn and the faroff, stone-grey waters of the Lough*; and 3. *(myself) hearing poor Freddie wandering about upstairs crooning like a dreamy banshee*. Interestingly, all three verbs used at the beginning of each macrophenomenon (underlined with a straight line) present a different type of transitivity process. *Sit* designates a material process, *look out* – a behavioural process and *hear* – a mental process. A closer look at the passage shows that the type of process encoded in the macrophenomenon has a relation to the interpretation of viewpoint. While the first

macrophenomenon clause in which the little boy is seen as performing the material process of *sitting* still holds the viewpoint in the eyes of the observing adult self, the next two clauses seem to evoke a viewpoint shift to the consciousness of the child on the scene.

The second macrophenomenon which involves the behavioural process of *looking out* seems to shift the perception from the narrator-visualiser to the child being visualised and the subjectivity markers that follow now seem aligned with the child self. The linguistic signals include the perception indicator *look out*, the further embedded present participle *falling* which is a very strong subjectivity marker showing perception from within, the deictic adjective *far-off* and the simile *stone-grey*. The third macrophenomenon containing the verb of mental process *hear* locates the perception in the child even more convincingly. If we remove the first two macrophenomenal clauses and preserve only the third one, we come up with the highly unusual sentence *I see myself hearing poor Freddie* where the two mental verbs *see* and *hear* appear to point to two different centres of consciousness.

Halliday states it clearly that ‘mental process clauses have this property, that only something that is being credited with consciousness can function in them as the one who feels, thinks, wants or perceives, one only has to put something into that role in order to turn it into a conscious being’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014: 249). Thus, the use of a mental verb in a macrophenomenon seems to enact a viewpoint shift because the senser in the main clause (*I*) cannot possibly give an account of the internal sensations of the phenomenon (*myself*) but can only describe how it sees it from without. This means that the remaining linguistic indices should be oriented towards the child’s mind, these being the

evaluative adjective *poor*, the other further embedded present participles *wandering* and *crooning*, the deictic adverb *upstairs* and the simile *like a dreamy banshee* which could well correspond to a child's knowledge because the banshee is a mythical creature featuring in children's stories.

Therefore, the macrophenomenon following this sensory modality pattern is important not only with the use of the present participle form which depicts the actions in the visualised picture as happening simultaneously with the act of observation but is also important with the type of process encoded in it because this appears to affect the presentation of viewpoint. A material process is less likely to evoke a viewpoint shift because it keeps the perception in the eyes of the senser from the main clause who is providing an external description of the phenomenon and its actions and appearance. A behavioural process which shares characteristics of material and mental processes, however, is suggestive of a change of perspective. And a mental process used as a macrophenomenon of another mental process, which constitutes quite a paradoxical pattern, is a stronger signal of the establishment of a second deictic centre. It has to be noted, though, that Banville makes this change very gradually which shows that the narrator is so immersed in the visualisation that he imperceptibly transfers into the mind of the observed entity.

Another point that needs to be considered is the use of tense within this semantic pattern. The previous two passages from Banville both introduce the memory episode in the present tense, *I see myself*, but in other extracts the pattern is employed in the past tense, *I saw myself*. The phrase in present tense indubitably positions the narrator in his immediate *now* splitting the co-referential pronouns into adult self and young self, with the adult self making a

current report of how he sees himself as a child. But when does the act of seeing happen in a past tense account when the narrator declares 'I saw myself'? Consider these two extracts:

(3) There is a moment that comes in drunkenness, or on the far side of it, when, as is said to happen sometimes to the afflicted in the throes of a heart attack, I seem to separate from my body and float upward, and hang aloft, looking down on the spectacle of myself with disinterested attention. It had happened now. I saw myself sprawled there, and then shift again with a violent heave, like a splayed horse trying to get to its feet, flailing about helplessly, muttering. (Banville, *Shroud*, 9)

(4) They were beyond me, they could not touch me – could they see me, even, or was I now outside the spectrum of their vision? And yet how avidly I observed them, in hunger and wonderment. They surged around me at a sort of stumble, dull-eyed and confused, like refugees. I saw myself, bobbing head and shoulders above them, disguised, solitary, nursing my huge secret. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 154)

Excerpt (3) is taken from a longer segment in which the narrator Axel Vander tells how he received a disturbing letter from a girl called Cass Cleave one day which threatened to expose the secret of his life – that he has assumed another man's identity. He conveys in free indirect style his thoughts and feelings upon receiving the letter and reveals that he drank whisky all day after that. The passage above, beginning with the narrator's generic statement in

gnomic present about how he sometimes feels in a state of drunkenness, returns to free indirect mode (*had happened*; *now*) into the consciousness of the experiencing self and reflects his perception at the time. Young Axel Vander, who is pretty drunk, has a hallucinatory vision that he sees himself from outside (sprawled *there*). But the splitting here is not between current self and past self but, obviously, within the past self itself who is having an out-of-body experience. The pattern *I saw myself* then represents the perception of the experiencing *I*, not that of the narrating *I*.

The fourth extract follows the same trend. The protagonist Freddie recalls how strange he felt among people, almost as a different species. In this scene he describes an occasion when he moved through a crowd in the street. The first sentence is filtered through the mind of the experiencing past self and renders his free indirect thought (*could they see me?*; *was I outside the spectrum of their vision?*; *now*). Further on we notice that mid-paragraph the protagonist takes an observing position towards himself – *I saw myself, bobbing head and shoulders above them, disguised, solitary, nursing my huge secret*. Instead of continuing the past-tense memory account by just enumerating the actions, e.g. *They surged around me at a sort of stumble, dull-eyed and confused, like refugees. I bobbed head and shoulders above them… and nursed my huge secret.*, the hero renders his sensual perception of the acts of bobbing and nursing as if they were performed by someone else – *I saw myself, bobbing… nursing…* Thus, the past self is duplicated into both an observer and performer of the acts of bobbing and nursing.

Apparently, compared to the present tense use of the pattern *I see myself* which presents the direct perception of the narrating self, its past tense use in the

narratives *I saw myself* is a means of rendering the represented perception of the experiencing self. While *I see myself* presents a division between current narrator who observes his past emanation in action, *I saw myself* presents a split vision of the past hero towards his own self which typically arises from some feeling of disunity. In example (3) the dissociative experience comes after drunkenness and in example (4) the mind-body split results from a feeling of not belonging.

The mental images evoked by means of this sensory modality pattern, however, are not necessarily based in reality. Due to the visual quality of memory in Banville, the act of remembering amounts to recording spontaneous visions that have opened before the protagonists' eyes. But this immediately puts under question the authenticity of the events – as the actions may have happened, so they may well not have happened in reality and might be simply imagined – 'seen' – at the moment of narration. More evidence in support of this hypothesis can be found in other examples which employ the same technique and use the same sensory modality construction 'I see/saw myself' but unarguably present imaginary scenes:

(5) Usually these imaginary, clean killings took place at night, and involved sentries. I saw myself rising up out of the darkness, deft and silent as a cat, and at the last moment saying something, making some sound, just to give poor Fritz a chance. (Banville, *The Untouchable*, 314)

(6) I suppose these were the kind of things I planned to say to Nick if he should challenge me. I saw myself in a Noel Coward pose, world-weary, polished, briskly turning aside his remonstrations

with the flick of an invisible ebony cigarette holder. (Banville, *The Untouchable*, 458)

(7) The thought occurs and at once there I am, in shirt-sleeves and concertina trousers, stumbling sweat-stained behind the mower, grass-haulms in my mouth and the flies buzzing about my head. Odd, how often I see myself like this these days, at a distance, being someone else and doing things that only someone else would do. (Banville, *The Sea*, 43)

(8) Oh, dear. Oh, double dear. My life, it often seems to me, is a matter not of forward movement, as in time it must be, but of constant retreat. I see myself driven backwards by a throng of furiously shaking fists, my lip bleeding and my coat torn, stumbling over broken paving and whimpering piteously. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 268)

All four passages demonstrate narrated imagination. In the first example the narrator Viktor describes how he and Nick used to imagine being sent on a secret mission and how he wondered what it would be like to kill a person conjuring up hypothetical scenes of murder in his mind. The second passage, also from *The Untouchable*, reveals the thoughts of Viktor who frets about what he would respond to Nick in case he challenges him and evokes an imaginary image of himself in the place of the action. In third place we have the narrator Max from *The Sea* who narrates his spontaneous thoughts in the immediate present. Upon noticing that the grass needs cutting, he suddenly conjures up being behind the mower. Lastly, Oliver from *The Blue Guitar* ruminates about his life in his immediate speaker-*now* and sadly exclaims that he feels his life is

moving backwards, his thought accompanied by a palpable vision of himself pulled back by a crowd. What these examples show is that this sensory modality pattern is used in Banville not only to render memory but also imagination. The employment of the same semantic means for both mental faculties, however, immediately raises a question about the reliability of the memories presented in this way. If memory and imagination are narrated using an identical construction, then memory is strongly equated to imagination. The fact that the memory episodes in Banville are revealed as visual perceptions at the moment of speaking challenges their authenticity because the reader can't be sure whether they have really happened or the speaker is imagining them. In this line of thought, the memory report loses its reliability and becomes highly dubious.

To bring things together, the sensory modality construction 'I see myself doing something' is a peculiar narrative device used habitually by Banville. It not only divides the protagonist into current self and past self but turns the current self into a spectator of the acting past self. The story develops on two convergent narrative planes – the plane from which the narrator observes and the plane where the visual picture takes place and since the actions on these two axes unfold simultaneously, the two spatio-temporal entities become co-existent with each other. Such a pictorial presentation of the past, which turns the act of retrospection into a perceptual process, creates the impression of an unintegrated past, a past over which the speaker has no firm hold. Besides, memory recounted in the form of visual images that spring to mind is highly questionable in terms of its veracity because it might be mixed up with imagination. This is evidenced by the fact that Banville employs the same semantic means for the narration of both memory episodes and imaginary scenes. In addition, the tense in which the

linguistic construction *I see myself* is used in the narratives determines the viewpoint through which we are reading the events. If used in the present tense, it introduces the perception of the narrating self and if used in the past tense, it mostly portrays the perception of the experiencing self. But in the latter case the division is not between current self and its younger version but rather between past self acting as an experiencing self and a double of him that appears on scene.

The most striking way, however, in which this sensory modality pattern can be utilised is through the incorporation of a mental and, to a lesser extent, of a behavioural process in its macrophenomenon, which enacts a shift to the consciousness of the entity being visualised. It is then that the narration becomes truly double-voiced and the narrative becomes split between the outside perspective of the speaker and the inside perspective of the speaker's image taking part in the visualised scene, which indeed creates a 'special effect', but one that is effected on a narrative level. Through the skilful use of visual duplication in memory novels Banville creates a sophisticated and stylistically-nuanced 'special effect' with the protagonist wavering between observation and experience, objective report and subjective account and an external and internal perspective of the events. Therefore, this peculiar type of visual modality can be a powerful resource in retrospective novels as well and such instances of doubling, when not restricted to genres that are unrealistic by definition, may have larger psychological significance and present more psychological phenomena such as the construction of inner splitting as done by Banville.

3.1.3 I hear myself…

As the above section showed, the semantic pattern ‘I see/saw myself’ in Banville’s novels is one powerful construction that can express the splitting of the self. However, Banville does not restrict his presentation of the ‘divided self’ to the visual domain but extends it to other areas of perception, as well. Thus, in some passages the narrative events are filtered not through visual perception but through auditory perception, or the protagonist reflects experiences through his sense of hearing using a construction like ‘I heard myself’. Unlike the phrase ‘I see/saw myself’, which is realistic only if we are looking at ourselves in a mirror, ‘I heard myself’ is not that limited in use because we can hear both our own voices and noises and those of others. Yet, the construction ‘I heard myself’ when used in narrative texts does still imply a degree of personal disunity. The four examples I have selected from Banville all illustrate disconnection from the self by foregrounding the perception of one’s own speech rather than simply representing the speech itself:

(9) The Doctor and I were standing together at the foot of the bed, watching her, when I heard myself starting to tell him everything. Well, no, not everything; lifelong habits of dissembling die hard. I told him how Cass Cleave had known things about me, without saying what those things were, exactly, and how when I discovered what she knew I realised at once and for the first time that my wife had known them too. (Banville, *Shroud*, 401)

(10) There was that gasp of gratitude we could not restrain when someone of the ones in authority over us chose to relent in the prosecution of some trivial order of the day. I heard myself

doing it, that gasp, even with Axel, on those occasions, rare enough, when he would express indignation at a particularly egregious piece of petty-minded cruelty that had been ordered to be inflicted on our side of the square. (Banville, *Shroud*, 225)

(11) What a memory I have, to retain so many things and so clearly; I must be imagining them. I stood with my hands plunged in the pockets of my overcoat and squinted about. Bleak thoughts in a dying season. Then, to my considerable surprise, I heard myself asking if I might come round and call here again; I don't know what had come over me. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 333)

(12) A weeping woman is a terrible spectacle. I heard myself saying Polly's name over and over in a low, urgent voice, as if I were calling to her into the depths of a cave, and now I touched her gingerly on the shoulder, getting the same small shock I had got from the eiderdown. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 205)

In all these examples the auditory perception of the respective hero is portrayed in free indirect style (*were standing*, *had known*, *egregious*, *petty-minded*, *here*, *had come*, *now*, *had got*). Each protagonist disassociates himself from the actions performed by expressly relating them to his sense of hearing. In the first passage instead of simply saying *when I started to tell him everything*, the hero chooses to express his perceptual comprehension of it – *when I heard myself starting to tell him everything*. Similarly, the other passages represent the perception of what was said rather than simply report the speech – *I heard myself doing it* instead of *I did it*, *I heard myself asking* instead of *I asked* or *I heard myself saying Polly's name* instead of *I said Polly's name*. By explicitly

thematising the auditory perceptions of his actions rather than simply presenting the actions themselves, the narrator diverts the focus from the content of the utterance, i.e. what I said or asked, to the perception of one's own voice while speaking. The stylistic effect of this shift is that it creates the impression of a voice disconnected from the self.

In a recent study exploring the grammatical signs of the divided self Haiman (1998) claims that 'the perfect participant […] looks outward and is visually unaware of himself or herself' (169) referring to Langacker's notion of *total participation* on a speaker's part (1985). According to Langacker, a speaker's total nonrepresentation, which also includes the avoidance of the first-person pronoun, is the strongest marker of subjectivity. Drawing on the idea that any overly specified self-reference can be interpreted as a grammatical signal of alienation, Haiman identifies five linguistic signs of the divided self in first-person report which he arranges in increasing order from the weakest to the strongest: self-address; self-reference; self-conscious emotions; affectation and distinct representations of the self by reflexive pronouns. He pays greatest attention to the last type which he also names 'mind-body splits' and illustrates with the following examples:

1	a)	I expect — to win.	2	a)	I got — up.
	b)	I expect myself to win.		b)	I got myself up.

(72)

The reflexive pronoun *myself* in the second set of sentences indicates a separate entity and constitutes an extreme form of alienation between subject and object. It should also be noted that according to Haiman's classification this

is the strongest sign of division of all five in his list. Haiman himself comments that:

> The representation of reflexivity by a separate (nonclitic) reflexive pronoun in sentences like (5b) and (6b) [herein designated as (1b) and (2b)] originally signalled the recognition of not one but two participants and thus implied some kind of detachment from the self. (72)

The detachment is especially underlined with introverted verbs. Haiman makes use of the distinction *introverted-extroverted* verbs, with the first denoting an action typically performed on oneself, i.e. reflexivity is incorporated in it (e.g. *eat*), and the latter denoting an action typically performed on others (e.g. *feed*).

Along these lines, the co-referential pronouns *I* and *myself* linked with an introvertly-oriented verb like *hear* create the impression of two participants. This undermines the status of the individual as a single unified whole who can act upon his own volition. By saying ‘I heard myself saying something’ instead of ‘I said something’ the speaker makes a strong suggestion that the voice does not emanate from himself but rather acts upon its own will. The speaker does not act as a volitional agent and isn’t in control of his own voice. What he commits is a kind of unintentional, involuntary action, which deprives him of any agency and presents a picture of him as a subject whose actions and perceptions are detached from each other. This sensory modality pattern even implies stronger agency in the act of hearing than in the act of speaking, which turns the hero into a mere perceiver of speech that is occurring without him being

responsible for it. The self does not represent himself through his voice but through his auditory perception of this voice. Thus, the voice disconnected from the body and the speaker's lack of control over it represent a different type of inner splitting that characterises Banville's fiction. The dissociation of hearing and speaking creates the image of a personality that is poorly integrated and that fails to construct a coherent view of the self.

In his study on Banville, Ghassemi (2016) sees this process of 'hearing-oneself-speak' (179) as producing a ventriloquist effect:

> … the ventriloquist aspect of the voice is constantly highlighted through the way in which the voice does not quite coincide with his immediate self-perception. Far from a vehicle for personal expression, the voice functions as a vehicle for the expression of a certain foreignness… (162)

According to him, the voice that has an autonomous existence apart from the individual carries a certain degree of spectrality and brings a sense of uncanniness into the narrative.

3.1.4 I feel myself…

A more internalised self-discontinuity than the one introduced by phrases like 'I see/saw myself' or 'I heard myself' can be found in the narration of memory through a linguistic expression like 'I feel/felt myself'. The reason for this lies in the semantics of the verb 'feel' which, despite still being a verb of perception associated with the sense of touch, in its other meaning denoting psychological states is essentially different from the verbs 'see' and 'hear'.

While ‘see’ and ‘hear’ are primarily used to describe our perception of the outside world, ‘feel’ represents the perception of our inner feelings. And though in rare cases ‘see’ and ‘hear’ justify reflexivity, as, for example, hearing your own voice or seeing yourself in a mirror or photograph, the object that follows them is generally different from the perceiving subject. But even in those rare cases the perception of the self comes from outside. Therefore, as Ono (2004) says, ‘the object of *feel* is not the objective outward world as in the case of *see* and *hear*, but the subjective inner sense arising in the perceiver’ (419). It should also be borne in mind that the verb ‘feel’ can take two kinds of objects: a physical one – when you feel something happening in the outer reality (e.g. *I felt the earth tremble/trembling*.), and a mental one – when you feel a certain emotion rising in your inner world (e.g. *I felt my interest rise/rising*.) (Ono, 2004: 419).

So, apart from seeing and hearing themselves and dwelling simultaneously outside and inside, Banville’s protagonists go one step further in their self-disintegration by dividing themselves even within the inner realm of feeling. The construction *feel myself* is either employed in the present tense and linked to the consciousness of the narrating self or in the past tense to convey the internal state of the experiencing *I*. An example from *The Book of Evidence* illustrates the complex psychological implications of using this pattern to represent the point of view of the narrating *I* who speaks from his current immediate *now*:

(13) There is so much to be said I do not know where to begin. I feel myself staggering backwards slowly, clutching in my outstretched arms a huge, unwieldy and yet weightless burden. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 40)

Here, the construction *I feel myself* is used in the physical sense of the word *feel* to describe the speaker's bodily sensation of movement. Obviously, this excerpt presents the perception of the narrating *I*. But it should also be noted that the physical movement of staggering does not take place in reality but rather unfolds in the imagination of the narrator who likens his frustration of having too much to say to a metaphorical action of staggering backwards under the weight of this burden. Yet, he does not only say *I stagger backwards* but expresses his feeling with the more dissociative *I feel myself staggering backwards* as if the process of feeling and the process of staggering have as a performer two different agents, thus implying involuntary kinesthetic activity. But this type of doubling has a profound effect on the narration. Since it takes place at the discourse level of the narrating *I* speaking from the present moment, it gives a sense of the narrator being subdivided into two entities: a reflective narrator giving an account and a narrator experiencing the act of narration. The self-consciousness typical for metafiction reaches the point of overconsciousness here. In other words, this metafictional narrator is so self-conscious that he becomes overconscious and starts treating his mind and body as separate entities.

In other cases, this construction refers to a mental awareness of a certain emotion. In Banville's novels it is mainly used in the past tense to portray the internal state of the experiencing past *I*:

(14) The wind was pounding at the house now, rattling the windows and setting the rafters creaking and making the stove shoot out spurts of smoke through tiny gaps in the door and along the rim of the red-hot lid. Sitting there, I felt myself being absorbed

into the listless rhythm of the room. Olive, making yet another pot of tea, ignored me, and manoeuvred her way around me as if I were no more than a mildly awkward obstacle, one that had always been there. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 330)

(15) She paused, and took on a look of such deep and serious portent that I felt myself quailing before it; what new trial had she thought up for me, what new hoop would she produce for me to jump through? (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 184)

(16) For my part I was in that state of late-night hallucinated wakefulness that makes the very notion of sleep seem preposterous, yet presently I felt myself to be suddenly stepping off a footpath and missing my step, and I came to with a jolt that made the bed recoil, and realised I had drifted into a sort of sleep, after all. (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 324)

In passage (14) the protagonist Oliver recalls a visit to his sister Olive. The first sentence, represented in free indirect style, portrays the subjective viewpoint of the experiencing *I* signalled by the use of the progressive forms (*was pounding*, *rattling*, *setting*, *making*), the past perfect tense (*had always been*) as well as the temporal deictic word *now*. In the second sentence, however, the focaliser depicts his internal sensation of immersion into the scene by detaching from his own self (*I felt myself being absorbed* instead of *I felt absorbed*). The reflexive *myself*, as Haiman points out, is indicative of a separate being, which standing as a complement to the verb of inner sensation 'feel', is a strong marker of a deep internal split. As if the participant of the first process *I*

feels how the participant of the second process *myself* is absorbed into the rhythm of the room.

Excerpt (15) comes immediately after Polly announces to Oliver that she has decided to go home to her parents and just before she asks him to accompany her. The text is narrated in free indirect style which becomes especially obvious after the semicolon where we have the free indirect thought of the experiencing hero *what new trial had she thought up for me, what new hoop would she produce for me to jump through?* but before that he expresses his feeling of fright with *I felt myself quailing before it*, which can be qualified as psycho-narration because it reveals the hero's internal state. However, the wording *I felt myself quailing before it* with the two mental verbs, one linked to the senser and the other to the phenomenon, is exactly what creates the effect of self-disunity. Besides, the hero's feeling of disintegration is further strengthened by the fact that he lacks control over his emotional world. Rather than presenting what he feels, he describes how he catches himself in the middle of the experience with the progressive form of *quailing* designating an action in *medias res*.

The last example (16) is part of an episode in which the protagonist describes falling asleep one night. The scene is narrated in an extremely perceptual manner. Just like in example (13) above the material activity of *stepping off a footpath* does not find expression in real life but is only realised as a sensation in the hero's mind. Therefore, when he says *I felt myself to be suddenly stepping off a footpath*, he splits into two entities: the first one is the *I* who feels or, in this case, this task is performed by his half-awake, half-asleep mind, and the second one, *myself*, is the self who has just been released into the

sleep but has not yet lost grip of the body. So, there is a strong sense of doubleness in this phrase.

In short, the construction ‘I feel/felt myself doing something’ is another tool that helps to intensify the protagonists’ feeling of disconnection with their own selves but the lack of internal unity that shows up in these passages draws a different picture of the ‘divided self’ in Banville’s novels. Compared to the visual and auditory splits, this division works on a deeper, more internalised level. This time the perception is not related to the outer world but is directed towards the heroes’ innermost experience. Consequently, the heroes’ integrity is more deeply affected and their self-disintegration more firmly exhibited as they cannot hold things together in a single, unified and solid whole.

3.1.5 I find myself…

Apart from the afore-mentioned linguistic constructions ‘I see/saw myself doing something’, ‘I heard myself doing something’ and ‘I feel/felt myself doing something’, I have identified one more similar pattern which is as consistent and prominent as the above three and this is the construction ‘I find/found myself doing something’. Though it is markedly different from the first three, it still bears a considerable resemblance to be included in this chapter. While evidence that comes from the senses distinctly classifies as ‘sensory modality’ according to Palmer and while the verbs *see, hear* and *feel* fall strictly into the ‘perceptive’ subtype of sensing in Halliday’s classification of verbs of mental processes, the phrase ‘I find myself doing something’ still fits into the category of mental processes in Halliday’s transitivity system but can probably be more accurately

categorised as belonging to the subtype of ‘cognitive’ sensing as it is closest to the verb ‘realise’ in meaning. Moreover, it follows the same grammatical pattern of duplicating the senser and the phenomenon linking the two with a mental verb and additionally employing a non-finite verb form in the macrophenomenal clause to give a feeling of ongoingness of the action. But what seems of greatest significance is the fact that this structure is strongly related to the topic of the ‘divided self’ and presents a different aspect of self-division. For this reason, the linguistic analysis of this semantic construction will make an enormous contribution to the overall exploration of Banville’s narrative techniques of conveying the disturbed consciousness of his protagonists.

I have selected four examples, each one demonstrating a slightly differing characteristic in order to show the diverse effects that this construction can create. I have provisionally divided it into mind-mind split and mind-body split on the level of the narrating *I* and mind-mind split and mind-body split in the domain of the experiencing *I*. I begin with the first two mentioned here:

(17) Yet I find myself contemplating now, with a pang of what feels like genuine regret, the possibility that between us we might have produced a fine, bright boy, say, with her eyes and my limbs, or a glowing girl, a miniature version of her, complete with shapely ankles and slender toes and an unruly curl behind her ear. Absurd, absurd. (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 119)

(18) He has clambered back on to the wagon many a time, and although each time he has toppled off again, and although each fall takes a heavier toll on him generally, these repeated resurrections that he pulls off cheer me up, and I find myself

> breaking out in a smile of welcome when, after another ominous period of absence, he comes bustling towards me in the street, bright of eye, the nap of his suede boots brushed, his Trinners scarf freshly washed and free of drool. (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 138)

In example (17) the narrator, Alex Cleave, ruminates about his past relationship with Mrs Gray. The episode is filtered through the mind of the narrating *I* and presents the viewpoint of adult Alex. Through the use of the present tense and the temporal deictic *now* the scene is deictically anchored into his immediate narratorial present – *I find myself contemplating* ***now***. He makes a simultaneous report expressing his feelings (*with a pang of what feels like genuine regret*) and thoughts (*the possibility that between us we might have produced a fine, bright boy, …*) at the current moment. The syntax of the first long sentence from the passage reflects the train of thought as it unfolds in the speaker's mind – *a fine, bright boy, say, with her eyes and my limbs, or a glowing girl, a miniature version of her, complete with shapely ankles and slender toes and an unruly curl behind her ear* – followed by the almost exclamatory short oral-style sentence *Absurd, absurd*. What this passage targets, however, is the expression *I find myself contemplating now*, which shows the speaker's sudden realisation of his thoughts. It also indicates lack of control over his mind and a kind of disunion between his spontaneous thoughts and his conscious assimilation of them. Since the verb in the macrophenomenon (*contemplating*) following the verb of mental process in the main clause (*find* = realise) also denotes a mental activity, this expression displays a peculiar mind-mind split.

Conversely, passage (18), also aligned with the narrator's deictic centre, demonstrates a disjunction between mind and body and a lack of connection between the two. In it, Alex Cleave is doing his regular walk and observing, as usual, the homeless in the street. And while he is crossing a bridge one autumn morning, he suddenly sees a vagrant whom he hasn't seen for some time. More curious is the way in which Alex depicts his own reaction at the picture of the vagrant observed and, more specifically, the wording *I find myself breaking out in a smile of welcome*. The mental clause containing the verb of mental process *find*, which in this context means 'unexpectedly realise' or 'suddenly become aware of', has as a macrophenomenon the behavioural process *breaking out in a smile of welcome* which reflects the physical acting out of a psychological state. So the expression *I find myself breaking out in a smile* shows a kind of mind-body discoordination in which the body does one thing which the mind does not initiate but rather just registers afterwards. It is as if the senser (*I*) and the phenomenon (*myself*) are two separate entities that act as two separate agents.

The same expressions can be encountered in the past tense, as well, but this time deictically centered on the consciousness of the experiencing self:

(19) She stood at a crouch, with her fists braced on her knees and her face a crumpled mask, trying not to look at us as we grappled there. I found myself wondering in mild annoyance what it could be that so ailed her, when it was we, Lydia and I, who should have been crying out in anguish and in pain; had Lydia frightened her, or hurt her in some way, by slapping her, perhaps? (Banville, *Eclipse*, 193)

(20) My first impulse was to thank him for his kind offer and politely decline it — a lift to where, anyway? — but instead I found myself walking round by the front of the throbbing machine, through the glare of the head-lamps, and climbing up into the passenger seat. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 259)

Extract (19), taken from *Eclipse*, portrays a fighting scene between the protagonist, Alex, and his wife, Lydia, in which Lydia pounds him and yells at his face and Alex holds her wrists when he suddenly hears a wailing sound from the doorway. When he looks at its direction, he sees Lily, the caretaker's teenage daughter. The whole second sentence presents the free indirect thought of the experiencing *I* captured at the moment of its occurrence in the past moment – *what it could be that so ailed her, when it was we, Lydia and I, who should have been crying out in anguish and in pain; had Lydia frightened her, or hurt her in some way, by slapping her, perhaps?*. But the introductory phrase *I found myself wondering in mild annoyance* attracts attention. Instead of the expected *I wondered in mild annoyance*, the protagonist puts emphasis on the dual working of his mind. On the one hand, the senser *I* makes a sudden discovery of being engaged in a thought process. On the other, the phenomenon *myself* performs the mental process of wondering. And the two mental verbs denote two different centres of consciousness. Similarly to example (17) above, this passage shows a mind-mind split but this time the detachment takes place entirely in the mind of the experiencing hero as the statement is framed in free indirect style.

Passage (20) can also be attributed to the experiencing self. In this scene, Oliver is stopped by a car on his way home. It is Freddie Hyland who offers to give him a lift. The episode is focalised through the consciousness of the

experiencing hero. In parenthesis we have the free direct thought of Oliver (*a lift to where, anyway?*), or his internal speech – words that he doesn't utter aloud. After that, the sentence continues in a mode midway between psycho-narration and represented perception – psycho-narration because it reveals the hero's internal state of mental realisation and represented perception because it displays the sensual perception of his bodily movement. Once more, the phrase *I found myself walking* implies lack of control over the physical body – as if there are two beings, the first one only feels, i.e. performs a mental activity, and the second one does the material action of walking. But there is no alignment between the performance of the physical action and its conscious perception on the part of the doer. Just like excerpt (18) this passage illustrates a mind-body disjunction, only in example (20) the disruption happens in the head of the experiencing hero.

To sum up, this subsection presented one more linguistic construction which follows the model of the perceptually modalised narrative utterances with the distinction that this one is more cognitively-oriented. Yet, despite this dissimilarity, the construction adds to the general topic of internal division by intensifying further the aspect of spontaneity in the characters' experiences and their absolute lack of control over their own mental and physical activities. This new construction also takes the 'special effects' technique one step further from duplication in the field of perception to a detachment in the domain of cognition.

3.1.6 On the origin of these patterns

Such sensory modality patterns that position the *I* as subject and object simultaneously feature prominently in Banville's fiction and play a major role in the portrayal of the 'divided self'. But although Banville has to be credited with his linguistic ingenuity in utilising these modality stances to create psychological implications, we can also trace some literary influences that have predisposed him to favour these peculiar transitivity constructions. As already explained in Chapter 2, a few writers have exercised enormous influence on Banville. One of them is Beckett who, like Banville, is of Irish origin and a careful examination of his texts reveals that Beckett also tends to use this pattern of splitting in his prose. This hints at a possibility that these constructions may have something to do with Hiberno English. In fact, this connection was suggested to me by Sylvia Adamson at a conference but I was unable to find a linguistic proof of that hypothesis. My research rather shows that these patterns owe their origin not so much in the Irish language as in literary influences because they are traceable in Nabokov as well. Since Beckett and Nabokov's influence on Banville is clear, it is not surprising that many features of their style interrelate with or transfer into Banville's writing. For this reason, the prose of Beckett and Nabokov merits consideration as a possible source of inspiration for the use of this linguistic structure and this is evident even without subjecting their works to thorough scrutiny.

A few examples extracted from Beckett's *The Unnamable* show the author's inclination towards this type of sensory modality that utilises a co-referential subject and object pronoun:

> But this is thinking again. And I see myself slipping, though not yet at the last extremity, towards the resorts of fable. (Beckett, *The Unnamable*, 88)

> That's to lull me, till I imagine I hear myself saying, myself at last, to myself at last, that it can't be they, speaking thus… (Beckett, *The Unnamable*, 161)

> … that's how I reason, that's how I hear myself reasoning, all lies, it's not me they're calling… (Beckett, *The Unnamable*, 279)

> No, I need nobody, they'll start sprouting under my arse, unaided, some day I feel myself soaring above my condition. (Beckett, *The Unnamable*, 164)

> This touching picture of my situation I found by no means unattractive and as I recall it I find myself wondering again if I was not in fact the creature revolving in that yard… (Beckett, *The Unnamable*, 109)

The same modality pattern is also a distinctive feature of Nabokov's *Lolita* but while Beckett's use of this construction is primarily in the present tense, which places the narrative in the immediate discourse present of the narrator and reveals his current process of thinking, in Nabokov it is more diversely utilised in terms of tense. Consider:

> I see myself following him through the hall, with a kind of double, triple, kangaroo jump… (Nabokov, *Lolita*, 430)

> I saw myself administering a powerful sleeping potion to both mother and daughter… (Nabokov, *Lolita*, 96)
>
> 'Lo! Lola! Lolita!' I hear myself crying from a doorway into the sun (Nabokov, *Lolita*, 332)
>
> In order to break some pattern of fate in which I obscurely felt myself being enmeshed, I had decided…. (Nabokov, *Lolita*, 301)
>
> Cars coming towards me wobbled, swerved, and cried out in fear. Presently I found myself approaching populated places. (Nabokov, *Lolita*, 435)

Apart from the marked distinctions in tense use, the sensory modality constructions in both writers' novels also differ in the type of process encoded in the non-finite progressive verb forms which constitute the macrophenomena in the respective sentences. The transitivity patterns in Beckett exhibit a tendency towards mental, verbal or behavioural processes compared to the more material processes in Nabokov. Due to these grammatical characteristics, Beckett's narrator is depicted as a pensive individual brooding over his current situation. The doubling of the first-person pronoun in the modality constructions in question as well as the introduction of a second centre of consciousness evoked especially by the mental processes in the macrophenomena (e.g. *I hear myself reasoning*) lends a double-voiced quality to the narration, thus enacting personality splitting. In this way, the language of the speaker reveals that his continuity of self is broken. Indeed, Beckett's writing is generally assessed by critics to present 'dissociation of the unity of consciousness into disparate

elements, into non-identity' (Adorno, 2019: 246) or a 'metafictional dissolution of the "writing subject"' (Weisberg, 2000: 5).

Nabokov's protagonist, in contrast, narrates his memories of past events. The tense shifts in the narrative point out that the story is sometimes recounted through the consciousness of the young self, sometimes handed over to the mature adult self. The transitivity patterns in question portray him as a perceiver of dynamic actions (e.g. *I see myself following him*). According to Grishakova (2006), Nabokov often uses 'the motif of distancing oneself from the present in order to see it' (42). Thus, the 'displacement necessary to cognise the present entails duplication of the "self", i.e. the split of the observer into the observing and the observed "self"' (42-43).

Obviously, despite the slight differences in tense use and type of process in the macrophenomena in the two writers' fiction, the selected sensory modality patterns reinforce their stylistic function of conveying division, disunity and displacement as these themes are dominant in Beckett and Nabokov, as well. Taking into consideration the influence of Beckett and Nabokov on Banville and the ideological and formal similarities between their works, I am strongly inclined to believe that, whether purposefully or unintentionally, Banville has absorbed these patterns from his predecessors making use of all their varieties.

Moreover, the establishment of a regular grammatical pattern has an important linguistic function. As Halliday points out in his groundbreaking transitivity analysis of Golding's *The Inheritors* (2005), the foregrounding of a certain feature indubitably carries stylistic meaning:

> … the fact that a particular pattern constitutes a norm *is* the meaning. The linguistic function of the pattern is therefore of some importance. The features that we have seen to be foregrounded in *The Inheritors* derive from the ideational component in the language system; hence they represent, at the level at which they constitute a norm, a world-view, a structuring of experience that is significant because there is no *a priori* reason why the experience should have been structured in this way rather than in another. (119)

Consequently, the pervasive use of these sensory modality patterns in Banville cannot be but a deliberate choice, hence they must be treated as an important stylistic feature through which the speaker transmits a certain mindset towards the world and his participation in it. As we have seen, the specific type of sensory modality that I have discussed is indicative of inner splitting and therefore facilitates the expression of the 'divided self'.

3.1.7 Concluding remarks

The whole section 3.1 has investigated the use of a specific type of sensory modality which uses pronouns of the same person as subject and object and which is called by Emmott the 'special effects' technique. While Emmott examines this linguistic structure in a fantastical context where its function is on a plot level, my research explores it in a more detailed way in the more realistic context of the genre of retrospective fiction and in relation to memory. My study shows that although the 'special effects' technique is a narrowly-defined sensory modality pattern, it has a far-reaching significance and can convey complex

psychological meanings through the narrative structure of the text. I have presented a wide range of examples to give a broader view of how the ‘special effects’ technique works in different narrative situations and how this creates multiple layers of stylistic meaning. As indicated, there are further details that can be added to Emmott’s discussion and these include: the function of these sensory modality patterns when used in the present and the past tense, the larger set of verbs that can be used as part of this technique, the role of the present participle forms in the macrophenomenal clauses, as well as the type of transitivity process construed as macrophenomenon. When all these aspects are accounted for, we find a variety of semantic nuances associated with this linguistic construction.

