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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this modest work to my dear parents, my father and my mother, also my mother's family Naamaoui and my Father's family Touahir for their patience, encouragements and continuous help during the years of the study.

This work is also dedicated to all my sisters, especially my sweet sister Hadjer. Besides, I dedicate this work to my nephews : Amina, Zizou Abdou, Noor , Ghano and yassine.

To all my brothers especially my oldest brother Azzedine may Allah bless him.

In addition, I dedicate this work to my lovely friends, especially my sweet Sabiha, and to anyone who knows Amina loves her.

Also, It is an honour to me to dedicate this humble work to all my teachers from primary school till university.

This work is also dedicated to my special someone.

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to analyze the use of symbolism in Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Fall of the House of Usher*. It aims to cast light on the motives behind the use of such figure of speech in this story.

This work is divided into four chapters. The First Chapter presents a general survey of the main figures of speech. The Second Chapter embodies theoretical background about symbolism and its major theories such as; Sigmund Freud, De Saussure and Whitehead theories of symbolism. The Third Chapter contains the literary analysis of the corpus which we are going to spot light on, studying the Romantic and the gothic styles. The Fourth Chapter deals with some prominent illustrations and the analysis of the symbols in the story.

Key words: Symbolism, Symbol, Meaning, Figures of speech.

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List of Abberviations

- (FB): The Freudian Broad
- (FHU): The Fall of the House of Usher
- (FN): The Freudian Narrow

General Introduction

General Introduction

Literature can be defined as the mirror of society. It tries to depict an image of its society in order to show certain phenomena or to find out a solution to a specific dilemma.

The author of any literary work devotes his language and style to deliver his own messages; each author has his specific way to convey his message that is why he uses different figures of speech such as simile, metaphor, symbolism, irony...etc. These distinct from one to another, each one has its own use and the author has motives behind using them in the literary works, such as creating some pleasure in language far from the ordinary rules of language.

Edgar Allan Poe is one of the great American writers; he overuses symbolism almost in all his works such as *The Tell Tell Heart*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *Black Cat*...etc.

The present study attempts to identify and explore the use of symbolism in Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1939). The latter, is among Poe's masterpieces; it is a romantic story which possesses the quintessential- features of the gothic tale: a haunted house, dreary landscape, mysterious sickness and double personality (Bradshaw,1997).

Stylistic devices play an important role in achieving different meanings in the literary works, and symbolism is the most necessary device, which can help the reader not just to comprehend the story, but also to leave the story itself as he/she is one of its characters, and this motivates us more to select this sample. Symbolism is among the earliest devices and it is the most important one; that is why we have selected it to be the focus of this study. One of the important motives behind choosing particularly this device is that when we were undergraduates, symbolism was something vague and difficult to understand. Thus, by doing this research we will try to help EFL students to understand symbolism in literature.

Symbolism is among the devices which were used in the very old works, as the works of Shakespeare and Chaucer. It is that style of literary writing that is characterized by using symbols whether for the sake of art and decorating the work or for any other purpose (political, social...etc), some writers using symbols to criticize society indirectly, safely and away from any troubles that may fall upon the writer (ibid.).

A symbol may appear in a work of literature in a number of different ways to suggest a number of different things. Most commonly, a symbol will present itself in the form of: 1) a word, 2) a figure of speech, 3) an event, 4) the total action, or 5) a character (Nair,2010).

Understanding symbolism can be difficult because while some writers use very simple imagery to put forward their views, there are authors, playwrights and poets who believe in using multiple symbols and several contexts to play on the symbols they have used. Symbolism is what makes prose and poetry more enchanting to read (ibid.). It gives us a reason to find insights into the writer's way of thinking and to try to understand why a writer would put forward a theory the way s/he has (ibid.). It is the writer's way of playing games with the Reader (ibid.).

Since *The Fall of the House of Usher* (FHU) is full of symbols, this makes it the best work to investigate (ibid.). This facilitates to us the task to achieve the goal behind this study, hoping to make learners knowledgeable and aware of using symbols in literary works.

This study, indeed, aims at providing a set of the main theories of symbolism. Also, it attempts to investigate the use of the symbols in *The Fall of the House of Usher* (FHU).

It often happens that as beginners, when we read literature, and namely symbolism as an authentic and artistic dress for literary works, it is rare that we realize or recognize that this character or that action is symbolizing something else that the reader is expected to understand beyond the symbol itself. By recognizing symbols, a student of literature or any reader may show and enjoy his talent and thus to understand the aim of literary writings by using symbolism in literature.

The major objective behind this work is to shed light on symbolism and to draw the reader's attention to the importance of symbolism in achieving the meaning of any literary text; in addition, this study aims at helping the student to fully understand and give the exact interpretation of literary texts through clarifying symbolism, and at making the task recognizing symbols in the literary works easier.

The present work also aims at showing the importance of this figure of speech which helps the reader to interpret the exact meaning of the literary text. Besides, this study aims not only to define symbolism, but also to give definitions of the major stylistic devices in literature.

A reader of *The Fall of the House of Usher* (FHU) will observe the special use of symbolism in this story. The author appears to have motives behind the use of this device. Hence, one may ask the following questions:

- How is symbolism used in *The Fall of the House of Usher* (FHU)?

- What are the writer's motives behind the use of symbolism?

To answer these questions, some number of hypotheses are put forward:

- ✓ The use of symbolism in the novel seems more functional than just decorative.
- ✓ Characters, objects, and actions in the short story are used symbolically; this means that they are not meant themselves, but there is a hidden meaning beyond these words.

The method which is followed in this work is descriptive and analytic, illustrating symbolism and in addition investigating and discussing its use in the short story.

In order to make this dissertation conventional and well organized, the framework is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is a general survey on the most used stylistic devices in literature such as simile, metaphor, irony and others. The second chapter focuses on our interest, symbolism, providing a set of theories: Whitehead (1927), Freud (2003) and De Saussure (2009). The third chapter is concerned with the literary analysis of the story. The fourth chapter is a practical section, the symbols in the story are discussed finding their various interpretation.

At last, we hope that we would be able to make this device comprehensible for EFL learners. We also hope that this study would help students of English in their study in literature, especially those who are interested in literary devices, particularly symbolism.

Chapter One

Figurative Language: A General Survey

Chapter one

Figurative Language: A General Survey

Introduction

Figures of speech are essential to meaningful and rich communication via language (Stanly, 2007). Without using stylistic devices, language seems boring and nonsense. Although the ancient Greeks and Romans knew and named nearly two hundred and fifty different figures of speech, fewer than twenty percent of these are recognized today (ibid.). This chapter tries to introduce a general survey of various figures of speech.

1. Types of Figures of Speech

Kennedy (1991: 584) states that “a figure of speech may be said to occur whenever a speaker or writer, for the sake of freshness or emphasis, departs from the usual denotations of words.” Figures of speech are not devices to state what is demonstrably untrue. Indeed they often state truths that more literal language cannot communicate; they call attention to such truths; they lend them emphasis. i.e., the figures of speech can add a meaning to the language, and can let the reader sail in the text; it lets the reader imagine and reveal what is the meaning beyond such words (Kennedy, 1991).

There are many figures of speech; every individual figure of speech has its own unique usage, its own way of imparting emphasis and exactness. Little (1985: 164-166) divides figures of speech into three classifications, which are respectively based on comparisons, associations, and other figure of speech. Meanwhile, Siswantoro (2002: 24-44) divides figures of speech into nine kinds: simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, hyperbola, antithesis, synecdoche, paradox and symbol.

1.1 Simile

Simile comes from the Latin word *similes*. A simile makes an imaginative comparison for purposes of explanation, allusion, or ornament, introduced by a word such as "like", "as", or "such" (Scott, 1983). It is a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, in such way as to clarify and enhance an image. It is an explicit comparison (Cuddon, 1998).

