

Symbolism: A Pragma Linguistic Study of 'The Oyster and the Pearl'

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ABSTRACT: To analyse the style of drama is a bit difficult because dialogues require specific tools and techniques to be used to trace out the functionality of the tactic manipulated. However, the primary goal of conducting this work is to focus on pragma linguistic analysis of symbolism in William Saroyan's play "The Oyster and the Pear." Frye's Theory of Symbolism was used to evaluate and analyse the symbols gathered from the play. Using direct, precise, and unambiguous language is unappealing to language users because it is dry, uncomfortable, and rigid, causing language partners to get easily bored and dissatisfied. To summarize, ambiguous language is becoming increasingly common among language users as the need for honest communication contact, plain language, and assertive requirements are not immediately addressed in the communication process.

KEYWORDS : Symbolism, Objects, Events, Hidden Realities, Despair, Hope

I. INTRODUCTION

This study's researcher is interested in symbolism in William Saroyan's "The Oyster and the Pear." Literature is a mirror of society expressed in poetry and prose utilising language to convey meaning either directly or indirectly. Poets, playwrights, and novelists use symbols to leave a lasting impression on their readers' minds. Every living thing has its way of interacting with its surroundings and society. Humans, on the other hand, have their style. Language is one of the ways individuals connect and communicate. Language has existed since antiquity, yet the language we use today has evolved. "A system of symbols in the form of sound generated by humans and used by a speech community to collaborate, communicate, and identify," says Keraf (2001). We must be aware that without language, all communal interactions and activities come to a halt. Language acts as a bridge in the socialisation process. He goes on to argue language has four functions. It is first and foremost an instrument for human interaction and communication. Gestures, photos, or symbols of other codes can also be utilised. Second, it is utilised to socialise with others. For example, we can learn about a society's standards and manners by listening to a member of the public speak. Third, language is utilised to influence others' behaviour. The language allows us to catch a speaker's soul. The inappropriate language used to advise subordinates or people also cost a leader power. Language is used to express ourselves. Language is often referred to as a medium when discussing its role in communication. Its literary role can be found. Guralnik (2001) defines literature as any inventive writing and of exceptional quality. Literary works include drama, prose, and poetry. We express ourselves through poetry. Hornby (1995) links poetry to music and religious traditions. Poetry is a unique literary work. Another way to convey sentiments, opinions, and even criticism about something or someone. In this case, poetry is a written work made of intelligible sentences that can be difficult to interpret. Theme, symbols, rhyme, rhythm, and figurative language are all aspects of poetry. Symbolism is one of the requirements for understanding poetry. "abstract entities in the shape of an event, person, or term" is how Meyer (1999) defines a symbol. Symbols are of two types. Sign and context symbol. The symbol reveals the poem's theme. Poets including Edgar Allan Poe, Shakespeare, Robert Frost, and William Blake used symbols in their works. William Blake is a poet who uses more symbols. So he became one of the poets who attacked the state.

Symbolism is a literary style used to evoke images in readers' minds. As defined by Carl Jung, a symbol is "a term, a name, or even an image that is familiar in everyday life, but has specific meanings in addition to its obvious meaning." A symbol might be a phrase or a picture. Symbols can be based on culture, religion (the cross signifies Christianity), or other things. The cultural emblems of various cultures might vary. For example, in our society, white is a sign of innocence and purity, but not everywhere. Other symbols, on the other hand, seem to be practically universal. Lighting is commonly used as a symbol of knowledge in literature from many cultures, while darkness is usually used as a symbol of the unknown. Snakes also signify temptation, curiosity, and the pitfalls that humans must face to learn, grow and evolve. These ideas are seen in mythologies like Genesis' genesis storey and Gilgamesh's epic poem "Search for Everlasting Life."

