

Language of Dramatic Monologue in Poe's "The Raven"

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Abstract

Dramatic monologue had been used as a powerful tool to express emotions and feelings through the characters in the ancient Greek drama. It received the proper recognition in the Victorian era as a new form of literary device when the various poets and writers started using it in their works. Edgar Allan Poe was not an exceptional. This article explores the language of dramatic monologue in Edgar Allan Poe's poem "The Raven". It aims to look at the poem through the three perceptible features of the dramatic monologue: speaker/narrator, audience/listener, and occasion. It examines how the speaker's soliloquy speech—moaning for the loss of his wife—changes into a powerful dramatic monologue. Obsessed with pain and agony, the speaker's dramatic monologue escalates finding a listener, ebony raven inside the room. Throughout the poem, the occasion of the cold December becomes the vital point to bestow cryptic feelings to readers. In addition, the article provides an analysis of poetic structures through figurative languages which have made the poem pedagogically rich and their impact has taken the speaker's dramatic monologue in different level.

Keywords: *dramatic monologue-soliloquy-figurative language-features-poetic structures*

Introduction

"The Raven" (1845) is Edgar Allan Poe's famous classic American poem written in gothic style in the gloomy setting fabricated with the elements of death as well as memory of love, full of emotions with the mixture of fear and suspense. The article explores the three features of dramatic monologue such as the speaker, listener, and the occasion in "The Raven." Such as the speaker's emotional state of soliloquy transforming into a dramatic monologue with the apathetic attitude of the listener, the raven and the particular chosen time occasion of a winter night are responsible to create uncanny mood in the poem. Furthermore, it tries to analyze the poetic structures like the use of rhyme, meter, repetition, etc. and the use of figurative languages such as personification, simile, symbol/metaphor, imagery, allusion, onomatopoeia, etc. in the poem and their impact in the dramatic monologue.

The Plot Summary

Poe's works express the psychological state of subconscious mind of the character leading to the mysterious abysses. Most of his characters as narrators appear isolated and aberrant. In "The Raven" too, the narrator is half asleep and trying to read a book subconsciously to release his suffering and loneliness caused by his wife's death. It is the midnight of a cold December. He is awakened by a tapping at his door. His basic instinct makes him awake fully hearing the sound. The sound creates a ghostly occasion

at bleak night and makes him think it might be his dead wife, Lenore, coming to visit him. At the very moment, his soliloquy begins. He peeps outside into the darkness and calls his dead wife's name "Lenore" persistently but there is no one, only the sound "Lenore" echoes back. He returns to the room however, the rapping and tapping sound come repeatedly louder than before. He thinks it might be the sound of the wind beating on the window's shutters. However, his anxiety makes him open the window, and a dark ebony creature flies inside the room. It perches on a bust of Pallas (Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom) above the chamber door. He is surprised to see the "grave and stern" (Poe, 1845, stanza 8, line 2) looks of the raven. He tries to address the unknown visitor, pronounces its name "raven" and in response, he hears the answer "Nevermore." His soliloquy changes into monologue, the speaker's instinct makes him enquire about the dark bird: who is this raven, why it is here in the midnight, why it does not want to leave, and why it responds his queries with only one word "Nevermore." Throughout the poem, the narrator's monologue seems to be possessed with the raven's presence. As Rachel McCoppin (2019) writes "Edgar Allan Poe's works are defined by obsessed narrators—that the narrators' obsessions come from within their own unexplored unconscious. Poe's narrators repress natural, yet fearful and unwanted, impulses, which results in irrational obsessions and ultimately leads to horror" (p.41). The unnamed narrator obsesses with his own unconscious thoughts that generate a series of dramatic monologue and dismay in the poem.

The narrator is sitting in front of the raven, looking at it directly, trying to understand what it means by "Nevermore", but the raven's lexis is limited to "Nevermore" and does not utter other words. The speaker's mumbling, speaking himself—it will leave him as his loved ones and friends did—however, he gets the response from the raven one more time "Nevermore" The word "Nevermore" becomes melancholy. As Harris (2020) states "Melancholy, for Poe was the "most legitimate" poetic tone. Thus, the tone of "The Raven" would be melancholic, continually underscored by a one-word refrain, "Nevermore," a word chosen based on its sound, "sonorous and susceptible to protracted emphasis" (p. 869). It sounds resonant and reminds the speaker his wife will never return to him. And the word "Nevermore" recurring in the poem expresses that death is inevitable. Kelly (2020) writes, "According to Sigmund Freud, the distinguishing feature of melancholia concerns what he describes as the "lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment" (p. 68). The "self-torturing" becomes the synonyms of "melancholy" for the speaker in "The Raven" that is forcefully replicated in his monologues.