Moreover, the ‘special effects’ technique is not an isolated case in Banville but a highly consistent narrative pattern, which inevitably turns it into a stylistic device. The examples used in this study are but a fraction of all examples encountered in the novels. The extracts that I have presented for analysis are selected to demonstrate as many of the facets of the subject as possible and illustrate a variety of subtleties that arise upon interpretation. In all of the above-quoted passages the senses are the major source of the information communicated. The evidence used comes from visual, auditory or other sensory modalities. Taking into consideration Palmer’s definition of modality as ‘the grammaticalisation of the speakers' (subjective) attitudes and opinions’ (Palmer, 1986: 16) and his assumption that ‘modality is concerned with the status of the proposition that describes the event’ (Palmer, 2001: 1), it can be concluded that the foregrounding of the sensory perceptions highlights the importance of the narrators’ perceptual engagement with the world. All aforementioned examples

from Banville involving sensory modality present experiences which are strongly imbued with perception.

This reiterates my earlier point that when memory is framed as pictures, the retrospective process turns into a perceptual act. This, however, creates dissociation between the perception of the experience and the experience itself, which, as Palazzolo (2019) notes, leads to discontinuity of the self: 'Banville's fictional universe immerses the reader in the myriad of sensory impressions that interrupt the narrator's attempt to maintain a sense of totality within multiplicity' (92). Such self-representation then reflects a splintered self-image and foregrounds the inconceivable nature of the remembered self – a self that remains beyond comprehension. The lack of self-continuity and identity integration implicit in these sensory modality markers is therefore a strong linguistic sign of the protagonists' discordant identity and divided sense of self.

3.2 Hypothetical focalisation

3.2.1 Introduction

Although all subtypes of sensory modality discussed above occur commonly throughout the novels, the one that is most extensively used is visual modality. A large number of these instances of visual splitting, apart from the general characteristics of this construction described in section 3.1.2, contain additional linguistic markers of hypotheticity, which further downgrade the integrity of the self and add a new layer of complexity to the topic of inner splitting. Therefore, in this section I will explore these special cases when vision is presented as hypothetical.

One scholar who deals with a similar phenomenon is Herman (1994) and he calls it *hypothetical focalisation*. According to Herman's own definition, hypothetical focalisation is 'the use of hypotheses, framed by the narrator or a character, about what might be or have been seen or perceived – if only there were someone who could have adopted the requisite perspective on the situations and events at issue' (231) as in the opening of Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Fall of the House of Usher* in which Usher's house is presented neither from the viewpoint of the narrator, nor that of a character in the story but from the viewpoint of a hypothetical observer: 'Perhaps the eye of a scrutinising observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in the front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tar' [my underlining] (231).

Herman also proposes a model for classifying types of hypothetical focalisation. He outlines two main varieties – *direct* and *indirect* – both of which can be secondarily divided into a *strong* and *weak* subvariety. Below is a brief outline of some of the examples that Herman uses to illustrate the different categories:

Direct strong hypothetical focalisation

> An observer might have speculated for some time as to whether they [Roland Michell and Maud Bailey] were travelling together or separately, for their eyes rarely met... (A.S. Byatt, *Possession*)

Direct weak hypothetical focalisation

> Despite this over-evident contrast between them, Dixon realised that their progress, deliberate and to all appearances thoughtful, must seem rather donnish to passing students.(K. Amis, *Lucky Jim*)

Indirect strong hypothetical focalisation

> Viewed from a balcony, the whole thing would, doubtless, have been weirdly picturesque. But the men in the boat had no time to see it... (S. Crane, *The Open Boat*)

Indirect weak hypothetical focalisation

> Dinner was being served very slowly. Candles – possible to see from the water – were lit now. (E. Bowen, *Her Table Spread*) [my underlining] (238-243)

According to this categorisation, direct hypothetical focalisation is reflected by an explicitly thematised counterfactual witness, whereas indirect hypothetical focalisation features an implicit onlooker whose presence is inferred from the narrative discourse. In the examples above, *An observer might have speculated* makes a direct mention of a hypothetical focaliser compared to *Viewed from a balcony* where the presence of an onlooker is invoked by the verb of perception *view*. As far as the additional distinction between strong and weak is concerned, in the first case the narrator calls on an entirely new entity on the scene as in *An observer might have speculated*, while in the second case the hypothetical focaliser is part of the reference world of the novel as in *must seem rather donnish to passing students* where the passing students are actual participants in the scene or in *possible to see from the water* which presents the imaginary perspective of the sailors on the water. In brief, in weak hypothetical

focalisation ‘the narrator merely imputes virtual acts to actual figures’ as opposed to strong hypothetical focalisation where the narrator calls on ‘one or more virtual figures to perform an equally virtual act of focalisation’ (Herman, 1994: 239).

The narrative phenomenon described by Herman, however, has points of resemblance to Banfield’s *empty centre* (Banfield, 1987; Fludernik, 1993, 1996; Sotirova, 2020). The empty centre is a narrative technique originally identified by Banfield which includes ‘sentences with a deictic centre but without any explicit or implicit representation of an observer’ (Banfield, 1987: 273), as in the following example from *The Waves*:

> The sun had now sunk lower in the sky. The islands of cloud had gained in density and drew themselves across the sun so that the rocks went suddenly black, and the trembling sea-holly lost its blue and turned silver, and shadows were blown like grey cloths over the sea (Woolf, *The Waves*, 155)

The passage teems with subjectivity markers of various kinds (*had sunk*, *now*, *islands of clous*, *black*, *trembling*, *blue*, *silver*, *like grey cloths*) that suggest a conscious perceptual experience from within, even though the text does not display any linguistic features implying the presence of a personal subject. In this, the empty centre is potentially reminiscent of the indirect type of hypothetical focalisation in Herman’s model. While in the direct type of hypothetical focalisation it is more strongly and explicitly highlighted that somebody is looking, the indirect type of hypothetical focalisation and the empty centre appear more ingrained in the language and it is the implicit nature of

indirect hypothetical focalisation where the similarity with the empty centre is more pronounced. In some cases, however, an observer might be implicated within the empty centre through the use of impersonal *you* or generic *one* as in *Perhaps if you had waked up in the middle of the night, you might have seen a big fish flicking in at the window* (Fludernik, 1993: 382) or *Now the leaping, glittering sea was so bright it made one's eyes ache to look at it* (Fludernik, 1996: 149), which, according to Fludernik, has the effect of projecting the reader into this text-internal position, thus inducing reader empathy.

This brings up the problem of attribution of point of view when hypothetical focalisation is used in narrative texts. Herman sees hypothetical focalisation as encoding a peculiar type of epistemic modality which expresses possibility focalised through the eyes of a non-existent observer. This imagined perspective is typically marked by modals of uncertainty: ***Perhaps*** *the eye of a scrutinising observer* ***might*** *have discovered…*, *An observer* ***might*** *have speculated…*, etc., where the modals *perhaps* and *might* are evocative of the viewpoint of the hypothetical entity. But on closer inspection, they might actually be emanating from the narrator who is projecting that hypothetical observer. This means that it is the narrator who expresses possibility and not the observer and the modality markers are anchored to him and not to the hypothetical focaliser. Equally, in the indirect type of hypothetical focalisation, the phrases belonging to the counterfactual witness might be viewed as stemming from the narrator after all.

Sotirova's recent article (2020) about the status of the Modernist narrator, in which she re-examines the empty centre, targets exactly the question about

the narrator's role in passages displaying the empty centre strategy. She reaches the conclusion that:

> In ontological and epistemological terms, this narrator can no longer be unequivocally considered an omniscient extradiegetic figure, but must also be capable of embodying a figure with limited knowledge of the narrative world and a specific deictic and evaluative stance which is not impersonal. (93)

What emerges from this analysis is that a narrator, in Modernism at least, is actually not always omniscient and objective and, as typically assumed, detached from the narrative world but can act almost as a personalised narrator who is on the same level as the characters restricted by a limited point of view. In the same way, the narrators in the hypothetical focalisation examples might be embodying the figure of the observer and projecting themselves into this deictic centre. Considering all this, it is to Herman's credit to have pointed out this narrative phenomenon. I find its greatest usefulness in acknowledging the existence of cases when the hypothetical observer is explicitly introduced but in cases of the so-called indirect hypothetical focalisation, the existing linguistic accounts about the empty centre might be more precise. Yet, the latter do not deal with the first category when an observer is explicitly mentioned, so, it is helpful to make the distinction between the two.

The reason why hypothetical focalisation interests me in the present study is because of the concept of hypothetical projections of an observer which can be made in a narrative. In my exploration of Banville, I have identified a unique type of presenting perceptual experience which involves the use of hypothesis

but in a very different form from the original examples given in Herman. This new phenomenon is encountered entirely in first-person contexts and, more importantly, contains hypothetical focalisation on one's own self, which is essentially different from the following example of hypothetical focalisation in a first-person novel which Herman provides: 'Jewel and I come up from the field, following the path in single file. Although I am fifteen feet ahead of him, anyone watching us from the cottonhouse can see Jewel's frayed and broken straw hat a full head above my own' (Herman, 1991: 237-38). In this example, as in the examples from third-person novels, the counterfactual observer is a separate entity. In Banville's texts, however, the innovative and more elaborate use of hypothetical focalisation stems from the fact that the counterfactual observer is the very speaker who adopts a hypothetical external position towards his own self. It is these hypothetical projections of oneself that make his examples remarkable and where the stylistic effect of division can be sought.

Therefore, in this section I will investigate a hitherto unexplored complexity of hypothetical focalisation when used in first-person texts. Given the prominence and the frequency of occurrence of this pattern in Banville, this linguistic novelty strongly characterises his style of writing and, as we shall see, acts as another linguistic signal of the 'divided self'. This extraordinary narrative technique involves not only the narrative practice of a present self externally focalising the past self but shows a much more fluid nature as this focalisation split can also occur both within the realm of the past self and within the realm of the present self alone. In the following three subsections I will consider each case in turn.

3.2.2 Present self as a hypothetical focaliser of past self

My first set of examples will be a case in which the adult narrator adopts a hypothetical external focalisation towards his young self. In section 3.1.2, which discusses visual modality patterns, I have shown that it is often the case in Banville's novels that the narrators assume an observing position in relation to their past experiences and present past scenes as vivid pictures still unfolding in the present. In this narrative situation the adult self watches his past life as a motion picture and plays the role of a spectator who describes what he is seeing. However, at certain times the narrator's external position of an eyewitness acquires a strong hypothetical character as the narrator's consciousness evokes a hypothetical version of himself located on the scene of action. The following extract from *Shroud* gives a telling example of a hypothetically viewed scene from the past:

(21) It was spring again when the two toughs waylaid me in the park. They were big bruisers, not as big as I am, but big enough. […] It all happened wordlessly. I wonder that I did not cry out for help – there were always bobbies on the beat in those days. Curiously, **I recall the incident from outside, as if I had not been part of it, but a witness, rather, a bad Samaritan hanging back in the bushes**. I see myself there, walking purposefully along a path with high laurel hedges on either side. It is coming on for twilight, very nice and calm, the air smelling of grass after its first cutting of the season. I am wearing a grey, double-breasted pin-striped suit, brown brogues, a grey fedora with a black satin band, every inch the

> gent. I am feeling full of vigour and purpose; […] However, here comes a harder reality in the shape of one of my two assailants, in cap and tight, shiny suit, enquiring for a match for his cigarette. I should have known. While I was fishing in my pockets, the other one came up behind me and struck me with a cosh. (Banville, *Shroud*, 290)

The hypothetical standpoint of the narrator is most explicitly stated in the sentence *Curiously, I recall the incident from outside, as if I had not been part of it, but a witness, rather, a bad Samaritan hanging back in the bushes*. Obviously, the speaker has a hazy memory of the events and feels detached from the experience. The flashback episode is not consistently focalised through the consciousness of the experiencing *I*. Though the beginning and the end of the selected passage seem aligned with the perspective of the young self, the larger part of the scene is viewed externally and portrays a vision of the narrating *I* at the moment of speaking. More importantly, this vision is made hypothetical because, as the hero states, he recalls the incident from outside, ***as if*** he were not a participant of the events but a mere witness. The conjunction *as if* emphasises the improbability of the proposition as it is used to describe an unreal situation.

Therefore, the narrator adopts a hypothetical external position in relation to his past self. The external report is signalled first by the verb *see* and the distal deictic adverb *there* in the phrase *I see myself there* and, secondly, by the shift to the present tense which marks the present discourse of the narrator, whereas the hypothetical quality of the statement is indicated by the modal conjunction *as if*. What is more interesting here is that compared to Herman's hypothetical focalisers who are always separate entities, Banville's heroes adopt a

hypothetical viewpoint towards their own selves. This focalisation strategy in which the speaker focalises himself from the outside can more justly be called hypothetical self-focalisation.

Even when the narrator's position of a 'witness' is not explicitly stated as in the previous example, any passage following the same pattern of presenting a detached version of a past experience of which the speaker does not have a conscious memory or cannot distinctly remember, can still be indicative of a hypothetically focalised narrative description. Two similarly composed passages reveal this hypothetical external perspective of the narrating *I* in relation to his past self:

(22) My mother feared I too would die. Jack Kay reminded her how his brothers, her homuncles, had succumbed after a day. She nursed me with a kind of vehemence, willing me to live. She would not let me out of her sight. She made a nest for me in the big drawer of the wardrobe in her bedroom. **I see myself** lying there, unnaturally silent, slowly flexing my bandy arms and legs, like a tortoise stranded on its back. When she leans over me I look at her gropingly and frown. (Banville, *Mefisto*, 11-12)

(23) Of the journey I remember little. That is to say, I do not remember changing gears, accelerating and slowing down, working the pedals, all that. **I see myself** moving, all right, as if in a crystal bubble, flying soundlessly through a strange, sunlit, glittering landscape. I think I went very fast, for I recall a sensation of pressure in my ears, a dull, rushing blare. So I

> must have driven in circles, round and round those narrow country roads. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 109)

Obviously, in these two scenes the voice cannot truly belong to the past self because the protagonists don't have a conscious experience of the situations. In extract (22) the speaker sees himself as a baby. In example (23) he does not have a clear memory of the events. Therefore, in both cases the narrator presents externally a hypothetical image of his previous self. His depiction of himself as a baby is entirely imagined as he can't possibly have authentic knowledge of what exactly he did (e.g. *lying there*; *slowly flexing my bandy arms and legs*) and how he looked (*unnaturally silent)*. What is more, he makes an evaluative comment on this vision which demonstrates mental reasoning that a baby cannot possess – *like a tortoise stranded on its back*. In the second passage his memory totally betrays him and he only manages to evoke a hypothetical vision of his car journey without being able to supply any definite evidence of it – *I see myself moving, all right, as if in a crystal bubble, flying soundlessly through a strange, sunlit, glittering landscape*; *I think I went very fast*; *I must have driven in circles*. As can be noticed, the scene is described with a strong degree of uncertainty signalled by markers of epistemic modality such as *as if*; *I think*; *must have driven*. Both episodes are mediated through the mind of the adult narrator who hypothesises what his past were and how he felt.

A different variety of hypothetical external focalisation towards the past self is discernible in passages in which a scene internally focalised by the experiencing self is suddenly followed by the current reflection of the narrating self who is speculating how he must have looked through the eyes of others back then. In other words, the narrators' lens of observing move to the hypothetical

external look of other people through whose eyes the current self is trying to see the past self. The speculative tone of such reflections is often reinforced by markers of deductive epistemic modality (as per Palmer) such as the modal verb *must*, as demonstrated by the following examples:

(24) Without thinking to do it I reached out and took one of Cass Cleave's hands in both of mine and smiled my compelling smile again, showing my teeth. **What a spectacle we must have been for the other lunchers in the place**, the rank old roué pawing this pale girl and grinning like a horse. (Banville, *Shroud*, 104)

(25) The bus plunged laboriously down the narrow country roads, pitching and wallowing, with a dull zip and roar that seemed the sound of my own blood beating in my brain. […] Yet I can see that **to someone like Charlie, watching from the ground, I must have seemed a creature of fable** scaling the far peaks, rising higher and ever higher, leaping at last from the pinnacle into marvellous, fiery flight, my head wreathed in flames. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 37)

(26) Then a Guard threw a blanket over my head and bundled me into a squad car. […] **What an interesting figure I must have cut, glimpsed there**, sitting up in the back like a sort of mummy, as the car sped through the wet, sunlit streets, bleating importantly. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 5)

In all three passages the initial free indirect account that seems aligned with the perspective of the past self is shifted to the narrator's immediate present,

made most obvious by the change from past to present tense. But the narrator's current ruminations about the past involve a reflection of the scene through the eyes of hypothetical observers and a description of what they probably saw there. Compared to examples (22) and (23) hereof, in which the older self of the hero turns into a hypothetical observer of his past self (*I see myself there…*), these three passages place the focalisation into the eyes of a third party. The second sentences of passages (24), (25) and (26), highlighted in bold and underlined, render the hypothetical viewpoint of entities that have been or could have been present on the past scene of action as observers. Passage (24) follows the gaze of 'the other lunchers in the place', passage (25) portrays the hero in the eyes of 'someone like Charlie' and passage (26) traces the look of an imaginary observer (all highlighted in bold). If we adopt Herman's categorisation of hypothetical focalisation varieties, we would have to classify excerpts (24) and (25) as direct focalisation because they explicitly appeal to the hypothetical witness and excerpt (26) as indirect focalisation because it invokes the perspective of a counterfactual onlooker whose presence is inferred from the verb *glimpsed* as it presupposes the existence of an agent of the activity of glimpsing. Additionally, the first two passages, (24) and (25), would also represent a weak version of hypothetical focalisation because the entities charged with the task of hypothetical observation are part of the storyworld.

We could say then that the focalisation in these three extracts is split between the narrating self (self 1), the experiencing self (self 2) and the hypothetical observer (self 3). But, on further scrutiny, the narrating self actually maps his own consciousness onto the hypothetical observer's perspective. Put differently, the viewpoint of self 1 and self 3 superimpose on each other. The

image of the past self evoked by the hypothetical spectator fully coincides with the narrator's feelings for himself and with the way he perceives his own personality. So, the hypothetical observer's viewpoint is, in its essence, an emanation of the narrator's perspective. As an external observer of the past, the adult narrator now has the chance to look at himself from a different angle by stepping into the shoes of hypothetical witnesses. Yet, what they see is exactly what he sees upon observing himself. Therefore, the hypothetical observer is none other than the narrating self.

To recap, the textual examples in this subsection have shown a particular narrative configuration in which the present self not only adopts a position of an external observer in relation to his younger self but also evokes a hypothetical version of himself on the past scene of action. The speaker constructs a fictitious image of himself either from the point of view of the older self or from the perspective of others. So, apart from the speaker's inability to maintain the viewpoint of the experiencing self and his constant return to the present moment of narration, which suggests internal instability, we also have a hypothetical outlook on the past events that creates further division. Therefore, the hypothetical focalisation of past scenes performed by the first-person speaker acts as yet another linguistic mechanism of the 'divided self'.

3.2.3 Past self as a hypothetical focaliser of past self

In Banville's novels hypothetical external focalisation is not always delegated to the present self who would be looking at his past self with the eyes of a grown-up but is also discernible on the level of the present self and the past

self alone when the focalisation split would concern one and the same temporal manifestation of the hero. And when the split happens in either of these two realms, the self-division of the protagonists becomes twice augmented. My analysis shows that a focalisation split in the realm of the past self is more frequent than the same in the realm of the present self. For this reason, I will begin with this type first by immediately proposing for consideration a passage from *Ancient Light* which deploys consciousness bifurcation transcribed entirely in the mind of young Alex in the midst of his past experience:

(27) I put my hands on her shoulders. The broad groove between her breasts had a silvery sheen. She began to say something, and stopped, and then—it was the strangest thing—then **I saw us there, actually saw us, as if I were standing in the doorway looking into the room**, saw me hunched against her, canted a little to the left with my right shoulder lifted, saw the shirt wet between my shoulder-blades and the seat of my wet trousers sagging, saw my hands on her, and one of her glossy knees flexed, and her face paling above my left shoulder and her eyes staring. She pushed me aside. Of all the things that were about to start happening, I think that push, the shock of it, although it was not violent or even ungentle, is the thing I have remembered of that day with the keenest clarity, the acutest anguish. (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 352)

In this scene the protagonist, the retired actor Alexander Cleave, returns to a teenage memory of his intimate relationship with Mrs Gray – twenty years his senior and his best friend's mother. The episode above takes place in the laundry

room in the Grays' house where the two of them go after getting wet in the rain in the forest. After the initial sentence of narratorial report describing that he put his hands on her shoulder, the account continues in free indirect style, or more precisely in the mode of represented perception. The second sentence reflects the visual perception of the boy Alex who notices 'the silvery sheen' of the groove between Mrs Gray's breasts. In the next sentence, the subjective viewpoint of the experiencing self is traceable in the choppy syntax reflecting his mental uneasiness (e.g. *…and stopped, and then […] then I…*) as well as in the parenthetical clause separated from the main sentence with dashes *it was the strangest thing* which presents the free indirect thought of young Alex. What follows is a dramatic moment of self-division in which the boy on the scene separates from his body and takes an assumed position in the doorway by claiming *I saw us there, actually saw us, as if I were standing in the doorway looking into the room*. The hypothetical standpoint of the speaker is signalled by the epistemic conjunction *as if* which indicates an imaginary location. After this sudden out-of-body experience focalisation is transferred to the boy's double who offers a fanciful vision of himself and Mrs Gray (underlined segment).

Therefore, the third sentence of this passage presents a case of hypothetical focalisation, which parallels Herman's categorisation of a counterfactual witness through whose eyes a narrative scene is focalised. Only, in Banville, the hypothetical observer is not a different person attracted to the scene but a duplicate of the very protagonist who splits into performer and onlooker thus intensifying his internal division. Besides, being simultaneously inside and outside himself inevitably leads to a double focalisation of the events. But what is peculiar here is the fact that this focalisation split unfolds in a passage written

entirely in free indirect style that renders the subjective viewpoint of the past self, hence the past self adopts a position of a hypothetical external focaliser of the very same past self.

This odd mixture of in-body and out-of-body consciousness finds reflection in the language of the narrative as well. Linguistically speaking, the external perspective of the observing duplicate of the experiencing past self is most conspicuous in the clauses containing the verb of perception 'saw'. The first sign of distance is the distal deictic adverbial 'there' in *I saw us there*, which immediately creates an impression of self-division even before the protagonist claims his hypothetical location in the doorway. Next, the sequence of the non-finite clauses is another strong indication of a visually perceived external entity as, according to Adamson (1999), it is used to 'add descriptive details to the scenario sketched in the main clause' (637). Fludernik (1993) further claims that 'the order of perception may be mirrored iconically by the word order' (305). To put it another way, a sequence of non-finite clauses typically reflects a vision as seen through the eyes of the observer, with the past participles describing a state (*hunched*, *canted*, *lifted*, *flexed*) and the present participles describing an action (*sagging*, *paling*, *staring*). And last, but not at all the least, the pronoun 'me' in *saw me*, where *saw myself* would be expected, further intensifies the split between observer and observed by objectifying even more the self in the observed position.

The use of 'me' in place of 'myself' has caught the attention of a few scholars all of which see it as a linguistic marker of self-division. Haiman (1998) comments that reflexive pronouns typically signal 'syntactic coreference' and when a subject *I* is aligned with an object *myself*, this shows 'sameness of

reference' but when a subject *I* is aligned with an object *me,* this clearly marks 'distinct reference' as in the following example:

a) I'm in charge of *myself*.

b) I'm in charge of *me*. [my italics] (76-77)

Haiman explains that in example b) 'the subject/speaker 'I' is treating the object 'me' as an entirely separate entity' and also that 'the failure of reflexive pronouns (himself, myself, etc.) to occur in syntactic contexts where they should be expected is usually a sign that the individual is divided into a self and a counterpart' (77).

Wales (1996) sees this variation as a 'viewpoint or empathy shift' (190) and illustrates it with the so-called 'picture noun phrases':

a) *I* have a photo of *me* on holiday in Canada.

b) *I* have a photo of *myself* on holiday in Canada. (190)

According to Wales, the first example, though perfectly possible, is 'less subjective' (190) than the second.

Lakoff (1970) connects the choice of *me* over *myself* with the use of hypothetical reference in dream reports as in the well-known example by Jim McCawley *I dreamt I was Brigitte Bardot and I kissed me, and then I woke up*. In this case the referent of 'me' in *I kissed me* is neither the dreamer *I* nor the real person Brigitte Bardot but rather a hypothetical version of the speaker in the skin of Brigitte Bardot. Therefore, he cannot use the coreferential *myself* because otherwise he cannot make the contrast between his mental representation and his real self. We can conclude then that the use of *me* instead of *myself* is a stronger

marker of self-division and of a split of perspective, especially when used in hypothetical accounts.

To return to the example from Banville, I have so far supplied proof of the external hypothetical angle of vision the protagonist takes when describing the scene in question. But at the same time, we shouldn't forget that the whole passage presents the internal point of view of the past self and is strongly experiential. Thus, the text generates a dual point of view which is enclosed within the boundaries of the past self. The protagonist participates as an actor in the events and at the same time sees the scene from outside as a still picture. The stylistic effect of this hypothetical vision of the self is to show the inability of the protagonist to feel inner unity with a single mind dwelling in a single body. On the one hand, we have the invisible ghostly double watching from the doorway and, on the other, the observed past self also viewed hypothetically. The result of this hypothetical observer observing a hypothetical version of himself creates the strange phenomenon of doubly hypothetical focalisation.

Such focalisation shifts are, in fact, a pervasive feature of Banville's narratives. Their high frequency of occurrence cannot but make an impression even upon a superficial reading of his novels. This means that it does not take a profound examination of the writer's fiction to notice that such splits form a peculiar writing habit of Banville's. D'hoker (2004) recognises them as 'a familiar feature in all of Banville's novels' (177). The frequent employment of this narrative technique then is no accident but a deliberately-sought stylistic device, which turns it into a case worth linguistic investigation. Since focalisation shifts are frequently encountered in Banville's writing, they do not appear to be specifically related to certain dramatic points in the story or some

moments of epiphanic significance but occur at various points. The feeling of inner division colours the protagonists' thinking to such an extent that it slips into their language almost inadvertently. This is clearly visible in a similar passage from *The Book of Evidence* which again demonstrates the divided consciousness of the past self:

> (28) I asked myself again what had possessed me to come to Whitewater. I knew the answer, of course. It was the smell of money that had attracted me, as the smell of sweat was attracting these damned flies. **I saw myself, as if from one of those sunstruck windows**, skulking along here in the dust, hot, disgruntled, overweight, head bowed and fat back bent, my white suit rucked at the armpits and sagging in the arse, a figure of fun, the punchline of a bad joke, and at once I was awash with self-pity. Christ! was there no one who would help me? (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 76)

This extract is written entirely in free indirect style and it is totally immersed in the consciousness of young Freddie Montgomery before he committed a murder and was imprisoned. It begins with the free indirect thought of Freddie who asks himself internally *What had possessed me to come to Whitewater*. The subjectivity of the experiencing *I* is signalled by the past perfect showing anteriority to the current moment (*had possessed*, *had attracted*), the past progressive indicating internal observation (*was attracting*), the deictic verb *come*, as well as the demonstrative pronoun of proximity *these*, the emotive adjective *damned* in *these damned flies* and the simile *as the smell of sweat was*

attracting these damned flies – all of which indicate a person subjectively involved in the scene of action.

Next, the narrative shifts into represented perception and displays the vision of the protagonist as he sees himself *as if from one of those sunstruck windows* again modalising the situation through the use of the hypothetical conjunction *as if*. The protagonist one more time hypothesises being at a different location and observing himself from the outside. The external hypothetical focalisation can be deduced from the non-finite clauses containing past participle (*disgruntled*, *bowed*, *bent*, *rucked*) and present participle (*skulking*, *sagging*) verb forms. As already discussed, this is a common linguistic pattern of describing scenes as observed externally on a photo or as a still picture. Furthermore, the last two clauses from the underlined segment, *a figure of fun*, *the punchline of a bad joke* can also be attributed to an external consciousness because they give an assessment of what is being seen.

Yet, despite the hero's distancing from himself and his adoption of a hypothetical external standpoint, the deictic indices in the sentence remain oriented towards the original experiencing self that participates in the scene. The distal demonstrative *those* together with the descriptive adjective *sunstruck* in *one of those sunstruck windows* reflect the point of view of the self on the ground to whom the windows are distant. But even after he starts recording how he sees himself from the outside, the proximal spatial adverb *here* asserts his position on the ground. Thus, the highlighted sentence presents an odd amalgam of internal participation and external observation altogether embedded in a stretch of text internally focalised through the mind of the past self.

The inner split of the hero is then stylistically inscribed in the text as hypothetical external focalisation of the self made by the very same self at the time of the past events. Thus, the internal perspective of the past self is further broken down into internal and external view of the self, which is exactly what enacts the feeling of division and of persistent lack of oneness.

Another consistent pattern of hypothetical external focalisation undertaken by the past *I* is the presentation of the self through somebody else's eyes, as in the examples below:

(29) When I spoke to her the poor girl turned crimson, and wincingly extended a calloused little paw as if she were afraid I might be going to keep it. I gave her one of my special, slow smiles, and **saw myself through her eyes**, a tall, tanned hunk in a linen suit, leaning over her on a summer lawn and murmuring dark words. Tinker! she yelped, get off! The lead pony, a stunted beast with a truculent eye, was edging sideways in that dully determined way that they have, nudging heavily against me. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 44)

(30) A large black car was waiting at the kerb, its twin exhaust pipes discreetly puffing a pale-blue mist. The driver, a burly, dark-suited fellow with no neck, hopped out smartly and held open the rear door. Charlie looked up at the window where I stood, and the driver followed his glance. **I saw myself as they would see me**, a blurred face floating behind the glass, blear-eyed, unshaven, the very picture of a fugitive. The car slid away smoothly and passed along the harbour road and turned a

corner and was gone. I did not stir. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 133)

(31) Word, obviously, had spread. They did not stare at me, I suppose that would have been unprofessional, but they took me in, all the same. **I saw myself in their eyes**, a big, confused creature, like a dancing bear, shambling along at the steel-tipped heels of Cunningham's friendly boots. He opened a door and motioned me into a square, grey room. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 194)

In all three examples the experiencer tries to imagine how he looks in the eyes of other people at the moment of experiencing the past events. This hypothetical focalisation is introduced by phrases like *saw myself through her eyes*, *I saw myself as they would see me* and *I saw myself in their eyes*. What the observer portrays is not just a picture of the observee's physical appearance (*tall, tanned, unshaven, big*) or actions (*leaning, murmuring, floating, shambling*) but also some evaluative comments (*the very picture of a fugitive*, *like a dancing bear*). Of course, the way he visualises himself by transferring in the minds of other people is not the way they see and evaluate him but rather reflects his own feelings and thoughts towards his own personality. This evaluative report reveals the hero's own mental state. It makes a strong impression that the character doesn't have a very high opinion of himself and is full of self-pity. The use of hypothetical focalisation in the passages above, then, appears to be a linguistic expression of the hero's self-grudge. His pitiful outlook towards himself is so strong that he believes it infects other people as well and they have the same feeling of dislike for him as he does for himself.

A similar phenomenon was observed in examples (24), (25) and (26) from the previous subsection (section 3.2.2) which also place the focalisation in the eyes of other people. Contrasted to those three passages in which the hypothetical vision of the past is done at the time of recalling the events, in this set of examples the hypothetical perspective is adopted at the time of experiencing the events. Another major difference between the two sets of examples is the degree of commitment to the truth. In extracts (29), (30) and (31) hereof the speaker shows greater conviction in what he says, while in passages (24), (25) and (26) from section 3.2.2 he expresses obvious uncertainty through the consistent use of the modal *must* with which he only speculates how he must have looked in the eyes of others. This is perhaps due to the time interval between recalling and experiencing in those examples, which obscures the memory.

A still more extreme manifestation of the divided consciousness of Banville's protagonists can be seen in a number of passages in which the narrated events are transferred to an illusory plane upon which the actions of the experiencing hero are doubled:

(32) She did not take her hands out of the pockets of her stylish coat, as if she thought I might imagine she intended to embrace me. I reached past her to unlock the door, and on the instant **saw myself, as if depicted identically on a set of cards that my memory was thumbing through**, doing the same thing, leaning forwards in just the same way, a little awkwardly, a little off-balance, on countless occasions in the past. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar,* 362)

(33) Things seemed not to recede as they should, but to be arrayed before me – the furniture, the open window, the lawn and river and far-off mountains – as if they were not being looked at but were themselves looking, intent upon a vanishing-point here, inside the room. I turned then, and **saw myself** turning as I turned, as I seem to myself to be turning still, as I sometimes imagine I shall be turning always, as if this might be my punishment, my damnation, just this breathless, blurred, eternal turning towards her. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 74)

(34) I went for a walk, alone, up in the hills. Even on the clearest days the sunlight here seemed hazy and somehow aswarm, falling like gauze over rocks and bushes, thickening to a milky blur the tremulous blue distances. How cunningly the grieving heart seeks comfort for itself, conjuring up the oftest of sorrows, the most sweetly piercing recollections, in which it is always summer, replete with birdsong and the impossible radiance of a transfigured past. I leaned on a rock and gently wept, and **saw myself**, leaning, weeping, and was at once gratified and ashamed. (Banville, *The Untouchable*, 370)

Example (32), taken from *The Blue Guitar*, presents Oliver's account of a meeting with Polly who summoned him to meet her in his studio. The first sentence presents Oliver's free indirect thought at the moment he saw her waiting for him in front of the studio. The next sentence switches to the mode of represented perception portraying a vision that has opened before the eyes of

Oliver who, surprisingly, has a sudden image of himself from without. His internal experiential account gives way to a hypothetical external vision of himself *as if depicted identically on a set of cards that my memory was thumbing through*. All of a sudden, he acquires a double existence and his acts are duplicated – they are once performed in reality, and once imaginatively reproduced on the set of cards. Examples (33) and (34) follow more or less the same trend. On the one hand, the actions in them are represented with the hero being inside his body and doing the action of seeing and, on the other, observed externally by a hypothetical version of himself also endowed with consciousness.

In all three passages there is doubling of the actions. In passage (32) the hero sees himself *identically, doing the same thing, leaning forwards in just the same way* when in physical reality he reaches past Polly to unlock the door. In (33) the hero *turned* to the other side and upon turning he suddenly slips out of his body to see himself doing the very same action: *I turned then, and saw myself turning as I turned*. So, he simultaneously turns and sees himself turning. After that, the sentence continues in a tone of very heightened emotion with the frantic repetition of *turning* and the hero's revelation of feeling this to be his punishment and his damnation. Passage (34) duplicates the actions of leaning and weeping. The moment the hero leans on the rock and starts weeping he escapes his body and sees himself leaning and weeping. Thus, the individual experiences the events on two planes at once and the sequence of passages above exemplifies a strong mind-body opposition.

But perhaps the most radical form of splitting observable on the level of the past self is found in *Mefisto* where the mind separated from the body acquires greater autonomy:

(35) The day I left my room. That was a day to remember. I sat cross-legged on the bed, with my hands in my lap, my eyes fixed on the door, then **saw myself, as if it were someone else**, rise and turn the handle and walk out. A long, low ward lined with beds, with figures in them, sitting up and looking at me. All those eyes! I had expected a vast emptiness, huge halls, the odd, solitary figure turning away. A small man in slippers and a sort of smock approached me. Smoked skin, sallow eyeballs, a lick of greased black hair. He greeted me with easy familiarity, grinning on one side of his sharp little face. (Banville, *Mefisto*, 163)

This episode describes Gabriel's slow recovery in hospital after a house fire in which he nearly died. The paragraph above illustrates his struggle with emotional and physical disfigurement following this accident. The passage begins in the consciousness of young Gabriel who describes the first time he left the hospital room and renders in free indirect style his perceptions at the time. We are led to follow his look which is first fixed on the door and then suddenly his mind feels split from his body and he visualises himself rise and walk out of the room. What follows until the end of the paragraph seems to be the internal focalisation of the externally-positioned mind which observes its belonging body moving around.

Various aspects of consciousness are represented such as perception, thought and internal state. Perception is linguistically manifested through a string of related syntactically-disjointed structures enumerated in the order in which they are recorded by the hero's eyes (*a long, low ward lined with beds*; *with figures in them*; *sitting up and looking at me*; *smoked skin, sallow eyeballs, a lick of greased black hair*), non-finite clauses (*sitting up*; *looking at me*; *grinning on one side*), deictic orientation according to the agent's spatial position (*looking at me*; *approached me*; *greeted me*) and some subjective evaluations of the pictures seen (*smoked skin*; *sallow eyeballs*). These visions are accompanied by the free indirect thought *All those eyes!* which expresses the focaliser's amazement at being looked at from everybody in the ward as well as by the psycho-narration *I had expected a vast emptiness, huge halls, the odd, solitary figure turning away* which displays his unjustified anticipation of disinterest towards him from the rest of the patients.

We can see that the floating mind turns into an autonomous centre of consciousness that is by far the most solidly represented in the narrative compared to the other examples presented in this section. All previous hypothetical stances have been linguistically expressed mainly by a sequence of non-finite clauses that reflect the order in which the hypothetical observer perceives the different details. In example (35), however, the hypothetical external focalisation which begins with non-finite verbless sentences, compared to other examples up to this point moves into finite sentences. This seems to suggest an even more realistic experience for the hero. Thus, the autonomous voice of the hypothetical observer makes the division more distinct and more salient.

To sum up, the focalisation splits discussed in this subsection occur in one temporal dimension, the dimension of the past self, and this exactly makes the division twice more pronounced in comparison with the first type of focalisation splits that I have analysed in section 3.2.2. When the present self adopts a hypothetical external perspective towards the past self, the division that is created feels slightly more natural due to the natural time gap that separates the two ontological manifestations of the hero. But when the focalisation split happens in one temporal domain, the effect that is generated is closer to that of doubling, with the younger self experiencing a mind-body separation at the moment of the past action.