Simile is among the oldest and most widely recognized figure in rhetorical theory. Many analysts have defined simile as a metaphor, but it is an explicit metaphor using the element of comparison "as" or "like".

Examples

- His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry...and the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.
- She walks like an angel.
- All flesh is like grass.

1.2 Metaphor

Metaphor is an implied comparison between two objects without using "as" or "like" (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Lakoff and Johnson define metaphor as a comparison that shows how two things that are not alike in most ways are similar in another important way. It is a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another. There is always a comparison but it is implicit whereas in simile it is explicit (Cuddon, 1998).

Bowdle and Gentner (2001) state that in metaphor there are two essential elements: *the topic* and the *vehicle*. The topic represents the subject, whereas the vehicle is the metaphorical term itself, e.g. time is a river. Here the time is the subject (the topic) and a river is the metaphorical term (the vehicle). When we want to interpret the meaning of the metaphor in any work in a very simple way, we try to put the metaphor as it is simile, then recognize the topic and the vehicle if they are alike in ways that are relevant in context.

Examples

- The broad sun is sinking down in its tranquility.
- This Woman is a parrot.

In the first sentence, there are two unlike objects that are implicitly compared; they are the broad sun and the tranquility.

In the second example, the metaphor is used to express the fact that the woman speaks a lot just as a parrot.

1.3 Personification

The point of the personification is to express the abstract ideas to inanimate objects, or aspects of nature are described as if they were human (Cuddon, 1998). This means that an idea or a thing (nature and animals) is given human attributes or feeling or is spoken of as if it were alive (Pickering and Hoepfer, 1981). Thus, there is impersonation or embodiment to do something like human.

Examples

- My teddy bear gave me a hug.
- The waves beside them danced.
- Justice is blind.

In the three sentences above, human qualities are given to nonhuman things.

1.4 Apostrophe

Comes from Greek, it means a turning away (Cuddon, 1998). Apostrophe is a figure of speech in which someone absent or dead or something nonhuman is addressed as if it were alive and present (ibid.). Scott (1983) considers it as a rhetorical figure in which the writer or the poet turned away from the rest of the audience to address one person is absent.

Examples

- "Oh! Stars and clouds and winds, ye are all about to mock me; if ye really pity me, crush sensation and memory; let me become as nought; but if not, depart, depart, and leave me in darkness." From *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelly.

- "Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee! I have thee not, and yet I see thee still." From *Macbeth* by Shakespeare.

- "Blue Moon, you saw me standing alone

1.5 Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a figure of speech contains that an exaggeration for emphasis; it is used as a means of emphasizing the truth of a statement (Cuddon, 1998). Wren and Martin (1981: 941) state that "in hyperbole a statement is made emphatic by overstatement". This means that there is an exaggeration behind the use of some words.

Examples

- "A soiled baby, with a neglected nose, cannot be conscientiously regarded as a thing of beauty." (Mark Twain)

- "Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse." (Jonathan Swift, *A Tale of a Tub*, 1704)

- "I am just going outside and may be some time."

(Captain Lawrence Oates, Antarctic explorer, before walking out into a blizzard to face certain death, 1912)

1.6 Understatement

The opposite of hyperbole; the deliberate presentation of something as being much less important, valuable than it really is (Lüders, 2010).

Examples

- "A soiled baby, with a neglected nose, cannot be conscientiously regarded as a thing of beauty."

- "Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse."

1.7 Onomatopoeia

Comes from Greek "name-making", the formation and use of the words to imitate sounds (Cuddon, 1998). It is a figure of speech in which the sound reflects the sense (ibid.).

Examples

- The words: beep, whirr, click, whoosh, swish, zap, zing, ping, clang, bong, hum, boom, munch, gobble, crunch, pow, smash, wham, quack, meow, oink, and tweet.

- The cuckoo whizzed past the buzzing bees.

- Dong, crackle, moo, pop, whizz, whoosb, zoom.

1.8 Antithesis

It is one of the figure of speech in which there are contrasting ideas sharpened by the use of opposite or noticeably different meanings (Cuddon, 1998). Also, antithesis is a direct contrast in which two sets of figures are set in opposition to one another (Bradshaw, 1997).

Examples

- "Everybody doesn't like something, but nobody doesn't like Sara Lee." (advertising slogan)

- "We notice things that don't work. We don't notice things that do. We notice computers, we don't notice pennies. We notice e-book readers, we don't notice books."

(Douglas Adams, *The Salmon of Doubt: Hitchhiking the Galaxy One Last Time*. Macmillan, 2002)

- "We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools."

(Martin Luther King, Jr., speech at St. Louis, 1964)

1.9 Synecdoche

Synecdoche is one of the stylistic devices in which the parts stand for the whole, and thus something else is understood within the thing mentioned (Cuddon, 1998). Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which the part stands for the whole or the whole for the part (Bradshaw, 1997).

Examples

- The word "bread" can be used to represent food in general or money (e.g. he is the breadwinner; music is my bread and butter).

- The "pentagon" can refer to a few decision-making generals.

- "Capitol Hill" refers to both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives.

1.10 Paradox

Paradox is a statement that seems to be self-contradictory, or opposed to common sense. On closer examination it mostly reveals some truth (Lüders, 2010). Originally, a paradox was merely a view which contradicted any accepted opinion (Cudden, 1998).

Examples

- It was the best mistake he ever made (he learned a lot from this error).

- Good fences make good neighbors (fences *do* separate people, but they help people get along by making boundaries clear).

1.11 Metonymy

Metonymy is a figure of speech that uses a concept closely related to the thing actually meant (Bradshaw, 1997). The substitution makes the analogy more vivid and meaningful. Kennedy (1991: 595) cites that "metonymy; the name of a thing is substituted for that of another closely associated with it".

Examples

- "The stage" for the theatrical profession.

- "The crown" for the monarchy.
- "The bench" for the judiciary.

1.12 Irony

Irony is saying the opposite of what you actually mean (Cuddon, 1998). Sarcasm is a strong form of verbal irony used to hurt someone through mockery or disapproval (Lüders, 2010). Shaw (1972: 208) states that irony is “a figure of speech in which the literal (denotative) meaning of a word or statement is the opposite of that intended”

Examples

- Teacher: "you are the best class I have ever had". Actual meaning: "the worst class".
- A: "you are my best friend I love you so much". The intended meaning is the opposite "I hate you".
- But every Englishman is born with a certain miraculous power that makes him master of the world. As the great champion of freedom and national independence he conquers and annexes half the world and calls it Colonization. (*Bernard Shaw*)

1.13 Oxymoron

A figure of speech which combines incongruous and apparently contradictory words and meanings for a special effect (Cuddon, 1998). It is a common device, closely related to antithesis and paradox. In this device, there is a pair of opposite or contradictory terms that are used together for emphasis (ibid.).

Examples

- Sweet sorrow
- A hateful love.
- Wise fool.
- "With careful carelessness" (Dickens)
- "The street damaged by improvements" (O. Henry)

1.14 Symbol

A symbol is something concrete like a person, object, image, word or event that stands something abstract or invisible (Lüders, 2010). Perrine (1974: 628) states, “A symbol may be defined as something that means more than what it is”.

Examples

- The cross is the symbol of Christianity.
- The dove symbolizes peace.
- The black colour is a symbol of sadness.

Conclusion

Amongst other stylistic devices, these are the most used in narratology. The literary man uses them not just to convey the reader the intended message, but also to decorate language and make it amusing to add a special taste to the language and make the reader feel the language. As it is explained, each device has its effect and use in a specific context. In the next chapter, there is a whole section about symbolism, providing the most known theories about it.