Every time the same answer "Nevermore" of raven makes the speaker angry and he commands raven to leave him alone: "Leave my loneliness unbroken! —quit the bust above my door! Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!" again, he receives the similar answer "Nevermore" (Poe, 1845, stanza 17, lines 3-4). The word "Nevermore" appears repetitively in the poem through the voices of the raven. It gives the impression that the raven is trying to convey the ultimate truth of life. At the end, the narrator concludes his monologue by saying that the devil-eyed bird is still sitting on the bust of Pallas, casting a shadow over his soul. As the speaker speaks the final lines: "And my soul from out that shadow lies floating on the floor. Shall be lifted—nevermore!" (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 18, lines 5-6). The speaker is in deep pain, he will never forget his wife and her memory will haunt him forever. We can relate the speaker's sufferings and self-torturing with the Poe's real-life story. Poe's beloved wife, Virginia Poe, whom he deeply loved, died of tuberculosis in 1842 bursting a gush of blood while singing, and two years later he wrote "The Raven." The poet chose the bird raven to express his own sorrow. "It seems, Poe was delighted in self-torture deliberately, he picked the melancholy mood and stormy night with the bereaved character in the poem. "The Raven" suggests his need to control emotions and thoughts this particular poem elicited in him" (Harris, 2020, p. 869). Thus, the element of melancholy becomes important and real in the poem.

Dramatic Monologue as Powerful Tool

Looking back in the history of dramatic monologue, it was used from the theater of the ancient Greece. However, we find its proper use in the Victorian era. According to Howard (1990), “[i]t was in the Victorian age that the dramatic monologue received the development which entitles it to the rank of a new type of poetry” (p. 60). Romantic poets like William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, not only embodied these qualities, but directed them to a considerable extent in their poetry (Howard, *ibid*, p.56). In the early part of the nineteenth century, before the opening of the Victorian era, Byron employed this form. Howard, (*ibid*) writes, “The movement and freedom of his verse and the vigor of his expression enabled him to use the dramatic monologue effectively. The forcefulness of “Jeptha’s Daughter” is certainly due to the monologue form” (pp. 56-57). Byron has employed the three features of the monologue in the poem. The occasion is extremely dramatic in the scene when strong warrior as a speaker hesitates before fulfilling his vow of daughter’s sacrificial (Howard, *ibid*, p. 57). It shows that “The dramatic monologue before the reign of Victoria was the result of an unconscious art of construction” (Howard, *ibid*, p. 58). The dramatic monologue is the mental state spurt out from the speaker. In “The Raven”, the speaker as the first person begins his soliloquy lamenting for his dead wife Lenore unconsciously and later his soliloquy constructs into powerful dramatic monologues. As Encyclopedia Britannica defines:

A dramatic monologue is any speech of some duration addressed by a character to a second person. A soliloquy is a type of monologue in which a character directly addresses an audience or speaks his thoughts aloud while alone or while the other actors keep silent (“Monologue,” & “Soliloquy,” 2021).

It is the inner thoughts the speaker voices aloud to himself and nobody listens to or the speaker is unaware of who is listening to him. Some creative writers like Robert Browning, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, and Alfred Lord Tennyson also used dramatic monologue through their fictional characters who speak to an audience without break and became early pioneers. In the 20th century, T.S. Eliot’s famous poem “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” and Ezra Pound’s a collection of short poems *Personae* are the examples of dramatic monologues. Browning’s one of earliest dramatic monologues is “My Last Duchess” where he illustrated his method of having the speaker reveal his character in his own word (Howard, *ibid*, p. 70). Howard further writes (1910):

Browning’s dramatic monologue enabled his form to reach the climax of its development, as the drama did in the hands of Shakespeare. He saw within it its potential powers and with his dramatic genius he developed it into a type of poetry peculiarly adapted to modern times. He raised it to the stage of conscious literary art and gave it its laws of construction (p. 79).