1.1 Historical Perspective

Figures of speech are inventive approaches used in ordinary communication and literature to express unfamiliar concepts. "A figure of speech is 'an expression such as a simile, in which words are arranged as multi-word expressions that serve as units in the text'" (Fadaee, 2011). Ghaffar Tajalli (2003) states that figurative language is used to add clarity, elegance, and other characteristics to the language. Notably, metaphorical meaning increases ambiguity, affecting linguistic simplicity and clarity. It has elements of figurative language such as metaphor and simile. Symbolism is important in literary works because it improves the story's meaning for readers and helps them relate to the characters and plot. Symbolism is a stylistic style widely used in earlier literary works such as Chaucer and Shakespeare. Symbols are used to embellish work, art, and sometimes political, social, and cultural aims. symbolism is "the use of symbols to convey ideas, notably in art and literature." Aesthetics and symbolism have long been part of human culture, and symbols and signs seem to be a natural method for people to express themselves. The Ankh was an emblem of life, and the Uraeus, a Cobra with a brilliant hood, guarded the underworld's doors. Symbolism is a literary technique used to create multiple levels of meaning. It allows readers to acquire insight into the writer's thoughts on how he views the world and how they think about everyday objects and actions with deeper significance, according to Djaafour Fouzia (2014). (p. 5). By reducing the narrative's meaning down to the unconscious level, symbolism strengthens the narrative, according to Nora Cherrat (2012). An important part of the development of literary modernism, symbolism refers to three stages: 1) artistic progress during the last decades and a half of the nineteenth century in France and Belgium, 2) its actual sources in French poetry beginning in the 1850s, and 3) how the above stages affected American and European literature in the twentieth century. Late-19th-century symbolist Charles Baudelaire (1827- 67). In addition to Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud, Stephan Mallarme (1842 – 98) were influential writers who impacted writers outside of France. Symbolism is an important part of modern art and literature. Maurice Maeterlinck, Richard Aldington, and Aldous Huxley were all graduates. Symbolic literature includes James Joyce's "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man", Maurice Maeterlinck's "La Princesse Maleine", Charles Baudelaire's "Le Voyage". Paul Gauguin's paintings are symbolic. In his self-portrait, Gauguin regarded it as "completely incomprehensible due to its abstractness," according to Harschel B. Chipp (1984). According to Emerging Infectious Diseases (2003), Pablo Picasso used symbols in his works. They must interpret the messages as they comprehend them. Symbolic poems are emotional, musical, and visual, and they opened the way for symbolic music. Claude Debussy, a French composer, was regarded as a great symbolist by early German musicologists concerned with mimicking harmonic techniques. Paul Diel remarked in his lexicon A Dictionary of Symbols (1971) that "the symbol is a vehicle both universal and individual." It is both universal and specific in that it alludes to a specific era of history.

1.2 Symbolism in 'The Oyster and the Pearl'

There is a great deal of symbolism in William Saroyan's play *The Oyster and the Pearl*. The central concept of the play is that if you take it easy and relax up, life will be a whole lot happier. In his barbering business, Harry Van Dusen operates on the philosophy of "Take it easy". During his haircutting sessions, he attempts to disseminate his philosophy by conversing with the men and women in the room. It was almost as if the haircuts were merely a means of bringing people into the barbershop to talk with them about their lives. The hats that Harry wore were a representation of the attitude that he was displaying. The sea is a metaphor for life. O.K.-by-the-Sea is the name of the small town where the narrative is set, and it is the setting for the story. That name represents the idea that life is not without flaws, but that by keeping things simple, one may make it much more enjoyable. Vivian McCutcheon is a fresh college instructor who follows all of the rules and regulations. She simply tries to blend in. This is symbolised by her desire for a poodle haircut. She did not want a man, but she wanted to be like everyone else, so she tried to be like everyone else. Harry was well aware of this, which is why he refused to give her a haircut. Vivian's idea of fitting in is preferable to Harry's philosophy of standing out. This is demonstrated by the fact that Harry and everyone else who adheres to his worldview is substantially happier than Vivian is.