3.2.4 Present self as a hypothetical focaliser of present self

As seen so far, a focalisation split can occur on the level of the past *I* alone who can adopt simultaneously an internal and hypothetical external perspective. The same phenomenon can be observed on the level of the present *I*, as well. This means that a remembering self can also be divided between a view of himself from inside and outside. The most notable example of this division appears in *The Sea*:

(36) Anything might appear on the table, and does. Tonight for instance she served us breakfast kippers with poached eggs and boiled cabbage. […] After the kippers there were tinned pears lodged in a gritty grey lukewarm substance which if childhood memory serves I think was semolina. Semolina, my goodness. As we made our way through this stodge, with nothing but the

> clicking of cutlery to disturb the silence, I had a sudden image of myself as a sort of large dark simian something slumped there at the table, or not a something but a nothing, rather, a hole in the room, a palpable absence, a darkness visible. It was very strange. **I saw the scene as if from outside myself**, the dining room half lit by two standard lamps, the ugly table with the whorled legs, Miss Vavasour absently at gaze and the Colonel stooped over his plate and baring one side of his upper dentures as he chewed, and I this big dark indistinct shape, like the shape that no one at the séance sees until the daguerreotype is developed. I think I am becoming my own ghost. After dinner Miss Vavasour clears the table in a few broad fanciful passes—she is altogether too good for this kind of menial chore—while the Colonel and I sit in vague distress listening to our systems doing their best to deal with the insults with which they have just been served. (Banville, *The Sea*, 194)

This episode describes a dinner scene. In this novel the majority of the scenes that take place in the narrator's immediate *now* are narrated in the present tense, with adult Max making a current report of the events from his present. Likewise, this excerpt begins and ends in the present tense and reveals the events from the spatio-temporal position of the present self. The middle part momentarily switches to the past tense to present actions that have just taken place but the perspective through which the events are reflected remains anchored in the narrator's deictic *here* and *now*. In other words, the present self adopts free indirect style and depitcts what has happened to him a short while

ago in a focalised way slipping into experiential consciousness. The free indirect mode makes the narrative sound like internal perspective, though the temporal manifestation of the hero is unarguably that of the present self. Having said that, in Banville, and probably in other memory narratives, there is not always a full coincidence between narrating self and present self because the present self can also adopt an experiential perspective.

As the dinner scene continues, Max suddenly has a strange image of himself as a dehumanised thing described initially with the impersonal and indefinite pronoun *something* and then immediately degraded to the non-existent *nothing*. Max finds it difficult to describe this vision and first resorts to an animal simile – *simian*, followed by oxymoronic expressions like *palpable absence, darkness visible, indistinct shape*. The external view of the scene is signalled by two strong textual cues. First, it is explicitly professed in the words *I saw the scene as if from outside myself*, which shows a conscious realisation of the dissociative experience. And second, the syntactic arrangement of the non-finite and the nominal clauses that follow provide a pictorial description of what is being observed by adding different sensory details. The objects enumerated reflect the order in which the eye of the observing entity perceives them: the dining room, the ugly table, Miss Vavasour, the Colonel, and *I*. Obviously, the speaker's consciousness has been separated from his body and he is able to see himself standing there at the table with the rest of the group and describe the scene as externally observed. After that, the narrator's body and mind unite again into one and he continues his current report at the scene in the present tense.

Another type of division that happens on the level of the present self is when the narrator does not recognise or rather cannot reconcile with his reflection in a mirror:

(37) Lately when **I see myself** peering out of the glass, stooped like that, with that expression of dim surprise and vague, slow fright which is perpetual with me now, mouth slack and eyebrows arched as if in weary astonishment, I feel I have definitely something of the look of a hanged man. (Banville, *The Sea*, 128)

The image in the mirror is more than simply the narrator's reflection. It has its own life and is endowed with a separate consciousness. This is evident from the fact that the reflected image (*myself*) is attributed with agency (*peering*) and does not seem to follow the command of its original standing in front of the mirror. Max's reaction to his ageing body is indicative of his refusal to accept the physical signs of age. His disapproval of his mirror image produces a profound feeling of alienation. The transition to old age brings with it a crisis of self-integrity and a loss of his sense of selfhood.

The hero's dissatisfaction with himself is also discovered in the familiar strategy of hypothetically focalising events through other people's eyes. Since this technique is discernible on this level as well, this proves its status as a consistent feature in Banville's fiction:

(38) I am kept locked up here like some exotic animal, last survivor of a species they had thought extinct. **They should let in people to view me**, the girl-eater, svelte and dangerous,

> padding to and fro in my cage, my terrible green glance flickering past the bars, give them something to dream about, tucked up cosy in their beds of a night. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 5)

According to the text, the present self, who speaks at the moment of discourse production, beholds himself externally from the point of view of random people that he fantasises to have been brought in front of his cage. As already asserted, in this type of presentation the speaker maps his own consciousness onto that of others and the way he describes being seen by them is actually the way he sees himself. What is particularly impressive here is the narrator's hypothetical observation of his own glance, i.e. the perception of his own eyes through counterfactual eyes (*my terrible green glance flickering past the bars*). The meeting of the eyes of the hypothetical observer with the eyes of the hypothetically observed entity gives a particularly eerie sensation of self-detachment.

A different variation of focalisation split occurring entirely in the temporal domain of the present self makes use of the imperative form, which further dramatises the hypothetical observer:

(39) How I savour these late days, the last of the year, all dense blue and charcoal and honey hues with long-shadowed backgrounds by de Chirico. The sun is still in turmoil and, thanks to its flares, our sham midwinter summer persists. A great silence reigns, as if the world were crouched in stillness, holding its breath. What is awaited? I feel sequestered, underground, poking out my

snout now and then to take a measuring sniff of the air. Yes, **see me there**, old Brock in his den, waiting too and watching for he knows not what, his pelt prickling, sensing some fearful imminence. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 361)

(40) At first it was a form. Or not even that. A weight, an extra weight; a ballast. I felt it that first day out in the fields. It was as if someone had fallen silently into step beside me, or inside me, rather, someone who was else, another, and yet familiar. I was accustomed to putting on personae but this, this was different. I stopped, struck, stricken by that infernal cold I have come to know so well, that paradisal cold. Then a slight thickening in the air, a momentary occlusion of the light, as if something had plummeted past the sun, a winged boy, perhaps, or falling angel. It was April: bird and bush, silver glint of coming rain, vast sky, the glacial clouds in monumental progress. **See me there**, the haunted one, in my fiftieth year, assailed suddenly, in the midst of the world. I was frightened, as well I might be. I imagined such sorrows; such exaltations. (Banville, *Eclipse*, 3)

In passage (39) the first five sentences render the direct musings of the present self. Once more, the narratorial report appears in the immediate present tense. Although internal focalisation in first-person texts, as noted previously, is most typically attributed to passages which depict the consciousness of the past self by means of free indirect style, metafictional present tense passages which portray the consciousness of the present self can also be said to present an

internal perspective. Likewise, the present self from the above-quoted passage is having an internal experience of his current life now. His internal subjective view of the current situation is recognisable in deictic features such as proximal demonstrative pronouns as in *these late days*, emotive expressions like *How I savour…, … in turmoil, A great silence…*, in metaphors and similes such as *charcoal and honey hues* and *as if the world were crouched in stillness*, and the direct question *What is awaited?*.

Then, all of a sudden, the present narrating self adopts an external position towards himself and starts describing his own self from outside. What is more, he uses a second-person imperative to address a narratee to behold the scene together with him (*See me there*). On the one hand, this narratee could be a hypothetical figure in the storyworld, or by extension the reader. On the other hand, the imperative might be read as a self-address. As O'Connell (2013) observes, 'the reader is not the object of the documents; they are, within the internal logic of the novels, entirely self-directed. Even when the narratives are nominally 'addressed' to implied readers […] these are really just imagined surrogates for the narrator's own self, the authority to whom he must ultimately answer' (1).

Keeping in mind the narcissistic quality of the narratives, we know that these self-obsessed narrators often talk about themselves to themselves, as in the following instances: 'Why do I torment myself with these insoluble equivocations, have I not had enough of casuistry? Leave yourself alone, Max, leave yourself alone' (Banville, *The Sea*, 218-219) or 'What a thought, I do not know what to do with it. Stop thinking it, that would be best; least unsettling, that is' (Banville, *The Sea*, 186). The underlined bits unquestionably

demonstrate the narrator's self-address. Similarly, in passages (39) and (40) above the narrator might be summoning his own self. In cases of self-address the function of the *you* pronoun, as Sorlin (2022) proposes, is to be viewed as 'doubly subjective' rather than 'doubly deictic' because the you 'fluctuates between a concealed 'I' and 'I' addressed *as* other' (60) when compared to the fluctuation between storyworld-internal and storyworld-external addressee evoked by doubly deictic *you*.

However, the use of the visual verb 'see' in the two examples from Banville above still opens up a potential for the reader to be the entity invited to view the scene. So, in linguistic terms, there is no clear-cut evidence to indicate either reader address or self-address. But considering the context of the novels, the self-address seems to be the more plausible option. In such a case then we observe a triple division because, first, we have a narrator (self 1) who points to himself as an addressee (self 2) and, then, we have the image of the visualised entity evoked *here* and *now* (self 3). This gives a sense of triple consciousness. The entity designated as 'self 1' begins the account from an internal perspective deictically anchored to his immediate present – *I feel sequestered, underground, poking out my snout now and then to take a measuring sniff of the air* – and then his consciousness immediately evades his body and he starts describing himself from outside – *see me* (self 3) *there, old Brock in his den, waiting too and watching for he knows not what, his pelt prickling, sensing some fearful imminence*.

What is most disconcerting here is that the mind that pretends to be observing the body from outside renders the internal perceptions and feelings of that body (*watching for he knows not what*; *his pelt prickling*; *sensing some*

fearful imminence) linguistically enacted by the use of behavioural (*watch*) and mental (*prickle, sense*) processes. As already explained in section 3.1.2, a mental, and to a lesser degree a behavioural, process construed as a macrophenomenon of another mental process triggers a viewpoint shift from observer to observee. In the example above, the clauses containing the verbs *watching, prickling and sensing* become deictically-reoriented with the mind of the observed entity and together with the other subjectivity signals like the evaluative adjective *fearful* render the observee's internal state. The self-detachment is further intensified by the shift to third-person pronoun (***old Brock*** *in* ***his*** *den*; *watching for* ***he*** *knows not what*; ***his*** *pelt prickling*). Obviously, the disconnection becomes so strong that the link to selfhood breaks and the narrator can no longer identify himself with the first-person pronoun. Besides, he further animalises himself with the name Brock meaning badger.

Extract (40) is the beginning of the novel *Eclipse*. The opening, though written in free indirect style, is mediated through the consciousness of the fifty-year old narrator Alexander Cleave who has just returned to his boyhood home. Like example (36), this passage presents events that have recently happened to the present self by adopting an experiential point of view. Thus, the subjectivity markers can be aligned with the consciousness of the adult narrator. We find depicted his sensations and perceptions in *a slight thickening in the air*; *a momentary occlusion of the light*; *bird and bush*; *silver glint of coming rain*; *vast sky*; *the glacial clouds in monumental progress*, and his mental reasoning of the situation in *as if something had plummeted past the sun*; *a winged boy, perhaps, or falling angel*. And then not only does the speaker suddenly switch to his immediate discourse present by shifting to the present tense but, even more

disturbingly, adopts an external position towards his own self by using the imperative *See me there* and continuing the sentence in descriptive mode. The fact that the speaker is having an external view of his present self is confirmed by the phrase *in my fiftieth year*, which proves that the current self now is having an external view of the very same current self.

In short, it becomes clear that focalisation splits are an integral part of Banville's writing. The examples analysed in this subsection have shown inner division that resides in the dual subjectivity of the present self as speaking subject and hypothetically observing agent. This narrative method implies the strongest division because assigning two entities simultaneous focalisation at the moment of speaking is the most disintegrative form of narration. Compared to the focalisation splits on the level of the past self (section 3.2.3), which also happened in one temporal dimension, the focalisation split occurring on the level of the present self, is even more unsettling because the speaker duplicates himself at the current moment of narration, i.e. the very moment of discourse production. Such doubly-focalised form of current narration seriously disrupts the narrative unity of the text and undermines the coherence of the protagonist's identity to the strongest possible degree, thus making the 'divided self' phenomenon stand out really strongly.

3.2.5 Concluding remarks

All examples analysed in this section employ visual sensory modality but, compared to the examples discussed in subsection 3.1.2, contain additional features of hypotheticity. The hypothetical stance has been mainly expressed by

the modal conjunction *as if* which implies a lower degree of certainty in the propositions and hence less conviction in the veracity of the statements: *I recall the incident from outside, as if I had not been part of it, but a witness*; *I saw us there, actually saw us, as if I were standing in the doorway*; *I saw myself, as if from one of those sunstruck windows*; *saw myself, as if depicted identically on a set of cards*; *saw myself, as if it were someone else*; *I saw the scene as if from outside myself*. Therefore, such hypothetical expressions are linked to sensory modality but add a strong flavour of uncertainty to the proposition.

In fact, even if the epistemic conjunction *as if* is not expressly used, hypothetical focalisation by itself has the semantic effect of reducing the speaker's commitment to the truth because the displaced view that it offers affects the modal status of the epistemic presuppositions expressed in the text. As Herman points out:

> HF [hypothetical focalisation] signals doubt about the very grounds for doubt. In hypothetically focalised narrative descriptions, doubt attaches now to the status of narrative agents (are they there or not?), now to that of their thoughts and behavior (do they do/think/ perceive that or not?), now to that of their circumstances (is their world like that or not?). The stronger and weaker versions of direct and indirect HF mark different distributions of doubt and doubtfulness with respect to the situations and events being focalised – different ways of ranking the components of the narrated according to their place on the continuum of epistemic modalities, and of presenting those components in accordance with their epistemic and more broadly modal status. (Herman, 1994: 246)

In Banville, however, the semantic value of hypothetical focalisation goes beyond the effect of ‘doubt and doubtfulness’, as deduced by Herman. A self-representation built upon a constant change of perspective as regards one’s own self is extremely disintegrative, hence it carries psychological implications. Thus, in Banville’s texts we see a completely new and intricate use of hypothetical focalisation primarily concerning the splitting of the self. Compared to Herman’s examples, which are not that remarkable as they can be found in earlier novels as well, in Banville we find an entirely new engagement with hypothetical focalisation. While the hypothetical observer posited by Herman is always a different person, even in the context of a first-person novel, in Banville it is the very self who participates in the story. When a first-person speaker performs an act of hypothetical focalisation towards his/her own self, he/she automatically adopts a dual point of view. This narrative stance even becomes doubly hypothetical since it features a hypothetical observer observing a hypothetical version of himself/herself.

It is exactly this unnatural splitting of the perspective of a first-person speaker into an observer and participant that mimics the internal tension and uneasiness of the protagonists and becomes a linguistic reflection of their lack of personal wholeness and stability. Therefore, the epistemic uncertainty that Herman points out is relevant in Banville, too, but more poignant in Banville’s use of focalisation splits is the embodiment of the idea that the individuality lacks a stable centre of being. So, in Banville this narrative technique, apart from being an epistemic marker of doubt, becomes an effective stylistic device for enacting the splitting of the self.

In order to arrive at a broader, more integrated appraisal of the stylistic and narrative implications of this linguistic feature, I have presented a categorisation of focalisation splits depending on the correlation between focal position (external-internal) and temporal distance. My findings have shown that three major types of focalisation splits can be distinguished. Firstly, there are those cases when Banville's narrators assume a hypothetical external view in relation to their past selves, i.e. the present self observes from outside a hypothetical version of his past self. Secondly and thirdly, focalisation splits are also found on the level of the past self and the level of the present self alone. In the former case, there is a division between internal and hypothetical external perspective amidst a stretch of text experientially rendered through the mind of the past self. In the latter case, the split occurs entirely in the consciousness of the present self. The second and third type generate stronger division by creating a double of the hero in the same temporal domain, with type three generating even stronger division by pointing to an immediate split at the current moment of narration – a time when a narrator's identity is supposed to be most coherent and unified.

Thus, Banville's skilful manipulation of focalisation splits on all levels of narration facilitates the presentation of the 'divided self'. As we have seen already, the use of hypothetical focalisation is a particular writing technique of Banville's and his foregrounding of this feature is another distinct linguistic mechanism in his narratives through which division is produced.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that sensory modality is a staple technique in Banville's fiction. In section 3.1 I have consecutively examined narrative propositions acquired by visual (section 3.1.2), auditory (section 3.1.3) and other evidence (section 3.1.4 and 3.1.5) and considered these sensory modality patterns as a narrative technique promoting the 'divided self' effect. Section 3.2 has focused on a special case of visual modality containing markers of hypothetical meaning. In it, I have proposed a more fine-grained categorisation of focalisation splits in first-person narration based on the criterion of time when the split takes place. The three configurations that have emerged in my analysis are: present self as a hypothetical focaliser of the past self (section 3.2.2); past self as a hypothetical focaliser of the past self (section 3.2.3) and present self as a hypothetical focaliser of the present self (section 3.2.4). By applying these strategies in his fiction, Banville creates a multi-dimensional narrative space within which the individual embodies a twofold perspective, which further compromises the self's integrity.

Thus, the detailed stylistic analysis carried out here gives a broader conception of this peculiar linguistic feature whose use in Banville's novels has thus far been briefly addressed by Hertel and D'hoker. As pointed out in sections 2.3 and 2.4, Hertel only notes the visual expression *see oneself* as a pervasive semantic choice by the writer without expounding on its workings, while D'hoker has been a little more specific in its use and function. A closer scrutiny of D'hoker analysis shows that the examples that she tackles follow very closely my own examples given in section 3.2.3 which deal with focalisation splits on the level of the past self only. But, as my analysis has demonstrated, this construction so inherent in Banville's fiction has a much wider textual

application and stylistic significance than this limited use reveals. D'hoker's study does not elaborate on these specific linguistic structures and their properties in the text. It only mentions the use of this linguistic feature as expressing one particular manifestation of doubling, while my study, which takes language as a central focus of the research and tries to correlate the topic of splitting with particular linguistic structures, places this construction in the wider context of sensory modality where it co-exists with other similar patterns (sections 3.1.3, 3.1.4 and 3.1.5) and additionally specifies cases of visual splits that contain hypothetical markers (whole section 3.2).

In this way, by adopting a text-oriented approach, I have illustrated that the construction 'I see/saw myself' is part of a bigger linguistic framework that encompasses other verbs of perception as well and that this construction can be further extended into the hypothetical subdomain of epistemic modality. Therefore, this structure is not a transitory pattern but a prominent linguistic mechanism encoding inner division. The linguistic evidence that I have provided gives me sufficient justification to conclude that such sensory modality patterns that utilise co-referential pronouns as subject and object in literary texts, especially in first-person memory narratives, can linguistically enact the theme of personality splitting, disintegration of identity and self-alienation. Moreover, if these patterns are further elaborated with markers of hypothetical focalisation, they can become a linguistic embodiment of dislocation, doubling and ego fragmentation. The 'divided self' effect in Banville, then, owes much of its stylistic power to the resourceful employment of these modality features.

Chapter 4

Tense shifts: The past made present

4.1 Theoretical considerations

In this chapter I will examine in detail the temporal arrangement of Banville's narratives and how the fragmented chronological structure of his novels contributes to the creation of a self whose integrity is compromised. As elucidated in chapter 2, the change of grammatical tenses contributes to the achievement of this effect but a more comprehensive analysis of how the discontinuity of memory disrupts the narrative flow of the novels needs to be performed. The specific nature of the memory process in Banville is pivotal in how the temporal framework of the novels is constructed and how time progresses in his narratives. Since time and temporal relations are grammatically encoded in the category of tense, tense is consequently an essential constituent of every narrative text and a better understanding of how tense functions in narratives will be a useful starting point for my discussion. For this reason, I will briefly review some of the major narrative roles of tense and tense shifts prior to outlining their more specific use in Banville's texts.

Tense has been identified by narratologists (Genette, 1980; Stanzel, 1984; Cohn, 1978; Fludernik, 1993; 1996; Fleischman, 1990) to fulfil various functions that are particular to narrative contexts. In the first place, it defines the temporal distance between the moment of narration and the moment of the narrated events. It also has a close connection to the expression of subjectivity and the presentation of fictional consciousness. The tense traditionally used in

fictional narrative is the past tense, or as it is also known *the Preterite*, because of its semantic value of rendering events viewed as completed and sequentially ordered and because a prototypical narration always renders past experience. For this reason, the past tense is considered to be the unmarked form, which means that it 'is often felt to be more normal, more common, or less specific' (Fleischman, 1990: 52) than its marked counterpart – the present tense, which possesses some properties which make it fundamentally different from the unmarked member of the opposition. For instance, the present tense has the widest scope of semantic meanings compared to other tenses and shows an exceptional ability to cover a broad temporal range which Fleischmann (1990) summarises as:

> The range of temporal references that the PR tense can have is greater than that of any other tense category. These include reference not just to the speaker's present but also to the future and the past, as well as reference to habitual, generic, gnomic, and timeless situations. (34)

Apart from its semantic versatility, the present tense has also been recognised to fulfil a variety of narrative functions. The first of these is the discourse present of the narrating *I* which coincides with the immediate present of the narrator and which Fleischmann designates as *present co-temporal with now* (298). The narrator often interrupts the flow of narration and returns to this zero temporal point to make a comment or address the audience as, for instance, in all Banville novels. But this constant foregrounding of the act of narration is a strong signal that the narrator cannot stay on the level of the narrated world and creates a sense of an incoherent past world. The fact that the speaker keeps

coming back to the present moment gives the impression of an unreliable narrator who is unable to make sense of the past. By breaking the continuity of the narrative and exposing the act of narration, this deviant narrator shows a lack of control over the story. A distinction should be made here between this type of present and some authorial interventions of gnomic quality that we find in what Fowler (2003) calls 'outspoken, sententious writers' (2003: 89) like George Eliot and Henry Fielding. Their proverbial statements uttered in the timeless and universal generic present tense carry strong authoritative and moralistic connotations. Stanzel (1984) also calls this the *authorial present tense* (37-38) since it corresponds to the authorial narrative situation. And this usage is different from the present contemporaneous with narrator's *now*.

Another type of present tense also attributed to the narratorial figure is the *historical present* but in comparison with the discourse present, which is deictically anchored in the narrator's immediate *now*, the time reference of the historical present tense is the past. Switches to it are mainly used for dramatic effect and applied to make a scene more vivid and the events more immediate for the reader. They frequently occur at climactic moments in a story which correspond to Longacre's notion (1983) of *narrative peak* or the marking of certain events as more important than others. A third type of present tense usage is recognised as emanating from the consciousness of the experiencing *I* who focalises the events from his/her internal point of view. Thus, his/her spatio-temporal framework becomes the deictic point of orientation. This type is used in interior monologue, or the free direct thought technique. The language used has a strong mimetic quality and transcribes exactly the character's thoughts or inner speech.

While the above functions of the present tense are typically determined when it is used in alternation with the past tense, the present tense can also be used as a main narrative tense throughout a whole novel as is the case with Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (2015), Pyncheon's *Gravity's Rainbow* (2012) or works from the French *Nouveau roman* movement. This type of narration, as already mentioned in section 1.3, is known as *simultaneous narration* and the present tense in it is designated as *narrative present* (Cohn, 1968). According to Fludernik (1996), it leads to a peculiar 'deictic uprootedness' (189) of the act of narration which becomes situated in a temporally undefined point. As a consequence, 'this lack of a temporal point from which the first-person narrator views the experience radically affects the establishment of story meaning' (Fludernik, 1996: 189) whereby the crucial narratological distinction between story and discourse is lost.

Therefore, the reason for the collapsing of this distinction lies in the apparent atemporality of the present tense which endows a sense of timelessness to the act of narration. Carruthers (2012) calls this atemporal character of the present 'temporal neutrality' and sees it as the root cause of the 'multivalency' of the present tense, i.e. its ability to take a number of different simultaneous meanings:

> This temporal neutrality can, in some cases, allow the PR [present] to be multivalent, in the sense that it can take on a variety of different temporal and aspectual properties in context. (307)

The eradication of the boundary between the time of narration and the time of the story events also affects the consciousness presentation in the text as tense

is tightly related to the expression of viewpoint and is a crucial component of the speech and thought categories given in section 1.2. The huge impact that the pervasive use of the present tense in modern texts has on the speech and thought presentation in narrative has been recently researched by Marnette (2005) and Ikeo (2022). The main ambiguities in terms of point of view that can thus arise are outlined by Marnette as follows:

> Moreover, these types of alternations in tenses also enabled authors to play on the continuum and ambiguities allowed by Free Direct Discourse and Free Indirect Discourse in the present, thereby challenging the neat repartition into categories (Direct, Indirect and Free Indirect Discourses) or between types (speech versus thought/attitude) and further calling into question the clear embedding of the characters' voices within the narrator's discourse. (Marnette, 2005: 241)

In third-person present-tense narration free indirect discourse can be differentiated from free direct discourse only by the use of the third-person pronoun. But if the narrator is not making a reference to himself/herself but to other characters in the story, the same pronoun would be used in both modes. Thus, ambiguity arises between free indirect and free direct discourse, as the following example shows: 'Gabriel looks in the distance; *they're bound to be bringing up the rear, women always do bring up the rear*…' (example cited in Marnette, 2005: 242). On the one hand, a transposition of tense will not be needed because the whole narrative is in the present tense. On the other hand, the pronoun cannot serve as an indicator of directness or indirectness because the speaker is talking about other people in the story. The italicised part of this

sentence fluctuates between free indirect and free direct thought. In first-person present-tense narration, free indirect discourse is simply undistinguishable from free direct discourse because the only structural criterion by which the two can be categorised, that of tense, is omitted.

The major ambiguity that can be found in first-person present tense texts is rather between narratorial description and free direct thought. Thus, the use of the present tense creates confusion between the free direct discourse of the experiencing self which gives direct access to the hero's consciousness at the time of the events and the narrator's immediate comments or timeless generalising remarks (though gnomic expressions could also belong to the experiencing *I*), as illustrated with a few examples from Celine's *Voyage au Bout de la nuit* by Marnette:

> But LET ME TELL THE STORY: Lola was pacing the floor without many clothes on, and in spite of everything her body still struck me as very desirable. Where there's a luxurious body there's always a possibility of rape, of a direct, violent breaking and entering into the heart of wealth and luxury, with no fear of having to return the loot. (example cited in Marnette, 2005: 253)

> There are different ways of being condemned to death. Oh! What wouldn't I have given to be in jail instead of here! What a fool I'd been! If only I had had a little foresight and stolen something or other when it would have been so easy and there was still time. I never think of anything. You come out of jail alive, out of a war you don't! The rest is blarney. (example cited in Marnette, 2005: 255)

In the first example the underlined sentence with its gnomic remark might mislead to be originating from the narrating self's mature wisdom but on second reading this might be the experiencing self's thought arising immediately after his perception of Lola's body as desirable. The next passage presents a similar case. The thought represented could equally belong to the narrating *I* and the experiencing *I* as it is practically impossible to differentiate between free direct discourse and narrator's discourse. In this case, the present tense neutralises the distinction between external and internal focalisation in the context of the first-person novel, or as Carruthers (2012) reiterates: 'the all-pervasive PR [present] has a "flattening" effect, making it extremely difficult to differentiate between voices' (329).

The outcome of the more widespread use of the present tense in the 20th c. is ultimately appraised by Marnette as leading to a shift of dominance from narrator to character:

> … subsequent evolutions in the 20th-c. amplified the potential for ambiguity between narrator and characters' discourses, challenging the primacy of the first over the latter (Marnette, 2005: 240)

In contrast to 19-century novels where the more consistent use of the past tense for narrator's report as well as for free indirect style maintains 'the preeminence of the narrative voice, which absorbs the characters' discourses' (Marnette, 2005: 239-240), the prevalence of the present tense in the 20th century frees the characters' discourses from the narratorial framework and 'the characters' voices appear to overtake the narrative voice, or at the very least to equal it' (Marnette, 2005: 266). In this way, the character is put on a par with

the narrator and the characters' discourses are no longer embedded in the narration.

Ikeo (2022) explores further in what particular contexts the ambiguity between narration and free direct discourse in first-person present-tense narratives can be found. According to her, 'the most common use of this type of ambiguity occurs when what appears to be a character's thought presentation provides situational information or when it gives an evaluation of another character's internal states' (22). This is illustrated with the following examples:

> The shorter shuffles on his stretching toes. Of course, I cannot find a log for the father to stand on, not in this darkness or this weather. The nearest fallen timber is a walk away, beyond our fields. I don't intend to go foraging so late at night.
>
> The music that comes out this time is deep and passionate. The violin almost speaks, the way the bow pulls at the strings and lingers on the low notes. A new crowd gathers almost immediately, drawn by the anguish of the sound, and I watch them for a while, wondering what they hear. Does he take them down his road, or does he open a different door for every individual? Jake plays to me, to Suzy, to the baby, even though he won't acknowledge it. He refuses to turn in my direction because he knows I'm still here. (examples cited in Ikeo, 2022: 23)

The underlined sentence of the first passage provides a geographical description which, in Ikeo's view, would have been classified as narration if it were in the past tense. But the use of the present tense makes the depiction look

more like the character's focalisation, making the statement ambiguous between narration and free direct discourse. In the second case ambiguity arises because the underlined sentence can be interpreted as either a narratorial description of Jake's action taking place at the narrator's deictic *now* or the heroine's perception of Jake's emotional state while playing the violin taking place at the character's deictic *now*.

Another situation outlined by Ikeo in which a narrator's and a character's voice can be conflated in first-person present-tense fiction is when a narrator's commentary is inserted into the narrative as a character's thought. For instance:

> Suddenly I feel like one of those TV-movie secretaries when some asshole barges into the chairman's office, 'Sir, you can't go in there…' But no, fucken guaranteed, Leona barges into Mom's room. (example cited in Ikeo, 2022: 24)

The swear words above can be equally read as the character's thoughts at the time of the events or as the narrator's commentary at the moment of discourse production. Ikeo concludes that these ambiguities between narration and free direct thought in first-person present tense narration 'increase the intensity of a character's subjectivity' because 'the reader is constantly exposed to the character's internal view even when the narrator is describing the character's actions and environments' (2022: 25). Evidently, both Marnette and Ikeo recognise the strong role that the character's voice has in this ambiguity.

In Banville's texts, however, the ambiguities in point of view show linguistic and structural intricacies that require a further discussion of focalisation ambiguities and tense shifts in first-person texts. The specific ways

in which memory is represented in his fiction makes his narratives very different from the texts that Marnette and Ikeo analyse, hence they show different effects. The temporal framework of Banville's novels is constructed upon a constant shifting between the past and the present in which the speaker tries to resurrect past events and reconsider them from the vantage point of the present. But memory is often tricky, elusive and deceitful and its reconstruction in the narrative also problematises the individual's coherent sense of self.

4.2 The fusion of the past and the present

In his narratives, Banville seeks to reproduce memory as a naturally occurring process and capture the exact way in which the process of remembering unfolds in our minds. He says in an interview:

> I've become more and more convinced that we don't actually remember things as they actually happened. We make models of things which we carry into the future and which account for the fact that, when we return to a place or meet a person we once knew, the place or the person is different – not entirely different, of course, but in strange ways. Rooms have moved around, the colour of their eyes has changed. It's because we don't actually remember these things. The brain is constantly modeling what it scans. That's what memory is – a series of models. (Breathnach, 2012: 108; interview with Banville)

Remembering in Banville's novels then is never presented as a factual report of past events but turns into an inventive and artistic experience in which

the characters re-experience the past. The narration of this type of memory process, however, can be very tricky in terms of viewpoint differentiation, as the following sections will show.

4.2.1 Re-experiencing the past

In Banville, memories appear as predominantly narrator-mediated. Even when the consciousness of the experiencing past *I* is strongly evoked by means of free indirect style or free direct style, the narrator frequently interrupts to make comments on the past events, characters and settings or to remind us of his role of visualiser. However, at some points in the story the voices of the narrating self and the experiencing self seem to merge and become unrecognisable from each other. This phenomenon is most prominently seen in the following episode from *The Sea*:

(1) (1) In fact, I do not recall under what circumstances exactly I managed eventually to get inside the Cedars. (2) I see myself after that initial encounter turning away frustratedly from the green gate with the twins watching me go, and then I see myself another day within the very sanctum itself, as if, by a truly magical version of Myles's leap over the top bar of the gate, I had vaulted all obstacles to land up in the living room next to an angled, solid-seeming beam of brassy sunlight, with Mrs. Grace in a loose-fitting, flowered dress, light-blue with a darker pattern of blue blossoms, turning from a table and smiling at me, deliberately vague, evidently not knowing who I was but

knowing nevertheless that she should, which shows that this cannot have been the first time we had encountered each other face to face. (3) Where was Chloe? (4) Where was Myles? (5) Why was I left alone with their mother? (6) She asked if I would like something, a glass of lemonade, perhaps. (7) "Or," she said in a tone of faint desperation, "an apple . . . ?" (8) I shook my head. (9) Her proximity, the mere fact of her thereness, filled me with excitement and a mysterious sort of sorrow. (10) Who knows the pangs that pierce a small boy's heart? (11) She put her head on one side, puzzled, and amused, too, I could see, by the tongue-tied intensity of my presence before her. (12) I must have seemed like a moth throbbing before a candle-flame, or like the flame itself, shivering in its own consuming heat. (13) What was it she had been doing at the table? (14) Arranging flowers in a vase—or is that too fanciful? (15) There is a multi- coloured patch in my memory of the moment, a shimmer of variegated brightness where her hands hover. (16) Let me linger here with her a little while, before Rose appears, and Myles and Chloe return from wherever they are, and her goatish husband comes clattering on to the scene; she will be displaced soon enough from the throbbing centre of my attentions. (17) How intensely that sunbeam glows. (18) Where is it coming from? (19) It has an almost churchly cast, as if, impossibly, it were slanting down from a rose window high above us. (20) Beyond the

> smouldering sunlight there is the placid gloom of indoors on a summer afternoon, where my memory gropes in search of details, solid objects, the components of the past. (21) Mrs. Grace, Constance, Connie, is still smiling at me in that unfocused way, which, now that I consider it, is how she looked at everything, as if she were not absolutely persuaded of the world's solidity and half expected it all at any moment to turn, in some outlandish and hilarious way, into something entirely different. (Banville, *The Sea*, 85-87)

Here, Max describes the climactic moment in which he, as a child, stood alone with Mrs Grace – his childhood love – for the first time. He does not remember the exact circumstances around entering the house. His vision places him directly inside. The beginning of this passage was given as an example in the previous chapter on modality (section 3.1.2, example (1)) to illustrate the split between character-in-the-present observing the events *now* and character-in-flashback taking part in them *then*. In this section, I investigate the passage further ahead to show how the perspectives of these two entities can fuse in a most specific manner.

Narratologically speaking, the first two sentences, as previously discussed, position the narrator in his immediate discourse present from which his consciousness returns to an earlier period of his life. There are clear indications of the instant memory process like *I do not recall, I see myself… and then I see myself*, all of which are in the present tense. Apart from the present tense verbs and the clear flagging of the visual perception (*I see myself… and then I see myself*), which position the narrator as a deictic centre, the narrator's

consciousness is also detectable in certain expressions like *within the very sanctum itself*, which are more likely coming from the vocabulary of adult Max who describes the Graces' house metaphorically as a *sanctum*. Other expressions that reveal the adult self's 'external' view of the situation are the hypothetical suggestion of how he could have got there *as if, by a truly magical version of Myles's leap over the top bar of the gate, I had vaulted all obstacles to land up in the living room*, as well as the hyperbolised simile *a truly magical* to characterise the leap which presumably brought him in. After Max has positioned himself inside the house and after the initial unclear circumstances around his entrance there, he continues to describe what he sees in the living room ending with the statement *which shows that this cannot have been the first time we had encountered each other face to face* which returns to the thought process of the narrating self who makes a judgement based on what he has perceived.

At the same time, the linguistic make-up of the second sentence, especially in its second half, has a strong experiential component. On the one hand, it seems to follow exactly the perception as it is registered by an experiencing consciousness which describes what it sees in the place of action in the order its eyes grasp the setting – *next to an angled, solid-seeming beam of brassy sunlight, with Mrs. Grace in a loose-fitting, flowered dress, light-blue with a darker pattern of blue blossoms, turning from a table and smiling at me, deliberately vague, evidently not knowing who I was but knowing nevertheless that she should*. First, the speaker spots the beam of sunlight with its characteristics of shape *angled*, quality *solid-seeming* and colour *brassy*. Then his eyes capture Mrs Grace. The first thing that he notices of her are her clothes (*loose-fitting,*

flowered dress), then he focuses on the colour and pattern of the dress (*light-blue with a darker pattern of blue blossoms*) and only then does he perceive her actions (*turning from a table and smiling at me*), which are presented in non-finite verb forms as still unfolding. After that he specifies the way she smiles (*deliberately vague*) and finishes with an epistemic proposition based on the expression of her face (*evidently not knowing who I was but knowing nevertheless that she should*). The syntax of this segment reflects a direct perception. The subjective experience of finding himself alone with Mrs Grace is further intensified by the use of the indefinite articles for the description of the environment, which suggests that everything is new and strange to him and he experiences the event for the first time. Until he mysteriously lands up inside the house, he uses the definite article to describe *the Cedars*, *the green gate*, *the top bar of the gate*, *the living room* – spaces obviously familiar to him. And then suddenly, articles revert to the unfamiliar indefiniteness of *an angled, solid-seeming beam of brassy sunlight*, *a loose-fitting, flowered dress*, *a table* and experience is represented as occurring right at the moment. Another small detail that shouldn't be ignored is the referential expression *Mrs Grace*, which is deictically aligned with the child's point of view.