Chapter Two

The Notion of Symbolism and Its Major Theories

Chapter Two

The Notion of Symbolism and its major theories

Introduction

Symbolism in literature is one of the many tools that writers employ in order to generate not only interest in one's work but also to create another level of meaning (Nair, 2010). Symbolism is used in literature to give to the literary work meaning that goes beyond what is evident to the reader (ibid.). Symbolism helps in giving the piece of writing feeling and mood without the writer having to actually spell out the same.

Symbolism is no mere idle fancy or corrupt degeneration; it is inherent in the very texture of human life, language itself is a symbolism (ibid.). It is not necessary to have symbols that are easily recognizable or ones that are commonly used. They can be subtle symbolic representations used to hint at something without making it an obvious and overwhelming statement (ibid.).

Symbolism has seeped into the arts in such a way that it has become an integral part of most literary works and even general communication (Nair, 2010). Roses and images of hearts have become synonymous with love (ibid.). Different colours have come to symbolize different emotions; for example, purple for royalty, green for envy and red for jealousy. But before symbolism penetrated everyday language the way it has, it became a mainstay in the literary world (Whitehead, 1927).

3.1 Definition of Symbolism

The meaning "symbolism" has subsequently expanded to include a diversity of meanings. Many contemporary definitions reflect the mystique originally associated with symbols, and which prompted Whitehead (1927) to comment on the 'unstable mixture of attraction and repulsion' in our attitude towards symbolism (Whitehead, 1927: 7). However, the most frequent observation is that it is impossible to find a general, unifying definition.

According to etymology (the study of the meaning and the history of the word), a symbol literally means something that has been put together (Nair, 2010). The source of the word "symbol" is the Greek word *symbolleîn* (literally "to throw together"), referred originally to

each of the two corresponding pieces of small object which contracting parties broke between them and kept as proof of identity (Liddell and Scott, 1968). It refers to the idea of putting things together to contrast them and ultimately become a word that was used for comparison.

From the word symbol came the concept of symbolism where one object is used to refer to something else. So, when an author or a poet uses one object to refer to a completely different idea, then he or she is employing symbolism.

Freud (2003) said that the symbolism is the difference between the two, which is the broader term, what activity may properly be as "symbolic". But this picture of disorder should not lead us to agree too readily that there can be no general theory of symbolism. Instead, by considering the definitions of symbolism from two different perspectives in turn, the first an overview both of the scope of the subject matter and of the extent of the disorder, the second allowing a convergence on the real centres of controversy, we shall find ourselves on a journey which leads through the disorder towards a focus of inquiry (Petocz, 2003).

3.2 Types of Symbols

One of the tools most useful in interpreting art and literature is symbolism. There are two major types of symbolism we encounter in analyzing literature, dreams, or even our life experiences are: conventional and personal symbolism (Smily, 2010).

3.2.1 Conventional Symbols (Cultural or Universal)

This kind carries similar meanings can be understood or interpret by people with the same cultural background .i.e. are those symbols we encounter that have different interpretations depending on the cultural context. For example, the ankh, which in Egypt was a cross with an oval on top of it, was sacred to the mother goddess Isis. In Greece and Rome a similar symbol in which the oval had become a circle was used as a symbol for Aphrodite and Venus. The same symbol in the modern world is used to represent the female in biology (ibid.). Object may become symbols or signs throughout times and depending on individuals and group. Likely, both individuals and groups create new symbols when they are needed and let others die when they no longer have meaning. When a student has difficulty in Mathematics, for example, the mathematical symbols many become symbols of all the complexities or unwanted matters (ibid.).

3.2.2 Personal Symbols (Contextual or Private)

These are the symbols that are given symbolic significance by an author in context of particular literary work. i.e., are those that change from author to author or dreamer to dreamer; an interpretation of a dog in a dream may be different from that of my neighbor, especially if the interpretation of dogs is representing bad attitudes and my neighbor sees them as symbols of protection. Another example, a horse is used in some story to symbolize particular meaning that is meant, created by this writer. Though, a horse may differ in its meaning from work to another. These symbols often are not generally understood or known, and they can only be decoded from their usage in a specific text (Stefanie & Jarmila, 36).

It's obvious that, having made the distinction between the two types of symbols, it does not necessary mean that the writer should limit himself in using only one type (Amraoui & Chiekh Salah, 2009).

This depends on the writer's need and the context he is writing about. Hence; writers, in addition to creating their own symbols in context, they used cultural (or conventional symbols. This is due to the fact that they are influenced by cultural symbols and they, subconsciously, transmit them since they are part of literary diction (ibid.).

3.3 Theories of Symbolism

Different scholars and theorists emerged themselves in understanding and providing theories of symbolism such as North Whitehead, Ferdinand de Saussure, Sigmund Freud, Joseph Campbell, Paul Tillich and others constructing a set of theories of the symbol.¹

3.3.1 Ferdinand de Saussure's Vision on Symbolism

According to Saussure, there are two important elements in the symbolism system which govern the understanding signs and symbols and which are the *signified*, *signifier*, and *object* (Todorov, 1982). For de Saussure, the signified is the abstract concept in mind represented by signifier (which can be verbal or nonverbal). A signified is the sense made by the sign. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea (ibid.). A signifier is the visible or the literal form that represents the signified. These are the visible signs that were verbalized and brought to reality as the results of cognition process formed in our brain (ibid.). Also, for de Saussure symbols are on our daily life, we use them through connecting with people, then the symbols represent reality.¹ Saussure reinforces that symbols/ language are

general ideas that are separated from reality; however, symbols through language are a structured system that represents reality (ibid.).

3.3.2 Alfred North Whitehead's Vision on Symbolism

To Whitehead, there are two principal components of the symbolism process; the human mind is functioning symbolically when it encounter in his experience in life a set of components, beliefs, emotions, and usages, respecting other components of its experience (Whitehead, 1927).

The former set of these components are the "symbols". Then there is a transition from the symbol to the meaning that will be called "symbolic reference". The latter requires a ground founded on some community between the natures of symbol and meaning. But such a common element in the two natures does not in itself necessitate symbolic reference, nor does it decide which shall be symbol and which shall be meaning, nor does it secure that the symbolic reference shall be immune from producing errors and disasters for the percipient (ibid.). For instance, the dove usually symbolizes peace. Thus, the dove is the symbol, and peace is the symbolic reference. I will rely in this study on Whitehead's theory in analyzing the symbols in "*The Fall of the House of Usher*"

3.3.4 Sigmund Freud's Vision on Symbolism

Freud offers two essential theories; the FN and the FB theories of symbolism:

- ***FN Position***

In the (FN) position, the use of the term "symbol" carries similar meanings that can be understood or interpreted by people with the same cultural background; it is universal and sometimes it is an inherited code from the previous generation (Petocz, 2003). For example, the black colour represents sadness and the white colour represents happiness. We inherited that from our previous generation.

" The first , which may be referred to as the 'Freudian Narrow' position, restricts the use of the term "symbol" to a special technical sense, in which symbols are the elements of unconscious, universal,

¹ <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/homework-help-literature/126289-understanding-symbolism-in-literature-a-guide/>

phylogenetically inherited code" (Petocz, 2003: 24).

- **FB Position**

In the **(FB)** position, the term symbol is restricted to contextual use used in the literary work (Petocz, 2003). It is a particular use can differ from context to another. For instance, the horse is used to interpret multiple meanings; these meanings differ from one work to another. The horse may symbolize speed in one work, and may symbolize beauty in another.

" The second, may be referred to as 'Freudian Broad' (FB) position, is a much less restricted view, in which the term "symbol" usually refers to any unconsciously produced defensive substitute, while nevertheless retaining certain specifiable connections with conscious, non-defensive production" (Petocz, 2003:24).