Browning has given significant recognition to the dramatic monologue as one of the new essentials of literature. He states that:

The development of the dramatic monologue may be divided into these two stages of unconscious and conscious construction. The first period of this development extends from its origin to its use by Browning; the second from its use by Browning to the present time (Howard, 1910, p. 43).

Dramatic monologue is consistently used by Browning as a tool in his works. The poets and epic writers use it as a powerful tool to express emotions and feelings of the speaker. Wiandari cited M.H Abrams (2002) who says, “The monologue is so organized that its focus is on the temperament and the character

that the dramatic speaker unintentionally reveals in the course of what he says” (Wiandari, 2017, pp.1-2). Monologue depends on the mental state of the character and, in the process, the character reveals his inner thought unknown to the reader/audience. It is the method of continuing inner flow of speech by the speaker. Moreover, as Fadhillah Wiandari (2017) cited Sen (2010) writes, “The dramatic monologue is essentially a narrative spoken by a single character. It gains added effects and dimensions through the character’s comments on his own story and circumstances in which he speaks” (p.1). It shows that dramatic monologue is the speech of an individual speaker with no dialogue coming from any other characters depending on the speaker’s thought what he is thinking and feeling at the moment and conditions. Mainly, it is a single narrative in a scene. As Wiandari (2017) compares the dramatic monologue with soliloquy:

The dramatic monologue is a narrative spoken by a single person...the root meaning of the term “monologue” is a single man’s conversation. Of course, that may sound slightly paradoxical because conversation by its very nature means a talk between two persons– in the dramatic monologue, though the active speech is ascribed to a single person, the presence and the reactions of other person are conveyed naturally in the course of the single man’s talk. The listener does not actively interrupt the current of speech. Thus, the dramatic monologue, unlike the soliloquy, implies the presence of some other character or characters, listening and reacting. In a soliloquy, the speaker delivers his own thoughts, uninterrupted by the objections or the proportions of other persons. In a dramatic monologue; however, the reactions of the listener, or other persons, are woven into a speaker’s word (p. 2).

It expects someone to be addressed to listen as the speaker speaks, there is no interruption from the listener however, in soliloquy speaker speaks his thought and others are expected to be silent. However, the word ‘monologue’ is used synonymously with ‘soliloquy’. “The speaker in the soliloquy is merely thinking aloud. His thoughts proceed freely and unmodified from his own individuality. In contrast to this, the speaker in the dramatic monologue is influenced more or less by the personality of the hearer” (Howard, 1910, p. 40). We could see many examples of it in Shakespeare’s dramas such as in Hamlet. In “The Raven” too the narrator begins his soliloquy, his speech without any disruption and after the entry of raven his soliloquy becomes dramatic monologue. Then speaker’s speech is directed to the second person, the raven.

Robert Browning’s poem, the “Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister” is an example of dramatic monologue by the character unnamed Spanish monk including audience, occasion, interplay, character, revelation, and dramatic interest. According to Sessions (1947), “[t]he only lacking prerequisite is that the “audience” does not hear the speaker, despite the fact his every move induces imprecations” (p. 512). We could observe in “The Raven”, Poe used soliloquy to dramatic monologue effectively. Its importance is highlighted with the use of figurative languages by the poet. Its overall control is within the narrator. The occasion has intensified the narrator’s emotional expression and helped to erupt the narrator’s pain and anxiety aloud through monologues. As Fletcher and Browning state that “Dramatic monologue is found to be represented as a literal transcript of words spoken, written, or thought at some definite time by some person who may be either historical or imaginary” (Sessions, *ibid*, p. 505). It speaks about the state of the narrator at that time and moment. The use of it will explain us what’s happening at that time. It could be anyone’s literal transcript who performs as a speaker in the text. As Sessions cited Howard that “One of the first examples of a dramatic monologue with the three characteristics of speaker, listener/audience, and occasion was Drayton’s sonnet beginning “Since there’s no help, come let us kiss and part” (Sessions, *ibid*, p. 506). Drayton’s poem:

Employs all the embryonic elements which are later developed into the dramatic monologue. The

occasion or situation is one of dramatic intensity. At the parting of the lovers for the last time, the emotions cannot be inhibited, but well up and receive their most forcible expression in the form of the monologue (Howard, 1910, p. 48).