In short, the succinct stretch of text formed by the first two sentences of this passage unquestionably begins and ends in the consciousness of the narrating self who performs a mental activity of remembering and analysing and the speaker expressly states that he does not recall certain details, that he sees himself in the living room with Mrs Grace and, finally, makes the deduction that this cannot have been their first meeting. But towards the middle of the second sentence, amidst the recollection, the narration acquires a discernible mimetic

quality and it becomes questionable whether the description of the scene henceforth is externally focalised by the narrating self who is viewing the past as on a film screen or internally focalised by Max the child. So, it is uncertain whose perception is portrayed. The perception presented in the underlined part hovers between the perception of the speaker and the hero in the flashback.

The three questions that follow in sentences (3), (4) and (5) cause even greater confusion as to who stands behind them. At first glance, they can be quickly determined as internally focalised by the boy Max and classified as his free indirect thought. But they could also be expressing the surprise of the narrating self who due to the distance of time has forgotten many details and wonders in his present moment where Rose and Myles have been then and why he has been left with their mother. The phrase *left alone with their mother* from the passive question *Why was I left alone with their mother?* is further unsettling because the narrator denies any agency on his part and because the referring expression *their mother* presumably stems from the consciousness of the child as an experiencing subject. Hence, ambiguity arises here between the thought of the young experiencing hero and the musings of the adult narrating figure.

After a short stretch of narration in which the speaker describes that Mrs Grace offers him a treat and his emotional response to it, he continues the next paragraph with a reflective question (13) *What was it she had been doing at the table?* in the style of questions (3), (4) and (5). This is more difficult to be qualified as the free indirect thought of the child because its direct equivalent *What is it she has been doing at the table?* is unlikely to have been used by the experiencing hero at the time of the events. It is not very probable that at that age he would have been wondering about her in that conscious manner. Max-

the-child has hardly been so consciously preoccupied with Mrs Grace. So, the thought is more plausibly attributable to the consciousness of the adult narrator who is struggling to remember details of the scene and is actually articulating the difficulty of recall. But it is still possible for the question to come from the child as there's no clear and definitive indication as to whose consciousness it pertains.

Sentences (14) and (15) present the narrator's current suggestion that she is arranging flowers interrupted by his hesitation *or is that too fanciful?* and further explanation that his memory is blurred. This part of the text, therefore, stems from the narrating self who comments on how he reconstructs his memory. The phrase *or is that too fanciful?*, in particular, presents a metacomment about the reconstruction of the experience.

In sentence (16) focalisation gets more complicated in the first few words. The introductory *Let me linger here with her* poses a challenge with the spatial deictic *here* which designates the place of the past scene where the meeting with Mrs Grace is taking place. On the one hand, it suggests that the speaker has suddenly transported back to the *here* of the past moment and speaks from the place of action, which is suggestive of the perspective of the experiencing self. On the other hand, the spatial deictic *here* in this phrase can also be interpreted as a temporal marker in the flow of the discourse about the memory. Thus, its ambiguity between pointing at a moment in the sequence of discourse and the sequence of memory allows it to be attributed to the perspective of the narrating *I*, as well. The complexities that the representation of distal events can create as regards the interpretation of deictic spatio-temporal markers is illustrated by Nijk (2019) who differentiates between the following two conceptual scenarios:

> Suppose that someone wants to describe the battle between Alexander and Darius at Gaugamela (331 BC) as if it is somehow 'happening right now'. This may take two forms:
>
> 1. *Displacement scenario*. 'We are standing on the plain of Gaugamela. It is October 1 331 BC. Over there on the left are the forces of Alexander. On the right, you can see king Darius.'
>
> 2. *Representation scenario*. Imagine that the speaker is standing in front of a model of the plain of Gaugamela. The forces of Alexander and Darius are represented by miniature soldiers. The speaker says: 'This is the plain of Gaugamela. Here are the forces of Alexander. On the right is king Darius.' (328)

In the first case the conceptualiser is mentally transferred to a distal deictic location and his imagined position there becomes a deictic point of orientation and in the second, the distal ground is brought forward and the events are visualised as occurring in a scale-down model positioned before the eyes of the perceiver. According to Nijk, in the displacement process 'the present tense forms designate the actual past events as seen from this displaced perspective' (328-329) and all spatio-temporal deictic adverbs (such as *over there*, *on the left*, *on the right*) are aligned with this virtual position. Where the representation process is concerned, 'the present tense refers to the time in which we are looking at the representation' (329) and our actual position does not move ground. Any proximal deictics then (such as *this*, *here*) are adjusted according to the parameters of the represented model. While in linguistic terms there is no difference in these two conceptual scenarios, they might actually affect how we

interpret the deictic point of orientation of the spatio-temporal markers. Thus, a proximal deictic adverb like *here* can correlate not only with the displaced perspective of the participant in the scene, but also with the perspective of the onlooker of the represented model. In Banville's example then the adverb *here* is a dual deictic reference which has a spatial meaning in terms of the past location of the child and a temporal meaning in terms of the progression of discourse.

But the phrase *Let me linger here with her* and what follows after it seem to correspond better with the adult's viewpoint. The self-imperative is more easily attributed to the external perspective of the adult narrator who imposes on himself to stay a little longer on the scene. Besides, the consciousness of the narrating self is even more strongly signalled by the fact that he knows what will happen next and that he can manipulate the time by fast-forwarding the action *before Rose appears, and Myles and Chloe return from wherever they are, and her goatish husband comes clattering on to the scene; she will be displaced soon enough from the throbbing centre of my attentions*. Obviously, the speaker's knowledge exceeds the knowledge that the child possessed at the time of the events. Yet, the way the protagonist positions himself on the scene of action by using the deictic verb *come* in *comes clattering on to the scene* once again suggests a displaced deictic centre which is orientated towards a participant in the scene. The temporal deictic *soon* in *she will be displaced soon enough*, similarly to the spatial adverb *here*, also maintains a duality as it is considered from the reference point of the experiencing self but framed in an utterance displaying the narrating self's subsequent knowledge.

It seems that the above sentence stems from two different deictic centres and is construed upon a spatio-temporal framework that oscillates between the near and the far and that creates an odd spatial mismatch between distance and proximity. The speaker mentally dislocates himself to the past and focalises the events from this displaced perspective but at the same time he remains deictically anchored into his present consciousness that gives him the omniscience of what will shortly follow. The represented model that he observes is a kind of virtual reality that he slips into, thus experiencing the past and the present simultaneously. This creates a new dimension of splitting which superimposes on the perception-participation opposition created by the modality patterns discussed in Chapter 3 above. The temporal peculiarities examined here divide the self between immersion in the experience of the past self and recreation of that experience in the present and generate focalisation ambiguity between the narrating *I* and the experiencing *I*. In addition, the two dual deictic references (*Let me linger here*; *she will be displaced soon enough*) underline the intersection between these two voices.

Sentences (17) and (18) are the most ambiguous of all in the extract and show the strongest degree of focalisation ambiguity. One interpretation is that the exclamation *How intensely that sunbeam glows.* and the interrogative *Where is it coming from?* present the free direct thought of the experiencing self who is fully immersed in the experience and these are his immediate musings at the time when he took part in the events. After the speaker has expressed his wish to stay a little longer on the scene with Mrs Grace and has mentally relocated himself in the past, he could easily be continuing with presenting what he had on his mind *then* when the events were unfolding in reality. The only possible

objection that could be raised to this interpretation is the distal demonstrative pronoun *that* in *How intensely that sunbeam glows*, which might suggest that the focaliser is spatially distanced from the scene. Yet, more extensive studies on deictic pronouns and adverbs show that their meanings are not exclusively restricted to psychical proximity and distance in space.

Toolan (1990), for instance, shows that the distal deictic demonstrative *that* does not always denote narratorial remoteness or impartiality but can also express a hero's subjective emotion in relation to phenomena or qualities that he/she perceives as respected, revered, awe-inspiring and unique. Toolan defines this use of *that* as expressing 'reverential distancing' and illustrates it with examples from Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses* among which:

> He had a… fyce… possessing that sort of courage which had long since stopped being bravery and had become foolhardiness.
>
> the Indian face [of Sam] in which he had never seen anything until it smiled, except that faint arching of the nostrils on that first morning when the hounds had found Old Ben. (189)

In Toolan's words, a phenomenon indicated by this form of *that* reflects an experience that is 'strange but intensely memorable' to the character and possesses qualities that are 'highly valued but ill understood, sometimes even mystical' (189). According to this hypothesis, the reverential demonstrative *that* can perfectly correlate with the point of view of an experiencing self.

Having said that, in Banville's example the use of *that* in *How intensely that sunbeam glows* emphasises the special status of the sunbeam and serves to imply that the speaker is impressed and astounded by it. He does not give an

objective account of the situation but is rather deeply involved in the experience as he is struggling with the strong light of the beam and searching to establish its source. Let us just remember that the first thing he noticed upon 'landing' into the house (sentence 2) was namely *an angled, solid-seeming beam of brassy sunlight* and a moment later *that sunbeam* (sentence 17) continues to instil in him a feeling of the sublime and to trigger an intense emotion. In addition, he does not present a factual report like 'There was a sunbeam that glowed intensely' but is discovering this information right now. The exclamation *How intensely that sunbeam glows.* followed by the question *Where is it coming from?* reproduces most directly the nature of experiencing of the event as it unfolds. Besides, the beam may be accepted as a metaphor of Mrs Grace who has such a strong impact on the child that her presence has a blinding power. Hence, the beam is symbolic of her effect on him. All this proves that the two sentences (17) and (18) are aligned with an experiencing consciousness.

But the question is who exactly experiences the event? Through whose mind is it focalised? Is this the subjectivity of the child self or the perception could be tied to the consciousness of the adult narrator? The first of these two scenarios was already discussed above. According to it, the two sentences (17) and (18) were seen as portraying the free direct thought of the experiencing past self facilitated by the use of the present tense and by the fact that they represent a past experience. However, an alternative reading which may turn out to be more credible and logical is that these contemplations present the narrator's discourse and belong to the narrating self who is resurrecting the scene in his mind and by reliving the events, he is making some new observations on the surroundings that he might have previously missed. The scene is so strongly

evoked in his mind that he seems to have materialised on site and be experiencing it once again, but this time with the mature mind of a grown-up person. And what impresses him *now* may not necessarily be what impressed the child *then*. So, any comments made might more plausibly be stemming from the consciousness of adult Max. The spatio-temporal orientation then becomes very complex as the two remarks are uttered in the speaker's present moment and belong to his deictic *here* and *now* but at the same time he is spatially transferred to a different location as the sunbeam exists in a fictional realm.

His fascination with the sunbeam continues in sentence (19) which presents the reflective consciousness of someone who is mulling over the perception. After the initial exclamation at the image of the beam, the speaker now begins to ruminate on where it possibly comes from *It has an almost churchly cast, as if, impossibly, it were slanting down from a rose window high above us*. Once again, the sentence contains strong markers of subjectivity such as the hypothetical proposition introduced with *as if*, the epistemic modality adverb *impossibly*, the progressive aspect *were slanting down* suggesting action *in medias res*. The epistemic modal adverb *impossibly*, in particular, shows such a compelling emotion of surprise that it breaks the continuity of the syntax and precedes the utterance explaining what the impossible thing is. All these subjectivity indices, together with the present tense of the sentence, indicate a direct experience or an instant thought at what is being seen. But just like in sentences (17) and (18), the discourse is ambiguous between that of the experiencing and the narrating self. Since the language of the sentence is reminiscent of that of a grown-up person, the focaliser may well be adult Max.

In brief, sentences (17) and (18), together with (19), differ from the rest of the discourse in that they can't be unequivocally placed within a clear spatio-temporal framework like the first sentences of the selected extract which give a clear orientation that the cognitive process of recalling and seeing happens in the narrator's deictic field. An experiential presentation from the point of view of the child, though credible at first, is not incontestable in the larger context of the passage because despite the sunbeam's material existence in the past and the speaker's direct experience of it as if he were seeing it for the first time, the wording conforms more closely to the external consciousness of the narrator. His visualisation of the memory is so vivid and engulfing that it literally transports him back on the scene of action and he starts reliving it all over again, gathering new impressions and feelings, noticing new details and looking with a new eye on the events that happened then. Exclamations and questions are both part of reflective consciousness and they imply conscious awareness of the events. Since the child is less likely to have done that reflection at the time of the original experience, it seems more plausible that the adult is performing it now.

Therefore, these three sentences cannot be straightforwardly accepted as the internal focalisation of the experiencing child because the point of view of the narrating self is never fully abandoned and there's a constant allusion to the adult inhabiting the scene. That is why, a more likely reading of the text is that the narrator revisits the past and now he can stay longer in the stillness of it. This gives him the opportunity to explore the surroundings more thoroughly, to have a better view of the environment and to notice new details that he didn't pay

attention to previously. This is how the reliving of the events loses the quality of remembering and comes closer to inventing.

The last two sentences of the selected passage display a total collapse of the present-past distinction. The first half of sentence (20) is aligned with the direct perception of what was there in the past (*Beyond the smouldering sunlight there is the placid gloom of indoors on a summer afternoon*) followed by a rapid shift to the narrator's discourse (*where my memory gropes in search of details, solid objects, the components of the past*), which once again flags the immediate memory process. At the beginning of sentence (21) the action is again suddenly moved to the distal deictic ground, with the speaker being in the middle of the experience (*Mrs. Grace, Constance, Connie, is still smiling at me in that unfocused way*). There are strong signals of subjectivity in the first half such as the temporal deictic *still*, the present progressive *is smiling*, the reverential demonstrative *that* in *that unfocused way* showing the hero's awe at the picture revealed, but as the sentence progresses, the viewpoint shifts more definitively to the discourse present of the narrator in *now that I consider it*.

In other words, the first part of the sentence uses the present tense with a past time reference to mimic the free direct thought or perception of the experiencing self, whereas the second part of the sentence shifts the reference of the present tense more unquestionably to the present discourse of the narrating self. The relative pronoun *which* (*Mrs. Grace, Constance, Connie, is still smiling at me in that unfocused way, <u>which</u>, now that I consider it, is how she looked at everything, …*) further complicates the relationship between these two voices as it practically weaves them together into one syntactic unit based on a relation of subordination.

Another aspect showing the ambiguity of viewpoints is the play with the referential expressions *Mrs Grace, Constance, Connie*, which reflects the speaker's total confusion at that point. The speaker is already so overwhelmed with the emotion of retrospection that he can no longer adopt a single and definitive position from which to refer to the woman. He begins with the child-aligned *Mrs Grace*, through her neutral full name *Constance* to the nickname *Connie* suggestive of an adult viewpoint. The triple reference is iconic of his inability to find a stable psychological centre and reveals his deep inner insecurity. In addition, the reference to Mrs Grace's smile in this sentence (*Mrs. Grace, Constance, Connie, is still smiling at me in that unfocused way*) is a continuation of the action in sentence (2) where she turns from a table and smiles at him (…*turning from a table and smiling at me*…). Obviously, everything in-between has happened in the time pause between sentences 2 and 21. Or narrative time has not progressed linearly but has moved in a circle.

To recap, the extract chosen for analysis presents a notable case of focalisation ambiguity. Though the passage contains some explicit markers of narratorial discourse which serve as orientation and which are clearly uttered in the speaker's present cotemporal with now, such as the verbs of mental reasoning *I do not recall*; *which shows that this cannot have been*; *my memory gropes in search of details, now that I consider it*, etc. and the verbs of visual perception *I see myself*, the rest of the text exhibits a pronounced mimetic quality and creates significant difficulty in determining the point of view through which the events are focalised. In the first paragraph the past tense dominates and the ambiguity is mainly between the free indirect style of the experiencing self and the external consciousness of the narrating self (*Where <u>was</u> Chloe? Where <u>was</u>*

Myles? Why <u>was</u> I left alone with their mother?). As Marnette suggests, this keeps asserting the narrating self's voice, though the manner of expression still remains ambiguous. But the second paragraph, in which the past tense is entirely substituted by the present tense, can be said to give greater freedom to the experiencing self, creating ambiguity between the free direct thought of the child and the present discourse of the adult (*How intensely that sunbeam glows. Where is it coming from?*). However, this interpretation is not without problems.

In the course of my analysis, I questioned the child voice hypothesis because despite the linguistic indices that can prove it (deictic expressions, exclamatory sentences, demonstratives, interrogative clauses, the present tense), a mature consciousness permeates the text of the paragraph. The consciousness presented then is neither completely that of the experiencing child self focalising the events internally nor completely that of the narrating self situated externally but a voice indeterminate between the two, or rather a narrating self who strives to incarnate into the experiencing self but can do so only deictically and perceptually and only partially conceptually. On the one hand, he fully displaces himself to the distal location of the past and describes the scene as if the characters and objects in it are before his eyes now (*How intensely that sunbeam glows*; *Mrs Grace is still smiling at me*) but the fact that he remains locked in his adult consciousness means that this is not actually the original point of view of his previous self and he does not reflect the scene from the eyes of the child but represents, evokes a small-scale model of the past in his mind. The stylistic effect of this oscillation is the interpenetration between past and present. It cannot be said for sure whether he goes to the past or the past comes to him; the boundary between the two is fluid and extremely fragile.

As a result, the past and the present cannot be distinctly separated and become indistinguishable from one another. The two temporal realms are continuously intertwined: the present in which the narrator dwells is a perpetual quest to relive the past and the past keeps encroaching on the present. And the speaker has got stuck in a temporal gap which does not allow him to free from the past and continue forward in his present life. Neither is his past authentic as we can never be sure whether this really happened or he is imagining it, nor is his present definite as it is so penetrated by the past that we can't help asking if he has a real present at all. The linguistic feature that plays a central role for the fusion of the two is the present tense which creates focalisation ambiguity between free direct thought and narratorial discourse. Thus, the narrating self and the experiencing self merge together and their voices conflate. The boundaries between the temporal realms of the past and the present become permeable and the two spheres interpenetrate each other.

4.2.2 Further aspects of the present tense

Fleischmann (1990) discusses a similar experimental use of the present tense in the story *The Mark on the Wall* by Virginia Woolf, whom she sees as one of the most successful exploiters of this tense pushing the narrative form to its limits. In Fleischmann's interpretation of this text, the past and the present tense are seen as members of the opposition action and knowledge vs. perception and thought and their use as reconstructing the narrative from a plot-dominated chronological sequence of events to a meditative monologue:

> … the use of tense figures prominently among the linguistic devices used by Woolf to subvert conventional narrative structure based on chronicles of events and to develop instead one of the major themes of her writing: a meditation on action and knowledge vs. perception and thought. Note that the categories of this opposition – action and knowledge, on the one hand, perception and thought, on the other – correlate in a motivated way with the P [past] and PR [present] tenses, respectively. (292)

This use of the present tense gives prevalence to thought and perception over action and knowledge. Such a text is difficult to qualify as narrative proper because it is essentially 'a narrative about thought' or, even more precisely, 'thoughts about narrative' (Fleischmann, 1990: 295). The contemplative structure of the text is devoid of plot and lacks linear chronology and consciousness moves in a circular way. This present tense has to be distinguished from interior monologue in that the narrator does not step into the shoes of his/her previous self and does not speak directly from this position but remains in the present where he/she performs a cognitive activity.

Such a narrator-oriented type of monologue has been previously defined by Cohn (1978) as *memory monologue*, where attention is not aimed at the internal perspective of the experiencing self but the emphasis is rather placed on the narrating self's current cognitive activity of retrospection. As we can see, the focus is on the present and 'the past is always anchored in the present moment of locution, and thus commented and exclaimed upon rather than plainly narrated' (Cohn, 1978: 246). Broadly speaking, experience becomes equated with narration.

Likewise, Banville's narratives can be qualified as what Cohn calls *memory monologues* (verbalising the activity of remembering) or Fleischmann – *meditative monologues* (silent dialogue with oneself). They feature a narrating self who performs a mental activity of remembering, analysing and contemplating the current moment. For this reason, I attribute the utterances to the consciousness of the narrating self rather than the experiencing self, though the latter possibility cannot be decisively rejected and still remains open. But as far as my conclusions go, what at times resembles a true interior monologue (*How intensely that sunbeam glows. Where is it coming from?*) is more likely to be the narrator's immediate thought. In the process of retrospection Banville's protagonists keep reliving the past. Thus, the past seems to subsume the present and to make the present.

The present tense contributes to this effect in one more way. Narration in the present does not only point to immediate temporality but also acquires features of the imperfective aspect (Fleischmann, 1990: 290-291). Thus, a present-past alternation in a text may carry the connotations of something indefinite and something determined, respectively. This view is also expressed by Cohn in her article on Kafka (1968) in which she contrasts the past tense forms in the text as denoting total finality with the present tense forms marking inconclusiveness, inertia and a lasting impasse (144), the latter of which Cohn evaluates as an *eternal present*. A similar phrasing is employed by Fleischmann to assess the effect of a speaker's present tense. She labels it as a *perpetual present* whose objective is 'not to create a dynamic linear pattern of events but to represent a totality, a static whole resembling a picture' (Fleischmann, 1990: 298). Applying the aspectual connotations to the meaning of the present tense,

the past-present switches in Banville's example from section 4.2.1 then may be interpreted also in view of the memory-imagination pole. Sentences (6)-(11) thereof resemble a typical narration in the past tense with actions presented as completed, which is closer to retrospection, while the undertone of sentence (15) where the temporal shift takes place points to the fact that his memory has retained nothing more than a 'a multi-coloured patch' of the moment and he sees things in a 'shimmer of variegated brightness'. Henceforth, sentences (16)-(21) transfer into an infinite present suggestive of indefiniteness, paralysis and incompleteness of the events, which for its part implies a more active working of the imagination. Therefore, the events presented in the past are more likely to have truly happened than those narrated in the present. The resurrection of the past then competes with an inventive recreation of the events.

Reflective narration displays one more characteristic feature. Since it represents the direct process of recollecting, it often emphasises the orchestration of the memory rather than the events that happened. The focus then is shifted to the arrangement of what is being recollected. And the linguistic medium communicating this is often the present tense, as seen in another passage from *The Sea*:

(2) (1) On a patch of grass between the low grassy bank and the wall of ferns a white cloth was spread. (2) Mrs. Grace, kneeling, a cigarette clamped in a corner of her mouth and one eye shut against the smoke, laid out the picnic things, while her husband, his hat falling further askew, struggled to draw a resistant wine cork. (3) Myles was already off among the ferns. (4) Chloe sat froglike on her haunches, eating an egg sandwich.

> (5) Rose – where is Rose? (6) She is there, in her scarlet shirt and dancing pumps and dancer's tight black pants with the straps that go under the soles of her feet, and her hair black as a crow's wing tied in a plume behind her fine-boned head. (7) But how did she get here? (8) She had not been in the car with us. (9) A bicycle, yes, I see a bicycle asprawl in abandon among the ferns, handlebars turned sideways and its front wheel jutting up at a somehow unseemly angle, a sly prefiguring, as it seems now, of what was to come. (10) Mr. Grace clamped the wine bottle between his knees and strained and strained, his earlobes turning red. (11) Behind me Rose sat down at one corner of the tablecloth, leaning on a braced arm, her cheek almost resting on her shoulder, her legs folded off to the side, in a pose that should have been awkward but was not. (12) I could hear Myles running in the ferns. (13) Suddenly the cork came out of the wine bottle with a comical pop that startled us all. (Banville, *The Sea*, 113-114)

In this scene, Max describes a picnic that he went to with the Graces when he was a child. The passage begins with the represented perception of the experiencing self who enumerates what every one of them did as they entered his field of perception. The details presented are filtered through the perceiver's consciousness. The non-finite clauses (*kneeling*; *a cigarette clamped in a corner of her mouth*; *one eye shut against the smoke; his hat falling further askew*) impart stillness and portray the hero's vision of static figures and events.

Following the white cloth, his eyes capture Mrs Grace, her husband, Myles, Chloe and finally Rose.

But the moment he mentions Rose's name, he realises that she is not in his sight, hence the interrogative *where is Rose?* in sentence (5). This question is extremely ambiguous in terms of focalisation. The dash enacts a shift to the present tense and the present tense here may be interpreted as indicative of the free direct thought of the experiencing self, i.e. Max the child. From this perspective, the whole underlined part of the excerpt beginning after the dash in sentence (5) until the first half of sentence (9) can be read as the interior monologue of the boy Max. Even the past tense in sentence (7) *But how did she get here?* does not go against this categorisation as this is the tense that would have normally been used by the speaker at the place of the action when thinking about the past. The only exception would probably be sentence (8) where the past perfect is indicative of free indirect style.

The spatial deictic expressions also seem to fall in line with this perspective. The adverb *there* in sentence (6) is aligned with the displaced virtual position the speaker takes in the past event space from which he points to the place in the distance where Rose is compared to him. *Here* in sentence (7) also relates to the location of the past event, the picnic ground, where the speaker is imaginatively situated. It is from this displaced position that the focaliser perceives the visual images of Rose in sentence (6) – *in her scarlet shirt and dancing pumps and dancer's tight black pants with the straps that go under the soles of her feet, and her hair black as a crow's wing tied in a plume behind her fine-boned head* – and the bicycle in sentence (9) – *I see a bicycle asprawl in*

abandon among the ferns, handlebars turned sideways and its front wheel jutting up at a somehow unseemly angle.

Yet, the free direct thought in the underlined segment may well correlate with a narrator's discourse. In this case the narrator conjures up in his mind past events and observes them as unfolding right now as if on a theatre stage or a film screen. He remains in his current location and retains his mature adult consciousness. In this line of reasoning, the underlined section portrays the immediate thought and perception of the narrating self who tries to reconstruct an episode from his past life. And where this is made more difficult by failure of recalling or loss of memories and requires an extra effort, he switches to the present in which he attempts to elucidate the moment. The action of seeing then, as well as possibly performed by the experiencing self, may also be performed by the narrating self in his current moment. The perception of Rose's appearance in sentence (6) and the bicycle's position in sentence (9) could belong to Max, the adult. But since he is not observing these entities in reality but in his imagination, it remains disputable whether his account is authentic. The protagonist is caught between the past and the present and is forced to fill the missing pieces of his life's puzzle with the images that unconsciously come to the surface of his mind, be they genuine or invented reflections of the past.

Overall, the narrator's memory account is suspended between the free direct thought of the experiencing *I*, that is the boy self, and the narrator's discourse, i.e. the thoughts and perceptions of the adult self. The latter option might be more plausible due to the sometimes adult wording and more mature-sounding comments and descriptions of the objects and scenes observed. The speaker often demonstrates such conscious awareness of the events and the

people involved that it is difficult to say that it is genuinely arising from the child's perspective. In view of this analysis, it is more feasible to assume that the narrator's voice overshadows the experiencing self. And compared to Ikeo and Marnette's findings presented in the introduction to this chapter – which postulate that the past tense (generating focalisation ambiguities between free indirect style and narratorial discourse) gives pre-eminence to the narrator's voice, while the present tense (generating focalisation ambiguities between free direct style and narratorial discourse) delegates privilege to the experiencing self – we see that the present tense can actually give significant supremacy to the narrating self, as well.

In Banville's fiction it is difficult to say if we ever hear the child's voice directly in the mode of free direct thought. What at times resembles the experiencing self's interior monologue, upon deeper scrutiny, emerges as the narrator's instantaneous thoughts. This peculiar *memory monologue* or *meditative monologue* reproduces the experience of the direct memory process in the narrator's deictic field and, in this sense, narration becomes experience but this experience has to be distinguished from the experience that the child once had. It turns out that the past is made present and, stylistically speaking, retrospection becomes a mixture between remembering and imagining. Stanzel (1984) acknowledges that in a first-person novel recollection often borders on invention: 'Many first-person narrators go far beyond transcribing that which they have experienced themselves by letting the narrative arise anew from their imagination. During this process, the boundary between recollection and creation is often suspended.' (215) This confirms once again the interplay between memory and imagination in retrospective narration.

One important distinction to make at the end of this section is between Banville's specific retrospective narration and certain first-person eyewitness narratives which also involve the use of present tense to designate subjective experience concurrent with the act of speaking. The latter type of novels typically render what the speaker is seeing at the moment of writing. What makes these two types different then is that the discourse present of the narrator in eyewitness novels is deictically anchored to immediate events in the narrator's present moment, while the experiential consciousness discernible on the level of the narratorial discourse in Banville relates to the past as his protagonists are not experiencing anything in reality right now. It is the past that they are evoking and re-experiencing as if they are materialising it in the present and observing it.

4.3 The search for the lost self

So far, I have examined how focalisation ambiguities in Banville's retrospective texts can contribute to the conflation of the past and the present and how the fusion of these two temporal domains creates the strange sensation of a past not finished and still lived through in the present. Thus, the ambiguity between free direct discourse and narration in the present tense in Banville points to a past so immediate that it is re-experienced at the narrative moment. In what follows, I will continue to examine the significance of tense shifts for presenting the process of recollecting in Banville's novels.

In the next two sections, I am going to explore other intricate mechanisms used by Banville to destabilise the spatio-temporal integrity of the novels which

involve alternations between free indirect style and the discourse present of the narrator. The examples selected for analysis in section 4.3 are grouped upon a specific phenomenon – the loss of the self upon recalling the past, while the examples that will be inspected in section 4.4 are arranged thematically around the difficulty of retrieving seasonal details in the picture of the past. These effects are achieved mainly by the narrating self's inability to fully restore the past and the contradictions that occur between the memory account rendered in free indirect style and the narrator's rational thought about that memory done at the moment of recollection.

4.3.1 The elusive *I*

According to Banville, 'the past seems the thing on which we rest our sense of ourselves and our sense of the world' (Burzynski, 2012, interview with Banville). Therefore, there is a strong relationship between the way his heroes represent the past and their sense of selfhood. But what sense of self can one display, if memory is constantly being elusive? The following examples reflect how this question is linguistically enacted in the narratives.

The first example in this section illustrates the discontinuity of the memory process which runs on two levels and is linguistically encoded in the tense shifts. The past–present opposition here is exhibited more evidently in the polarity non-reflective–reflective consciousness. In addition, the inner division of the character goes to the extreme of questioning the existence of the past self. Consider this extract:

(3) (1) Later that day, the day the Graces came, or the following one, or the one following that, I saw the black car again, recognised it at once as it went bounding over the little humpbacked bridge that spanned the railway line. (2) It is still there, that bridge, just beyond the station. (3) Yes, things endure, while the living lapse. (4) The car was heading out of the village in the direction of the town, I shall call it Ballymore, a dozen miles away. (5) The town is Ballymore, this village is Ballyless, ridiculously, perhaps, but I do not care. (6) The man with the beard who had winked at me was at the wheel, saying something and laughing, his head thrown back. (7) Beside him a woman sat with an elbow out of the rolled-down window, her head back too, pale hair shaking in the gusts from the window, but she was not laughing only smiling, that smile she reserved for him, sceptical, tolerant, languidly amused. (8) She wore a white blouse and sunglasses with white plastic rims and was smoking a cigarette. (9) Where am I, lurking in what place of vantage? (10) I do not see myself. (11) They were gone in a moment, the car's sashaying back-end scooting around a bend in the road with a spurt of exhaust smoke. (12) Tall grasses in the ditch, blond like the woman's hair, shivered briefly and returned to their former dreaming stillness. (Banville, *The Sea*, 9-10)

This paragraph records Max's perception of Mr and Mrs Grace passing by him in their car. The passage is structured upon the consecutive alternation of

two narrative techniques: represented perception and narrator's discourse, most clearly discernible in the repeated shift of tense. The past tense reflects the focalisation of the experiencing self in its original past time frame and the present tense corresponds to the time frame of the speaker's present and reveals the direct process of storytelling. The two techniques are distributed at almost even intervals throughout the paragraph. Schematically presented, it would look like this:

Represented perception	**Narrator's discourse**
sentence (1)	
	sentence (2); sentence (3)
sentence (4)	
	sentence (5)
sentence (6); sentence (7); sentence (8)	
	sentence (9); sentence (10)
sentence (11); sentence (12)	

The use of represented perception creates a perceptual alignment with the consciousness of the child as an experiencer of the events. Conversely, the narrator's discourse is associated with the voice of the adult self narrating the story. These two perspectives differ in one more way: the first seems to express non-reflective perception, while the second seems to present a reflective thought about that perception. Thus, all sentences from the first column of the above table (1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12) give a glimpse into the non-reflective perception of Max-the-child and simply portray the visual pictures that his eyes register in the

place of action without much mental processing involved. The linguistic indices that point to this subjective perception are: the verb of perception *see* in sentence (1) (*I saw the black car again*); the past progressive tense and aspect (*The car was heading…*, *she was not laughing only smiling*, *She… was smoking*); the non-finite progressive verbs (*saying something and laughing*, *pale hair shaking*, *lurking*, *scooting around*); the past perfect (*had winked*); the spatial deictic adverb *away* and the strings of free modifier clauses serving to enumerate details of the visual pictures (*saying something and laughing, his head thrown back*; *her head back too, pale hair shaking in the gusts from the window*; *the car's sashaying back-end scooting around a bend in the road with a spurt of exhaust smoke*).

On the other hand, the sentences from the second column (2, 3, 5, 9, 10) classified as originating from the consciousness of the narrating self refer to the reflective mind of Max-the-adult who ruminates on that visual perception. The linguistic features construing the reflectivity are: the interjection *yes* in *Yes, things endure*; emotive expressions like *ridiculously, perhaps, but I do not care*, the modal adverb *perhaps*, the spoken-style discourse which stands in stark contrast with the more literary style of the free indirect sentences from column 1 which are also greater in length.

What is remarkable here is the temporal gap between the perception of the character-in-the-past and its deferred assimilation by the narrator-in-the-present. The narrator cannot sustain the visual representation of the past and keeps interrupting his memory account in order to explain, add or comment on it. This creates a sense of unintegrated past, a void between the past and the present and suggests that the speaker has not made sense of his past. The very act of narration

then becomes an attempt of rethinking the past experience and understanding it. The non-reflective vision focalised through the eyes of the protagonist's young self is rationalised only now by the reflective consciousness of his present self. Therefore, the distinction between represented perception and narrator's discourse made in the table above is also a distinction between the non-reflective perception of the experiencing self and the reflective thought about that perception of the narrating self. The alternation between these two narrative positions is a manifestation of internal division in itself because it breaks the continuity of the narrative and suggests a self who is wavering between the past and the present.

However, what makes the above passage even more pertinent with regard to the 'divided self' is the elusive *I* in sentences (9) and (10) in which the speaker self-questions his own existence *Where am I, lurking in what place of vantage?* and makes the claim that he cannot establish his location in space *I do not see myself*. The first-person pronouns here evoke again the enactor split already discussed in section 3.1. The speaker asking the question does not refer to his present self but rather to his previous *I*. He asks where the child self is, or the character-in-the-present cannot see the character-in-the-flashback. The connection between the two is suddenly lost. And this affects the protagonist's self-identification in at least two ways. Firstly, it signifies an illusory presence. The perceiving consciousness from the previous sentences is seriously undermined. At the beginning of the paragraph the speaker indubitably certified his identity with the use of the personal pronoun *I* in *I saw the black car again*, which clearly personalises the perception presented. It is filtered through the mind of an *I* which existed there on the scene. But the question *Where am I…?*

most unexpectedly denies the existence of this *I* and it becomes unclear who then has focalised the scene. The deictic centre of the represented perception sentences (column 1) is collapsed since the 'I' that has occupied it is claimed to be no longer there. Secondly, the hero's location on the past scene of action is subverted, as well. The past self not only lacks a certain presence but also a determinate position in space. The narrator is unsure from *what place of vantage* his child self observes. The past enactor is also said to be *lurking*, i.e. hiding somewhere like a shadowy figure. The paradox arises here from the fact that the phantom childhood self is alleged to have no fixed point of observation, but the represented perception sentences suggest a specific point in space from which the perceiver sees the car moving. The text reveals that the experiencing self is located near the bridge that connects the village he is in with the town and he has just a momentary view of the car passing over the bridge. The whole scene is then focalised from one single defined spatial location.

Thus, sentences (9) and (10) disrupt not only the continuity of the memory process but also the continuity between present and past self because the outright rejection of the hero's presence and his unclear whereabouts on the past scene lead to a complete disassociation of selfhood. The reader is left confused as to who exactly filtered the car-passing scene then. The explicitly self-referenced personalised account is suddenly declared to be focalised by an elusive *I*, an *I* with an obscure ontological status. And even more shockingly than that, after questioning his existence in the past, the narration returns imperceptibly to the internal focalisation of the experiencing *I* again in sentences (11) and (12) as if no doubt about his presence has been raised. The transition into the

consciousness of the child self after sentences (9) and (10) comes almost as abruptly as the narrator's declaration of self-absence.

This contrasts sharply with the detached image of the self set out in section 3.1.2 where the splitting presented by the linguistic pattern 'I see myself doing something' featuring co-referential pronouns linked with a verb of visual perception was seen as creating a division between observation and participation. In comparison with the self-division that the semantic pattern 'I see myself' presupposes, its negative usage 'I do not see myself' reveals a different manifestation of the 'divided self'. The protagonist is not simply splitting himself between actor and spectator when looking at the past but is negating that past altogether and shaking its foundations when the past self is claimed to be unreachable.