All of the minor details in the story are also loaded with symbolism. The bottle of seawater represents the nuances of life that must be sought out and appreciated. When it comes to life, Clay and Clark Larabee are a representation of the obstacles and troubles that arise. The oyster and the pearl are two of the most important symbols in the story, and they are both represented by the same symbol. The oyster represents the difficulties that must be conquered to reach optimism (the pearl). Beachcombing describes the process of looking for and overcoming difficulties to reach hope. The pearl represents the possibility of a better future. When Clay first discovered the oyster, he was convinced it contained a precious gem. Everyone, except for Harry, informed him that there was nothing at all inside the oyster. Harry was undoubtedly well aware that there was nothing inside the oyster, but he wanted to please Clay in any way he could.

1.3 Rationale the Study

The symbolism of William Saroyan's drama "The Oyster and the Pearl" is extensive. The goal of this research is to discover and assess symbols to better understand the objects and events in the play to the readers. A symbol, in the broadest definition, is anything that represents anything; in this sense, all words are symbols. However, when discussing literature, the term "symbol" refers exclusively to a word or phrase that denotes an item or event, which in turn denotes something or has a range of reference beyond itself.

1.4 Need of the Study

Humans use symbolic units to grasp the basic image of the real universe. People use symbols to visualise the world's most basic image, the sun. Language can constantly interpret the signals and properties of things and phenomena, as well as the relationships between them. Symbols play an important role in the process of learning about the real world through language. Symbols serve to update outdated elements of ethnic cognitive conceptions and produce external unity of the linguistic and non-linguistic view of the world.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What kinds of symbolism does William Saroyan utilise in his play "The Oyster and the Pearl"?
- ii. What is the significance of the symbolism in William Saroyan's "The Oyster and the Pearl"?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Symbols are commonly used in philosophical history to describe and learn about the transcendent secret world (Firth, 2011; Cassirer, 2012). As a result, Socrates advocated knowing the "truth of being" through implicit pictures to avoid being blinded by the dazzling light of truth. E. When Kant looked at the symbol, he saw it as a spiritual tool that aids in the spiritual knowledge of the surrounding environment (Toscano, 2005). E. According to Cassirer (2012), symbols are also a universal way of interpreting the cosmos. Some of the most recent linguistic studies have focused on the topic of "language and ethnos" (Cauthen, 2004). Linguistic studies usually incorporate concepts like symbolism and symbolic logic. Many related studies are based on the acquisition and transmission of national character, as well as national understanding and national spirit (Smith, 2005; Smith, 2009; Anthony, 2009). (Carnap, 2012; Kalmar et al., 2013). You should avoid conflating them with the sign. Symbolic logic, as a branch of logic, analyses logical conclusions by making logical estimations, similar to mathematical logic, but utilising a strictly symbolic language (Wagner et al., 2015). As has been extensively documented, human cognitive energy is accountable for the symbolic names of objects and phenomena in the real world (Ellis, 2014). Because of their singular impact on humanity, both active and inanimate objects in the surrounding natural world acquire symbolic meaning; the language picture of the universe also gets symbolic value (Dickins & Dickins, 2001). R. Sakharov, a Russian language expert, claims that the Kazakh language has a large and complex vocabulary. According to a notable Kazakh linguist, the term "symbol" refers to the artist's conveyance of a certain concept or notion through an objective image in studies of fiction, such as those that investigate the alteration of the word patterns of poetic speech in Russian poetry (its name). Here, a symbolic representation of the world forms as a result of the unification of language components in a linguistic-cognitive model between the thought and the object (Mukerjee & Dabbeeru, 2012). Many academics have expressed their thoughts on the symbol seen here. Using A. as an example, Veselovsky (1989) defines parallelism as a sort of symbolism. According to him, the symbol is formed by not pronouncing one of the elements of parallelism, because the second member serves as an indicator for the first. Furthermore, language symbols help to the extension of the human worldview by transmitting allegorical notions (Embler, 1956; Wylie, 1928). Modern linguistics studies communication, cognition, ethnicity, and symbolism to better understand the features of languages (Kim, 2015). Detailed research into the informational and symbolic underpinnings of national consciousness that are inherent like language is required. It may be feasible to answer the linked problem of the nature of symbols that convey images of culture and learning in language using linguistic-cognitive analysis (national symbols).