We see the speaker is speaking in monologue assuming the listener/audience is listening to him and we feel the expression in the romantic occasion. There are many examples like this in literature using of three traits in dramatic monologue. And some believe in:

7 characteristics of dramatic monologue such as speaker, audience, occasion, revelation of character, interplay between speaker and audience, dramatic action, and action which takes place in the present. Judged by these seven characteristics, a poem or prose work may be a perfect example of the dramatic monologue type (Sessions, 1947, p. 508).

Robert Browning's "My Last Duchess" fits in the description. "The Raven" follows the three features of the dramatic monologue as it has the speaker as narrator, listener the raven, and the occasion, that is, melancholic, gloomy freezing night. These features of dramatic monologue are convincingly used by the poet in the poem. Every use of words and phrases become authentic and relevant in the poem. Besides these features, monologues are classified in various forms such as quoted monologue, quoted interior monologue, memory monologue, autobiographical monologue, etc. All these classifications have distinctive use in the literature.

Quoted monologue has to be spoken aloud using imagination. It is frequently used as a form of ingrained narrative in a traditional form of the novel. We often find this when a new character is introduced (someone who gives his or her life story), or when a character has been off-scene for some time and returns to tell the others what has happened (Hughes, 2002, p. 104). It is like a story telling or narration. It plays with ambivalences between spoken and written modes of narratives. The sentences broken with the dashes suggests oral narratives, just as mention of "the moral at the end of story" may suggest traditional fables or children's tales. (Hughes, *ibid*, p. 105). Quoted monologue is the story of own retelling or narrating other's story. Someone quotes and narrates the story in this monologue. We can classify the poem "The Raven" as an excellent example of quoted monologue. The speaker in the poem starts with the narration of his story, he mutters himself alone: "Tis some visitor," "tapping at my chamber door— Only this and nothing more" (Poe, 1845, stanza 1, lines 5-6). The speaker is trying to convey his inner feelings through quoted monologue. Because from the beginning, narrator is narrating his own sufferings and feelings to the reader/listener. Poe's quoted monologue reflects the existing situation and the condition of the narrator. As Hughes (2002) cited Dorrit Cohn:

*We are given a discourse that has not been spoken aloud and thus has no listeners, but that expresses a character's intimate thought. In such passages we find the great paradox of modern narrative fiction: it "attains its greatest 'air of reality' in the presentation of a lone figure thinking thoughts (Hughes, *ibid*, p. 107).*

James Joyce's novels are the best examples of quoted interior monologue. It is the expression of the character's inner thoughts like stream of consciousness in the speaker's mind. In this type of monologue, we as a reader are able to hear the narrator's thoughts without seeing him. Poe has used this trait too in "The Raven" when the speaker is thinking in pain about his wife Lenore. In the poem soliloquy to dramatic monologue, we hear the inner voices of the narrator. Fatima H. Aziz and Ukaal Ghailan (2018 cited Sinfield 1977) defines the Dramatic Monologue as: "a poem with a speaker who is clearly separate from the poet, speaks to an implied auditor, who while he stills silent, remains clearly present in the scene"

(P.64). In the poem, the speaker's mind is "weak and weary" (Poe, 1845, stanza 1, line 1) the narrator does not speak only he ponders even though his inner mind is talking with the reader. He is mentally exhausted and grieving for his love. The quoted inner monologue occurs in every stanza in "The Raven." The third one is memory monologue. In the words of Hughes (ibid), "In memory monologue it is the act of remembering that structures the monologue, directs the attention of the narrator toward events, and decides on their importance" (p. 109). The character's speech moves towards the sharing of memory in monologue and describes about the events and experiences of life. "The Raven" is an example of using memory monologue where the narrator continuously speaks it out his love for his wife and memory of the time they spent together. It is the memory of his wife haunting him in his monologue. Similarly, autobiographical monologue tries to bring the life of the author in the conversation. We do not see the appropriateness of this monologue in "The Raven."

Dramatic monologue has become an effective tool and rationalized the whole occasion and mental state of the narrator in the poem. From his monologue, we could guess that character is in pain, trying hard to control his emotions. One way speaking as the Oxford English dictionary defines a "dramatic composition for a single performer" or "a long speech or harangue delivered by one person" (Hughes, ibid, p. 104). Monologue is structured by the single character continuously speaking and talking long without any disturbance. From the ancient period to the present time, it is observed that dramatic monologue has been used as a powerful tool to express the writers' works which we see in "The Raven." The whole poem illustrates the significance of dramatic monologue through the speaker's prevailing domination in use of language.