The search for the lost self is even more strongly dramatised in a similar passage from *Eclipse* in which the writer asserts the presence of the self more strongly through the more frequent use of first-person pronouns before the existence of that self is negated. Thus, the more personal pronouns are used, the more abruptly the illusion of presence is shattered:

(4) (1) I walked down through the town. (2) It was Sunday and the streets were empty, and the glossy black windows of shut shops stared at me disapprovingly as I went past. (3) A wedge of inky shadow sliced the main street neatly into halves. (1) On one side parked cars squatted hotly in the sun. (4) A small boy threw a stone at me and ran off laughing. (5) I suppose I was a motley sight, with my nascent beard and unkempt hair and no

> doubt staring eyes. (6) A dog came and sniffed at the cuffs of my trousers with fastidious twitchings of its snout. (7) Where am I here, boy, youth, young man, broken-down actor? (8) This is the place that I should know, the place where I grew up, but I am a stranger, no one can put a name to my face, I cannot even do it myself, with any surety. (9) There is no present, the past is random, and only the future is fixed. (10) To cease becoming and merely be, to stand as a statue in some forgotten dead-leafed square, released from destruction, enduring the seasons equably, the rain and snow and sun, taken for granted even by the birds, how would that be? (11) I turned for home, with a bottle of milk and a brown-paper bag of eggs bought from a crone in a hole-in-the-wall down a lane. (Banville, *Eclipse*, 77)

In this excerpt we are given a glimpse into Alexander Cleave's memory of a walk through the town that he once took. The paragraph, again, combines two alternating narrative techniques: free indirect style and narrator's discourse most obviously discernible in the shift of tense. The first four sentences come in free indirect style portraying the subjective experience of the hero indicated by subjectivity markers like emotive adverbs (*disapprovingly*; *hotly*), metaphorical expressions of colour (*glossy black*; *inky*), personification indicating the individual perception of the surroundings (*the glossy black windows of shut shops stared at me*; *A wedge of inky shadow sliced the main street neatly into halves*; *parked cars squatted hotly in the sun*) and phrasal verbs signifying spatial deixis (*walked down through*; *ran off*). These are followed by the

narrating self's current contemplation of his appearance at that time in sentence (5) signalled by the verb of mental process in the present tense *suppose*. Sentence (6) brings back the narration to the past time frame of the experiencing self whose internal perspective is designated by the deictic verb 'came' in *A dog came* and the evaluative adjective 'fastidious' in *fastidious twitchings of its snout*. Then follows a longer stretch of text from sentence (7) to sentence (10) indicative of the external viewpoint of the narrating self ruminating upon the past place and his presence in it which is recognisable by the shift to the present tense, the gnomic generalisations and the reflective questions. The passage is finalised with sentence (11) which returns to the location of the past self and continues the narration of his actions.

Similarly to passage (3), this excerpt is also structured upon the successive alternation of the experiencing self's internal point of view written in free indirect style and the narrating self's external perspective presented by the discourse present of the narrator. The two techniques are most noticeably differentiated by the consecutive changes in tense, which already signal a discontinuous narrative structure. What makes the case of the 'elusive *I*' more conspicuous and dramatic here is the sharper contrast between the presence and the absence of the *I* on the scene. In this passage the memory account is made stronger by the more tangible presence of the *I* facilitated by the use of a higher number of first-person pronominal references, both in subject and object position: *I walked down through the town*; *the glossy black windows… stared at me*; *I went past*; *A small boy threw a stone at me*; *A dog… sniffed at the cuffs of my trousers*.

These sentences make it clear that not only is the hero self-aware of being there but his material presence is also noticeable to the boy who threw a stone at him and the dog that came to sniff at him. The reflection of himself that he sees in the windows of the closed shops serves as an additional confirmation of his presence on the scene. And then, the remembering consciousness of the narrating self in sentence (7) suddenly loses the continuity between the past and the present. The experiencing past hero, who was so professedly present on the past scene, becomes unexpectedly absent from it. Compared to the previous passage from *The Sea*, in which a first-person reference was made only once in sentence (1) (*I saw the black car again*) and then the hero's presence negated further down in sentence (9), here there are five instances of first-person pronominal forms throughout the text (sentences (1), (2), (4), (6)) and the denial of the self in sentence (7) comes much more suddenly namely because of the proximity of the self's material existence up to sentence (6) and its questioning in the immediately following sentence (7).

A further consideration that needs to be taken into account is the double deixis in *Where am I here?* in which the spatial deictic adverb *here* refers to both the experiencing and the narrating self. It is basically the deixis of the experiencing self adopted by the narrating self because the whole sentence is rendered in the discourse present of the narrator. Moreover, sentence (7), which began as a spatial questioning, in its second part changes to a temporal question asking about the protagonist's age. Apart from asking where he is, the narrator cannot identify in which life period he was when the events in question happened. He hesitates whether he was a boy, a youth, a young man, or a broken-down actor at the time.

The state of perpetual internal agitation in which he lives is displayed most evidently in the sentences that come up next (sentences (8) to (10)). In them the narrator gives full vent to his feelings of anguish. He becomes unrecognisable not only to his neighbours but also to his own self (*This is the place that I should know, the place where I grew up, but I am a stranger, no one can put a name to my face, I cannot even do it myself, with any surety*.). This personal discord affects even the temporal flow which is seen in the irrational statement *There is no present, the past is random, and only the future is fixed*. This comment on the passage of time is very odd because in reality it happens the other way round: only the past is fixed, the present is what exists now and it is the future that is open and random. Switching the natural progression of time one more time shows the instability of the spatio-temporal setting in the narrative. And in this confusion the protagonist degrades his older self as nothing more than *a statue in some forgotten dead-leafed square*.

In brief, these two passages point to a profound disturbance of the self. In both examples the present self of the narrator cannot locate his past self either spatially or temporally in his current thought about the past. The strategy that Banville uses to make the subversion of the self more dramatic is to first create a convincing representation of the past self in free indirect style and then shatter it from his vantage point in the present. Or rather in the midst of an obviously personalised account revealing the subjective perspective of the experiencing hero, the narrating self interrupts to ask if this hero has been there at all, where exactly he is positioned or what his actual age is. The change of tense from the past to the present thus underlies, and makes possible, this undermining of the

past. Due to the instability of memory, the past self is lost to a certain extent. Time has erased the past and memory cannot fully reconstruct it.

4.3.2 The disembodied eye

The special emphasis on 'vision' and 'seeing', as it must have become clear by now, is a distinctive aspect of Banville's fiction. In the vast majority of the examples discussed so far visual perception has been given prominence in one form or another: either as the splitting of the *I* as both subject and object of seeing (section 3.1.2), the observation of the self from a hypothetical position (section 3.2), the ambiguous focalisation of some past scenes (section 4.2) or the inability of the *I* to see himself back in the past (section 4.3). And the list does not stop here as Banville likes to play different optical 'tricks' with the representation of perception in his narratives. Another visual effect in his fiction arises from the separation of the eye from its body. The protagonist's ontological status is then reduced from an 'I' to its homonymous 'eye'. The protagonist ceases to exist as a self-contained well-integrated whole and is turned into a disjointed part of the body, as illustrated by the following textual sample from *The Book of Evidence*:

(5) (1) Daphne was sitting cross-legged in a canvas chair, shelling peas into a nickel-bowl. (2) She wore a bathrobe, and her hair was wrapped in a towel. […] (3) What did we talk about that day, the three of us? (4) What did I do? (5) Sat down, I suppose, drank a beer, stretched out my legs and leaned back, playing at being relaxed. (6) I cannot see myself. (7) I am a sort of floating

> eye, watching, noting, scheming. (8) Anna came and went between the living-room and the kitchen, bringing cheese and oranges and sliced avocados. (9) It was Sunday. (10) The place was quiet. (11) I watched through the window the mist moving among the trees. (12) The telephone rang and Anna answered it, turning away and murmuring into the receiver. (13) Daphne smiled at me. (14) Her glance was unfocused, a kind of soft groping among the objects around her. (15) She rose and handed me the bowl and the remaining unshelled peas, and went away upstairs. (16) When she came back in a while she was dressed, her hair was dried and she was wearing her spectacles, and at first I did not recognise her, and thought she was yet another tenant of the house. (17) It was only then that I realised it was she I had seen on the lawn that day at Professor Something's party. […] (18) It occurred to me that my presence was hardly impinging on their day, that they would have done just these same things if I were not there. (Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, 62)

This extract presents Freddie's recollection of an episode from his youth when he pays a visit to The Behrens' house and finds there Anna Behrens and Daphne, the latter of which would later become his wife. The first two sentences begin in free indirect style (*was sitting*, *shelling*) providing a description of Daphne at the time of the events. The next segment, from sentence (3) to (7), belongs to the voice of the narrating self. Although sentences (3) and (4), with their interrogative form and past tense verbs, might mislead to be the free

indirect thought of young Freddie, they are more plausibly arising from the adult narrator's point of view who is struggling to remember in his current now certain details of the past event, such as the group's topic of conversation as well as his own actions at the time. The narrator's discourse is made more explicit in sentences (5), (6) and (7) which shift to the present tense. The orienting phrase *I suppose* expresses the current self's suggestion of what he might have been doing and how he might have been positioned. In sentences (6) and (7), similarly to sentence (10) from extract (1), the narrator claims to be unable from his position in the present to see his past self. But compared to the speaker from example (1), who is lurking somewhere unseen, this elusive past self is not just invisible but separated from his body and hovering like a disembodied eye.

Yet, this claim contrasts sharply with the rest of the section which resumes the free indirect account of the experiencing past self. There are strong subjectivity signals in it that point to an experiencing consciousness: deictic verbs (*came and went*, *went away*, *came back*), past progressive and non-finite progressive forms (*bringing*, *moving*, *turning away*, *murmuring*, *was wearing*), similes (*a kind of soft groping*), past perfect forms (*had seen*). The presence of the *I* is even evident from the use of first-person pronouns both in subject (*I watched*) and object (*smiled at me, handed me the bowl*) position, the latter of which especially show the other characters' interaction with the main protagonist, thus certifying his material presence there. Besides, the free indirect part from sentence (8) onwards presents not only the perception of the hero but also his thoughts. For instance, sentence (11) with the verb of perception *watch* and the present progressive *moving* clearly shows perception from within. The second half of sentence (16) as well as sentence (17) portray the hero's thoughts

signalled by the mental verbs *recognise, thought, realised* which are a strong indicator of an internal mental activity. The past perfect *had seen* and the distal deixis *that day* additionally confirm the internal perspective as well as the fact that the hero is not only present on the scene but also has an anterior life. Therefore, the consciousness of the experiencing self is solidly represented in linguistic terms.

It is paradoxical then how the narrator negates that self's presence and degrades his status to a floating eye. The reason why he is probably doing that is because, despite the hero's presence in the past, that hero has never felt himself to be a substantial figure and a person of significance. This is even expressed in sentence (18) which reveals the past self's feeling of being invisible in the company of the two women. This feeling of insignificance bordering on invisibility is still haunting the narrator in the present so that when he resurrects past scenes, he is finding it impossible to resurrect his own image as a self-contained whole.

Consequently, the presentation of the self as a disembodied eye has a strong depersonalising effect. But this depersonalisation can become more pronounced still if it is expressed with the addition of the interrogative pronoun for inanimate objects *what*, as is the case in a scene from *Ancient Light*:

(6) (1) What of my mother, though, and what she would say? (2) Well, what of her? (3) It was the school holidays still, I would make some excuse to be gone for the day; […] (4) I pause. (5) I am suddenly assailed by a memory of her, my mother, sitting on a beach on a windy bright day in the midst of the remains of

> a picnic, paper plates and crushed paper cups, bread crusts in a big tin biscuit-box, a banana skin rudely splayed, a bottle with the dregs of milky tea in it sunk at a drunken angle in the sand. (6) She is sitting up straight with her bare mottled legs extended before her, and there is something on her head, a headscarf, or a shapeless cotton hat. (7) Is she at her sewing?—for she wears that abstracted half-smile that she does when she is doing her embroidery. (8) Where is my as yet undead father? (9) I do not see him. (10) He is down at the shallows, it must be, where he often was, paddling, his trousers rolled, his calves and his knobbed ankles on show, greyish-white, the colour of lard. (11) And I, where am I, or what?—an eye suspended in mid-air, a hovering witness only, there and not there? (12) Ah, Mother, how can the past be past and yet still be here, untarnished, gleaming, bright as that tin box? […] (13) Would I really go to Rossmore? (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 297-298)

This scene is again structured on two narrative levels. It begins (sentences (1), (2), (3)) and ends (sentence (13)) in free indirect style rendering young Alex's internal dialogue with himself. He wants to secretly go to Mrs Gray and is thinking how to hide from his mother. At the thought of his mother, however, his memory account pauses as the current self is 'assailed' by a vision of his mother during a picnic and from sentence (5) till sentence (11) the narrator verbalises the act of visualising this picnic scene. Certain details of the picture come clearly to his mind such as the remains of the food and drinks as well as the way his mother is sitting, while other details are more difficult to recall and

the narrator begins reflecting on them in order to elucidate them. He makes suggestions on what there is on his mother's head, if she can possibly be sewing, where his father has gone and, all of a sudden, when he has to account for himself, he cannot trace his past self on the scene. The past self is missing from the picture.

But apart from the narrator being unable to locate his previous self in this vision of the past (*where am I*), there is also the problem of recognising that self's identity at all (*or what*, i.e. what am I). In this way, the self is dehumanised as he is not referred to with the person-related interrogative pronoun *who* (Who am I?) but with the interrogative pronoun reserved for inanimate objects *what*. The past self's ontological status is therefore reduced to the inhuman condition of *something* and thus treated as a non-person. All he is, is a disembodied eye that hovers in the air around being *there, and not there*. In short, he is not a substantial figure to himself. The narrator is able to reconstruct details of the setting and the actions and appearances of other people but not of his own self. As the above passage shows, he is very particular about the details of all those plates and cups and bottles. He is also able to partially recall his mother. He struggles with the description of his father but still manages to reconstruct him, though only hypothetically. But himself he is unable to resurrect at all.

Thus, by presenting a past self that is lost and irrecuperable Banville also disrupts the sense of integrity of the present self. As pointed out at the beginning of section 4.3.1, Banville sees the past as the foundation on which our identity is built. When the past is undermined, the self cannot be complete and integrated because he lacks the very foundations of selfhood. Stylistically viewed, the

passages explored in this section enact the self's struggle to rediscover and establish his identity.

4.4 The fictitious nature of memory

The inventive quality of memory is a central leitmotif in all of Banville's works but is particularly prominent in the novel *Ancient Light* which posits the question whether there exists any difference between recollecting and inventing in a more straightforward and more provocative manner. Banville himself has revealed in an interview that 'All art is an attempt to capture the moment, to stall time in its terrifyingly unstoppable flow. Memory is a kind of back-door way of doing that. But I no longer believe that we *remember* – I think we invent, and take our inventions for 'what really happened'. It's a harmless and consoling bit of self-deception.' (Wells, 2012, interview with Banville).

In this section, I will explore how the theme of the deceptiveness of memory is approached through marked discrepancies in the protagonist's retrospective view of the events. The examples that I have selected to demonstrate this include an intricate interplay with the seasons which are linguistically expressed in two ways – as either encoded in the discourse present of the narrating self, or ingrained in the free indirect style representing the consciousness of the experiencing self. The two different temporal levels on which these discrepancies appear create a slightly different effect and, for this reason, they will be dealt with in separate sections.

4.4.1 The narrating self's issue with the seasons

I will begin with seasonal incongruities that involve the narrating self's current reflections about a scene evoked in his mind. In the first of these passages the protagonist is struck by certain inconsistent features in his vision of the past that are related to the seasons:

(7) (1) I recall the day I first saw the house. (2) We had been in the little hazel wood along by the river, Billy and I, and he had brought me up to a ridge and pointed out the roof among the treetops. (3) From the height on which we stood only the roof was visible, and at first I could not make it out, for the slates were covered with moss as green as the surrounding foliage. […] (4) It is odd, but I see our pockets that day filled with hazel nuts we had collected down in the wood and the ground around us plated with the hammered gold of fallen leaves, yet it was April, it had to have been April, the leaves green and still on the trees and the hazel nuts not even formed yet. (5) Try as I will, however, I see not spring but autumn. (6) I suppose we straggled away, then, the two of us, through the green not golden leaves, with our pockets not full of nuts, and went home, leaving Cotter's place undisturbed. (7) Something in me had been struck, though, by the look of that sagging roof among the trees, and I went back the very next day, led by love the necessitous and ever-practical, and discovered in the tumbledown house just the place of shelter Mrs Gray and I were in need of. (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 18-19)

This passage narrates Alexander Cleave's memory of the day when he as a boy and his best friend Billy saw a house in a hazel wood, which would later become the love nest of young Alex and Billy's mother. The first paragraph of the selected text begins in the consciousness of the current adult self who thematises the act of recalling (*I recall*…). The narration continues then in free indirect style (*we had been*; *he had brought me up*) depicting the visual perception of the boy Alex as he saw a roof among the treetops. Following this, the underlined segment reinstates the external perspective of the narrating self who makes a prolonged comment on his vision in which he expresses his amazement at the seasonal inconsistency in the picture revealed. He is stunned by the impossibility of seeing both spring and autumn details at the same time: on the one hand, features of autumn are clearly seen in the pockets full of hazel nuts as well as the golden leaves fallen on the ground around, on the other hand, the vernal element is recognisable in the green leaves on the trees.

The protagonist is so confused by this sight that he is unable to place his memory in a definite time or rather in a definite season. His mind cannot discern which mental image is correct and truly belongs to the past scene and which is a current invention. He is at first seized by the impression that it is autumn since this is what his eyes see, but on further scrutiny the vernal aspects stand out. He remains split between these two incompatible images. In one moment, he rejects spring and accepts it to be autumn (*Try as I will, however, I see not spring but autumn*), and in the next moment he decides in favour of spring after all (*I suppose we straggled away, then, the two of us, through the green not golden leaves, with our pockets not full of nuts…*). But even when he negates the autumnal elements, the emphasis on their absence in the phrases *not golden* and

not full still evokes the mental picture of them. After that part the narration returns to the internal perspective of the experiencing hero who presents his internal state in the mode of psycho-narration (*Something in me had been struck, though, by the look of that sagging roof among the trees,…*).

In short, what we have here is a memory account interrupted by the narrating self who makes a current comment on certain incompatible features of the picture of the past. Although the memory process is demarcated by a verb of mental activity in the present tense (*I recall*) and basically handed to the narrating self, the speaker briefly plunges into the consciousness of his previous self to present his perception and sensations at the time but is unable to sustain this perspective for long. His mind suddenly becomes aware of some contradictions in the surroundings and this takes him out of his role of internal focaliser. He pauses the past scene, steps out of it in order to look at it from the outside and to make some assessment. Then the reflective consciousness of the adult narrator takes over and he begins to ruminate on the setting. The angle of vision is shifted from the internal focalisation of young Alex there on the scene seeing the roof to the external view of the narrator observing himself in the past setting. The narrator's reflections express his feeling of astonishment (*It is odd, but…*), his inferential reasoning (*it had to have been April*), his meticulous observations (*Try as I will, however, I see not…*) and his epistemic supposition (*I suppose we straggled away*). Another linguistic marker pointing to the external perspective of the adult self is the demonstrative pronoun 'that' in *that day* which distances temporally the speaker from the event.

After pausing the picture and stepping out of the scene, the speaker notices the vast discrepancy in the seasons, the trees being green as in spring and at the

same time the leaves fallen off them as in autumn. The game that memory plays with him enhances the inner struggle that he nevertheless goes through and disturbs his internal equilibrium even more. The 'divided self' that is on display here is seen in the protagonist's inability to discriminate between the contradictory nature and inherent incompatibility in the images of the past that flood him and overflow in his consciousness. He cannot locate himself in a definite time in the past, the scenery changes abruptly from one season to another and he remains caught in this temporal indeterminacy. Try as he will to take control of his past, it evades him even in the smallest details of the landscape.

A more complicated case of this division is noticed in a similar season-related passage which comes shortly after the above-quoted in the novel. In it, the protagonist Alex continues the memory account of his teenage adventures with his friend Billy. This time he recalls a day when Billy and he got drunk for the first time in the Grays' house and Alex felt bashful and ran out of the house, thinking that he might see Mrs Gray at the door, but didn't:

(8) (1) The pavement when I stepped on to it seemed farther away from my head than it should be, and tended to tilt, as though I were on stilts and the stilts had squashy springs attached to the ends of them—in short, I was drunk, not seriously so, but drunk nevertheless. (2) Just as well, then, that I did not encounter Mrs Gray, being in such a state of soggy euphoria, for there is no telling what I might have done and thereby ruined everything before it had even started. (3) <u>And look! (4) In the square, when I come out, it is, impossibly, autumn again, not spring, and the sunlight has mellowed and the leaves of the cherry trees have</u>

> rusted and Busher the rag-and-bone man is dead. (5) Why are the seasons being so insistent, why do they resist me so? (6) Why does the Mother of the Muses keep nudging me like this, giving me what seem all the wrong hints, tipping me the wrong winks? (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 28-29)

The first striking characteristic of this excerpt is the focalisation ambiguity observable in the two underlined sentences. The first two sentences of the selected passage written in free indirect style (verb of epistemic modality *seem*; deictic adverb *farther away*; simile *as though*, metaphor *squashy*) clearly demonstrate the subjectivity of the experiencing past hero and describe his internal sensation of being drunk. And then, sentences (3) and (4) might initially be accepted to be a continuation of the experiencing self's internal perceptions and musings only shifted from free indirect to free direct mode which gives a more immediate access to his feeling of amazement upon discovering that it is autumn and not spring. This interpretation is linguistically justified by the tense shift to the present and the deictic verb 'come out' (Fillmore, 1966) (Lyons, 1977) aligned with the past self's position on the scene.

But on second reading this segment is also evocative of the external perspective of the narrating self who expresses his surprise at the seasonal incongruity in his current vision of the past that he has discovered only now, in his adult present. So, this is nothing more than his immediate comment on the past scene imaginatively resurrected in his mind. Since this repeated reference to autumn (*…impossibly, autumn again…*) is linked to the previous passage in which the comments on the seasons were more clearly shown to arise from the consciousness of the narrating self, I find it more plausible to attribute this

segment to the narrating self too. Besides, the two questions that follow the underlined part indubitably reveal the reflective consciousness of the narrating self so the preceding segment might be seen as connected to it.

Yet, apart from the focalisation ambiguity discernible here, the effect of division in this excerpt is additionally enhanced by the dynamicity of the picture described. While the underlined section in example (7) above had a more static quality produced by the verb of visual perception *see* (*I see our pockets… and the ground around us*; *I see not spring but autumn*) which frames the scene as a still picture observed by the narrator, here the action does not stop but continues to unfold with the speaker making a concurrent report (*when I come out*; *the sunlight has mellowed and the leaves of the cherry trees have rusted and Busher the rag-and-bone man is dead*). The dynamic quality in this example is created mostly by the motion verb *come out* which shows a material transitivity process.

In this sense, the statement *In the square, when I come out, it is, impossibly, autumn again* divides the *I* into both actor and spectator. He is observing and reflecting on the past action, while at the same time the action continues to unfold with him as a participant in the past time frame. And this makes a more powerful split than the one observed in example (7) because of the experiential quality of the narrating self's comment. The exclamative sentence *And look!* and the emotive interjection *impossibly* also contribute to this effect because they are highly experiential linguistic features whose use in the narratorial discourse turns the narrating self into an experiencer. Thus, the present self of the protagonist is not merely a narrating self who recounts past events from the position of a grown-up man but becomes an 'experiencing

present self' who lives through the experience of recollecting or rather inventing the past.

The spring-autumn uncertainty is a major issue here as well. After the narrator has eventually accepted that it is spring in the first extract and has continued forward, now he suddenly stops because he feels the scenery has acquired autumnal traits again. This inconsistency frustrates him to an extent that he asks the follow-up angry questions *Why are the seasons being so insistent, why do they resist me so? Why does the Mother of the Muses keep nudging me like this, giving me what seem all the wrong hints, tipping me the wrong winks?*.

To sum up, the two passages analysed in this section also utilise alternations between the past and the present tense which indicate the free indirect discourse of the experiencing self and the immediate discourse of the narrating self respectively. The free indirect parts represent the past self's internal view of the past events, while the present tense sentences reveal the narrator's current comments on the past being resurrected. But these comments are typically provoked by the narrator suddenly realising that some details in the surroundings are contradictory and he interrupts the narrative flow in order to express his astonishment at how this could possibly be. In this way, he demonstrates the illusory and unstable nature of memory.

4.4.2 Seasonal discrepancies on the level of the experiencing self

A further exploration of the passages dealing with the seasonal dilemma reveals that the issue with seasons, as a persistent subject in this novel, is

inscribed in the narrative in an even wider variety of forms than so far discussed. Until now, it was mainly traceable in the narrating self's reflective consciousness. In addition, the remarks about the seasons were textually set forth in separate paragraphs in the novel, or the moment the narrator felt confused he interrupted his free indirect account and began his current ruminations in a new paragraph in which he lay his temporal disorientation about the past. In other examples, however, this disorientation has become a more pervasive feature and can be seen to be infiltrating the experiencing past self's account:

(9) (1) She stopped a little way off from me and waited until another car going in the opposite direction had passed by. (2) It was an overcast May morning with a metallic glare in the clouds. […] (3) She was wearing her light, flowered frock with the wide skirt, … […] (4) She was childishly excited, dying to know what was the surprise that I had for her, but I would not tell, and the more she pressed the more stubborn I grew, and even began to be a little annoyed by her importuning, and strode ahead of her so that she had to hurry at almost a stumbling run, barefoot as she was, just to keep up with me. (5) The path wound its sombre way under the unleaving trees—see, it has suddenly become autumn again, impossibly!—and by now I was full of vexed misgiving. (6) I am struck, looking back, by how volatile my temper was when I was with her, how quickly I would fly into a rage over a trifle, or for no reason at all. (Banville, *Ancient Light,* 102-103)

(10) (1) It was a Saturday morning when they went. (2) Imagine if you will a small-town summer day: flawless blue sky, birds in the branches of the cherry trees, a not unpleasant, sweetish reek of slurry from the pig farms out in the purlieus, the knock and clatter and cry of children at play. […] (3) I felt dry all over, dry and hot, as if I had been scorched, and my eyes ached and even my fingernails pained me. (4) I was like one of those big sycamore leaves, resembling parched claws, that scuttled and scratched their way along the pavements, driven by the autumn gusts. (5) What am I saying? (6) It was not autumn, it was summer, there were no dead leaves on the ground. (7) Yet that is what I see, the caducous leaves, and dust-eddies in the gutters, and my suffering self facing into a bitter wind portending the onset of winter. (Banville, *Ancient Light*, 289-291)

In the first of these two examples we have a description of the moment when young Alex brought Mrs Gray to the hazelwood in order to show her the abandoned house that he has discovered and which he considered a safe place for them to meet in secret. The scene, with the exception of the small part set off in parentheticals and the last sentence, is focalised through the consciousness of the teenage hero and is deictically aligned with his spatio-temporal coordinates. This internal perspective is made obvious by linguistic markers such as tense (*had passed by*; *was wearing*; *would not tell*), space and time deixis (*a little way off from me*; *going in the opposite direction*; *May morning*; *ahead of her*; *by now*), emotive adjectives and adverbs expressing a subjective feeling (*overcast*

May morning; *metallic glare in the clouds*; *childishly excited*; *sombre way*; *unleaving trees*; *vexed misgiving*) and similes (*at almost a stumbling run*).

The phrase that needs special attention is the attributive *unleaving* before 'trees' in sentence (5) from the selected text, which carries the direct connotation of autumn. If we go a little back in the text (sentence (2)), we will see that the protagonist made an unambiguous claim regarding the season clearly reporting that it was a May morning, i.e. he positioned himself in the season of spring. And in the course of his description of the background he unwillingly drops the hint of autumn. The use of this attributive is more important for the analysis than the following parenthetically-separated comment of the narrating self *see, it has suddenly become autumn again, impossibly!*. As we recall from the two previous passages (7) and (8) such statements are attributed to the reflective consciousness of the adult narrator who ruminates on his past experiences and finds certain images from his visions astonishing to the extent of exclaiming.

The reason why I find the adjective *unleaving* before the narrator's interruption more significant is because it is interwoven in the free indirect discourse of the experiencing self. This comes to say that the uncertainty about the seasons belongs entirely to the experiencing self. One moment he states that it is May, next he says that the trees are unleaving. This hero, obviously, cannot be trusted and the confusing evidence about the whereabouts that he provides make us question the other content narrated by him, as well. If he cannot reliably report relatively objective phenomena such as what the season is, what about his account of subjective experiences, perceptions, feelings and thoughts? He is thus undermining his own self.

The same instance of involuntariness is visible in passage (10), as well. In the midst of an intensely subjective section portraying the young boy's anguish and suffering over the end of his relationship with Mrs Gray, a reference to autumn is spontaneously dropped in again, namely *driven by the autumn gusts*. Sentences (3) and (4) are cast in the mode of psycho-narration and tell us how the experiencing hero felt at the time. Phrases that describe his internal state are: *I felt dry all over, dry and hot*; *my eyes ached and even my fingernails pained me*. His subjective feelings are further intensified by similes that give a more vivid description of the sensation like *as if I had been scorched*; *I was like one of those big sycamore leaves, resembling parched claws, that scuttled and scratched their way along the pavements, driven by the autumn gusts*. At the thought of *autumn gusts* the internal focalisation is suddenly transferred to the narrator's external view in sentences (5), (6) and (7). These three concluding sentences bring us back to the narrating self's reflective consciousness and to his deictic present. He is surprised at his own mention of autumn (*What am I saying?*) and reminds himself that it is summer, a claim that he made earlier in sentence (2) from the selected extract (*It was not autumn, it was summer*). The last sentence portrays a scene that arises before the speaker's eyes with his past self in it *Yet that is what I see, the caducous leaves, and dust-eddies in the gutters, and my suffering self facing into a bitter wind portending the onset of winter*.

Nevertheless, as with the previous example, my interest is more strongly drawn to the last clause of sentence (4) *driven by the autumn gusts* rather than the last three sentences because, compared to them, this short clause belongs to the consciousness of the experiencing self. Just like the definition *unleaving*

trees, which slips out of the hero's mouth in passage (9), here the experiencing past self unwillingly says *driven by the autumn gusts* to qualify the wind blowing at the leaves. This means that the experiencing *I* simultaneously sees summer and autumn and is unable to determine the exact season. Such an unstable account of the past seriously sabotages the stability of the self.

To recap, this section portrays the protagonist's uncertainty in relation to the spatio-temporal setting of the past that he is trying to resurrect. Compared to the examples explored in section 4.4.1 in which the disclosure that there are inconsistencies in the seasons is acted out in the narrator's intrusions, in the examples presented in section 4.4.2 the contradictory descriptions arise from the perspective of the experiencing self. In the first case, the distance of time that has passed since the event and its remembering might justify to some extent the confusion around certain details, but when contradictory details are expressed on the same temporal level on which the events are unfolding, it creates stronger instability in the memory being represented.

4.5 Conclusion

All three sections of this chapter revolve around the central idea of the discontinuity of memory and the interpenetration of the past with the present. In one form or another all passages concern themselves with the representation of visions of the past. In section 4.2 we have observed how the object of the experiencing self's perception is imaginatively shifted in the present temporal framework of the narrating self where the current speaker continues to perceive it. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 have shown the narrators' perceptual struggles with

visualising their own selves in the past and with recalling lucid details of the past picture.

In this framework, the past episodes were not presented in their totality but as ongoing scenes with the present self being not an impartial chronicler of his past but rather an archaeologist who excavates the pieces of his lost life in order to restore it. The narrators in Banville's retrospective texts then act as orchestrators of the spontaneous memory process and are able to imaginatively recreate or rearrange certain events and details of the past picture. The internal division stemming from this artistic task of recollection resides chiefly in the oscillation between recollecting and inventing with the protagonist's reminiscences being always on the verge of invention.

In their attempts to resurrect the past, the protagonists are thwarted by the instability of memory and often forced to fill the missing pieces of their life's puzzle with the power of the imagination. The past becomes for them a living present which they re-experience and re-construct from their adult point of view, hence the narrators' strong preoccupation with the resurrection of the past. They reflect long on the pictures evoked rediscovering the settings, the events, the people and their own selves. In this chapter I have shown how these processes are set up in the narratives and how by means of focalisation ambiguities and shifts between the past and the present Banville manages to create an unstable temporal setting which ultimately corresponds with the unstable sense of self of his protagonists.

Chapter 5

Pronoun Alternations: Visions of Division

5.1 Pronoun alternations from *I* to *he* in narrative texts

The use of specific sensory modality patterns as well as particular tense manipulations as discussed in the previous two chapters have proved to be an important factor contributing to the stylistic effect of inner splitting. This chapter will continue the exploration of linguistic features enacting the 'divided self' by looking at how Banville uses pronominal shifts from the first- to the third-person as a formal device for rendering self-division. Although *I* to *he* switches have been widely discussed as a tool generating an effect of distancing, their function in first-person texts has not yet been extensively studied in relation to how they can intersect with the representation of the perspectives of the narrating self and the experiencing self. Since this interaction is crucial for Banville's representation of the 'divided self', I am going to explore in detail how pronoun alternations are implemented in his texts. As this chapter will show, Banville's employment of this linguistic device has a complex expression in the narratives and in the stylistic nuances that it generates. But before I proceed to analyse the particular textual examples from Banville, I will first provide a brief overview of previous studies on pronominal variation.

In his fundamental theory of narrative, Stanzel (1984) outlines two main directions in which the alternation of the first- and third-person pronominal

references can be explored: ‘In dealing with the variation in pronominal reference in the modern novel one must distinguish between the aspect of content and form’ (106). When related to content, pronoun alternations, for him, typically illustrate a split personality. Therefore, ‘the increase in the frequency of changes in pronominal reference in the modern novel is an expression of the growing identity problem of modern man’ (Stanzel, 1984: 106). As far as form is concerned, pronominal variation is not viewed in terms of the usual pronoun alternations between narrator’s discourse and characters’ direct speech but rather addresses purposeful shifts between the first-person and the third-person narrative mode for stylistic reasons. Thus, Stanzel points to a subtle difference between pronoun shifts that occur in close proximity and appear to be more psychologically motivated as when referring to oneself in the third-person and the more narratologically motivated alternation of first- and third-person mode of storytelling that affects larger stretches of text. The latter type of changes in pronominal reference have been a subject of recent narratological investigation.

The increasing interest in pronouns, and more particularly, in odd pronominal cases and the proliferating unnatural modes of narration in recent years, has prompted theoreticians to better categorise the wide variety of referential forms as well as their alternations in fiction. Perhaps the most in-depth studies of pronominal variations and of the multitude of different texts employing a ‘polyphony’ of voices so far have been conducted by Richardson (1994, 2006) and Fludernik (1996). Richardson identifies three types of, as he calls it, *multipersoned narration*: narration that moves back and forth between different narrative positions; narration that remains fundamentally ambiguous; and narration that employs ‘impossible’ unnatural narratorial stances

(Richardson, 2006: 62). Fludernik examines in more detail the referential parameters of pronoun alternations and emphasises another very important distinction: pronominal alternations in reference to different protagonists and pronominal alternations in reference to the same protagonist, with the latter category further subdivided into systematic change in pronouns by chapter or segment and inconsistent, vacillating pronominal shifts.

Richardson's and Fludernik's studies are valuable in that they radically reconsider and expand the traditional narratological category of 'person' in terms of Genette's dichotomy *homodiegesis–heterodiegesis* and of Stanzel's opposition *identity–non-identity*. Richardson offers a revision of Stanzel's narrative circle and expands it to accommodate previously unacknowledged strategies of narration such as second-person fiction, multiperson narrative and impossible narration (Richardson, 2006: 77). Fludernik, too, redefines the theoretical category of 'person' and sees Genette and Stanzel's dichotomies as no longer applicable and insufficient to host the new and gaining increasing popularity unnatural modes of narration employing odd pronominal references like *you*, *one*, *we* and even *they* (Fludernik, 1996: 185), the last two of which present a special category of fictional consciousness – a collective mind which Fludernik assesses as very subversive and unverisimilar ways of narration.

With regard to person shifts that appear to be more psychologically motivated, Fludernik, too, provides instances in which pronominal alternations can mirror a protagonist's mental disturbance or psychological instability. Perhaps the most widely-cited examples of this category come from Margaret Atwood's novels in which pronominal splits reflect and express the heroine's double-mindedness. Pronoun issues in Atwood have been more specifically

explored by Nischik (1994) who introduces the concepts of *successive* and *simultaneous splitting of the narrative instance*. A *successive splitting* takes place in *The Edible Woman* in which the first and third part of the novel are told in the first-person only interrupted by a third-person shift in the second part, which reflects the character's sense of disjunction with herself. More dramatic is the latter, *simultaneous* type of splitting which puts the referential cohesion totally out of tune and serves to reflect a split mind, as in Atwood's *Dancing Girls* and *The War in the Bathroom*. The following example is especially illuminating:

> **I** finally persuaded **her** to get up and close the window (I have always felt fresh air to be necessary for one's health, although she is not fond of it) and turn on the electric heater. **She** began to go back to the bed but **I** told **her** to put on the clothes: **she** had to go shopping, there was nothing to eat. [my emphasis] (Atwood, *Dancing Girls and Other Stories*, 3)

The heroine here refers to herself with both *I* and *she* forms within the same sentence. The personality dualism is achieved by the alternation between first-person and third-person references for self-identification.