When a symbol becomes identified with the deeper reality to which it refers, it becomes idolatrous as the "symbol is taken for reality". Here the symbol itself is substituted for the deeper meaning it intends to convey.¹ The unique nature of the symbol is that it gives access to deeper layers of reality which are otherwise inaccessible (ibid.).

Without symbolism, something essential is missing from language and art. Symbols allow authors to impart ideas above and beyond the literal level of the text. A symbol represents, or stands in place of, something else. Even letters and words themselves are symbols, because our brain turns those markings into thoughts and ideas (Nair, 2010).

Conclusion

Symbolism, as we have seen previously, is one of the stylistic devices that is often used in narratology to convey certain messages indirectly. It is described as a style in which objects, characters or actions stand for, and represent, notions, ideas and emotions (Langer, 1953). Such a style is used generally for two major things: decorative and functional (i.e. to change some matters in society). Besides, other concepts that related for this subject are provided for more understanding.

Chapter Three

A Critical Review of the Story

Chapter Three

Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*: A Critical Review

Introduction

The Romantic Period of English literature began in the late 18th century and lasted until approximately 1832 (High, 1986). Edgar Allan Poe exerted a major influence on American literature with his own works but also with his literary criticism (ibid.). Poe is best known for his horror fiction, but many readers also enjoy his clever detective stories. He was well known as a major American poet and published a good deal of literary criticism as well. "The fall of the house of usher" is one of Poe's most popular short stories. This chapter provides an analysis of Poe's masterpiece.

4.1 Romanticism in American Literature

The period 1828-1865 in American Literature is commonly identified as the Romantic Period in America, but may also be referred to as the American Renaissance or the Age of Transcendentalism (Borges, 2011). American literary Romanticism was derived mainly from the English Romantic poets, particularly Coleridge and Wordsworth, and from the German Romantic philosophy (Skipp, 1992). There are five principal Romantic themes in American literature (ibid.):

- Intuition (the truth of the heart) is more trustworthy than reason.
- To express deeply felt experience is more valuable than to elaborate universal principles.
- The individual is at the center of life and God is at the center of the individual.
- Nature is an array of physical symbols from which knowledge of the supernatural can be intuited.
- We should aspire to the ideal, to changing what is to what ought to be.

The writers of this period produced works of originality and excellence that helped shape the ideas, ideals, and literary aims of many American writers (Borges, 2011). Writers of the American Romantic Period include Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Wadsworth

Longfellow, Emily Dickinson, and Walt Whitman (ibid.). In general, Romantic literature can be characterized by its personal nature, its strong use of feeling, its abundant use of symbolism, and its exploration of nature and the supernatural (ibid.). In addition, the writings of the Romantics were considered invative based on their belief that literature should be spontaneous, imaginative, personal, and free (ibid.). The Romantic Period produced a wealth of authors including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Jane Austen, and Lord Byron. It was during the Romantic Period that Gothic literature was born. Traits of *Gothic literature* are dark and gloomy settings and characters and situations that are fantastic, grotesque, wild, savage, mysterious, and often melodramatic. Two of the most famous Gothic novelists are Anne Radcliffe and Mary Shelley (Borges, 2011).

4.2 The Gothic Style

A type of romance, it had a considerable influence on fiction and is much importance in the evolution of the ghost and horror story (Cuddon, 1998). It is a literary style popular during the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. This style usually portrays fantastic tales dealing with horror, despair, the grotesque and other "dark" subjects (Borges, 2011). Most Gothic novels are tales of mystery and horror, intended to chill the spine and curdle the blood (ibid.). They contain a strong element of the supernatural and have or most of the now topography, sites, props, presences and happenings (Cudden, 1998). Gothic literature was named for the apparent influence of the dark gothic architecture of the period on the genre (Borges, 2011). Also, many of these Gothic tales took places in such "gothic" surroundings, sometimes a dark and stormy castle as shown in Mary Wollston craft Shelly's *Frankenstein*, or Bram Stoker's infamous *Dracula* (ibid.). Other times, this story of darkness may occur in a more everyday setting, such as the quaint house where the man goes mad from the "beating" of his guilt in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*. In essence, these stories were romances, largely due to their love of the imaginary over the logical, and were told from many different point of view. This literature has given birth to many other forms, such as suspense, ghost stories, horror, mystery, and also Poe's detective stories (ibid.). Gothic literature was not so different from other genres in form as it was in content and its focus on the "weird" aspects of life (ibid.). This movement was begun to slowly open may people's eyes to the possible uses of the supernatural in literature (ibid.).

4.3 Edgar Allan Poe's Style

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49) is regarded as the greatest American teller of mystery and suspense tales in the 19th century (Collines, 1999). In his mysteries he invented the modern detective story (ibid.). In Poe's poems, like his tales, his characters are tortured by nameless fears and longings (ibid.). Poe is acclaimed as one of America's greatest writers, but in his own unhappy lifetime he knew little but failure (ibid.). Although he had little impact on poets immediately following him, the popularity he enjoyed in his day has endured (Skipp, 1992). He had a difficult life, beset by personal tragedy and alcohol problems (ibid.). He was one of the earliest writers to use the short story form and wrote many chilling horror stories in the romantic tradition (ibid.). He is also recognized to be the inventor of the detective story (Collines, 1999).

Long before Sigmund Freud mapped the “swamps” of the human psyche, Edgar Allan Poe roamed there, his tales and fables as odd and troubling as dreams (Collinse, 1999). It is curious that while most of us can remember vividly our first reading of *The Tell-Tale Heart* or *The Masque of the Red Death* —can remember the tale's plot and the fascination, and the frightening effect, we rarely reread these stories, perhaps from a fear that the satisfying terror of first reading would now be stale and flat, or from reluctance to submit to it again (ibid.). The image of Red Death removing his mask to mock the arrogant revelers is too potent a metaphor to need repeating; we got it the first time and have never forgotten it (ibid.). Nor can we ever recapture the effect of a first reading of “The Cask of Amontillado,” the horrid understanding dawning on us as we read; once known, the ending to which the whole thing is so cryptically pointed cannot surprise us again (ibid.). Yet today we return to Poe to admire the brilliance with which he marshals his effects (ibid.). The stories are shorter than we remembered, and decorated like plum cakes with symbols whose significance has been made familiar since Poe's time, and whose directness could make the stories seem obvious in retro-spect but does not. He continues to trouble us (Hitchcock, 1960). Ever since criticism on him began, it has been argued that many works by Edgar Allan Poe contain autobiographical elements. Indeed, the outlines of some of his short stories read like parts of his biography, and it seems that the main character in particular often shares characteristics or experiences with the author himself (ibid.). Therefore, much of the criticism that looks at autobiographical elements has focused on his short stories (ibid.). One of his poems, *The Raven*, published in 1845, rather than a short story that has extraordinarily strong autobiographical elements. It is not like many of his stories, bear resemblances to his life in general, but that there were a number of concrete events and influences on him at the time when

he wrote *The Raven* that can be found in the poem (ibid.). The evidence that supports my thesis comes from various sources, ranging from an examination of the poem itself and of related works of Poe's and their comparison to the author's biography to various secondary sources of criticism on the poet and his writings (Collines, 1999).

4.4 A General Literary Analysis of *The Fall of the House of Usher*

4.4.1 plot Summary

When the narrator arrives by horseback one autumn evening at the house of Usher, the sight of its bleak walls and desolate grounds fills him with gloom. He draws up his horse at the edge of a tarn, a small lake encircling the mansion and reflecting its forbidding image.

In a letter, the owner of the property, Roderick Usher, had begged the narrator to visit him for several weeks. Such a visit, he wrote, would be a form of therapy for Usher against a mental disorder afflicting him. Usher and the narrator had been close friends since childhood, although Usher was never one to confide his inmost thoughts to anyone. The narrator, therefore, does not know Usher as well as their close friendship would suggest. The Usher family has long been distinguished for its devotion to the arts and its dedication to charitable causes.