The soliloquy changes into monologues when there is the entry of the raven and the speaker opens the window and it perches upon the bust of Pallas (Poe, ibid, stanza 7). His monologue becomes dramatic when he starts speaking with the raven, his monologues target towards the listener as the raven: "Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven, Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!" Quoth the Raven "Nevermore" (Poe, ibid, stanza 8, lines 3-6). Somewhat beguiled by the raven's appearance, the speaker asks its name however he gets the reply "Nevermore." We could apply here DeVries's theory of dramatic monologue. According to him in the process of growth, elements of dramatic monologues are "differentiated somewhat sporadically and independently, yet the term "process of development" is legitimate when used with certain limitations and it is certainly indicative of the nature of its growth" (Howard, 1910, p.41). We see the power of monologue in the poem changes its tone from subtle soliloquy to infuriating dialogue with the raven. The language usage in speech spoken aloud by the speaker: "Wretch," ... "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee" Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!" And again, raven answers "Nevermore." (Poe, 1845, stanza 14) directs us to extended monologue. Here the growth of speaker's monologue reflects the memory monologues too. The speaker is trying to forget the pain and suffering in the absence of his wife. Pronouncing his wife's name "Lenore" repeatedly tells us he could not forget his wife; memory becomes vital to flow monologues. As Kelly (2019) states:

At first blush, it would indeed appear that the mourning of the physical loss of the speaker's love object, the sorrow resulting from her absence and the pain induced by her memory, is the event around which the poem's narrative turns (pp. 67-68).

The monologues of the speaker swear with the punitive language take us to the climax "Prophet!" ... "thing of evil! —prophet still, if bird or devil! —Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore, Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—On this home by Horror haunted—

tell me truly, ...Is there—balm in Gilead?” Quoth the Raven “Nevermore” (Poe, 1845, stanza 15). The speaker asks the bird if he is wicked and if has brought healing medicine to him however similar answer he gets “Nevermore.” The speaker shrieks, the tone of monologues change from low to high note:

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” ...

“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken! —quit the bust above my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!”

*Quoth the Raven “Nevermore” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 17).*

The narrator orders the raven to leave him alone. However, it replies “Nevermore.” The speaker is angry seeing the unwelcoming attitude of the raven. However, there is no interruption in the speaker’s dramatic monologues, it is used as a powerful tool in the poem.

Textual analysis of “The Raven” through poetic structures and figurative languages

The poetic structures and figurative languages are useful devices in teaching language. They help learners to improve grammar, increase vocabulary, understand sentence structures, clear the concepts, abstracts and ideas. They connect us with the text and enhance the imaginative power and critical thinking to express emotions and feelings through visualizing description. They are effective to develop language skills in both written and spoken communication and help to draw conclusion.

The poetic structures comprise lines, stanzas, rhyme schemes, meters, repetition, and refrain in the poem. “The Raven” has 108 lines with eighteen six-line stanzas and it follows the ABCBBB rhyme scheme. Poe’s rhyme arrangement is very intentional in a planned way. Looking at the rhyme of the words in the poem: Lenore, lore, door, before, implore, floor, explore, yore, wore, more, bore, store, core, ashore, shore, implore, adore, and nevermore show beautiful implication in expressing the speaker’s inner thoughts. Poe has created a musical aura to interact with the readers using rhythmic words. At the end of first, second and third lines in the first stanza **weary/ lore/tapping** follow ABC rhyme and the use of the word **door** in the fourth and fifth lines repeatedly with the **more** in the sixth line are BBB rhyme as in **lore**.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and **weary**,

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten **lore**—

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a **tapping**,

As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber **door**.

“‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber **door**—

Only this and nothing **more**.” (Poe, 1845, stanza 1)

And the poem has internal rhyme like AA, B, CC, CB, B, B. In the first line of stanza **dreary** and **weary** follow AA rhyme. Second line has B rhyme as **lore**, and third line follows the CC rhyme as **napping** and **tapping** and in the fourth line has CB rhyme **rapping** and **door**. At the fifth and sixth lines

follow B, B rhyme such as **door** and **more**.