Although in psychological terms Stanzel and Fludernik mention third-person self-referencing mainly as a tool for expressing psychological disturbances, this device has a longer history of use, though in a slightly different form. Known under the name *illeism* (from Latin *ille* meaning 'he', 'that'), the practice of referring to oneself in the third-person dates back to Shakespeare where it is present in the variety of self-naming, as in the following words of

Caesar: *Shall Caesar send a lie?/ Have I in conquest stretch'd mine arm so far,/ To be afeard to tell greybeards the truth?/ Decius, go tell them Caesar will not come* (Viswanathan, 1969: 409). So uttered, Caesar's statement acquires a flavour of objectivity and impartiality which a subjective account intrinsically lacks. This has to be differentiated from the rare case of using a *we* pronoun with a reference to *I*, known as the *royal we*, which is often used to 'resist the egocentricity of a potential *I*' (Wales, 1996: 63).

Basically, self-naming is associated with the expression of selfhood and its effect may vary from the extreme of 'enhancing' one's sense of self (*Old Orlick knowed you was burnt, Old Orlick knowed you was smuggling your uncle Provis away, Old Orlick's a match for you and know'd you'd come to-night!...* [Ch. Dickens, *Great Expectations*, 465]) to the extreme of 'reducing' one's sense of self (*But let us be prim and civilised. Humbert Humbert tried hard to be good. Really and truly, he did. He had the utmost respect for ordinary children, with their purity and vulnerability, and under no circumstances would he have interfered with the innocence of a child, if there was the least risk of a row.* [V. Nabokov, *Lolita*, 20-21]). In the first case the character wants to look evil and menacing, while in the second he wants to appear vulnerable, infantile and misfortunate.

In addition, illeism is also recognised as a powerful tool for rendering psychological disconnection as a result of trauma, mental disorder, or the lack of self-consciousness in artificial intelligence. In a discussion disproving Benveniste's assertion (1971) that the third-person is 'non-person', Wales (1996) provides a few more instances of the use of third-person forms for *I*-reference such as in baby-talk (*Mammy* (=I) *will do that for Timmy*); formal

writing (*the present writer* for 'I') and humility in the liturgy (*Lord, hear thy servant* [=me]) (56-57). The mechanics of this stylistic process is explained by Znamenskaya (2004) as a transference of additional connotational meaning upon the main denotational meaning of the pronoun which produces a certain stylistic effect as, for example, a pronoun switch found in Catherine Mansfield's diary can generate estrangement and generalisation: *I do not want to write; I want to live. What does she mean by that?* (99).

More complicated questions regarding pronoun alternations, however, arise when we look into complex modernist and postmodernist texts in which experimental uses of pronouns can be found. For this reason, more studies exploring the function of pronoun shifts in relation to consciousness presentation are needed. Sotirova's recent studies on Modernist fiction (2011; 2013) make an important contribution in this respect by calling attention to two inverse processes related to pronouns in the works of eminent Modernist writers which involve not just the pronoun but also the referent of the pronoun. In the first, two different pronouns are used to designate the same referent and in the second, the other way round, the same pronoun is used to designate two different referents, as demonstrated by the following extracts:

> The baby was restless on his mother's knee, clambering with his hands at the light. Mrs Morel looked down at him. She had dreaded this baby like a catastrophe, because of her feeling for her husband. And now she felt strangely towards the infant. Her heart was heavy because of the child, almost as if it were unhealthy, or malformed. Yet it seemed quite well. [my emphasis] (example cited in Sotirova, 2011: 66-67)

> The crux was it was a bit risky to bring <u>him</u> home as eventualities might possibly ensue (somebody having a temper of her own sometimes) and spoil the hash altogether as on the night <u>he</u> misguidedly brought home a dog (breed unknown) with a lame paw, not that the cases were either identical or the reverse, though <u>he</u> had hurt <u>his</u> hand too, to Ontario Terrace, as <u>he</u> very distinctly remembered, having been there, so to speak. . . . [my emphasis] (example cited in Sotirova, 2013: 104)

The first example, taken from Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, involves a pronoun shift between *he* (single underlining) and *it* (double underlining) in reference to a baby. The change of pronoun is deliberately made for stylistic purposes to show the mother's shifting attitude towards her baby. The second extract is found in James Joyce's *Ulysses* and demonstrates the ambiguity of reference that one and the same pronoun can manifest. Thus, the pronoun *he* refers both to Stephen (single underlining) and to Bloom (double underlining) within the boundaries of a single sentence. This transcription of Bloom's consciousness aims at presenting Bloom's thought in a verisimilar way though this hyper-realistic presentation makes narrative comprehension difficult for readers. So, apart from pronoun shifting we can also observe a process of referent shifting.

Sotirova (2013) also points out the specific shifting between free indirect style in the third-person and interior monologue in the first-person that is typical for Modernism. The grammatical characteristics of interior monologue which allow for the first-person references to be omitted make such slippages very unsettling as they may not formally involve the pronoun. Thus, the transition

from *he* to *I* happens unannounced and the pronoun shift is actually signalled only by the co-occurrent tense shift.

Experimenting with pronouns is even more prominent in certain Postmodern texts such as Julio Cortazar's *62: Model Kit* in which pronoun shifts are pushed to an extreme as they not only happen unexpectedly but also appear unmotivated. This can be evidenced with the following example:

> Even though years passed, centuries, even though eternity passed, it was inconceivable for her to be going up to Helene's place along with Helene. 'No one really knows her', she thought when the elevator stopped with a kind of hiccup and I saw Helene get out, pushing the suitcase, looking for the key in her purse. [my emphasis] (example cited in Fludernik, 1996: 180)

The passage begins in the third-person rendering the free indirect thought of Celia but in the middle of the second sentence the narration is taken up by Celia herself and switches abruptly to the first-person. What is most disconcerting here is the fact that the two modes are not set apart in separate paragraphs or sentences but occur in one and the same sentence joined with the coordinating conjunction *and*. Even though this pronominal experiment seems quite innovative and highly provocative, scholars struggle to see the psychological motivation for it. Fludernik (1996), for instance, comments that 'its functional significance for the novel remains unclear' (181).

But the specific alternation from *I* to *he* in first-person texts that is the subject of this study rather seems to have caught the attention of more cognitively-oriented researchers as the linguistic phenomenon of referring to

oneself in the third-person has been more recently investigated by Dancygier (2004, 2005, 2008) from the perspective of the theory of *conceptual blending* (or *conceptual integration*). In fact, Dancygier's research tries to tie conceptual blending with the study of narrative viewpoint, but her work prioritises the cognitive split encoded in this pronominal shift at the expense of the narrative mechanics associated with it. According to cognitive studies, the construction of blended spaces relies on the mechanism of *compression*, through which two or more input spaces are condensed and the result is a blended structure. The reverse process, called *decompression*, decomposes a blended space into its constituent parts. These two operating principles are directly linked to the concept of identity which, by definition, is a unique blend of different features such as social roles, behavioral patterns, beliefs, changes in appearance, etc. Our sense of self is achieved by the conceptual 'compression' of all these varying aspects. When they are in unison with one another, our sense of selfhood is coherent and harmonious and, vice versa, when there is a certain dissonance between some of these aspects, our integrity is seriously impaired. Therefore, the technique of 'decompression' usually marks an incoherent sense of self.

Particularly representative in this respect is Lakoff's work on the 'split self' metaphor (1996, 1980) which indicates the war between these mental constructs, as illustrated in his popular example 'I am not myself today' in which the co-referential pronouns *I* and *myself* differentiate between our current state of mind and our general state of mind. According to Dancygier, the cognitive process of decompression has a rather wide application in language and can refer to people (*There seemed, in fact, to be two of me.*) as well as places (*The Mississippi was two rivers.*) (2005: 108-110). Personality decompressions often

induce pronoun switches but may well be observed in the use of reference forms of the same person. In this sense, the modality constructions examined in Chapter 3 are also a peculiar example of decompression. What I will deal with more extensively in this chapter, however, are the cases enacting pronominal switches from the first-person to the third-person, named by Dancygier 'total decompression' or 'complete decompression'.

Pronouns and referring expressions are tightly linked with decompression. As Dancygier puts it 'the choice of referring expressions signals identity decompressions' (2005: 104). When an actual change in pronominal reference occurs, the continuity of identity is so seriously disrupted that the different images of the self can no longer be housed by a same-person reference. In the rest of this section, I will briefly summarise some of the major stylistic effects of pronoun shifts from *I* to *he* identified by Dancygier and discuss how the current investigation will make use of them. One of the most common purposes that a pronominal variation can serve is to contrast two different roles an individual can play – such as social, work, family or other roles:

> I try to keep a notebook when I'm on the move ... but hardly ever find anything in the notebook that's worth using later. ... The keeper of the notebook sounds stupid and confused. He grouses too much about tides and timetables ... When I'm writing the book, I get precious little help from him... [my emphasis] (example cited in Dancygier, 2008: 176)

A distinction is made here between the note-taker who keeps a diary of his impressions while travelling and the writer who later develops these notes into

a fully-fledged narrative. This role distinction is linguistically encoded in the split between the first-person pronoun (*I*) and the third-person referring expressions (*the keeper of the notebook, he, him*). Since the text presents a first-person account, the speaker designating himself with *I* obviously identifies with his role of writer, while the entity denoted as *he* obviously does not form part of his sense of selfhood. Dancygier defines the primary role of the *I* as determining the 'default' deictic ground, while the *he*'s secondary role forms an 'alternate' [sic] deictic ground.

Another frequently encountered instance of decompression is between a person (or an object) and its representation in a painting, photograph or a reflection in a mirror, as seen in the following two examples:

> ... and on the way we were ingeniously tormented with mirrors, each one placed so that it appeared to be an innocuous part of the display. I kept on barging into a figure who darkly resembled Henry James's inconceivable alien. I first spotted him in the Victorian men's club. ... He could have done with a new set of teeth. ... [my emphasis] (example cited in Dancygier, 2008: 175)

> In the picture on the screen his face had a cheesy pallor. […] He looked to me like a clowning greenhorn. [my emphasis] (example cited in Dancygier, 2005: 109)

In the first example the narrator referring to himself with the first-person pronouns *we* and *I* (indicated by single underlining) dissociates himself from the perceived image in the mirror by designating the figure in the reflection with the third-person referring expressions *a figure who darkly resembled Henry James's*

inconceivable alien, *him* and *he* (doubly underlined). Similarly, the second extract draws a dividing line between the speaker (referred to with *me*) and his representation in a TV coverage (*his face*, *he*). In both examples the speakers do not perceive the represented images of themselves as connected to their own personas, or person and representation are seen as independent entities. Hence, the need for two separate pronouns. As commented above, the pronoun *I* is deictically oriented towards the active narrative space, while *he* shows the impossibility of linking this perspective with the second entity. Such decompressions usually reveal the hero's dissatisfaction with himself and the non-acceptance of his own personality.

A more intricate form of decompression, often found in first-person texts, serves to dramatise a narrator's reevaluation of his past by the presentation of a past scene as happening concurrently but with the narrator's adult consciousness mapped onto his/her younger counterpart. In the scene below the adult narrator recalls his relationship with his father when he was a child:

> Seeing him now through different eyes, I find myself watching a sorrowful, lean and angular young man, hopelessly lost for words. [...] He searches the face of his child for a clue as to how to go on [...]. The child is blind to all this. He is putting on the finishing touches to his Bored Aristocrat face. [my emphasis] (example cited in Dancygier, 2008: 175)

The speaker is divided between the temporal space of the adult-now and the temporal space of the child-then. But we cannot draw a strict dividing line between the realms of the past and the present as the two merge into a special

blend in which the input space of the past featuring the young father and Raban-the-child and the input space of the present featuring Raban-the-adult conflate to create the blended space of the present featuring the young father and Raban-the-adult superimposing on Raban-the-child. This configuration namely generates the effect of coalescing the past with the present and allows the adult to revisit his past and glimpse his old days with the eyes of a grown-up man. The young father and the adult son are now brought together in the same spatio-temporal setting but the age difference between them is preserved. We are not given access to the internal world of the child as the scene is focalised by the adult narrator who has 'time-travelled' to a past location. In Chapter 4 of this thesis I discussed exactly the same phenomenon but encoded in the linguistic category of tense so this effect can be achieved by means of the present tense only as well. Dancygier also notes the role of the present tense in the above passage but puts a greater emphasis on the role of person switches underpinning the emergence of the unique blended structure. If the writer had used *I* (*I am blind to all this.*) instead of *the child* (*The child is blind to all this.*), this would have implied that the adult sympathises with the child's lack of response but, obviously, he does not and this presupposes the switch to the third-person.

One last use of 'total decompression' signifies a switch to another character's point of view. The following example demonstrates Dave's attempt to get home before his brother Toph has noticed his absence, so when he refers to himself with the third-person reference *his brother* in the second part, he adopts the viewpoint of Toph and looks at himself from this alternative deictic standpoint:

> I wanted to be home in case he came back early. [...] The house was empty, and I dove into bed, fell back asleep, and when he came back home his brother was there, of course had been there the whole time, of course had never left. [my emphasis] (example cited in Dancygier, 2008: 175)

All in all, total decompression involving a shift from first to third-person reference, as presented by Dancygier, serves to contrast different roles of an individual, to show a person's lack of acceptance of his/her visually represented image, to resurrect a past episode for current rethinking or to allow a character to look at himself/herself from the position of others. In this process the default deictic ground of the *I* is re-anchored to 'another aspect of the *I*'s identity or to another character' (Dancygier, 2008: 178).

Since the act of referring to oneself in the third-person shows a conceptual division of the self, it is not surprising that such texts have attracted the attention of cognitive narratologists. In a similar vein, Gavins (2007) investigates a case of a person shift in a contemporary science fiction novel from a cognitive vantage point. In her augmentation of Text World Theory originally developed by Paul Werth (1999), Gavins uses the concept of *enactors* to designate 'different versions of the same person or character which exist at different conceptual levels of a discourse' (41). She sees the *enactor* as a text world-building element which can help explain world-switches (a reformulation of Emmott's notion of *frame-switch* (Emmott, 1997)) between the different mental representations of a character and appreciates it as a useful tool when dealing with complex text world structures such as the one in Audrey Niffenegger's

novel *The Time Traveler's Wife* in which the twenty-seven-year old Henry meets his nine-year-old earlier self and teaches him pickpocketing:

> We cross Michigan Avenue and walk between students and housewives sunning themselves on the museum steps. Henry pats one of the bronze lions as we go by. I feel moderately bad about this whole thing. On the one hand, I am providing myself with urgently required survival skills… On the other hand, I am corrupting my poor innocent little self. (Gavins, 2007:41)

In this novel the narrator not only observes his former counterpart from the standpoint of an already mature person but the adult engages in an extremely dynamic imaginative relationship with Henry-aged-nine. The temporal dimensions are totally overridden and the protagonist is portrayed as a 'Chrono-Displaced person' (Gavins, 2007: 42). Evidently, the twofold referring expressions strongly contribute to this effect, as does the use of the present tense.

Overall, previously-conducted cognitive analyses have done a great deal to illuminate the conceptual processes underlying person shifts and undoubtedly provide a useful framework for exploring split selves but a more profound examination of this phenomenon in the light of narrative theory can yield some insightful new findings, too. Indeed, Dancygier has acknowledged the need for expanding the framework for studying *decompression* by incorporating the study of viewpoint but her work still asserts more strongly the cognitive line, which leaves unexplored aspects of the interrelation between pronoun alternations and the rendering of consciousness. The examples from Dancygier that have closest relation to the examples from Banville which I am going to

analyse are the third and the second. The third example has presented a narrator's reevaluation of a scene from the past in which he superimposes on his younger self. This is also a familiar strategy in Banville. But even more important is the second example in which the change of pronoun has designated a split between the character and his image on a picture, screen, photograph or in a mirror. Having in mind the visual nature of memory in Banville and his framing of past scenes as pictures observed by the narrator, this function of pronoun switches from *I* to *he* is prominent in his works as well. But when we analyse more closely how these pronominal alternations correlate with switches between the viewpoints of the present self and the past self in the novels, we find more intricate and more interactive patterns of consciousness presentation. These patterns will be explored in the next sections.

5.2 Pronominal shifts in Banville

In drawing the images of his psychologically divided personalities, Banville frequently resorts to the technique of 'decompression', as defined in the short introduction above. This allows him to better distinguish between different aspects of the self that battle with each other in the heroes' minds. But since person shifts in Banville appear in an incredibly wide variety of forms and contexts, I have divided them provisionally into subsections according to the type of third-person referent used. In my analyses, I will draw on the scholarly findings laid out in the previous section but will focus more thoroughly on the interdependence between referential switches and the rendering of consciousness.

5.2.1 Third-person references in relation to the child self

This subsection specifically will explore the switch from *I* to *he* when used to underscore the chronological distinction between the adult self and the child self of the narrator. In Chapter 3 of this thesis these two entities were often contrasted by the use of *I* and *myself* linked with a verb of perception in an idiosyncratic transitivity pattern. Here, however, the continuity of person is more aggressively overridden and the younger version of the *I* is conceptualised as *he*. One example from *The Sea* demonstrates the narrator's detachment from his previous young self as follows:

(1) If that child dreaming by the wireless had been asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, what I had become was more or less what he would have described, in however halting a fashion, I am sure of it.

[…]

There were things of course the boy that I was then would not have allowed himself to foresee, in his eager anticipations, even if he had been able. (Banville, *The Sea*, 93-95)

The two sentences in close proximity to each other in the text originate in the narrating self's monological contemplations on his life now and then. They are deictically anchored in the consciousness of the adult self and reveal the wisdom of the grown-up Max who can now make comparisons between his expectations as a boy and the real life events that followed. The pronoun *I* is aligned with the personality of the current speaker, while the reference to his

younger self is passed to the distancing third-person (*that child*, *he*, *the boy that I was then*; *himself, his*). Further dissociation stems from the deictically distal words in the two third-person referring expressions: the demonstrative *that* in *that child* and the adverbial *then* in *the boy that I was then*. The images of Max-the-child and Max-the-adult are thus totally detached from each other not only temporally and spatially but also conceptually because the two developmental versions of the same person do not form a coherent whole.

But while the previous extract clearly demarcates the identity of the adult self with the pronoun *I* and the identity of the child self with the third-person *he* and displays a completely consistent application of these two linguistic designations, in other passages the pronominal expressions do not show the same degree of consistency and the boundaries between the *I* and the *he* interpenetrate resulting in the convergence of the two psychological spaces. Two such examples are found in *Ghosts*:

(2) The objects that I looked at seemed insulated, as if they had been painted with a protective coating of some invisible stuff, cool and thick and smooth as enamel, and when I touched them I could not seem to feel them. I thought of being here, a solemn little boy in a grubby jersey, crop-headed and frowning, with inky fingers and defenceless, translucent pink ears, sitting at this table hunched over my homework on a winter evening and dreaming of the future. Can I really ever have been thus? Can that child be me?

[…]

I saw again the bed at the window, the tall, fluted half-columns

> of the curtains rising above me, the tops of the autumnal trees outside, and the child that I was then, lying quietly with bandaged throat, grey-browed and wan, my hands resting on the turned-down sheet, like a miniature warrior on his tomb. How strangely pleasurable were the illnesses of those days. Afloat there in febrile languor, with aching eyes and leaden limbs and the blood booming in my ears, I used to dream myself into sky-bound worlds where metallic birds soared aloft on shining loops of wire and great clouded glass shapes sailed ringingly through the cool, pellucid air. (Banville, *Ghosts*, 259-264)

These two passages, spaced four paragraphs apart from each other, describe Freddie Montgomery's return to his native home one day. Overcome by emotions, he initially thinks of turning to go but most impulsively he smashes the pane of glass and steps inside. There in the house he experiences an emotional journey through his past life, a journey imbued with vivid and sensory-rich recollections and feverish contemplations. The scene is focalised through the consciousness of adult Freddie who makes a journey to his former home. Although narrated in a past tense free indirect mode, the episode does not portray the internal experiences of the child of those days but of the adult looking on that child. In the context of Banville's narratives where the immediate reflections of the current self are usually given in the present tense, the past tense here only suggests an event from his recent past but remains aligned with the consciousness of the adult. As noted, the narrative mode is predominantly free indirect style, blending represented perception and reflective thought, with only

two sentences (*Can I really ever have been thus? Can that child be me?*) that could be read as either the free direct thought of the experiencing hero (who in this case is adult Freddie revisiting his native home) or the narrator's direct intrusion concurrent with the act of narration (discourse present of the narrator). The linguistic cues revealing the hero's subjectivity are: lexical verbs expressing modality (*seemed insulated*; *could not seem to feel them*), similes (*as if they had been painted with…*; *… smooth as enamel*; *like a miniature warrior on his tomb*), metaphors (*inky fingers*; *leaden limbs*), the past perfect tense (*had been painted*) and emotive adjectives and adverbs (*solemn*; *defenceless*; *quietly*; *wan*; *strangely pleasurable*; *ringingly*; *pellucid*).

More interesting here are the deictic indices of space and time, and more particularly their variability. For instance, the spatial deictic *here* in *I thought of being here* has a double reference to both the house in the past and the house in the present. Since it is the same place in two different time periods, the conflation of the two serves as a kind of channel through which the protagonist can travel back and forth in time. So, after initially describing what he sees upon entering the house and how it feels to him, the hero goes on to visualise himself as a child sitting there. The noun phrases and the free modifiers in the second sentence (*a solemn little boy in a grubby jersey*; *crop-headed and frowning*; *with inky fingers and defenceless, translucent pink ears*; *sitting at this table hunched over my homework on a winter evening*; *dreaming of the future*) intensify the visual quality of his memory. The demonstrative *this* in *sitting at this table* is again doubly deictic as it can be aligned with the perspective of the child or the perspective of adult Freddie visiting his former home and seeing the same table years later. This proximal object is another bridge connecting the past with the

present. Though the speaker's current visit of his old home, in general, allows him to bring the two temporal planes together, the two doubly deictic words *here* and *this* additionally strengthen this effect.

It is the referring expressions in the text, however, that merit greatest attention. In the transcription of his spontaneous thought about himself in his child days, the speaker designates his old self simultaneously with third-person and first-person references. In the noun phrases and free modifiers following the main clause *I thought of being here*, all of which represent adult Freddie's external vision of himself as a child, the protagonist first refers to his child enactor as a separate third-person being, *a solemn little boy*, and then switches to the first-person anaphoric reference *my* in *hunched over my homework* where the third-person *his* (*hunched over his homework*) would form a more precise agreement in grammatical person with the noun phrase *a solemn little child*. The variation between the two referents shows that the protagonist cannot distinguish between the two psychological spaces and they interpenetrate in his mind, which is also detectable in the question that follows *Can that child be me?* It is still not clear for the narrator whether the two temporal images belong to one and the same personality or not. Besides, the distal demonstrative *that* in *that child* makes a contrast with the proximal demonstrative *this* in *this table*. While the spatio-temporal setting was presented as proximal (*here*, *this table*), probably because these objects are still materially present at the time of the events, the ontological status of the mentally evoked child oscillates between the near (*my homework*) and the far (*a solemn little boy*; *that child*). Or he frantically swings between a distant and proximal version of himself not even being able to decide between the two (*Can that child be me?*).

A similar shift is observed in the second part of the extract which follows further down in the text. Portrayed there is adult Freddie's visual recollection of the room as it was back then. While walking around the house, Freddie enters one of the bedrooms which is now completely empty. An accidental bang of a bird against the window-pane triggers a spontaneous memory of him as a child being brought to this bedroom to recover from a childhood illness. His mind then immediately reconstructs the scene with the bed, the curtains, the trees outside and himself as a child lying ill in the bed. His identity is again divided between the adult self visiting the house and recollecting the past events and the child self as he sees his younger counterpart in his reminiscences. But the latter entity is further subdivided into *I* and *he*. The first sentence of the passage presents the perception of adult Freddie whose visual memory is arranged in a series of noun phrases and free modifiers. The *I* in the main clause is adult Freddie in his role of senser (in Halliday's terminology) or subject of the vision, while the referring expressions in the consecutive noun phrases and free modifiers all present the visualised entity as an object or phenomenon of that vision. And this object of visualisation is alternately referred to as either *I* or *he*, making the versions of the self three in total – *I*-the-adult, *I*-the-child and *he*-the-child:

> I (I-the-adult) saw again the bed at the window, the tall, fluted half-columns of the curtains rising above me (I-the-child), the tops of the autumnal trees outside, and the child that I was then (he-the-child), lying quietly with bandaged throat, grey-browed and wan, my (I-the-child) hands resting on the turned-down sheet, like a miniature warrior on his (he-the-child) tomb.

A closer look at the peculiar variation between the first and the-third person reference in relation to the child self brings up the question whether this shift could possibly correlate with a viewpoint shift between the internal perspective of the child and the external view of the adult calling his older self *he*. As we shall see, such a reading is stylistically plausible. The assumed viewpoint shift is schematically shown below in two different fonts.

> I saw again the bed at the window, *the tall, fluted half-columns of the curtains rising above me, the tops of the autumnal trees outside*, and the child that I was then, lying quietly with bandaged throat, grey-browed and wan, *my hands resting on the turned-down sheet*, like a miniature warrior on his tomb.

Since the curtains are no longer to be seen in the place of action, the subjectively described curtains might be arising from the consciousness of the child. The progressive form of the verb *rising* and the deictically-oriented preposition *above* also facilitate this view, the first with its implication of an ongoing action and the latter by presupposing that the perceiver is lying in the bed. So, after the adult narrator's claim to be externally visualising the bed at the window (*I saw again the bed at the window*), his mind seems to momentarily glide into the consciousness of the child perceiving the tall curtains above him (*the tall, fluted half-columns of the curtains rising above me*). I include the third clause as also evocative of the child's visual perception because in his lying position in the bed only the tops of the trees and not the whole of them would be visible to him (*the tops of the autumnal trees outside*).

The next few clauses sharply move the lens from the presumed internal focalisation of the child to the external focalisation of the adult. This time the

perspective is more easily recognisable as external because of the third-person distancing reference *the child that I was then* with the temporal deictic *then* ingrained in it and the fact that the speaker can capture the child's whole body in his field of vision which is possible only from an outside standpoint. In this case the present participial clauses (*lying*, *resting*) linked to *the child that I was then* presuppose an external perspective with the observer being able to notice the colour of the face (*grey-browed and wan*).

But the clause *my hands resting on the turned-down sheet* does not easily fall into this pattern. Since it is syntactically connected with the previous clause *lying quietly with bandaged throat* and the following clause *like a miniature warrior on his tomb*, it should be aligned with the same perspective. However, the first-person reference *my* in *my hands* contrasts with the third-person pronoun *his* in *his tomb* from the last clause. Although the pronoun *his* in *like a miniature warrior on his tomb* per se is dubious between a distant reference to the child self and simply a co-reference with the noun 'warrior', I still view the whole clause as externally focalised due to the reflective comparison with a miniature warrior and the more adult-sounding rhetoric which are more plausibly coming from the mature present self. In this line of reasoning, had the narrator used *his hands* instead of *my hands* in *my hands resting on the turned-down sheets*, the clause would have undoubtedly passed for externally focalised but having in mind that the first-person tag designating the child self in *rising above me* is evocative of the child's internal perspective, we cannot but ask whether the clause containing *my hands* is not suggestive of the child's point of view again.

The reason for this pronominal fluctuation might be seen as lying in the referring expression *the child that I was then*. From a grammatical point of view, the expression constitutes a complex noun phrase with an embedded restrictive relative clause in it. Such noun phrases are very complicated in terms of pronominal concord. A recent study by Collins and Postal (2012) investigating the difficulties of pronominal agreement in cases of grammatical *imposters* (in the authors' definition phrases that differentiate in notional and grammatical person), sheds some light on this matter. For instance, in the sentence 'I am an experienced teacher who takes care of myself/himself' (Collins and Postal, 2012: 157-160) both pronominal forms are possible: 'himself' would be aligned with the immediate antecedent (*a teacher*) which is a third-person noun phrase, while 'myself' would agree with a more distant determiner phrase syntactically related to the immediate antecedent (*I* which stands in a predicate nominal relationship with a teacher – *I am a teacher*), which Collins and Postal call secondary source of agreement.

The complex noun phrase 'the child that I was then' would also allow for a two-fold pronominal agreement, but only in a syntactic position of object. In subject position only a third-person concord is acceptable. Consider the sentences: *The child that I was then could not understand why he was left alone* and *I cannot describe the emotion of the child that I was then, far from his/my house and his/my parents*. The first sentence containing the complex noun phrase as a subject would only agree with a third-person anaphoric reference but the second, which has the complex noun phrase as an object, leaves it up to the speaker to choose which antecedent he/she will refer to. In the latter case the choice of pronoun will also carry a stylistic message. A third-person reference

would accentuate the ontological difference between the two selves, whereas if a first-person is opted, no identity discord would be discerned.

Thus, in example (1) of this section only the third-person forms (*himself*, *his*, *he*) are in unison with the antecedent (*the boy that I was then*) which plays the role of subject in the sentence, but in example (2) where both options are possible and grammatically correct, we would expect at least a consistent usage – either the one, or the other. On this basis, we can infer that when a referring expression alternates between the first and the third-person, its use is purposeful and done for stylistic reasons. It is also noticeable from the sentence with the two font styles that the use of the first-person in reference to the child self coincides with clauses that are more or less evocative of the internal perspective of the child, whereas the third-person in designation of the child self is more manifestly stemming from the external perspective of the adult distinguishing himself from his younger counterpart. But even if these pronominal alternations don't strictly fit into this categorisation, they still presuppose a degree of focalisation ambiguity or, even more importantly, they show a lack of cohesion in Halliday's sense of that term. As Halliday and Hassan (1976) state, 'cohesion lies in the continuity of reference' (31). But what we see in this example is the exact opposite, namely a constant swinging back and forth between first-person and third-person references. And the referential incohesion in this example is neither a mistake, nor an accident but an intentional stylistic device that aids the linguistic presentation of the 'divided self'.

The last sentence from this extract also shows referential variability. The scene is deictically distanced in space (*Afloat <u>there</u> in febrile languor*) and time (*How strangely pleasurable were the illnesses of <u>those</u> days*), while the reference

of person is moved to the more proximal first-person forms to denote the child self (…*the blood booming in my ears, I used to dream myself into*…) where the third-person could well have been used because these pronouns are still an anaphoric reference to *the child that I was then*. The variability in this sentence thus contributes further to the referential incoherence which creates the stylistic effect of division.

To sum up, extract (1) from *The Sea* demonstrates a consistent shift between the first-person, designating the adult narrator who has an awareness of himself as a mature being, and the third-person referring entirely to the child self with no interpenetration between the two domains. The decompression between adult self and child self is complete not only linguistically in the pronominal shift but also cognitively as the referents of the referring expressions have set boundaries. The narrative defines an opposition between 'self' and 'other' in which the narrator identifies himself as 'self' and the child as somebody 'other'. The second set of examples, taken from *Ghosts*, however, demonstrates an incoherent alternation between the third-person and the first-person in reference to the child self. The protagonist is not simply divided between self (adult) and other (child) but shows an apparent inability to draw a line between these two entities and repeatedly switches between the two. This leads to a palpable interweaving between the consciousness of the adult and the consciousness of the child and enhances the inner division underlying the protagonist's sense of self.

Yet a third type of pronominal split observed in Banville shows a completely different pattern of interacting with the presentation of consciousness. In it, the third-person reference to the child self is consistently

applied throughout a whole paragraph (as in example (1) from *The Sea*) but the perspective does not remain anchored in the external consciousness of the narrating self and occasionally slips into the internal perspective of the child, this time, however, without a co-occurrent pronoun switch as was the case in example (2) from *Ghosts* but remaining entirely under the dominion of the third-person. I demonstrate this with a passage from *The Blue Guitar*:

(3) I felt just now a sudden sweet rush of fondness for the little boy that I was then, in his khaki shorts and his sandals with diamond shapes cut out of the toes, standing there with his heart in his mouth, on the brink of the great adventure that his life would surely be. A mass of raw compulsions, inchoate fears, he hardly knew yet who or what he was. How quietly he closed the door behind him, how softly he trod upon those forbidden floorboards. In the summer silence the wooden walls around him creaked and the roof above him with its blistered coat of tar blubbered softly in the heat. Everything seemed alive, everything seemed to regard him with sharp-eyed attention. There was a smell of sun-bleached timbers and creosote and dust that seemed the evocative whiff of an already lost past. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 53)

Narrated above is a memory episode in which the protagonist Oliver Orme, a painter by profession and a thief by hobby, sentimentally remembers an early childhood theft. In it, he describes how he stole a little porcelain lady from Miss Vandeleur's collection of china statuettes. The quoted excerpt comes just after he announces that one day he finally plucked up the courage to penetrate

Miss Vandeleur's den and just before he starts giving details of the theft itself. So, this passage comes as an emotional prelude to the actual account of the act of stealing, in which the narrator renders his current emotion for the child on the brink of that great adventure.

What immediately grabs our attention is the pronominal shift to the third-person beginning just after the referring expression *the little boy that I was then* until the very end of the paragraph. The third-person reference to the child self is probably one of the strongest linguistic signals of the external viewpoint of adult Oliver who distances himself from his younger self to such a degree that a separate pronoun comes to be used. In this line of thought, the third-person pronoun *he* might be seen as functioning as the distal variant of *I*, just like the spatial and temporal deictic pairs *here-there* and *now-then*. The choice of referring expressions then indicates that the whole scene is cast through the eyes of the adult narrator. The other deictic indicators seem to support this view as the location of the past scene is described with the distal deictic adverb *there* (*standing there*) and the distal demonstrative pronoun *those* (*those forbidden floorboards*), while the temporal domain of the adult self is designated with the proximal time adverbial *just now* (*I felt just now*). However, due to the past-tense narration combined with the present time deixis, the paragraph presents the point of view of the adult in free indirect style, thus turning the narrator into an experiencing self.

But if we leave aside the experiential nature that the adult's point of view acquires due to the free indirect narrative technique used and return again to the psychological division between older self and younger self, we will see that the syntax of the first and the third sentence suggests a visual portrayal of externally-

observed objects and actions, which reinforces the external focalisation of the adult self. As soon as the speaker expresses his internal feeling of 'sudden sweet rush of fondness' for the boy that he once was, he begins to describe in a few consecutive free modifier clauses how he visualises at his moment now this boy from time past (*in his khaki shorts and his sandals with diamond shapes cut out of the toes, standing there with his heart in his mouth, on the brink of the great adventure that his life would surely be*). So, the little boy is externally focalised from the perspective of the adult. Sentence 3 also gives an external view of how the boy closed the door behind him and trod upon the floorboards as observed from a distance, but this time greater emphasis is put on the reflective consciousness of the observer who is impressed by *how quietly* and *how softly* the action has been performed.

Between these two external visualisations describing the appearance and the actions of the child, a brief glimpse into the internal state of the child is squeezed in *(… his heart in his mouth, on the brink of the great adventure that his life would surely be. A mass of raw compulsions, inchoate fears, he hardly knew yet who or what he was.*). This part of the text raises a question about focalisation since there is strong evidence that we are in the limited perspective of the child. Some linguistic signals indicate the child's perspective, as, for example, the emotive adjective *great, would* as a projection of the future in the past, the modal adverb *surely* and the temporal deictic *yet.* The phrase *life would surely be*, which reflects the child's expectation that his life would surely be a great adventure, can only be stemming from the boy's consciousness and thus asserting the child's perspective and showing the limited point of view of the

past self. Yet, the way of phrasing in *A mass of raw compulsions* and *inchoate fears* is more reminiscent of an adult's vocabulary and manner of expression.

The second half of the passage (sentences 4, 5 and 6), however, seems to evoke more palpably the internal focalisation of the child. All three sentences present his sense perceptions at the time of the events. The narration abounds in descriptions of his sense of smell, hearing and sight. Some linguistic cues signalling the child's subjectivity as a deictic centre are: vocabulary related to the senses such as *summer silence*, *creaked, blubbered softly, seemed to regard him, there was a smell of*; deictically-orientated prepositions of place like *around* (*walls around him*) and *above* (*roof above him*); the temporal deictic *already*; the perception verb conveying modality *seem* in *everything seemed alive, everything seemed to regard him, that seemed the evocative whiff*, as well as the parallelism itself in the last three phrases. Besides, the fairy-tale like content also indicates a child's view. To this list we could even add the non-representation of the speaker as defined by Haiman (1998: 68). The non-representation of the observer as a grammatical sign of internal focalisation (named *total participation* by Haiman) means that *I* as a subject is not explicitly stated, so a sentence like 'There was snow all around me' displays a greater degree of internal focalisation than a sentence like 'I saw snow all around me' in his view. Though narrative studies would classify both sentences as represented perception, the avoidance of the *I* in the above sentence more strongly evokes an internalised representation.

The perceptual process in the passage above is thus foregrounded by the change of transitivity structure from sentences displaying a mental or action process with an animate agent in the first three sentences (*I felt*; *he hardly knew*;

he closed the door; *he trod*) to sentences displaying an event or relational process with an inanimate agent in sentences 4, 5 and 6 (*the wooden walls creaked*; *the roof above blubbered*; *everything seemed*; *there was a smell*). The only debatable linguistic indices here are the metaphors *blistered coat of tar* and *sharp-eyed attention* that show a more refined vocabulary than a child would have employed and the description *sun-bleached timbers and creosote and dust* which suggests a more mature knowledge of the world. But excluding these expressions which have as a more plausible source the consciousness of the adult, the majority of the second part successfully reconstructs the child's senses. Besides, we already know that in Banville the interpenetration of the voices of the narrating *I* and the experiencing *I* creates ambiguities.

Returning to the role of the pronoun switch in this passage, I can conclude that the first-person narrator clearly distances himself from his childhood counterpart by utilising a third-person form but at the same time this pronounced external perspective of the adult gives way to a potential internal presentation from the point of view of the child. Even more importantly, these internally portrayed perceptions of the child remain deictically anchored in the narrating self's consciousness due to the consistently-applied third-person pronoun forms.