Looking up from the lake, the narrator-upon beholding the mansion and the grounds once again-perceives that an eerie atmosphere-" a pestilent, mystic vapor"-overhangs the scene. The ancient building is discolored. A tangled fungus covers the walls. The structure appears stable, however, even though individual stones of the masonry are crumbling.

After riding across a bridge to the front of the house, the narrator hands the reins of his horse to a waiting servant, enters the mansion, and walks through a gothic archway. A valet conducts him through a labyrinth of hallways with tapestries and coats of arms, then up staircases. On one staircase, he meets the family physician. Finally, he enters the chamber of Roderick Usher. It is a large room with a vaulted ceiling and dark draperies, as well as various books and musical instruments scattered about. Usher, lying on a sofa, rises and greets the narrator warmly. Then they sit down.

Usher, a delicately handsome man, is much altered in appearance since the last time the narrator saw him-so much so that the narrator hardly recognizes him. He is sickly pale; his silken hair has grown wildly about his face. He is nervous; agitated one moment and sullen the next,

speaking rapidly, then slowly like a drunkard or opium user. His illness, he tells the narrator, runs in the family.

"He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses," the narrator says. "The most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror."

Ushers says, "I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect- in terror. In this unnerved – in this pitiable condition – I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantasm, fear."

The gloomy mansion is in part responsible for his depressed state of mind. But what deeply disturbs him is the condition of his beloved sister, Madeline: long in declining health, she now appears to be dying. He is his only relative and, for many years, has been his only companion. Her death would leave him as the only survivor of the ancient Usher family. While Usher and the narrator converse, Madeline passes quickly through the distant end of the room and disappears. The sight of her fills the narrator with a sense of dread that he cannot explain. Physicians have been unable to identify the exact cause of her illness, but its symptoms were as follows: " A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affection of a partially cataleptical character." Although she had long managed to remain on her feet, that very evening- not long after the narrator arrives- she is confined to bed.

Over the next few days, the narrator does his best to cheer up his friend. They paint and read books. The narrator listens to Usher play his guitar. It becomes clear, however, that Usher remains locked in his prison of gloom. One of Usher's paintings depicts a long subterranean tunnel with a low ceiling and white walls. Although no torches line the walls, a ghastly light radiates from the scene.

While playing the guitar, he sometimes vocalizes improvised verses remarkable for their organization and clarity. One of them, "The Haunted Palace," is a ballad that tells of a stately, radiant palace through whose windows passersby could see spirits moving to the rhythms of a lute around a throne upon which a monarch sat. echoes of the sweet music passed through the pearl- and ruby- studded door of the palace, singing of the "wit and wisdom" of the king. But evil

invaded the palace, attacking the monarch and desolating the palace. Never again would morning dawn for him. Only discordant melodies would henceforth emanate from the door.

When the narrator discusses the meaning of the ballad with him, Usher speaks of the ability of the trees on the grounds and the fungus on the stones of the house to create, over time, a sinister atmosphere that shaped the destinies of the long line of Ushers.

The books he read focus on fanciful, mystical, or religious subjects- a subterranean voyage, palmistry, satyrs, a Dominican directory on the inquisition, and "the manual of a forgotten church."

One evening, after Usher informs the narrator that Madeline has died, he announces that he will preserve her corpse for two weeks in a vault in one of the walls of the building before its final burial. This unusual step will keep the corpse out of reach of her attending physician, who are curious about the malady that killed her. It will also provide a temporary resting place for the body while burial plans are decided.

The narrator assists Usher in lifting the body into the coffin and placing the coffin in the vault, situated beneath the part of the house containing the narrator's bedroom. In feudal days, the vault served as the keep of a dungeon and in later years as a storage place for gunpowder. The archway in front of the vault was covered with cooper, as was the huge iron door opening into the vault. After setting the coffin in place, they moved aside the lid to look one more time upon Madeline Usher. Noticing the very strong resemblance between her and Roderick usher, the narrator wonders whether Madeline and her brother were twins; Roderick affirms that they were and says that they shared certain feelings that others would find hard to comprehend. Before screwing down the lid of the coffin, the narrator notices that her illness left a "faint blush" on her breast and her face. Her lips were locked in lingering smile.

In the following days, Roderick Usher paces aimlessly and his complexion takes on an even paler hue. He speaks in a tremulous voice, as if he were experiencing terror. The narrator observes:

"There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage....and felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, with wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions."

About a week after Madeline was laid in the vault, the narrator is unable to sleep because of the nervousness that overcomes him – perhaps resulting from the gloomy surroundings. His body begins to shake. He hears "indefinite sounds," perhaps from a storm raging at that moment, and puts on his cloths and begins to walk around his chamber. After a few moments, he answers knock at his door. It is Usher carrying a lamp. He has the same cadaverous look except that "there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes." Usher looks about for a moment and says, "And you have not seen it?" then he throws open a window to the storm. A blast of wind rushes in, nearly knocking the man down. Outside, the narrator sees low clouds gusting into one another in the glow of an unearthly light from "faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion."

The narrator, protective of Usher, pulls him away from the window, telling him that the strange sights result from ordinary "electrical phenomena" or arise from the small lake on the property. To calm Usher, he seats him in a chair and reads from a romance: "The Mad Trist," by Sir Launcelot Canning. As the tale progresses, Usher listens carefully to every word of the story as the narrator comes to the part when Ethelred, the hero, breaks into the dwelling of a hermit by driving his spiked war club through the door. The sound of the cracking, splintering wood reverberates through the forest. At that moment, the narrator hears a similar sound that appears to be coming from some distant corner of the mansion. Perhaps, the storm rattled windows.

The narrator reads on:

Upon entering the hermit's dwelling, Ethelred encounters a dragon keeping guard over what turns out to be a palace of gold. On a wall is a shield inscribed with these words:

Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;

Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.

Ethelred slays the dragon.

The narrator a wild scream in the mansion, not unlike that which he imagines the dragon gave out in his dying moment. But the narrator maintains calm so as not to excite Usher. However, Usher turns his chair to the door. His lips tremble as if he is trying to say something. His head hangs on his chest. His body begins rocking.

The narrator reads on:

After slaying the dragon, Ethelred walks up to the shield. But before he can reach for it, it falls crashing to his feet. At that moment, the narrator hears a similar sound in the mansion. The

narrator jumps up and goes over to Usher out of concern for his reaction to the sound. But Usher continues to rock, his eyes fixed in an empty gaze. When he begins murmuring, the narrator places an ear in close to hear what he is saying. Usher speaks of hearing something for many minutes, hours, days. Then he says:

"I know tell you that. I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them – many, many days ago – yet I dared not – I dared not speak!"

Usher jumps to his feet and says, "Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"

The wind throws open the door and there stands Madeline Usher with blood on her burial garments. Then, giving out a low cry, she enters the room and, in the throes of her final death spasms, falls upon Roderick Usher. During the fall, he dies. The narrator flees the mansion. During his escape, he sees a blood red moon shining over the building. The mansion than collapses and the dark waters of the tarn swallow every last fragment of the house of Usher.¹

4.4.2 Type of the Work

The Fall of The House of Usher is a short story of gothic horror. It was first published in September 1839 in Burton's Gentleman's Magazine. In 1840 and 1845, Poe published it with other stories in *Tales of the Grotesque and of the Arabesque*.

4.4.3 Characterization of the story

4.4.3.1 Major characters

The Narrator: A friend of the master of the house of Usher. When he visits his friend, he witnesses terrifying events.