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FRYE'S THEORY OF SYMBOLISM

The Canadian literary critic and literary theorist Herman Northrop Frye (1912-1991) was active in the twentieth century. "The term symbol refers to any unit of literary structure that can be isolated for critical examination," he says (Frye, 1957). In his *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye claims that when we read, we move our attention in two directions at the same time. One path is outward, in which we take our reading outside of the text, away from the writers and toward the things they are trying to say in the text. It is in this second direction that we try to evaluate and examine the meaning that we derive from a word. Because in both circumstances, readers are dealing with symbols, Frye uses this concept to bring the concept symbol to the surface in this instance. These two types of comprehension take place at the same time in all reading. The verbal structure, on the other hand, can be characterized based on whether the final direction of meaning is outward or inward.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The drama 'The Oyster and the Pearl,' written by Saroyan, is a treasure trove of rich and deep symbolism. The places, people, objects and ideas in the play have a deeper significance than they appear to be on the surface level. Even though the average reader has the necessary capacity and perception to delve deeply into the philosophy of written words, the philosophical analysis of those words will reveal to the reader the genuine meaning that the dramatist is attempting to portray via his writing.

a. Things

i. The Oyster and the Pearl

The title of the play carries a great deal of symbolic significance. It may be divided into two planes, which manifests two of the most important symbols in the play. The oyster represents life's problems and barriers, and the presence of a pearl in the oyster represents man's determination to overcome these difficulties. The pearl in the oyster also represents their hope for a better future. A man should not sit on his laurels; instead, he should go out into the world and accept and cope with the hardships of life to see their hopes realised and receive a pearl as a reward.

ii. Newspaper

In light of Clay's father's inability to meet the everyday demands of his children in terms of domestic provision and the financial outlay for their education, his wife is constantly at odds with him over whether or not he should do something to help their family. The sources of substantial money he was looking for were not available in his hometown. To avoid this, he had frequent disagreements with his wife. It was never stated in the article whether he was to blame or not. Nonetheless, based on the economic conditions of the town, it may be inferred that his earnings were insufficient to support happy family life. A few days later, he was getting into it with his wife's mocking and lost his cool. He stormed out of the home and went to some unknown place without alerting anybody. Clay placed an advertisement in the newspaper in the hopes of reuniting with his father. As a result, newspapers are regarded as emblems of hope.

b. Places

i. OK-by-the-Sea

That name represents the idea that life is not without flaws, but that by keeping things simple, one may make it much more enjoyable. The action of the play takes place at Harry Van Dusen's barbershop in the California town of OK-by-the-Sea. The village that is positioned close to the seashore is known as Seaside. The town has a population of roughly 909 people, which is quite small. Harry is the one and only barber in town who is intimately familiar with the ups and downs of the community. This is not a well-educated community in this village. Because the residents of the town are downtrodden and impoverished, they appear to be more concerned with obtaining their daily bread than with obtaining a better education. Because Harry has been a resident of this town for many years, he is intimately familiar with the people, their desires and concerns, as well as what they do to have their desires fulfilled under challenging circumstances. This village represents both the little cosmos and the entire universe. Also implied is the depravity of the inhabitants as well as the failure of the government to raise the living standards of the people in the hamlet, which is not paying enough attention to this issue. This also alludes to Plato's notion, according to which the town is the axis of the universe. Plato's thesis, which states that "if you want to make the world progressive, you must work on the community," is widely accepted. According to Plato's philosophy, there is no such thing as an "OK-by-the-Sea" situation. If this is the case, this town is a complete failure with a mediocre way of life.

ii. The Sea

The sea represents life as a metaphor. If we are being honest, the sea in 'OK-by-the-Sea' titillates the senses of a keen reader in the same way that the sea in 'The Old Man and the Sea' titillates the sensations of a sharp reader. Both William Saroyan's Sea and Ernest Hemingway's Sea are emblems of life, filled with love, hatred, suffering, and hope, respectively. This provides bread and butter to the town's hungry and impoverished residents and visitors. Anglers go fishing in the old man and the sea, and residents in this town go to the sea to collect the old

things that have washed up on the shoreline as a result of the sea. Some of them rely on the sale of these washed-out items as a source of income.