On a more formal level, this begs the question of whether the I-narrator is not actually giving a third-person account of his childhood. The narrator's attempt to reproduce the internal feelings and sensations of the child gives me a reason to assume that he abandons the first-person presentation for a moment and adopts an omniscient narrative stance when telling about his childhood experiences. Thus, for an instant and in the stretch of a paragraph the first-person narrator introduces a new frame within the narrative in which he relates to his

past self as a narrator in a third-person narrative. As already noted, the third-person references in the context of the passage are not imperative because the complex noun phrase *the little boy that I was then* used as an object perfectly allows first-person anaphors after it (*I felt just now a sudden sweet rush of fondness for the little boy that I was then, in my khaki shorts and my sandals with diamond shapes cut out of the toes, standing there with my heart in my mouth, on the brink of the great adventure that my life would surely be…*). Therefore, the deliberate choice of third-person forms here affects the structural framework of the narrated world and except for the opposition adult-child, the person shift also corresponds to an odd transfer from a first-person to a third-person narrative position. Furthermore, additional consciousness differentiation can be made here between a narrating adult self, an experiencing adult self and an experiencing young self.

As regards the point of reversal from one pronoun to the other, in the above example the transition between *I* and *he* is smooth and moderated by the use of the referring expression *the child that I was then*, which fuses both types of person in one lexical unit and then allows for both grammatical persons to be used. But in another instance the pronominal shift expressive of a child-adult split is used in a more abrupt manner involving strong syntactic breaks in the form of dashes:

(4) We three were the only ones on the beach. The misty grey air of evening had the feel of dampened ash. I see us turn and walk away towards the gap in the dunes that led to Station Road. A corner of Chloe's towel trails in the sand. I go along with my towel draped over one shoulder and my wet hair slicked down,

> a Roman senator in miniature. But who is it that lingers there on the strand in the half-light, by the darkening sea that seems to arch its back like a beast as the night fast advances from the fogged horizon? What phantom version of me is it that watches us – them – those three children – as they grow indistinct in that cinereal air and then are gone through the gap that will bring them out at the foot of Station Road? (Banville, *The Sea*, 136-137)

Max is recalling a time when he, Chloe and Myles went swimming at the beach one day. The extract opens with the presentation of Max-the-child's internal perspective rendered in free indirect style, with the second sentence specifically portraying his represented perception. In the third sentence the account switches to the discourse present of the narrator and unambiguously states his position of an external observer of the past scene conjured in his mind. The protagonist is hence divided between the image of the adult visualiser (*I see*) and the image of the visualised child (*I see us*; *I go along*; *my towel*; *my wet hair*). The mental picture that passes before his mind's eye has the quality of a vivid tableau, with the narrator observing it. This is mainly reinforced by the use of the present tense.

The second part of the text includes two extended questions in which the speaker records the unexpected appearance of an unrecognisable ghost-like figure on the scene by the sea and insistently asks who this is. In the second question he even recognises a 'version' of himself in this phantom. Following this discovery is a dramatic change from the first-person *us* to the third-person *them*, which persists until the end of the passage (*those three children*; *they*;

them) and changes the referential content of the sentence. In his monograph on John Banville's fiction, Murphy (2018) briefly touches upon the pronominal variation in this example with the following interpretation: 'the shift between he and his friends, from "us" to "them", to "those three children", firmly renders all of them as figures in the imagined landscape' (110-111). While it is true that the children are indeed presented as figures in an imagined landscape, I would linguistically attribute this effect more to the use of the present tense and the sensory modality pattern *I see us* rather than the pronominal switch. Even if there was no change in the pronoun, the character would still remain split between observer and observee and sentences 3 to 5 illustrate this very well. So, it seems that this explanation cannot fully capture the stylistic effect of this person shift.

Vandelanotte (2012), who has also looked into the role of the pronoun switch in this particular example, sees things differently:

> … a recollection of a beach scene with Chloe in which apart from Max-as-a-boy there also lingers on the beach a 'phantom version' of him [*The Sea*'s narrator], observing the scene, from whose perspective the 'us' referring to Max, Chloe and Myles becomes 'them – those three children'. It is almost as if the I-narrator recognises that somewhere inside him there is an omniscient narrator lurking in the background. (80)

So, we have an adult narrator who portrays a vividly recalled scene from his past and in this process the protagonist functions both as a subject and object of seeing. Initially, this split is only conceptual and the first-person references to Max point once to the adult enactor and once to the child enactor (*I see us*…). But towards the end the phantom's interference prompts a pronoun alternation

which produces a ‘zooming-out effect’ (Dancygier and Vandelanotte, 2016: 24). The external perspective of the narrator is so intensified by the pronominal shift from *us* to *them* that the first-person observer now turns into a kind of omniscient reporter in relation to his child self and continues the rest of the sentence in the third-person mode.

Stylistically speaking, when the narration switches to the discourse present of the narrator in the third sentence, the scene emerges as a small-scale model for the narrator to observe (sentences 3, 4 and 5). The textual cues corroborating the narrator’s external perspective include the explicit pronouncement of the act of seeing (*I see*), the switch to the present tense to facilitate the pictorial description, the lexical phrasing suggesting an outside observation point (*turn and walk away towards the dunes*; *A corner of Chloe’s towel trails in the sand*; *I go along with my towel draped over one shoulder*), the deictic *away* and the metaphorical equation of himself with *a Roman senator in miniature* hinting at a more evolved language and knowledge than a child would naturally possess.

But his mind gradually seems to plunge more and more deeply into the scene and the consciousness of the adult seems to gradually relocate to the place of action (sentences 6 and 7). So, even though we have the present discourse of the narrator in sentences 6 and 7, the spatio-temporal markers seem aligned with the past scene. In addition, this narrator who has transferred himself to the past renders the encounter with the phantom in a very emotional and very experiential way which is demonstrated by the following subjectivity signals: the question ‘who is it…’ showing the hero’s direct experience of an event he has limited knowledge about; the spatial deictic *there* which appears aligned with the hero’s displaced position; the subjective visual perception of *the half-light, the*

darkening sea and *the fogged horizon* suggesting a visualiser on the scene of action; the lexical verb conveying modality *seems* and the metaphorical comparison of the sea with *a beast* that *seems to arch its back*.

This direct experience continues in the next sentence with the speaker's amazement that the phantom is actually a 'version of me' that watches 'us'. I see the pronoun 'us' as having a very special function here: to mark a near-cohesion between the adult narrator and the child enactor, or at this point the present self of the narrator already closely identifies with his past self. By now, the adult consciousness of the narrator seems to have immersed so deeply into the past scene that he has taken over the child self and is focalising from his point of view (*watches us*). This contrasts sharply with the use of *us* in *I see us* a few sentences before where the narrator is clearly positioned in his current ground and observing the past self. Thus, from an observer of his past (*I see us turn and walk away*) he changes perspective and feels observed in the past (*What phantom version of me is it that watches us*).

And then all of a sudden, shocked at how far his mind has wandered off into the recesses of the past, he regains his current position of an external observer. But this reclamation is so abrupt in manner, so startling in expression and so dramatic in power that it is almost as if the speaker is shouting it. He distances not once but twice from his previous self, first by the unexpected shift to the third-person *them* and a second time by the referring expression with a distal demonstrative *those three children*. Both of these references break the continuity of the syntax and the fact that they are bracketed by dashes implies that the protagonist is redefining his identity. Having now resumed his external perspective towards his past, he continues to refer to his child self in the third-

person (*they*, *them*), to view the scene as distal (*that cinereal air*) and to demonstrate his superior knowledge of the events (*that will bring them out at the foot of Station Road*).

Therefore, the pronoun shift in this particular example serves to re-anchor the speaker into his current moment. It is noteworthy that this shift comes immediately after the second pronoun *us* which by now designates a third conceptual version of the self – 'adult self encroaching on child self' (*watches* us) as compared to the preceding references to either 'adult self' (*I see us*) or 'child self' (*I see us*, *I go along*). So, the moment when he has almost seized his previous self, he feels the need to make a definitive distinction from this past enactor and adopts the distancing third-person mode to finish the sentence and reclaim his position of narrator.

In conclusion, as existing studies have shown, pronoun alternations from the first- to the third-person are often associated with retrospective texts in which the speakers would like to distance themselves from their previous counterparts. Such shifts totally decompress the identity of the protagonist by splitting it into two entities, that of the adult and that of the child. But when Banville's texts employing this technique are examined more closely in terms of the portrayal of consciousness, pronoun shifts appear to have a much richer and varied representation in the narratives. Each of the four examples analysed here displays the same cognitive phenomenon of decompressing the protagonist into adult self conceptualised as *I* and child self conceptualised as *he* but all four of them are interwoven in the narrative texture in their own characteristic and unique ways. We have seen a number of different consciousness presentation patterns embedding pronominal variations such as: the child self is consistently

referred to with third-person pronouns from the perspective of the narrating self (example 1), the child self is referred to with both *I* and *he* and this variation correlates with a change of perspective (example 2), the child self is referred to with third-person pronouns only but at certain points his consciousness is internally represented (example 3) and the child self is abruptly referred to in the third-person when the adult regains his position of narrator (example 4).

The close analysis of pronominal variations through the lens of narrative theory demonstrates that the process of *decompression*, as described in the introduction to this chapter, does not sufficiently explain these intricacies of consciousness presentation. A more precise estimation of the way the child self is represented will then include not only the pronoun the child is referred with but also the vantage point from which the child's experience is seen. Thus, a more fine-grained differentiation of the child self includes *he*-the-child (externally focalised), *he*-the-child (internally focalised), *I*-the-child (externally focalised), *I*-the-child (internally focalised). The recognition of these variations is important because the stylistic richness of the presentation of division lies in the complex interactions between these different manifestations of the self. The textual examples have indicated that the narrators attempt to resurrect the past and the physical and emotional sensations of the child but the shifts in point of view and in references to that child enact their inability to do so. The unreality of the past scenes leads the narrators to an awakening that this cannot have been them (*Can that child be me?*), that the past is already lost (*whiff of an already lost past*) and that they will be returning to it as phantoms (*What phantom version of me is it that lingers there…*).

5.2.2 Third-person references in relation to an imaginary double

Another very prominent type of division found in Banville's prose is the personal antagonism between 'me' and 'another me'. In this case, the third-person references designate not the narrator's young self but an imaginary double that the individual conjures up. Since this type of split is the most conscious expression of the 'divided self' in the narratives, it is often used in a metaphorical or figurative way as, for instance, 'I became at once acutely aware of myself, as if another I, mute and breathing, had sprouted up out of the balding carpet to loom over me monstrously' (Banville, *Athena*, 27) where the awareness of one's own self is lived through as a sensation of a double *I* rising before the protagonist. Such scenes are significant with the images of doubleness that they create but more effective from a stylistic point of view are passages in which the protagonist is trying to assume the other self's perspective and trying to see himself through that other self's eyes as they make the presentation of division more interactive. The examples that I have selected illustrate exactly this dynamics.

In the following extract the pronominal shift from the first- to the third-person marks the huge contradiction between real self and dream self by portraying the two entities as separate beings, each represented by a different pronoun. The real self of the protagonist is referred to with the first-person pronoun *I*, while the mental representation of his dream self is referred to with the third-person pronoun *he* and a number of noun phrases that further intensify the split. One of these phrases, however, seems to reflect the viewpoint of the 'other me':

(5) Yet oftentimes, too, I entertain the fancy that somewhere in that infinity of imbricated other creations there's an entirely other me, a dashing fellow, insolent, devil-may-care and satanically handsome, whom all the men resent and all the women throw themselves at, who lives catch as catch can, getting by no one knows how, and who would scorn to fiddle with colouring-boxes and suchlike childish geegaws. Yes yes, I see him, that Other Oliver, a man of the deed, a kicker out of his way of milksops such as his distant doppelgänger, yours truly, yours churlishly, yours jealously; yours oh, oh, oh, so longingly. Yet would I leave again and try to be him, or something like him, elsewhere? No: this is a fit place to be a failure in. (Banville, *The Blue Guitar*, 100)

This piece of emotionally intense discourse takes us straight into the narrating self's immediate thoughts expressed at a moment concurrent with the narration. Old Oliver launches into a long rant about how displaced he feels and gives a full vent to his dissatisfaction with his own personality which he considers weak, cowardly, ugly and passive. Therefore, in his dreams he imagines that he is the exact opposite of all this. But the impossibility of binding these two selves into one or the impossibility of ever reaching this fancy self makes him refer to it in the third-person: *I see him*; *his distant doppelganger*; *out of his way*; *try to be him*, *something like him*.

Some of the referring expressions are also indicative of this internal split. The phrase *an entirely other me* points to a double of the speaker who is a separate entity and at the same time remains inextricably linked to its original

(the ‘he’ is another ‘me’). Also, the phrase *that Other Oliver* creates further distance in two ways: first, the demonstrative *that* serves as a distal deictic marker and, second, the pronoun *other* is capitalised and made to function as a proper name. So, the assonance in the assumed name Other Oliver mirrors the protagonist’s real name Oliver Orme. In addition, the distinct ontological presence of the evoked mental representation of the ideal self is emphasised not only by the fact that he is given a name but also by the fact that he becomes materially visible in the eyes of real Oliver. The moment his fancy becomes most intense, he makes the claim that he can see *that Other Oliver* materialise before him.

Most other noun phrases and expressive adjectives emanate from the consciousness of the real self in whose eyes the dream Oliver looks like *a dashing fellow, insolent, devil-may-care and satanically handsome, a man of the deed, a kicker out of his way of milksops*. But the noun phrase *his distant doppelgänger* attracts most special attention here because of its pretence to mimic the voice of ‘that Other Oliver’. Instead of saying *a kicker out of his way of milksops such as <u>me</u>*, the speaker prefers to refer to himself with the genitive construction *his distant dopplegänger* that naturally reflects the point of view of the other self because Oliver, the real speaker, is a distant doppelgänger for the imaginary double and not for himself. The genitive construction is indeed recognised in the narrative literature as a linguistic mechanism for expressing point of view. Discussing the double perspective elicited by genitive constructions, De Hoop and Schreurs (2018) adduce the following example from Nabokov’s short story *Signs and Symbols* analysed previously also by Levie and Wildschut (2014):

> *She* waited for *her* husband to open *his* umbrella and then took *his* arm. *He* kept clearing *his* throat in a special resonant way *he* had when *he* was upset. (De Hoop and Schreurs, 2018: 115)

According to Levie and Wildschut, this passage takes the woman's perspective and this is due to no other reason but the genitive construction *her husband*. The effect of genitive constructions on focalisation can be seen by juxtaposing the sentences *She waited for her husband to open his umbrella* and *His wife waited for him to open his umbrella*, which depict the same situation with the same participants, even the grammatical attribution of activity (woman – subject of 'waited' and man – agent of 'open his umbrella') is the same, but differ only in the choice of referring expressions (*she – her husband*; *his wife – him*). Yet, this only difference turns out to be of utmost significance to the angle of vision from which the action is seen. That's why, the first sentence is viewed as triggering the woman's perspective, while the second as triggering the man's perspective.

In a similar vein, the genitive construction *his distant doppelgänger* seems to mimic the viewpoint of the 'other Oliver' or the real *I* projects himself into the dream *I* and from the perspective of this solid and substantial figure he sees himself as a distant doppelgänger. The alienating effect brought about by this momentary shift of focalisation is continued in the referring expressions *yours truly*, *yours churlishly*, *yours jealously*, *yours oh, oh, oh, so longingly* that immediately follow the genitive construction in question. Although the phrase *yours truly*, together with its synonymous variants *yours churlishly*, *yours jealously* and *yours longingly*, constitutes a familiar idiomatic expression

meaning ‘I/me’, hence it brings back the first-person speaker’s perspective, it still implies a degree of self-alienation.

A similar internal clash can be found in a passage from *Ghosts*, too. The protagonist is again divided between the image of his real self and a mental representation of an ideal self which are designated with first-person and third-person pronouns, respectively, to show the impossibility of housing these two enactors under one pronoun. But the effect of evoking the ‘other self’ is made more pronounced by the more explicit hypothetical focalisation from the point of view of ‘the other’ as well as by the introduction of *you*-forms to directly address this other entity:

(6) I have always been convinced of the existence somewhere of another me, my more solid self, more weighty and far more serious than I, intent perhaps on great and unimaginable tasks, in another reality, where things are really real; I suppose for him, out there in his one of many worlds, I would be no more than the fancy of a summer’s day, a shimmer at the edge of vision, something half-glimpsed, like the shadow of a cloud, or a gust of wind, or the hover and sudden flit of a dragonfly over reeded, sun-white shallows. And now as I stood in the midst of my own absence, in the birthplace that had rid itself of me utterly, I murmured a little prayer, and said, Oh, if you are really there, bright brother, in your more real reality, think of me, turn all your stern attentions on me, even for an instant, and make me real, too. (Banville, *Ghosts*, 261)

The protagonist admits to being aware of the existence of ‘another me’ out there that is more solid and more substantial than himself. But after describing this separate entity from his point of view (*more weighty and far more serious than I, intent perhaps on great and unimaginable tasks*), in the second part of sentence 1 after the semi-colon the speaker projects himself into the double *I* and describes himself from the hypothetical viewpoint of this other, more solid self (*I suppose for him… I would be no more than the fancy of a summer’s day, a shimmer at the edge of vision, something half-glimpsed, like the shadow of a cloud, or a gust of wind, or the hover and sudden flit of a dragonfly over reeded, sun-white shallows*). So, the double perspective transcribed in this sentence alternates between the hero’s internal vision of his more real counterpart and his external vision of himself subsumed under the hypothetical focalisation of this ‘other me’. The protagonist makes his own insignificance even greater when looked through the eyes of the duplicate *I* and additionally undermines his own ontological status to an extent equal to voidness (*as I stood in the midst of my own absence*) in the following sentence.

The imaginary self referred to in the third-person eventually becomes so real, almost a living being, that the hero enters into a dialogue with him and starts addressing him as *you* (marked by double underlining) in the last sentence of the passage. A different interpretation of this passage is offered by some literary scholars who see this particular *you*-address as marking a transgression from the realm of fiction to the realm of reality. According to Hertel (2005), here we have ‘a character’s pledge to change his reality status, to step out of the book and become real’ (39). Put differently, this excerpt presents a case of a narrator trying to step out of the frames of the diegetic world. The same view is taken by

Murphy (2018) who states that ‘At one point in *Ghosts*, for example, Freddie even makes a direct appeal to Banville, his creator to grant him life’ (65). Or, in these scholars’ views, the *I-you* split in this passage concerns the relationship between I-narrator and protagonist and real author. When the *I*-narrator’s psychological emptiness has reached an utmost point, he begs his inventor to intervene and breathe life into him.

What entity exactly stands behind the second-person pronoun, whether it is an imaginary self within the diegetic space or the real author outside the fictional world, is a question open for debate. My contention is that the evidence from the text doesn’t point to the author and the mechanism of splitting which these two scholars interpret as an ontological transgression, is rather purely fictional. It is the narrating *I* who projects this split and he has already referred to this other self in the text as part of his conscious awareness of having a double. So, following the logic of the passage the narrator is addressing his other self and is begging this more solid entity to make him real too.

Internal detachment achieved by attribution of consciousness to a second self is also very distinct in passages of free indirect style that represent the past self’s experience. The first example below demonstrates such a bifurcation between the perspective of the *I* and the perspective of ‘another self inside me’, while the second example shows the hero’s dislocated feeling of being ‘someone else’:

(7) Halfway down the corridor we stopped, and while I waited politely as the Sister searched importantly among the keys on a big metal ring attached to her belt, another self inside me

yearned toward that window with its milky effulgence, that seemed the very promise of escape and freedom. (Banville, *The Untouchable*, 378)

(8) Hackett was watching me with quiet interest. I experienced then a flash of that old malaise that seizes on me now and then in moments of stress and extremity, bringing with it a dizzying sense of dislocation, of being torn in two; for a second I was someone else, passing by and glancing in through the window of my self and recognising nothing in this other's commonplace and yet impenetrably mysterious surroundings. (Banville, *Athena*, 114)

The scene in passage (7) describes the moment when Victor, the protagonist of *The Untouchable*, takes his mentally retarded brother Freddie to a private nursing home where he leaves him. The sentence above, focalised through the consciousness of young Victor experiencing the events, reflects his feeling of agony at having to walk through the home. But within the boundaries of this psycho-narratorial report we encounter the subjective viewpoint of 'another self' living inside the hero who seems to be endowed with feelings of his own. The internal state of this third-person entity is linguistically rendered by means of the verb *yearn* denoting a psychological state, the demonstrative pronoun *that* – which has a double function in this context as it can point to real distance between agent and window in the past scene but can also be interpreted as expressing the speaker's subjective emotion of awe (as already discussed in section 4.2.1), the emotive adjective *milky* which also functions as a simile, the

verb expressing modality *seem* as well as the metaphorical vision of the window as *the very promise of escape and freedom*.

These linguistic indices reinforce this other self as a deictic centre in his own right. Such split within the internal perspective itself results in psycho-narration within the psycho-narration. Instead of referring to himself in the first-person throughout the whole sentence (e.g. *I yearned toward that window*), the protagonist chooses the estranging third-person reference *another self inside me* when referring to his internal world of emotion. The reason why he attributes these feelings to a second self inside him and not to himself alone is probably because he tries to justify his need to escape this appalling place and to exonerate himself of the guilt of abandoning his brother. By claiming that it is not him who yearns to escape but another self, he transfers the guilt to 'the other' and thus remains in himself pure and innocent. He has not got the stability to accept his own individuality and keeps retreating from this centre of selfhood every time an emotion becomes intense or unbearable.

In passage (8), Morrow, the protagonist, recollects a conversation he had with Inspector Hackett inside the inspector's motor car. When Inspector Hackett informs him that Whitewater House has been robbed again, Morrow remembers the crime that he himself committed years ago and feels uneasy. This uneasiness is rendered as a feeling of dislocation and of being *someone else*. Though presented with an indefinite third-person reference (*someone else*), this apparitional figure seems to have a distinct material presence as he is claimed to possess a physical, perceptual and cognitive capacity. The verb of mental process *recognise* and the verb of behavioural process *glance* enact a viewpoint shift to the mind of this 'someone else' and render his perspective from within.

In narratological terms, they present, first, represented perception (*glancing in through the window of my self*) and, then, psycho-narration (*recognising nothing in this other's commonplace and yet impenetrably mysterious surroundings*) but aligned with the hero's other self.

A further proof indicating that this second entity is a subjective deictic centre are the referring expressions *my self* and *this other* to denote the original self. The splitting of the reflexive pronoun *myself* into the noun phrase *my self* clearly demonstrates the ontological split of the hero who is now seeing himself from outside. Besides, the entity initially designated by the hero as *someone else* now refers to this same hero as *this other* and claims to recognise nothing there. This is by far the strongest expression of division because these two selves are mutually unfamiliar to each other.

Briefly summarised, the third-person referring expressions that represent this type of self-division include phrases like *an entirely other me, another me, my more solid self, another self inside me or someone else*. In some cases, the other self has a separate material existence outside the narrator and the speaker is not only seeing his double but also addressing him. In other cases, the other self is alleged to be living inside the protagonist and causing an emotional discord. Narratologically speaking, these splits are particularly amplified when there is an assumed focalisation from the viewpoint of the other which is suggestive of the second self also being a centre of consciousness. It is then that the presentation of the 'divided self' goes beyond its metaphorical expression and becomes a narratological phenomenon as well.

5.2.3 Third-person episodes in Banville's first-person novels: switches from *I* to *he*

The pronoun shifts that I have addressed so far have one essential feature in common: they occur in the context of the hero referring to his past self (section 5.2.1) or to an imaginary self (section 5.2.2) and thus always following a noun phrase that introduces this other entity. The noun phrase serves as a link between the two pronominal positions and makes the transition between them smoother. But sometimes the shifts can be much more dramatic and thus directly affect the mode of narration. This type of pronominal alternations is more firmly embedded in the narratives and involves a systematic fluctuation between a first-person and a third-person mode of narration. As a result, it affects larger segments of the text compared to the brief sentence- or paragraph-long switches identified in the previous sections.

As already noted in Chapter 2, Banville, who is famous for his devotion to the first-person narrative style, rarely resorts to third-person narration but when he does, his narratives are assessed as 'highly problematic':

> John Banville is a novelist strongly associated with the mode of first-person narration. Where his novels do switch to a third-person perspective – much of *Ghosts*, parts of *Shroud*, most of *The Infinities* – the narration itself becomes highly problematic, and is always revealed as an imaginative attempt by a first-person narrator to move beyond his own narcissistic encounter with the world. (O'Connell, 2011a: 427)

Evidently, O'Connell considers the switches to the third-person in those three novels as an attempt on the part of the protagonists to overcome their narcissism and adopt a more 'empathic' position towards others. By imaginatively transcending their epistemological boundaries, Banville's heroes acquire features of omniscience and alternate between a limited and an omniscient point of view. This narrative stance, however, has to be differentiated from the mode referred to in narrative literature as 'first-person omniscient narration' which, as I have already explained in section 1.3 of this thesis, is also designated as 'I-as-witness' or 'peripheral first-person narrator' (Stanzel, 1984; Fludernik, 2009). First-person omniscient narration essentially preserves the first-person pronominal form and the continuity of first-person narration, while the phenomenon that I am going to explore in this section involves first-person narration that not only manifests authorial qualities but does switch to a third-person mode, as well.

My aim in this section will be to investigate how the change of mode in Banville's fiction contributes to the overall presentation of the divided self. In order to provide a fuller picture of the disruption of narrative continuity that takes place, I will explore first the effect of pronoun variation from *I* to *he* and then from *he* to *I*. This will elucidate how the switch from one pronominal position to another destabilises the narrative point of view and generates a dual self-representation.

A peculiar example of pronoun alternations from the first-person to the third-person and vice versa is encountered in the novel *Shroud*. The third-person segments, however, do not occur as separate chapters or new sections, and neither are they cut off from the first-person parts by means of a three-asterisk

break or a double paragraph break. They literally occur from one paragraph to the other, last for a few paragraphs and finish all of a sudden with the next paragraph resuming the first-person perspective again. This makes them tightly weaved into the narrative texture, as demonstrated by the following passage from *Shroud*:

(9) (1) But let me try, once more, a last time, while the mood is on me, to describe how it really was between Cass Cleave and me. (2) I propose a series of scenes, as in a frieze, depicting a pale girl capered about by an old man, against the background of a marble cityscape. (3) The oldster is in motley, masked and plumed, pinned all over with diamond patches, with a monstrous codpiece strapped under his belly. (4) In each of the panels he is striking an elaborate attitude for the girl's benefit. (5) Now he is the gay blade, hand on hip, now the demon lover, rampant, irresistible, now the unresting scholar with his taper and his book. (6) The girl stands before him gazing upon these antics with a patient expression, forbearingly, a dreamy Columbine, waiting for him to doff the mask and motley; how eerily he reminds her of her father, playing his parts. (7) See, here they are now, in the heights across the river, on a narrow, upwardly curving road overhung by dark trees. (8) It is a deserted, sultry, knife-grey evening, and Franco Bartoli, that lugubrious Innamorato, has invited them to dinner. (9) They are alighting from a taxi. (10) She helps the old boy with his walking stick and his useless leg. (11) She tries not to let him

> see her seeing the palsied shaking of his big, white-knuckled hand clamped on the handle of the stick. (12) A waft of warm wind sways the trees, silvering the leaves; she thinks again not for the first time how the city seems to breathe, wearily, like a living, ancient thing. She takes the old man's arm and they set out across the road. (13) For a second she sees him looming naked above her, huge and scrawny and sagging, hair wild and eyes ablaze, his old mouth open. (14) Then she sees herself holding him; she is like the anatomically impossible Madonna in that painting they saw somewhere, cradling a giant Christ on splayed knees with no more effort than if she were dandling a babe. (Banville, *Shroud*, 340-341)

The first two sentences of this extract act as a discourse link between the two narratorial stances and explicitly thematise the speaker's current mental effort to explain his relationship with Cass Cleave by presenting it as a frieze scene (*But let me try… to describe how it really was between Cass Cleave and me. I propose a series of scenes, as in a frieze, depicting…*). The most remarkable feature of this frieze-style portrayal of the narrator's past is the change of the self-reference to the third-person and the way he begins to speak of himself as another. As the previous chapters of this thesis (Chapter 3 and 4) have already shown, Banville's protagonists have a strong predilection for this type of vivid tableau-like visualisations in which the current self sees his own past self in action but the first-person references have so far been maintained throughout the extracts. Here, however, the narration switches to the third-person and the object of visualisation is not simply a narrative enactor still

represented by the same pronoun but an almost separate entity designated by a different pronoun and a series of noun phrases. The speaker's alienation from his old self is further intensified by the choice of the indefinite article in the first third-person reference *an old man*. Thus, *Cass Cleave* is equalled to *a pale girl* and *me* turns into *an old man* emphasising their appearance on the scene of action for the first time.

In the beginning, the narration emphasises the discourse of the narrator who describes in his immediate *now* what appears in front of his mind's eye on the spur of the moment. The consciousness presented is that of adult Axel who has an external view of the unfolding situation. Initially, he describes the picture revealed in his imagination: the appearance of the young girl and the old man and how they are positioned in space *(…a pale girl capered about by an old man, against the background of a marble cityscape. The oldster is in motley, masked and plumed, pinned all over with diamond patches, with a monstrous codpiece strapped under his belly.*). The adult speaker's perspective is evident from evaluative words and phrases that suggest the thinking of a grown-up man and constitute the verbal commentaries of an external observer such as *motley, plumed, monstrous, elaborate, rampant, irresistible, unresting, a dreamy Columbine, that lugubrious Innamorato*. His role as an orchestrator of the visualisation is further emphasised by meta-narrative intrusions that remind the reader of the frieze framing of the scene – *in each of the panels*; *see, here they are now*. The present progressive tense (*is striking*; *are alighting*) as well as the non-finite progressive forms (*gazing*; *waiting; silvering*) can also relate to the perspective of the passive observer by highlighting the current process of visualising.

Although the external focalisation of adult Axel Vander's consciousness is dominant in this passage, there is also a distinct viewpoint shift into Cass Cleave's consciousness towards the end of the extract. The narrator makes an attempt to capture the private thoughts and emotions of Cass and to penetrate her consciousness. A first signal of this can be discovered in the last clause of sentence (6) immediately after the semi-colon which, apart from its syntactic function, in this case also fulfils the narrative function of enacting a viewpoint shift into Cass's free indirect thought *how eerily he reminds her of her father* linguistically signalled by the exclamative construction and the evaluation in it. A slight hint to Cass's subjectivity is also perceptible in the demonstrative deictic pronoun *these* (*gazing upon <u>these</u> antics*) earlier in the same sentence, which might be positioning Cass as a deictic centre. This momentary glimpse into her internal perspective is again interrupted by the voice of adult Axel who, with his meta-narrative imperative *see* evoking an interlocutor and the pointer phrase *here they are now*, deictically aligned with the space and time of the represented picture, returns the narration to his own angle of vision. The scene continues from the point of view of the narrator who describes how he finds the place – *dark*, *sultry* and *knife-grey* – and gives an epithet to Franco Bartolli – *that lugubrious Innamorato*.

The second half of this paragraph makes a more pronounced penetration into Cass's mind by giving a closer glimpse into her subjective point of view. Axel's account seems to alternate between his external observation of a fanciful scene and Cass's internal world. Now that he has opened the door to her consciousness, he successively conveys her emotions, thoughts and perceptions. Beginning with her mental state *She tries not to let him see her seeing…*, the

narration goes through her passing thought *she thinks again not for the first time how the city seems to breathe, wearily, like a living, ancient thing* and comes to her imaginary visual perception *For a second she sees him looming naked above her, huge and scrawny and sagging, hair wild and eyes ablaze, his old mouth open.* The subjectivity markers which prove that the viewpoint is orientated from within the narrative range between mental verbs (*she thinks*; *she sees him*; *she sees herself*), verbs expressing modality (*seems to breathe*), the evaluative adverb *wearily*, the simile *like a living, ancient thing,* the deictic preposition *above* and the emotive adjectives *huge, scrawny, sagging, wild, ablaze*. Therefore, the second part of this excerpt can be interpreted as centring on Cass Cleave's consciousness.

This fact is also duly acknowledged by other scholars of Banville. O'Connell (2013), for instance, comments that: 'Axel Vander tries and ultimately fails to solve the enigma of Cass Cleave by means of a free indirect narrative which represents the events of the novel from her point of view.' (193). He sees the switch to the third-person perspective as an *empathic paradox* that allows the first-person narrator to transcend his 'narcissism and advance towards a more empathic, less self-centred position in relation to others' by recounting 'a story from a point of view other than his own' (O'Connell, 2011a: 428). Ghassemi (2016) further adds that 'the shifts in narration to the third-person seem more in line with the production of the uncanny' (165) and that they function as a 'window to Cass's interiority for Axel. The narrative voice, in this sense, opens up a telepathic universe for Axel by means of which he gets a glimpse into Cass's consciousness.' (165). Even though the first scholar more heavily accentuates the overlap between solipsism and empathy and the latter

puts a stronger emphasis on the creation of the uncanny and the telepathic nature of this type of narration by clearly differentiating telepathy from omniscience, both scholars' observations indeed verify Axel's attempt to give some voice to Cass and broaden the novel's scope by presenting Cass's point of view, as well.

While these two scholars do have a point as some parts of the novel seem to adopt Cass's viewpoint, the effect of the pronoun shift in this passage in particular does not fully match their evaluation. What O'Connell and Ghassemi do not account for is the fact that the third-person narration in this novel displays a much more complex and interactive pattern of viewpoint juxtaposition, which makes the viewpoint demarcation not so clear and distinct as it first appears. What I am addressing more particularly is the claim that the third-person narration in the novel presents the events 'from her (Cass's) point of view', that the story is recounted 'from a point of view other than his own (Axel's)' and that we get 'a glimpse into Cass's consciousness'.

A more careful examination of this passage reveals that Cass's assumed internal perspective is more plausibly the male narrator's own viewpoint projected onto her inner experience. The narration doesn't really seem to portray Cass's actual and authentic point of view but rather Axel's own subjective perspective encroaching on Cass's consciousness. A linguistic proof of this can be found in certain semantic repetitions that occur in this particular extract and throughout the rest of the text. In the subjective viewpoint attributed to Cass we find a somewhat unattractive, even repulsive and loathsome image of Axel, which, in the context of the novel, is actually his own attitude towards himself. This immediately suggests that he is mapping his own consciousness onto that of Cass and trying to see himself through her eyes.

More decisive proof of this conflation of voices can be obtained from certain subjective words and expressions from other parts of the novel that are encountered in the first-person account of Axel where we unquestionably hear his personal voice. His account clearly expresses his feeling of aversion towards himself. As we shall see, such idiosyncratic phrases penetrate this third-person segment. As a start, the evaluative word *useless* in sentence (9) *She helps the old boy with his walking stick and his useless leg* which can be easily classed as depicting Cass's subjectivity, is actually a pervasive epithet that the first-person narrator has previously used together with other similar expressions to describe his inner pain at having a feeble leg. Some of his descriptions encountered in the first-person parts of the novel include: *my dead leg rolling like a log*; *I hate this leg*; *grasping my useless leg in both hands and hauling it in after me*; *me and my stiff leg*; *the intellectual equivalent of my useless leg*; *my bad leg*; *my damaged leg* and so on.

Apart from the leg, the first-person speaker has also shown to have an issue with his hand, as well. He appears to be extremely body-sensitive and to generally experience his body negatively. Sentence (10) *She tries not to let him see her seeing the palsied shaking of his big, white-knuckled hand clamped on the handle of the stick*, which at first reading seems to evoke Cass's internal state of concealing that she notices Axel's white shaking hand, in fact correlates perfectly with Axel's own view of his hand found in other parts of the novel – *When I was lifting the glass to my mouth my hand shook violently, Parkinsonially, and the wine spilled over and splashed on the tablecloth*; *I... lifted high my stick in a hand white and shaking*, etc. As we can see, the subjectivity ingrained in the tenth sentence of the selected passage fully

coincides with the male narrator's perception of his own hand. Obviously, he feels very frustrated at seeing the 'Parkinsonial' shaking of his white hand.

His obsession with his ugly, old and failing body does not stop with the hand and the foot but encompasses his body build, skin, hair, eyes and mouth, too. This immediately puts under question the source of the subjectivity in sentence (13) *For a second she sees him looming naked above her, huge and scrawny and sagging, hair wild and eyes ablaze, his old mouth open*. The evaluative adjectives describing Axel's appearance, such as *huge*, *scrawny*, *sagging*, *wild*, *ablaze* and *old* are strongly reminiscent of the speaker's own manner of expression in *What a sight I would have been, suspended up there behind glass, a grotesque seraph, vast, naked, ancient*; *A half-formed image came to my mind – from Bosch, was it, or Dante? – of an emaciated, gape-mouthed figure, stooped and naked, running with uplifted arms*; *Where women are concerned I have always been, as you can attest, the bull in the china shop*; *Lately I have begun to feel that… my suety old flesh is melting off my skeleton and soon will all be gone*; *the sightless eye that glares at me unmoving from the morning mirror, clouded and colourless as I imagine the eye of a dead albatross* and other phrases and sentences.

Another pervasive feature that suffuses the above extract is the narrator's insistence on calling the man in the frieze scene an 'oldster'. The referring expressions used as a linguistic variation of Vander are: *oldster*, *old man*, *his old mouth*; *the old boy*. Of all the subjective expressions in the passage this type of reference is least likely to originate in Cass's consciousness as it stands much closer to Axel's own discourse. A few citations from the rest of the text prove his complex about age unambiguously: *Oh, fond old man!*; *Probably not;*

probably I shall shuffle into senility all unaware. The onset of extreme old age as I am experiencing it is a gradual process of accumulation, a slow settling as of soft grey stuff; *…annoyances of old age*; *How could I be expected to see her clearly, peering rheumily as I must across the chasm of the years that yawned between us?*.