¹ <http://cummingstudyguides.net/Guides2/Usher.html>

"I know not how it was, but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit...I looked upon the scene before me – upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain – upon the bleak walls – upon the vacant eye – like windows..." (FHU: 11).

Roderick Usher: The master of the house. He suffers from a depressing malaise characterized by strange behavior.

"Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa upon which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality – of the constrained effort of the ennuyé man of the world". (FHU: 18)

Madeline Usher: Twin sister of Roderick. She also suffers from a strange illness. After apparently dying, she rises from her coffin.

"As he spoke the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread". (FHU: 23)

4.4.3.2 Minor Characters

The Servant: Domestic in the Usher household. He attends to the narrator's horse.

"Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall". (FHU: 17)

The Valet: Domestic in the Usher household who conducts the narrator to Roderick Usher's room.

"A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to

the studio of his master...the valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master". (FHU: 17).

The Physician: One of several doctors who treats Madeline Usher.

"On one of the staircases, I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. (FHU: 17)

4.4.4 Setting

The story begins at dusk on an autumn day in an earlier time, probably the 19th century. The place is forbidding mansion, covered by a fungus, is encircled by a small lake, called a tarn that resembles a moat. A bridge across the tarn provides access to the mansion.

4.4.5 Themes of the story

The central theme of *The Fall of the House of Usher* is terror that arises from the mysterious house. Dreadful, horrifying events result not from a single, uncomplicated circumstance (Cunnings, 2011).

"...and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror...to an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave."I shall perish," said he, "I must perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the event of the future, not in themselves, but in their results". (FHU: 21)

In Poe's story, *The Fall of the House of Usher* there are other themes; some of them are as follows:

- Theme of Evil

Evil has been at work in the house of Usher, befouling the residents of the mansion. Roderick Usher's illness is a constitutional and family evil, one for which he despaired to find a remedy. Usher himself later refers to this evil in stanza V of "The Haunted Palace", a ballad he

sings to the accompaniment of his guitar music. The palace in the ballad represents the house of usher.

"It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy – a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off". (FHU: 20 – 21)

- Theme of Isolation

Roderick and Madeline Usher seal themselves inside their mansion, cutting themselves off from friends, ideas, progress. They have become musty and mildewed, sick unto their souls for lack of contact with the outside world.

"He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin – to the severe and long-continued illness – indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution – of a tenderly beloved sister; his soul companion for long years – his last and only relative on earth."Her decease" he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." (FHU: 22)

-Theme of Madness and illness

Roger and Madeline suffers from mental illness which characterized by anxiety, depression, and other symptom of Madeline's illness. It is not an illness in itself but a symptom of an illness, such as schizophrenia, epilepsy, hysteria, alcoholism or a brain tumor. Apparently, Madeline is not dead when her brother and the narrator entomb her; instead, she is in a state of catalepsy. When she awakens from her trance, she breaks free of her confines, enter her brother's chamber, and falls on him. She and her brother then die together.

"The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physician...a settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed..."
(FHU: 23)

- Theme of Mystery

From the very beginning, the narrator realizes that he is entering a world of mystery when he crosses the tarn bridge. He observes, "what was it-I paused to think-what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the house of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble".

"I know not how it was, but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable...I looked the scene before me – upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain – upon the bleak walls – upon the vacant eye – like windows..." (FHU: 11)

- Theme of family

The story is about the Ushers family; which was the last race.

"...it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issues, and the consequent undeviating transmission, from sire to son, of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher" – an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the

peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion". (FHU: 15)

Conclusion

As conclusion, *The Fall of the House of Usher* is one of Poe's few stories that seem to elicit nearly as many critical interpretations as it has readers. As explained above this chapter provided analysis of the story. The next chapter will deal with the symbols in *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

Chapter Four

Corpus Analysis: The Use of Symbolism in
The Fall of the House of Usher

Chapter Four

Corpus Analysis: The Use of Symbolism in *The Fall of the House of Usher*

Introduction

The Fall of the House of Usher is one of Poe's most famous short stories. Moreover, analyzing this story provides a basis for understanding Poe's Gothicism and his literary theories. Poe's carefully makes every sentence in the story contribute to the overall effect, horror, accompanied by oppressing morbidity and anxious anticipation of terrifying events. So, here he uses symbolism as a contribution in drawing the image of terrifying house. This chapter will clarify the symbols in the story then, applying North whitehead theory.

4.1 Symbols in the story

Symbolism becomes apparent as the story progresses. At first, the reader thinks that the story is about the structure of the house as Poe describes its condition (Cummings, 2005). However, as the story continues still further, it becomes apparent that it is about Roderick Usher and the lament of the end of his family line (ibid.). It will end upon his death which is all too obviously imminent.

4.2 Symbolism in the Name 'Usher' as a character

The Fall of the House of Usher is full of symbols which serve both the plot and themes the flagrant symbols the name Usher; an usher is a door keeper. In this sense, Roderick Usher opens the door to frightening the world for the narrator. Roderick Usher is the last of the descendants of the Usher family. He has no children; therefore, no heirs to carry on the family name or bloodline. The structural "house of Usher" is old, decrepit and in disrepair. Roderick Usher is aged, infirm and about to die. He knows that when he dies, his family line dies with him. Hence, with applying Whitehead's theory, Usher is a symbol and the door keeper is the symbolic reference of Usher.

"Surely, man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the one being

before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times." (FHU: 19)

4.3 Symbolism in Objects

4.3.1 The Title

Symbolism in *The Fall of the House of Usher* begins with the title. At the end of the story, the house itself does indeed fall; in the beginning, however, Roderick Usher tells the narrator that once his chronically ill twin sister Madeline dies, it "would leave (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers."

".....So identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher" – an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion." (FHU: 15)

4.3.2 The Fungus – Ridden Mansion

In the story, the overuse of the word fungus which symbolize the Decline of the Usher family. So, the Fungus or Ridden mansion is a symbol, whereas the Decline of the Ushers family is the symbolic reference.

"Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts, and the utterly porous, and evidently decayed condition of the individual stones." (FHU: 16)

4.3.3 The Collapsing Mansion

Another symbol which is the collapsing mansion, it can be interpreted as the Fall of the Usher family. Poe used this symbol to describe the end of the Usher family.

"Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued – for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me."
(FHU: 45)

4.3.4 The "Vacant Eye – like" Windows of the Mansion

Besides, there is another symbol in the story, the vacant eye – like. The latter has many interpretations:

- The first, hollow, cadaverous eyes of Roderick Usher.
- Madeline Usher's cataleptic gaze.
- The vacuity of life in the Usher mansion.

So, we have three suggestion symbolic reference of the symbol "the vacant eye". In this case, the 'vacant eye – like' windows of the mansion is the symbol and the three interpretations is the symbolic reference. Poe used the vacant eye to describe the evil throughout the story.

"...I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down – but with a shudder even more thrilling than before – upon the re-modelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant-like windows." (FHU: 13)

4.3.5 The Tarn, a Small Lake Encircling the Mansion and Reflecting its Image:

This is another symbol in the story; it has three possible symbolic references:

- (1) Madeline as a twin of Roderick, reflecting his image and personality (Cummings, 2005).
- (2) The image of reality which Roderick and the narrator perceives; through the water of the tarn reflects details exactly, the image is upside down, leaving open the possibility that Roderick and the narrator see a false reality (ibid.).
- (3) The desire of the Ushers to isolate themselves from the outside world (ibid.).

"...or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression; and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down – but with a shudder even more thrilling than before – upon the re-

modelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows."

(FHU: 13)

4.3.6 The Bridge over the Tarn

Another symbol in *The Fall of the House of Usher*, is the bridge over the tarn which is the symbolic reference of the narrator as Roderick Usher's only link to the outside world. Poe uses this symbol to emphasize the need to contact the outside world (people) as the bridge in our life.