iii. Barber's Shop

Barber's Shop serves as the stage for the play, as it is where all of the action takes place during the play. Harry came to this town 24 years ago and purchased the shop for \$75 when he first arrived. The shop, which serves as a gathering place for people from many walks of life, is the ideal location for filming the play's scenes. Harry, the barber, is the most appropriate individual because he understands and can supply knowledge about all types of people, including their desires, attitudes, behaviour, misbehaviour, wants troubles, and anything else they may be experiencing. In this regard, it appears to be a focal point of unification in terms of symbolic significance.

iv. *Black Rock*

The Black Rock is a representation of the difficulties that people face in their lives. It was a place on the far side of the sea where no one can dare go, as the water was dangerously deep there. By a stroke of fate, the water from there sank and Clay was lucky enough to get one oyster from there while he was suffering from a hard time. He needed money severely, When he obtained the oyster, he was so delighted that he went to the barber's shop and said that the oyster had a pearl inside it and that the pearl is worth \$ 300. Clay embraced the challenge of going to Black Rock; in reward of his fortitude and hard toil, he received \$300.

c. Persons

i. Harry Van Dusen

Harry is a representation of the past and the continuation of a tradition. Harry is the solitary and only barber in the town who is familiar with the residents because he has lived in the town for many years and practises traditional barbering, thus he is familiar with the minute details of the village's inhabitants from the inside out. He claims that the people who live at OK-by-the-Sea are living in a terrible environment. The vast majority of them are unemployed and destitute enough to survive for several days. They are unlikely to find work within a month or a year. Only a few of them are retired or nearing retirement. Almost every household has planted a garden and raised a modest number of hens, though the numbers vary. Clay is Harry's apprentice, and he works for him. As Harry is well acquainted with everyone, he is acutely aware of the domestic difficulties that Clay's family is experiencing. Clay's father has left the home, and Clay is distraught by his loss. He is fully aware of this, and he wishes to assist Clay by giving gifts to his mother. In addition, it is for this reason that he believes in Clay when he claims that there is a pearl in the oyster.

ii. Clarke and Clay

Clay Larrabee is the son of Clarke Larrabee, who leaves his home without alerting anyone, causing hardship for his family in the process. Clay looks to be depressed and concerned about his family's difficulties from the very beginning of the play. Larrabee ran away from his obligations at home and vanished, leaving his son to deal with the consequences of his actions. Both father and son represent the trials and tribulations of everyday existence.

iii. Miss McCutcheon

Vivian McCutcheon, who comes to the village to teach the students. She is an outsider who has come to the community to bring them up to modern standards. Throughout the story of the play, it becomes clear to the reader that she has become tired of her position in the village since the villagers are uninterested in scholastic matters. They are more interested in passing the time by playing games and going on nautical adventures than anything else. Her demeanour does not fit the environment in which she lives, where people are not just illiterate, but also disinterested in anything. Even though she is a fashionista with a poodle hairdo, she is committed to her career and wishes to become more at ease with the modest and plain atmosphere of the village she lives in. She wishes to educate the public on the importance of realising one's responsibilities and facing one's fears head-on. In actuality, she serves as a guide and lighthouse for the people of the town.

iv. Beach

According to the play, the beach serves as a symbol of search because it is the only area where people can go in quest of washed-up items that may be of financial advantage to them. The beach was a source of money for the people who lived in the town of OK by the Sea.

v. The Writer

The writer is a symbol of covert assistance and support, expressing genuine and sincere feelings. He is not a full-fledged writer in the traditional meaning of the term. He only writes minor, insignificant things. He goes to the barber's shop to get his hair styled and cut. He learns from Harry and Miss McCutcheon's conversation that there is something worthwhile to generate interest in their conversation. Clay maintained that there is a "Pearl" in the oyster, which is worth three hundred dollars. Clay's assertion is backed up by Harry. Miss McCutcheon, in response to this argument, asserts that Harry is betraying the children by shielding them from reality and the harsh realities of life. He is in desperate need of money to buy a gift for his mother, so he keeps claiming that his

journey was worthy because no one would dare to travel to that treacherous rock from whence he obtained the oyster that is certain to contain a pearl worth three hundred dollars. Miss McCutcheon proposes that they open up the oyster, but the man sees through the dire situation and purchases the pear for three hundred dollars in exchange for the oyster. Now, he claims that the pearl in the oyster's interior is a pearl in and of itself because the oyster is a pearl in and of itself. To be completely honest, the writer saw Clay's financial plight and covertly assisted him by refusing to open the thing and instead of purchasing it.