The general pattern that is identified shows that very often the third-person segments which pretend to give access to Cass's interiority very closely mimic the first-person narrator's personal way of expression and thinking about himself. Besides, despite the switches to the third-person, the narrator's occasional metanarrative comments (*I propose a series of scenes, as in a frieze, depicting a pale girl capered about by an old man, against the background of a marble cityscape*) preserve the continuity of the first-person mode of narration. The third-person scenes then appear framed in the speaker's personalised narration and present an attempt on his part to hypothesise the events from another character's point of view. The consciousness portrayed in the third-person parts then cannot be authentically attributed to Cass and is more plausibly the first-person narrator's own viewpoint superimposed on that of Cass. The semantic repetitions prove that Cass's assumed perspective is coloured by the male narrator's mentality and idiom and bears the indelible imprint of his voice. Moreover, the referring expression *the girl* in sentence (6) further supports my argument because such a noun phrase cannot be used in a sentence filtered through her own point of view. Last but not least, the third-person segments also frequently portray a series of actions that she performs. This description of action is difficult to interpret as her internal perspective, as well. All this marks the third-person narration in Banville as a special case. What previous

researchers have defined as ‘empathic paradox’ or ‘telepathic narration’, from a purely stylistic point of view can be more accurately interpreted as ‘hypothetical third-person narration’. The voice behind is that of the first-person speaker who describes the events of his life as happening to somebody else and proposes his own reading of the minds of the characters involved.

In fact, I have explored a narrative technique strongly associated with the element of hypotheticity in section 3.2 in which the narrator used hypothetical focalisation towards his own self by presenting himself as seen in other people’s eyes or from an outside standpoint. I would just very quickly remind us of a few examples: *I saw myself, as if from one of those sunstruck windows…*; *I saw myself in their eyes…*; *I saw the scene as if from outside myself…*, et. al. These hypothetical visualisations do not trigger a pronominal switch but tellingly illustrate Banville’s speakers’ predilection for portraying themselves from an external angle of vision and their divided sense of self. That is why, my own interpretation of the chosen passage is not so much grounded in the telepathic nature of the third-person narration in Banville’s texts as in its hypothetical feel. Telepathy in some way presupposes a true knowledge of the mind of others as they transmit thoughts and feelings directly. Vander’s source of knowledge, however, seems to be his own narcissistic mind only. Cass’s true subjectivity presented in her own first-person voice or narrated by a real omniscient narrator is never revealed.

Vander’s attempt to penetrate Cass’s mind indicates his effort to see the events from an external source of vision and indeed to transcend his ontological status but what we have as a result is just his conjecture of what happens in Cass’s consciousness and this automatically means that his speculations reflect

the workings of his own mind. He does not and cannot know with certainty what is going on in Cass's head, hence his narration cannot authentically be portraying her consciousness. Thus, despite feigning omniscience, the narrator remains confined to his own inherently limited first-person perspective. Besides, the hypothetical focalisation examples presented in section 3.2 only portray the heroes' actions and appearance through the eyes of a passive hypothetical spectator creating just a split between internal and external visual modality, while here the subjective expression is mapped onto the consciousness of other characters in the story and involves not only a passive camera-style observation but also their whole mental reasoning of the situation and the 'divided self' is discernible on a deeper narrative level.

All this gives me good reason to consider the third-person narration in Banville as carrying a strong hypothetical charge. The hypothetical aspect that this type of third-person narration brings with it is more explicitly underscored in another passage from *Ghosts* which straightforwardly depicts the protagonist's past as a hypothetical situation featuring a hypothetical hero:

> (10) Let us take the hypothetical case of a man surprised by love, not for a living woman – he has never been able to care much for the living – but for the figure of a woman in, oh, a painting, let's say. That is, he is swept off his feet one day by a work of art. […] This man, this hypothetical man, finds himself one day in the house of a rich acquaintance, where he is confronted by a portrait of a woman and knows straight away that at once and by whatever means he must possess it. […] And our Monsieur Hypothesis is not used to seeing people whole, the rest of

humanity being for him for the most part a kind of annoying fog obscuring his view of the darkened shop-window of the world and of himself reflected in it. He tells himself he will steal the picture and hold it for ransom, but really that is just for the purposes of the plot. His true and secret desire – secret even from himself, perhaps – is to have this marvellous object, to have and to hold it, to bathe in the brightness of its perfected, still and immutable presence. […] Suddenly, however, to his intense surprise and deep chagrin, he discovers that the picture has lost its charm for him. Ashes. Daubs. Mere paint on a piece of rag. He tosses it aside as if it were a page of yesterday's newspaper. What interests him now, of course, is the living woman that he so carelessly did away with. He recalls with fascination and a kind of swooning wonderment the moments before he struck the first blow, when he looked into his victim's eyes and knew that he had never known another creature – not mother, wife, child, not anyone – so intimately, so invasively, to such indecent depths, as he did just then this woman whom he was about to bludgeon to death. Well, he was shocked. Guilt, remorse, fear of capture and disgrace, he had expected these things, welcomed them, indeed, as a token that he had not entirely relinquished his claim to be considered human, but this, this sudden access to another's being, this astonished and appalled him. How, with such knowledge, could he have gone ahead and killed? How, having seen straight down through

> those sky-blue, transparent eyes into the depths of what for want of a better word I shall call her soul, how could he destroy her? And how, having done away with her, was he to bring her back? For that, he understood, was his task now. (Banville, *Ghosts*, 125-129)

As a sequel of *The Book of Evidence*, *Ghosts* comes second in the Frames trilogy. The unnamed narrator in it is strongly identifiable with Freddie from *The Book of Evidence*. Released from prison, now he dwells on an island and reflects on his past life. The selected episode captures the moment when the protagonist retells how he stole a painting in his past and killed the maid that caught him (presented in *The Book of Evidence*). As in the previous passage, the first sentence of the paragraph serves as a transition between the first-person and the third-person mode of narration by emphasising the narrator's current ruminations about a 'hypothetical' hero – *Let us take the hypothetical case of a man…* After this sentence the narrative switches to a third-person perspective for a few paragraphs but soon returns to the *I*-mode again. Quoted above is just a small extract of this third-person segment. A very important note that should be made here is that despite the pronominal shift to the third-person, the whole third-person part remains deictically grounded in the first-person speaker's consciousness. This is evident from occasional meta-narrative commentaries of the narrator such as *Let us take the hypothetical case of a man…*; *let's say*; *That is….*; *our lovelorn hypothetical hero*; *I grant you, mark you, what we call real life, Here the plot does not so much thicken as coagulate*; *for want of a better word I shall call*; *Well, to shorten a long and grisly tale*; *As I say, merely a hypothesis*; frequent parentheses that interrupt the flow of the *he*-narration like

(I feel we shall have something to say on the subject of statues before long; yes, definitely I feel that topic coming on); *(oh yes, lots of flesh, lots of blood)*; *(pretend this is olden times, when domestics were readily available, not to say expendable)* and, most importantly, the referring expressions designating the hero as hypothetical which indubitably come from the perspective of the first-person speaker: (*This man*; *this hypothetical man*; *our Monsieur Hypothesis*; *our lovelorn hypothetical hero*). Not all of these phrases are included in the passage quoted above but are part of the overall third-person segment in question. This means that what appears to be third-person narration on the surface never ceases to be a first-person account on a deep structural level.

But despite the narrator's adoption of an omniscient viewpoint towards this hypothetical man, at some points he gradually plunges into the internal perspective of the hypothetical entity. At such moments the narrator pretends to know what the hypothetical hero is experiencing from within and to have access to his innermost feelings and thoughts. The third-person narration then renders the consciousness of the hypothetical man down to the finest detail and is saturated with subjectivity signals like mental verbs (*knows*, *discovers*; *recalls*; *knew*; *astonished*; *appalled*); modal verbs (*must*); reflexive pronouns (*himself*); evaluative adjectives and adverbs (*annoying*; *marvellous*; *perfected*; *still*; *immutable*; *carelessly*; *intimately*; *invasively*); metaphors and similes (*the rest of humanity being for him for the most part a kind of annoying fog obscuring his view of the darkened shop-window of the world and of himself reflected in it*;); space and time deictics (*now*; *just then*; *those*); tenses (*had never known*; *was about to*; *had expected*); repair mechanisms in oral presentation (*but this, this sudden access to another's being, this astonished and appalled him*) and

questions and exclamations (*How, with such knowledge, could he have gone ahead and killed? How, having seen straight down through those sky-blue, transparent eyes into the depths of what for want of a better word I shall call her soul, how could he destroy her?*).

As demonstrated, the narrative above is split between the first-person speaker's narratorial discourse and the third-person account regarding the hypothetical man. The consciousness portrayed thus alternates between the mind of the external visualiser imagining and observing the scene at the current moment and the mind of the person defined as 'hypothetical' who has a subjective experience of the events. This double role of the narrator is seen by Pedersen (2003) as a division between the *speaking subject* and the *storied subject* with the narrator adopting either an omniscient or a first-person stance. In his words, the narrator in *Ghosts* is 'a narrating *I* which is not one but is split into the authorial and first-person versions of Freddie' (2003: 227). This narrative disequilibrium is additionally enhanced by the spectral ontology of both entities. The *speaking subject* in the novel remains an unnamed disembodied voice, whereas the *storied subject* is portrayed as a non-existent hypothetical entity. Ghassemi (2016) confirms this peculiar narrative situation in *Ghosts* by calling it 'a specific narrative that illustrates the narrator's spectral self-representation' (176).

By depicting the scene as a frieze-like representation in the third-person, the speaker not only disassociates himself from the actor on stage – as Dancygier describes one of the functions of decompression, when a person does not accept his/her represented image in a painting, photograph, TV or mirror (described in the introduction to this chapter) – but also dives into the consciousness of the

hypothetical hero and presents the events from his subjective point of view. We have seen a similar strategy though on a smaller scale in example (3) from section 5.2.1. The most distinct feature of that example was the relocation from first-person to third-person mode of narration but this change of pronoun stretched over one paragraph only, while the pronoun shift that takes place here spreads over longer parts of the text. The psychological division resulting from the pronoun alternation that we have seen in extracts (9) and (10) herein stems from the dual narrative position of the narrator and his twofold role in relation to the storyworld of the novels.

As we have seen, the first-person narrator repeatedly adopts an external perspective towards his past self and the narrator's ontological status intermittently oscillates between two opposing narrative positions. In this way, his role of autobiographer inevitably changes to that of novelist and the speaker recounting his own experiences gradually turns into a fictional storyteller inventing the lives and voices of his characters. It is exactly this fictionalising of the past events through the use of the third-person mode that gives an illusory feel to the story. The deviation from the first-person position seems to be employed for the purpose of setting the narrator's imagination free. The analysis of these two passages therefore adds a new dimension to the problem of self-division in Banville's works, with the 'divided self' now discernible in the narrator's split narrative position through which he continuously mediates between the level of first-person narration and third-person narration, or between the role of autobiographer and novelist and between truthful and illusory account.

It is also important to point out that in both passages above the narrator uses the present tense to portray his hypothetical visions which arise in his mind as still pictures. This use of the present tense is also known in narrative literature as ‘tabular present’ and defined as ‘present of description, which appears in ekphrastic (roughly, descriptive) passages and serves the function of halting the flow of the narrative to provide a pause’ (Fludernik, 2012: 84). Banville’s novels abound in vivid tableau episodes written in the present tense and extracts (9) and (10) above constitute such tableau scenes in which the narrator observes his previous self as in a motionless picture. But such pictorial framing is assessed by Stanzel (1984) and Partlow (1961) to produce a distancing effect. Stanzel explains that:

> In David Copperfield, for example, the first-person reference is never abandoned, but the first-person narrator often presents his recollection of certain episodes and scenes from his earlier life in the present tense instead of in the usual narrative tense, the past. For this the designation ‘historical present’ is not quite appropriate, for only rarely in this novel is the present tense used to animate the development of a recollection by presenting it as if it were taking place at the moment. This present tense frequently produces a kind of tableau-effect: the recollected scene is imagined as if it were a picture at some distance presented for quiet and reserved observation. This, too, results in an increase in distance: The ‘I’ on the tableau is nearly a ‘he’. (1984: 99-100)

Partlow, discussing similar scenes in the present tense in *Great Expectations* that he also calls ‘moving pictures’, comments on this psychological distance in like manner:

> Dickens was not – perhaps could not be – equally scrupulous in his use of the pronoun *I*. As a result the reader does not always know at once if it means "I- the-narrator, as I am now" or "I-as-Pip, as I was." In this novel the two are so different that separate pronouns might well have been used […]. If the reader is very attentive, he will get this effect anyway: there is often such a great difference between the two *I*'s that the latter, the "I-as-I-was," becomes virtually "he". (1961: 124)

Both Stanzel and Partlow acknowledge the psychological and conceptual difference between the two entities in present tense tableau scenes. The *I*, which in Dickens is ‘nearly’ or ‘virtually’ a *he*, in Banville becomes an actual *he*. The change to the third-person pronoun reinforces the otherness of the *I* in a most categorical way. Thus, the pronominal variation that we encounter in Banville not only breaks the continuity of the narrative, it also breaks the continuity of the self.

In essence, the previous two examples have explored the effect of transposing first-person narration into the third-person mode in Banville’s texts and this transition was assessed as breaking the unity of the narrative viewpoint. The speaker’s subjective position is split between his first-person present discourse and his third-person hypothetical imaginings. The transitions to the third-person are typically never abrupt but textually facilitated by certain

introductory phrases such as *let me try […] to describe how it really was between Cass Cleave and me…* or *Let us take the hypothetical case of a man…* Therefore, the third-person segments initially originate in the narrator's first-person present discourse and the switch to the *he*-form is a linguistic tool that can be said to facilitate the transition of the speaker's role from autobiographer to novelist. This further exposes the fictionality even of autobiography and gives a postmodern dimension to the text, as well.

5.2.4 Third-person episodes in Banville's first-person novels: switches from *he* to *I*

Up to this point I have analysed two instances of pronoun shifts from the first-person to the third-person narrative mode and have discussed how they produce psychological discord by splitting the speaker's ontological status. Banville's strategy of incorporating picture frames in his texts thus breaks the continuity not only of the narrative, but also of the self. But the writer goes a step further in radically challenging the presentation of the split consciousness by employing the opposite shift of pronoun and my next set of examples will show how this alternation creates different narrative implications. Thus, in this section, I will investigate the reverse process of alternation by looking at how the extended episodes in the third-person in *Shroud* shift back from *he* to *I* towards their end in order to resume the first-person speaker's position. In contrast to the passages analysed in the previous section 5.2.3 where the change of pronominal position happens gradually, here the switch is very abrupt:

(11) Vander was watching her, turning his head on the pillow to follow her about the room with his eyes. He bade her eat. She brought a chair and sat down before the food. She was not hungry now. She was thinking. She was excited. Her gaze gleamed. She put a tea bag in the cup and poured hot water over it. She nibbled at one of the stale-tasting rusks. "You should not bite your nails," Vander said. "Look at them." They could hear the hot wind gusting outside, and in the room everything seemed taut and thrumming, and they might have been in the cabin of a ship under full-bellied sail. "I did see you come into that lecture room," he said, sullen and accusing, not looking at her now. […] Suddenly he gave a loud laugh that ended in a cough, making the bed shake. He drew his hand from under the bedclothes and held it up for her to see. "With this I wrote those articles that you found," he said. "Not a single cell survives in it from that time. Then whose hand is it?" He, I, I saw again the empty bottle on its side, the mauve pills in my palm. I closed my eyes. I listened to the wind washing over the rooftops. The girl rose and came forward and knelt beside the bed and took my hand in both of hers and brought it to her lips and kissed it. I. (Banville, *Shroud*, 192-193)

(12) Cass Cleave, rearranging his pillows, paused, leaning over him, and looked into his eyes. Is that how it was to be, she asked herself, would that be all her task, simply to take care of him? She saw herself tending here, the bed a sarcophagus and his

> swaddled corpse topped with its living head; she saw the days rise from dawn to burning noon, then the long, slow fall to evening and the night. The head would speak, it would be the oracle, it would tell her things; she would understand; she would be given to understand; she would know. Suddenly, with an animal quickness, he reached from under the covers again and clamped his clawlike hand on her wrist. His fingers were dry and burning. She looked at the agate nails, striate, chipped. He let her go, his strength failing; his hand withdrawing under the sheet was like an animal slithering away. White weals on her wrist, and then the blood rushing back, under the slackening skin. She bent and put her mouth against his ear, saying something in a hot whisper, saying something I could not make out. Her burning breath. Saying something. (Banville, *Shroud*, 197)

As mentioned, the third-person episodes in this novel have started like picture frames but then have proceeded as focalised narratives in their own right. Passage (11) depicts a scene in which Vander is lying sick in bed and Cass stays around him. The first part of the excerpt maintains Cass's point of view by presenting in free indirect mode her perception of being observed by Vander (*Vander was watching her…*) and her internal sensation and state of mind (*She was not hungry now. She was thinking. She was excited.*). The subjectivity markers that indicate Cass's internal perspective include time deictics (*now*), past progressives (*was watching*; *was thinking*), non-finite progressives (*turning*); mental verbs (*thinking*) and adjectives of emotional state (*excited*).

After the following description of their actions and the rendition of their conversation in direct speech, the first sentence with underlined pronouns signals an abrupt shift to Vander's viewpoint enacted in a most straightforward manner by the switch of pronoun from *he* to *I* at the very beginning of the sentence. The first-person identification is reiterated twice in the course of the sentence, first, in the form of a non-restrictive appositive and a second time as a newly-defined subject of the sentence (He, *I, I* saw again…). In other words, the first *I* redefines the identity of the fictional character, while the second *I* reinforces this change of position by now placing the *I* as the subject of perception in the sentence. The next four sentences until the end of the paragraph continue the narration in the first-person mode with the last mono-word sentence (*I.*) underscoring the first-person voice one more time. Thus, the narrative consciousness in the last five sentences revolves around Vander as a deictic centre by portraying from within first his traumatic memory of poisoning his wife to death by overdosing her medication further back in his past, then his auditory perception of the wind gusting outside while he's lying in bed and speaking with Cass and, finally, his focalisation of Cass's subsequent actions. His subjectivity is linguistically expressed by verbs of perception (*saw*; *listened*), non-finite progressive forms indicating action in medias res (*washing*), referring expressions from the point of view of the adult man (*the girl*), deictic verbs (*came*) and prepositions of place providing deictic orientation (*over the rooftops*; *came forward*).

It is important to note that the switch of pronoun which occurs in the sentence beginning *He, I, I saw again…* does not induce a change of consciousness category from free indirect to free direct mode as might be

expected with a pronominal transition from *he* to *I* (also involving a shift in tense from the past to the present). The most essential feature here is the fact that the narrative remains in the past tense even after the adoption of the first-person mode and the narrative technique remains free indirect style throughout. What changes is only the speaker's way of self-identification through the self-reference.

The next episode captures the same scene moments later. The greater part of the passage seems to assert Cass's point of view by adopting her free indirect thought *Is that how it was to be, she asked herself, would that be all her task, simply to take care of him?*; her visual imaginings *She saw herself tending here, the bed a sarcophagus and his swaddled corpse topped with its living head…*, as well as her represented perception *She looked at the agate nails, striate, chipped*. A remarkable switch occurs in the sentence with underlined pronouns where not only the viewpoint is shifted to Vander but also the third-person reference most surprisingly changes to the first-person within the limits of the same sentence (*put her mouth against <u>his</u> ear… saying something <u>I</u> could not make out*). Just like in passage (11), the sentence preserves the past-tense form of the narration despite the referential shift, and the free indirect technique is simply transposed from third into first-person. The transition from third-person to the more limited and unreliable first-person perspective is even more dramatic here because it happens in a subordinate clause and a subordinate clause is tightly linked to the main clause. In this case, the hero is first referred to as *he* in the main clause and then, contrary to expectation, anaphorically substituted by *I* in the subordinate clause.

Such a radical manipulation of person shifts when a third-person free indirect account switches to the first-person without changing the tense is thought by Chafe (1994: 257-58) to produce a 'climactic' effect. He illustrates this sort of displacement with an example from Hemingway's short story *Big Two-Hearted River*:

> He'd bet the trout was angry. Anything that size would be angry. That was a trout. He had been solidly hooked. Solid as a rock. He felt like a rock, too, before he started off. By God, he was a big one. By God, he was the biggest one I ever heard of. [my emphasis] (Chafe, 1994: 257)

As can be seen, the last sentence where the pronoun variation occurs cannot be classified as free direct thought because the narration preserves the past tense. Therefore, the narrative technique in the sentence constitutes an intermediary case between free indirect and free direct thought with the pronoun *I* placing the experience directly in the consciousness of the speaker but the past tense preserving the distance between experience and narration. According to Chafe, this type of person switch then 'expresses some sort of climax in the story. It is a story without a clear plot, but the devices employed in (22) [quoted passage] – moving from verbally uncommitted thought to verbatim indirect thought to (almost) direct thought – make it appear that Nick's encounter with this unusually large trout constituted the high point of his experience.' (Chafe, 1994: 257).

Chafe's observation confirms Longacre's hypothesis (briefly touched upon in section 4.1) that person shifts are a linguistic signal of *narrative peak*

(1983) and Margetts's further development (2015) that even if they do not mark a structural highpoint in the strict sense of Longacre's notion, they still indicate dramatic moments, high tension, intense excitement or hurried actions. In her discussion of pronoun alternation in fiction, Fludernik (1996) directs our attention to the fact that pronominal switches can occur either in reference to different protagonists or to the same character and further divides the latter type into strategic alternation by segment or chapter and vacillating alternation. According to this categorisation, the change of pronoun that we saw in Banville's *Shroud*, as well as the one in Hemingway, represents exactly a vacillating alternation with both pronouns aligned with the same protagonist. Stylistically speaking, this change 'tends to be motivated psychologically rather than structurally' (Fludernik, 1996: 177). Fludernik's view in some degree substantiates all Longacre, Margetts and Chafe's comments that the pronominal variation in question most often carries an emotive charge.

The alternation between the two narrative positions in the two selected extracts from *Shroud* indeed marks a highpoint in the story and a build-up of psychological tension. The narrator who has previously completely distanced himself from his own personality in the visualised scene and observed his past self from an external vantage point suddenly occupies his mind and body again. The sentence in which this transition happens explicitly blends two pronominal deictic systems with the speaker using a twofold referential anchoring for self-identification. It is without doubt that Banville has deployed these vacillating pronominal shifts for stylistic purposes.

In Ghassemi's reading (2016) of passage (11) 'the constant shifting of the pronouns between 'he' and 'I' evoke a sense in which he [the narrator] is unable

to assume a stable subjective position' (156) and 'the result for the narrator is that he is unable to secure a unified narrative point of view by means of which he can express a unified subjective position' (165-166). The referential instability in extract (12) also leads Quarrie (2012) to ask a question that she herself does not give an answer to in her work: 'Is he [Vander] inserting himself to regain narrative control here, or the opposite, to assert the importance of the speaking subject who is not him, and whom he cannot comprehend?' (67)

The abrupt shifting of narrative perspective that we have observed in Banville does point to a great instability of the speaker's subjective position in both passages quoted above. It also brings up the question of the referent's identity, as Quarrie suggests. But most of all, it indicates a dramatic peak in the expression of self-division as, for instance, in passage (11) where the narrator who is orchestrating a represented scene by adopting an authorial role towards himself and others now suddenly comes to the realisation that this is actually his own persona and that he is telling his own story after all. By narrating his hypothetical visualisations in the third-person in examples (9) and (10) he had turned himself into a fictional character being narrated and at the most dramatic moment, the moment he comes to the memory of how he killed his wife, his consciousness abruptly shifts the reference to the first-person in example (11). The repetition of the first-person form (*He, I, I*...) has the effect of shouting that it is not a hypothetical 'he' who did these things but 'I, I' was the one who did them. The mention of the hand specifically triggers an association of what his hand performed years ago when he gave the medicine to his wife. The hectic pronominal variation then has a foregrounding effect and what is foregrounded is his agency in this murderous act. The unexpected switch from *he* to *I* in

example (12) also suggests Vander's emotional engagement with the specific memory and might even suggest his heightened annoyance at not hearing what Cass is saying.

Another significant impact of the transposition from *he* to *I* in the two selected passages is the pronounced unconscious quality that it brings to the narratorial process. If contrasted to examples (9) and (10) from the previous section where the pronominal transfer was deliberately imposed by the narrator who put a conscious effort in relocating the narration to an imaginary space, now in passages (11) and (12) he traverses the two deictic realms almost involuntarily and without awareness or intentional control. Even though the narrator has developed sufficient distance from the imaginary frieze scene by portraying himself in the third-person, in the midst of this distanced perspective he merges with his own first-person self again and the two narrative positions that he has been occupying simply converge into one. The intense perceptual experience in the second two extracts seems to predispose this transference from one pronominal position to another.

More technically speaking, the pronoun shift that is observed in examples (9) and (10) is basically an alternation between the narrator's first-person present tense discourse and his third-person hypothetical visualisations. These two extracts have demonstrated a narrative pattern in which the speakers consciously evoke a mental representation of a hypothetical scene in which they see themselves as third-person entities playing on stage. The switch to the third-person pronoun is initially flagged by introductory imperative phrases like *Let me try to explain* or *Let us take the hypothetical case* and the subsequent flow of the third-person narration is occasionally interrupted by orienting phrases like *I*

grant you, As I say et al. Therefore, there is a clear-cut boundary between the first-person narrator's consciousness, which is easily detectable in narratorial comments that firmly hold the grip in the sphere of direct *I*-oriented discourse, and the third-person hero's consciousness whose internal viewpoint is elicited by means of free indirect style. The first-person speaker seems to have control over the third-person parts in the sense that he is the arranger of the visualisation. The third-person referential expressions maintain this narrative position by asserting his point of view. Nevertheless, the cognitive split is not simply a case of total decompression featuring a speaker who presents himself as a participant in a distant scene that he observes externally but goes one step further with him plunging into the consciousness of the hypothesised participants and revealing their internal state of mind. The most essential difference between the two examples analysed resides in the fact that in passage (9) the third-person parts attempt to portray mainly Cass's assumed internal perspective, whereas passage (10) gives access to the consciousness of the speaker's old self.

In comparison, passages (11) and (12) demonstrate a narrative pattern of pronoun change while preserving the past-tense mode of the narration. The stylistic effect of this peculiar case of pronominal alternation is assessed as carrying a dramatic tone and having a strong emotive quality. Moreover, while examples (9) and (10) depict a narrator who consciously evokes hypothetical scenes in his mind by emphasising his cognitive act of fantasising, passages (11) and (12) reveal a narrative dynamics in which the narrator, deeply plunged into the represented scene, unconsciously returns to the first-person mode. The first-person narrator hiding behind the omniscient speaker suddenly uncovers his true

identity. This is also the point in the narrative where the two conflated voices break up and exhibit the divided self in a most conspicuous manner.

5.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored how the linguistic phenomenon of referring to oneself in the third-person is used by Banville to create inner division. The choice of pronominal references for self-identification is the most direct expression of a person's sense of selfhood. Thus, designating one's own self with a third-person pronoun invariably exhibits non-unitary selfhood. This makes the practice of third-person self-referencing especially well-suited for a linguistic presentation of the 'divided self' and, as we have seen, Banville has utilised it in a very efficient way.

I began this chapter with the premise that I am going to explore *I* to *he* switches from the standpoint of narrative viewpoint and consciousness presentation because a consciousness presentation analysis can display different narrative interactions between pronouns and referents, which can show a variety of stylistic nuances related to the textual manifestation of the 'divided self'. As has been shown throughout this chapter, pronominal alternations are not only a device for decompressing a character's identity into various conflicting aspects of selfhood but also a device for orchestrating complex narrative perspectives by means of which personality disintegration can be manifested in an exceptional and extraordinary way.

Thus, the third-person references in relation to another manifestation of the self, be it the child self or an imaginary double, have more significance than merely to create a juxtaposition between two selves. The speakers' attempt to

transfer themselves into these entities, to focalise through their eyes reveals their need to connect with these selves and to establish an interpersonal communication with them. It is through the mapping of pronoun shifts onto shifts in point of view that the effect of splitting is enhanced. The double pronominal system and the referential instability that it entails thereby embodies the idea of psychological displacement and identity discontinuity.

As regards the use of third-person episodes in Banville's novels, they disrupt the narrative continuity in a way that impacts the unified consciousness of the protagonist. The change of the first-person speaker's role of an autobiographer recounting his own story into an inventor of a fictional version of parts of that story can be read as an attempt of the narrator to gain control over that past. But the speaker's remodelling of the fictional reality that he is narrating, suggested by the hypothetical implications of the third-person references, also undermines his own ontological unity. Consequently, the self-division that so strongly characterises Banville's characters and constitutes the major topic of Banville's fiction is made particularly salient through the consistent use of pronoun alternations.

Chapter 6

Overall Conclusion

This thesis set out to investigate the presentation of the 'divided self' in John Banville's novels from a stylistic and narratological perspective and to analyse what linguistic mechanisms Banville exploits to express this fictional phenomenon. Through identifying consistently employed linguistic structures and patterns, I have outlined the devices that assert the overall effect of division. Although Banville's works contain a good number of passages or sentences that explicitly express his protagonists' feelings of inner splitting, mental unease or identity crises, his style of writing also enacts the theme of division in the language through certain linguistic techniques that I have researched herein. In other words, it has not been my aim to illustrate the overt statements of splitting that occur on the very surface level of the texts but to explore the more profound and more deeply-embedded narrative mechanisms that play a considerably more important role for achieving the stylistic effect of the 'divided self'.

The three analytical chapters, namely chapters 3–5, have shown the diverse ways in which division is embodied in the language of the novels. In chapter 3 I have elucidated how the use of peculiar sensory modality patterns that have co-referential subject and object pronouns creates an unintegrated sense of self. The feeling of dissociation stems from the fact that such patterns invariably split the narrative action on two planes, that of perception and participation, with one version of the self perceiving what another version of the same self is performing. Where visual modality is used, the actions are framed

as pictures that are being observed. In cases when other modality is employed, the actions appear framed as reflected through other senses. All this creates a sense of a non-unified self. Moreover, since visual modality patterns are dominant in the novels, they are often encountered with additional linguistic markers of hypotheticity. My findings show that the specific focalisation splits that are identified can function at different narrative levels and the splits do not manifest as only 'a present self observing past self' but also as 'a past self observing past self' and 'a present self observing present self'. These distinctions are significant because they demonstrate not only different interactions between perspectives but also different degrees of splitting. Focalisation splits that occur on the same temporal level are more unsettling in that they enact a split in one and the same ontological manifestation of the protagonist.

The 'divided self' effect, as revealed in chapter 4, is also encoded in the tense system of the novels. The use of the present tense when resurrecting past events gives rise at certain points to potential ambiguities between the viewpoint of the past self and the viewpoint of the present self. The scenes are so vividly recollected that the narrator seems to be re-experiencing the events from his current perspective. Linguistically, this is expressed by spatio-temporal markers that refer to the past scene but that are framed in the discourse present of the narrating self. In this way, the realms of the past and the present interpenetrate each other and allow the *I* to freely traverse them. The past becomes present, a perpetual present in which the protagonist reflects upon the spontaneous impressions that come up.

A different manifestation of the intermingling of the past with the present is achieved through consistent switches between free indirect style and narrator's discourse in which the narrator questions or negates the picture of the past that has just been recreated through the experiential discourse of the past self. The impression thereby created is that no matter how much the narrator tries to incarnate his young self again, he fails to fully achieve this. In some instances, in the midst of an internally focalised account, the narrator suddenly declares the absence of that self as that self is lost from view. In other instances, he tries to resurrect the background of the past scenes but this background keeps changing. So not only are the personages and actions in the foreground of these scenes unstable but so are the details in the background. Thus, the spatio-temporal setting is so strongly shaken that, try as they will, the protagonists cannot construct a stable sense of self. The spatio-temporal instability ultimately corresponds with the instability of the self.

The pronoun alternations in the novels, dealt with in chapter 5, further undermine the self by creating an even more pronounced ontological split that presents the self as other. The third-person forms can either occur over a short stretch of text mainly in reference to a previous designation of the self as a third-person entity, e.g. a child self or an imaginary double, or can affect the mode of narration more widely. Even when alternations occur on a smaller-scale to refer to that other self, however, the events are not presented through a single unified narrative viewpoint but there is a sense of multiplicity in the portrayal of consciousness due to the interactive connections between the different manifestations of the self. In regard to the larger-scale alternations that concern the overall mode of narration, apart from disrupting the continuity of the

narrative by introducing another pronominal framework, they also disrupt the role of the narrator as an individual recounting his own story by turning him into an inventor rewriting parts of that story. Thus, the pronoun alternations break not only the unity of the narrative but also the unity of the self.

From a literary perspective, the detailed and systematic investigation of linguistic mechanisms of splitting has allowed me to delve deeper into the presentation of the 'divided self' in Banville's novels. Compared to previous critical studies of Banville that have dealt with the question of division mainly by exploring the literary, psychoanalytic and philosophical aspects of it, my examination reveals how this division is constructed by linguistic means. Where any linguistic features are mentioned in other studies, they have not been a central focus of the research. Thus, my study gives a different perspective on Banville by providing strong textual evidence of the linguistic basis underlying the effect of division. From a narratological perspective, my research carries crucial implications for the study of fictional consciousness in first-person memory narratives as it elucidates the subtler interactions between the narrative manifestations of the *I*, namely narrating self and experiencing self, and the ontological manifestations of this same individual, that of present self and past self.

In the context of retrospective narration, the ontological split between current self and past self, as I have reiterated throughout this thesis, does not directly correspond to the narratological concepts of narrating self and experiencing self, i.e. the two conceptual entities present self and narrating self should not be regarded as identical, just like the entity past self should not be automatically equated with experiencing self. This is especially evident in

complex texts like Banville's where the arrangement of the perspectives of the different manifestations of the self is so elaborate that when we look at the consciousness presentation more closely, we find a four-way split rather than the conventional two-way split between narrating and experiencing self.

The reason for this is that the cognitive split between present self and past self and the narratological split between narrating self and experiencing self seem to cross-link and form various embodiments of these narrative entities. For instance, the consciousness of the present self, apart from being typically represented by the discourse of the narrating self, has also been shown to exhibit highly experiential language at times, which imposes a distinction between a 'narrating present self' and an 'experiencing present self'. Likewise, the past self can be either presented in the narrative by means of internal focalisation or recounted through the perspective of the narrating self, which draws a distinction between 'internally represented past self' and 'externally represented past self'.

To put it in another way, the narrating self's discourse can refer to both the present self and the past self as it may relate to the protagonist's current experiences or distant past. More importantly, when an experiential point of view is adopted, it is not always aligned with the consciousness of the young self as sometimes it is the adult self who is in the centre of this subjectively rendered experience. As noted throughout the above analytical chapters, this is exhibited in Banville's texts either as present-self-oriented free indirect style when the present self renders his recent experiences by adopting free indirect style, or the spontaneous present-tense ruminative monologues of the adult narrator which are replete with markers of subjectivity. The traditional

narratological distinction between internal focalisation and external focalisation does not fully capture these subtle distinctions.

In Banville, the complexities of viewpoint differentiation are further enhanced by the pictorial presentation of the past which provides a particularly suitable narrative medium for the interpenetration of perspectives. The visual nature of memory which takes the form of frieze scenes or tableau episodes, as evidenced with examples in all three analytical chapters, is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of Banville's fiction. In this narrative situation the speaker recalls the past by watching it unfold in his mind's eye and the process of observation may be accompanied by ruminations on the observed. The intense visualisations of the past scenes which the speaker is strongly involved in observing often make the voice of the narrating self more experiential. Moreover, the resurrection of the past in the speaker's mind when the past is being projected in front of him at the current moment means that the speaker is re-experiencing it. This re-experience produces a very specific type of consciousness presentation where we find a present self superimposing his/her subjectivity on the past self. Thus, the discourse of the present self is often combined with deictic features that relate to the past scene or, more precisely, the scene that is being evoked. The stylistic effect of this is that the current speaker experiences the past moment anew but this time through his adult consciousness.

Another frequently employed technique by Banville which also involves a conflation of perspectives is when the speaker projects his own viewpoint onto that of others. This was observed in a number of examples throughout the analytical chapters as, for instance, in the speaker hypothetically observing

himself through other people's eyes, or through the eyes of an imaginary double, or even through Cass's perspective in the sustained third-person episodes. So even when the narrators try to evoke others in the narratives, they end up evoking their own selves only, which generates a split view of the self and underscores the self-reflexive quality of the narratives.

Thus, retrospective novels often present a complex fusion of voices and it is not uncommon to find different perspectives interpenetrating each other. This multiplicity in the presentation of consciousness is due to the sophisticated nature of the act of retrospection which involves a few processes running simultaneously such as recollection of memories, reliving of the old events, contemplation on the past and reevaluation of the present. The co-occurrence of these cognitive processes allows the various perspectives to intermingle in the same paragraph or even in the same sentence. The portrayal of consciousness in first-person texts is additionally complicated in self-reflexive texts like Banville's that also frame the events as visions. The innovations brought about by these novels point to the need of further development of the study of first-person narratives.

Overall, the more subtle viewpoint differentiation allows for a more profound exploration of the divided self because the effect of division is not created only by the splitting of the self into different conceptual entities but by the specific ways these different entities interact and interrelate with each other in the texts. It is through the analysis of these intricacies of consciousness presentation that we can explain how the effect of division is created in Banville's novels. This thesis therefore makes an original contribution both to

the study of Banville, a major contemporary writer, and to the study of first-person narratives.

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