"....Which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn." (FHU: 16)

4.3.7 The Storm

The storm in this story symbolizes the turbulent emotions experienced by the characters. Hence, the motives of Poe's behind using the storm is to express the emotion we experienced in our life. The storm is the symbol, then the turbulent emotions is its symbolic reference.

"The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued – for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me." (FHU: 45)

4.3.8 The House of Usher

There is much symbolism associated with the house itself; the narrator describes the house at length in the beginning of the story. From the outside in, everything about it seems to be in a state of decline, disrepair or neglect, paralleling the steadily declining health of the occupants (Cummings, 2005). Perhaps the most telling image is the upside-down reflection of the house on the lake, indicating that everything about the place is wrong (ibid.). It is main symbol in (FHU), which refers to both the house and the family (ibid.). The author uses it to tell us about the Usher family. Thus, The House of Usher is a symbol and the Usher family is the symbolic reference.

"During the whole of dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher." (FHU: 11)

4.3.9 The Ghastly Images Inside the House

It symbolizes the madness of the house's inhabitants. Poe used the ghastly images to emphasize his gothic style. The ghastly image is the symbol and madness is its symbolic reference.

"...I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down – but with a shudder even more thrilling than before – upon the re-modelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems..." (FHU: 13).

4.3.10 The Fungi and Physical Deterioration of the House

Another symbol in the story, symbolizes the physical deterioration of Roderick and Madeline. The fungi and the physical deterioration of the house is the symbol, then the physical deterioration of Roderick and Madeline is the symbolic reference.

"Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts, and the utterly porous, and evidently decayed condition of the individual stones." (FHU: 16)

4.3.11 The Upside Down Reflection of the House in the Tarn

This symbolizes the upside down thinking of the Ushers. The bridge over the tarn symbolizes the narrator who serves as the only bridge to the outside world. Here we have the

symbol which is the upside down reflection of the house in the tarn, whereas the troubles of Usher's thoughts are the symbolic references.

"Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zig-zag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn." (FHU: 16)

4.3.12 The Collapsing of the House Straight Down into the Tarn

This symbolizes the linear fashion of the Usher's family tree and its ultimate collapse. Poe uses this symbol to describe the ultimate ending of Usher's family (Cummings, 2005). The collapse of the house is the symbol, and the collapse of the Usher's family is the symbolic reference.

"...there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters – and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of 'House of Usher'." (FHU: 46)

4.3.13 The Rank Atmosphere in *The Fall of the House of Usher*

This symbolizes the negative effect of being in the Usher's presence. The atmosphere is the symbol, and the negative effect in the Usher's presence is the symbolic reference.

"I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that around about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity – an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn in the form of an inelastic vapor or gas...." (FHU:15)

4.3.14 The Structural "House of Usher"

This symbolizes the family line or "House of Usher, because family lines of the nobility in England are referred to as 'Houses' (Cummings, 2005). The family line of the several kings and nobility of England were referred to as the "House of York" or the "House of Lancaster", etc (ibid.). Thus, the structure of the house of Usher is the symbol and the family line of nobility considered as the symbolic reference.

"What was it – I paused to think – what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. "
(FHU: 12).

4.3.15 The Painting and Poem

In the middle of the story, Roderick paints a picture of the inside view of the vault (Cummings, 2005). Later, he and the narrator place the supposedly dead Madeline in an almost identical real vault. In the same passage, there is a poem or a ballad called "the haunted palace". It describes a once-beautiful palace in once-green setting in which "evil things, in robes of sorrow/ assailed the monarch's high estate" (ibid.). The Usher Mansion immediately comes to mind, while the "robes of sorrow" are reminiscent of Madeline's burial robes (ibid.). Hence, they are the symbolic reference of the the burial robes of Madeline.

"From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrilling, because I shuddered knowing not why, from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words." (FHU: 25)

4.3.16 The Weather and Moon

In the final scene, a storm comes up, building along with the narrative; storms in literature have long been used to underscore climatic action (Cummings, 2005). Finally, as the house crumbles into the lake, there is a full, blood-red moon overhead, symbolic of bloodshed and death (ibid.). Thus, here the weather (storm) and then moon are symbols then blood and death are the symbolic reference.

"The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway...the radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken, as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction to the base." (FHU: 46)

At the story's end, Roderick dies and the "House of Usher" dies with him. As the narrator of the story rides away from the house, then the structure itself falls.

Conclusion

In this chapter we attempted to analyze Poe's use of several symbols in his short story *The Fall of the House of Usher*, such as the 'house', 'the fall' and 'the family Usher'. It should be stated that in this story every detail is on purpose. Edgar Allan Poe make use of such symbols in the story, to transmit his message.

General Conclusion

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All in all, it should be stated that Edgar Allan Poe possessed a talent in all his writings though he had a short life (Skipp, 1992). He owned a simple but effective style which is easy to be understood but not easy to be interpreted (ibid.).

The target, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, is one of Poe's masterpieces in which there is much madness and mind troubles; that is why it reflects the psychology of Edgar Allan Poe (ibid).

The present study has attempted to give an overall survey on symbolism theory. A is usually defined as an object, character or an action that suggest meanings, notions or emotions beyond what is expected at first time from its meaning or function (Huch & Brown, 1995).

The aim behind this work is to make EFL learners aware of the meanings of symbolism, and then mindful of the way of recognizing the interpretations of the symbols in any literary text.

Besides, this study has focused not only on the symbolism, but has also provided a general survey on the most common figures of speech in the English language.

The *Fall of the House of Usher* is full of stylistic devices such as simile, imagery and symbols expressed by Allan Poe. However, symbolism is the most prominent feature in his short story. It takes a special road in the story, and really makes it interesting. This device is expressed in different contexts; also it may suggest several interpretations by the reader. The prominent symbols in the story are the title itself, the name 'Usher', the house and its fall. All this symbols are used by the author to describe the characters, places, actions, and emotions.

The theory which is selected to be the sample to analyse the symbols of *The Fall of the House of Usher* is Whitehead's theory. The core of this study has demonstrated that recognizing the real interpretations of symbols exist in the literary work based on the analysis of story, and to what extent you understand symbolism.

Through the stylistic analysis of the corpus, we notice the frequent use of gothic and dark words in the story such as dull, dark, terrible, horror, depression, torture, terror, malady and gloomy.

The use of the first point of view in narrating the story is a strategy used by Poe to conduct the reader's interpretations into the writer's intention. That is to say Edgar Allan Poe used the narrator as the teller of the story to make the story seems real as if we lived those moments of fear with the narrator and Roderick Usher.

Also, the 'I' narrator in the (FHU) is a tool used to establish a relation with the reader. The writer may have difficulty if he wants to make a direct relation with the reader, i.e., without a narrator.

Thus, Poe uses the 'I' narrator to influence the reader. This prominent feature of Edgar Allan Poe's style, and as we have seen this is used for a purpose make the reader close to the writer or sympathizing with the reader.

As we have seen previously, and from the word symbol came the concept of symbolism where one object is used to refer to something else. So, when an author or a poet uses one object to refer to a completely different idea, then he or she is employing symbolism. Thus, symbolism is the most important device in literature, it has the decorative aim and the functional one.