vi. Judge AppleGarth

Apple Garth is a representation of frivolity and a carefree way of life. He does not hold himself out as a judge in his professional capacity. He was given the moniker Judge after he judged animals at a fair, and he is content with accomplishing anything worthwhile in action as long as it is for the greater good.

vii. Wozzeck

Wozzeck is a symbol of evidence and proof in fantasy and fiction. As soon as there is talk of a pearl in the oyster, they are concerned that if they open the oyster themselves, they may destroy the pearl. As a result, on the suggestion of Harry, Wozzeck is called out to determine whether there is a pearl in the oyster or not. If it is thought that Wozzeck will open the oyster without hurting it and offer confirmation that the pearl is indeed there in the oyster, he is a watch repairer.

d. Ideas

i. Harry's Philosophy

Harry's Philosophy is a sign of satisfaction and well-being. In these lines, he summed up his philosophy: "Eat, drink, and be merry." He is unconcerned about anything and takes everything in stride. The Philosophy's precise phrases are as follows. 'Take it easy way'. There are two possible interpretations for this. First and foremost, it vibrates with satirist contact. He satirises the carefree lifestyle of the people of the town, claiming that they are not bothered to improve their living conditions. Second, he wishes to instil the lesson of contentment in them, emphasising that when they have little, they should not be concerned about it and but instead embrace life as it is.

V. DISCUSSION

Symbolism is extremely helpful in defining literature and the arts. There are two types of symbols used in the interpretation of arts, literature, dreams, and experiences: conventional and personal. Typical Symbols (either cultural or universal): Awareness signs requires a thorough understanding of one's cultural background. In other words, the meanings of signs for persons from the same culture are the same. Sign meanings vary from culture to culture, and sometimes a sign has an entirely different meaning in another cultural environment. For example, while white is the most common wedding dress colour in Iran; white is also the most common funeral dress colour in India. It is important to note that humans create symbols. Personal Symbols (contextual or private): Personal symbols differ from one person to the next; author, dreamer, artist, etc. For example, when two people hear the word "Heart," their interpretations of it may differ; one considers it simply an organ of the body, while the other considers it the centre of emotions, particularly love. Many theorists and scholars appear to be major figures in giving and creating theories of symbolism, such as Ferdinand De Saussure, Alfred North Whitehead, Susanne Langer, Northrop Frye, and others; nonetheless, Frye's vision is taken into account in this work. Frye's Theory of Symbolism has been used to understand many elements of the present study. Places, people, artefacts, and ideas have all been considered. Because the typical reader is unable to comprehend the essence of the text, the interpretation demonstrates that simple symbolic terms are insufficient to convey the needed meaning.

VI. CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to locate the kinds of symbols and their significance in the play 'The Oyster and the Pearl' authored by William Saroyan. The study implicates that it is vital to understand the employed meaning when disclosing the nature and meaning of a sign. Because the symbol frequently includes a figurative meaning, each person interprets it according to his or her degree of comprehension and selects the meaning that best suits his or her skills. For starters, the interdependence of language (word) and symbol open the path for human understanding of the nuances of their reality. The world's linguistic form is inextricably tied to the symbolic categories of empirical cognition. Second, the process of description and symbolization sheds light on the most distinguishing characteristics of a language symbol, namely its novelty, communicativeness, and cognitive activity. This suggests that a symbol is a cognitive category. The process of symbolization influences not only the global construction of language specificity but also the function of national-cultural-cognitive associations in the formation of a specific notion. Only one short play was included in the study. Comprehensive research in the form of an MPhil thesis is required to better comprehend the types and applications of symbolism.

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