Appendix

Chronological of Poe's Life and Time

-
- Edgar Poe was born on January 19, in Boston.
- 1809** **Thomas Jefferson** was President.
Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, in Kentucky.
Charles Darwin was born on February 12, in England.
-
- 1810** Edgar's parented separate. Elizabeth Poe takes the children.
1 year old
-
- 1811** Edgar's mother, Elizabeth dies.
2 years old Mr. and Mrs. John Allan adopted Edgar Poe.
-
- 1812** **The war of 1812** begun.
3 years old **Charles Dickens** was born on February 7, in England.
-
- 1813** **Lord Byron** wrote "**The Giaour**"
4 years old
-
- 1814** British forced burn **Washington D.C.** during the war of 1812.
5 years old **George Stephenson** designed the first flanged-wheel locomotive.
-
- Edgar Allan went to school in England.
- 1815** Pirates helped defeat the British at the **Battle of New Orleans**.
6 years old **Napolean** was defeated at Waterloo.
-
- 1816** **The year without a summer**.
7 years old
-
- 1817** **Henry David Thoreau** was born on July 12, in Massachusetts.
8 years old **Mississippi** became the 20th State of the U.S.A. on December 10
-

- 1818**
9 years old

Mary Shelley, 21, published "Frankenstein".
- 1819**
10 years old

John Polidori, 24, published "The Vampyre".
Herman Melville was born in NYC. He later wrote "Moby Dick" in 1851.
Walt Whitman was born on May 31, in Long Island.
Spain gave the territory of **Florida** to the United States.
- 1820**
11 years old

Edgar returned to the United States and continued his schooling.
Florence Nightingale was born on May 12, in Italy.
- 1821**
12 years old

Charles Baudelaire was born on April 9, in Paris.
Fyodor Dostoevsky was born on November 11, in Moscow.
- 1822**
13 years old

Louis Pasteur was born on December 27, in France.
- 1823**
14 years old

Edgar attended the academy of William Burke, succeeded in athletics.
- 1824**
15 years old

One of the most interesting **presidential elections** in U.S. history
- 1825**
16 years old

John Allan inherited a fortune when his uncle dies.
John Quincy Adams was President.
- 1826**
17 years old

Edgar attended the University of Virginia, want by "Edgar Poe".
James Fenimore Cooper, 37, wrote "The Last of the Mohicans".
- 1827**
18 years old

Poe dropped out of school because John Allan won't give him any money.
Poe wrote and printed his first book, "Tamerlane and other Poems".

Poe could 'not support himself so he joined the United States Army.

Ludwig Van Beethoven died.

Edgar Poe did well in the Army, attained rank of sergeant major.

1828 **Jules Verne** was born on February 8, in France.

19 years old **Leo Tolstoy** was born on September 9, in Russia.

Construction of the first U.S. railroad, the **B&O**, begun.

Mrs. Allan died, Edgar returned home.

1829 Poe and John Allan temporarily reconciled their differences.

20 years old Poe applied to West Point, John Allan sponsored him.

Andrew Jackson was President.

1830 **Emily Dickinson** was born on December 10, in Massachusetts.

21 years old

1831 Poe deliberately got kicked out of West Point.

22 years old

1832 Poe submitted a number of stories to magazines. They were rejected.

23 years old **Édouard Manet** was born on January 23, in France.

1833 Poe sanded a desperate letter to John Allan asking for help, and was ignored.

24 years old **Slavery was banned** in Great Britain.

John Allan died and left Edgar nothing in his will.

1834 **The Spanish Inquisition** ended.

25 years old **The Postage Stamp** was invented in Great Britain.

1835 Poe won a contest for "**The Manuscript Found in a Bottle**".

26 years old Because of the contest, Poe finally gets a job.

Mark Twain was born on November 30, in Missouri.

Edgar Poe married his cousin Virginia in May. She is 13.

1836
27 years old

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 33, published his first book, "Nature".

Battle of the Alamo.

1837
28 years old

Nathaniel Hawthorne, 33, published "Twice-Told Tales".

Charles Dickens, 25, begun writing "Oliver Twist".

1838
29 years old

Poe wrote "**Ligeia**".

1839
30 years old

Poe wrote "**The Fall of the House of Usher**".

"Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque", Poe's first volume of short stories, was published. He receives no money from the publisher.

Louis Daguerre invented the daguerreotype and photography was born.

1840
31 years old

French sculptor, **Auguste Rodin** was born on November 12, in Paris.

French painter, **Claude Monet** was born on November 14, in Paris.

1841
32 years old

Poe wrote "**The Murders in the Rue Morgue**".

1842
33 years old

Virginia Poe broke a blood-vessel while playing the piano.

1843
34 years old

Poe won a hundred dollar prize for "**The Gold Bug**".

1844
35 years old

Poe moved back to New York City.

Thousands were deceived by Poe's story, "**The Balloon Hoax**".

Poe writes "**The Purloined Letter**".

Poe wrote "**The Raven**".

1845
36 years old

Poe was working 14 hour days but still couldn't make a living.

Florida became the 27th State of the U.S.A. on March 3

Poe wrote "The Philosophy of Composition".

1846
37 years old

Poe sued another paper for libel and won. The suit was settled for \$225.00.

1847

Poe's wife, Virginia, died from tuberculosis on January 30.

38 years old

Thomas Edison was born on February 11, in Ohio.

Poe wrote "The Poetic Principle".

1848
39 years old

Karl Marx wrote "The Communist Manifesto".

The California Gold Rush begun.

June 30 - Poe left NYC and visited John Sartain in Philadelphia.

July 13 - Poe went to Richmond and stayed at the Swan Tavern Hotel.

Poe joined the "Sons of Temperance" in an effort to stop drinking.

1849

Poe lectures on "The Poetic Principle".

40 years old

Sept 27 - Poe left Richmond and goes back to Philadelphia.

Sept 30 - Poe apparently got on the wrong train and went to Baltimore.

Oct 3 – Poe was found half conscious and was taken to a hospital.

Edgar Allan Poe died on October 7, 1849.

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Résumé

Cette étude est une tentative pour analyser l'utilisation du Symbolisme dans le roman d'Edgar Allan Poe's La Chute de la maison Usher, (The Fall of the House of Usher). Elle vise à mettre en lumière les motivations de l'utilisation de cette figure de style dans ce roman.

Ce travail est divisé en quatre chapitres. Le premier chapitre présente un aperçu général des principales figures de style, en mettant l'accent sur le Symbolisme. Le deuxième chapitre montre les fondements théorique du Symbolismes et ses grandes théories comme celle de Sigmund Freud, De Saussure et théories Whitehead du Symbolise. Le troisième chapitre contient l'analyse littéraire du corpus, l'étude du romantique et les styles gothique. Le quatrième chapitre traite quelques illustrations et l'analyse du Symbolisme dans le récit.

Mots clés : symbolisme, symbole, le sens, figures de style.

المخلص

هذه الدراسة هي محاولة لتحليل استعمال الرمزية في قصة الكاتب الأمريكي إدغار آلان بو (*The Fall of the House of Usher*) (إنهيار بيت أشر). وتهدف الى تسليط الضوء على دوافع الكاتب وراء استعمال هذه الظاهرة اللغوية في القصة القصيرة.

هذا البحث مقسم إلى أربعة فصول: الفصل الأول يقدم بعض الآراء و النظريات حول الصور البلاغية و تعتبر الرمزية و الهي هي محور دراستنا هذه واحدة من أهم هذه الصور . أما الفصل الثاني فيبرز بعض الأفكار و التعليقات على الرمزية و نظرياتها 'كنظرية دوسوسور 'فروود و وايت هاد. وأما الفصل الثالث فيبرز نظرة نقدية ومواضيع ادقار الان بو, مع الأخذ بعين الاعتبار بعض الآراء على ا لقصة (*The Fall of the House of Usher*) . و أما الفصل الرابع والأخير فهو عبارة عن دراسة مباشرة للرمزية في القصة القصيرة (*The Fall of the House of Usher*) محاولين بذلك إيجاد دوافع الكاتب وراء استعمال هذه الأداة اللغوية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الرمزية, الرمز, المعنى, الصور البيانية.