Once upon a midnight **dreary**, while I pondered, weak and **weary**,
 Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten **lore**—
 While I nodded, nearly **napping**, suddenly there came a **tapping**,
 As of someone gently **rapping**, rapping at my chamber **door**.
 “‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber **door**—
 Only this and nothing **more**.” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 1)

All the stanzas and lines follow the similar rhyme pattern in “The Raven.” With the rhyme, we see the rhythmic pattern with metrical feet of stressed and unstressed sounds/syllables in the poem. “The lines of the poetry fall into short units called feet and are described by how many feet each line has, thus a foot might be one of several links” (Rush, 2005, p. 88). Generally, a metrical foot has one stressed and one or two unstressed syllables. Analyzing “The Raven”, more or less all the stanzas follow trochaic octameter. Trochaic octameter is a poetic meter of eight metrical unit or foot per line. Each foot has one stressed syllable followed by unstressed syllable word in line. For example: **But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping**,... (Poe, 1845, stanza 4, line 3). It has followed the trochaic octameter metrical unit. There are repetition and refrain of words in the poem as in line “Quoth the Raven ‘Nevermore’” repeated in stanzas 8, 14, 15, and 16 and this line repeated sometimes after a gap as a refrain. “The Raven” is the masterpiece of the Poe where we could find the heavy use of dramatic form of meter and a melodic pattern of rhyme.

Similarly, Poe spontaneously used full of figurative languages that help the poem to heighten the dramatic monologue. Anggi Desatria Budiargo (2020) states that in the Poe’s “The Raven”, there are eight types of figurative language as mentioned in theory of Abrams (1999). They are personification, symbol/metaphor, allusion, hyperbole, alliteration, simile, imagery, and onomatopoeia (p.12). It has created the ominous and mythic mood of the poem. As Budiargo (2020) states that Poe has used eight types of figurative language:

The Personification figure head gets a higher percentage than the others and the percentage is 25%, imagery language that takes second place appears more after Personification figure which gets a percentage of 22.5%, then Metaphor figure appears 7 times and the percentage is 17,5%, Hyperbole figure that appears 5 times the percentage of this figure of speech is 12,5%, Alliteration figure that appears 4 times the percentage of this figure of 10%, then Allusion figure which appears 3 times the percentage of 7,5%, Simile figure appears 1 time is 2,5 same with Onomatopoeia figure which appears 1 time percentage 2,5% (p. 12).

The use of personification in “The Raven” could be seen in most of the lines that treats inanimate objects as human. The personification helps to increase the murky atmosphere in the poem. The poet personified the raven as ‘lord’ or ‘lady’ (Poe, 1845, stanza 7, line 4), and uttering the word “nevermore” through the raven’s states that raven is treated like a human. Observing the lines “Other friends have flown before—On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 10, lines 4-5), the raven is personified as ‘friends’ and ‘he’ who left him before and the raven will as well. Likewise, the poet has used symbols/metaphors in the poem. The whole poem is a symbol of the narrator’s grief and fears about his mortality and the “Raven” traditionally symbolizes death. According to Wakhid Harits &

Rizkyanita Sari (2016) states:

The words “Pallas” and “Night’s Plutonian” symbolize the God and angel, “balm in Gilead” refers to the holy land and medicine that is stated in the Bible becomes the traditional medicine and cures the pain. The words “midnight” and “December” symbolize the decline of Poe’s life. This fact is strengthened by word “chamber” which represents the misery (p.128).

The multiple times metaphors appear in the poem. Such as when the speaker says, “each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor” (Poe, 1845, stanza 2, line 8), here, the diminishing light of the fire is casting shadows upon the floor compares to ghosts. The narrator does not see Lenore, only her name echoes in the dark night, like a ghost, no mortal body, only feelings of despair. Metaphorically, Lenore is compared to the ghost like dying fire casting the shadow. The dying embers remind the narrator, death of Lenore, the shadows remind him of her spirit. Similarly, when the narrator speaks the words “Prophet!” “thing of evil! —prophet still, if bird or devil!” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 15, line 1), here the poet is comparing the raven with the devil, demonic figure. “fiery eyes now burned into my bosom’s core” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 13, line 2), eyes of the bird are compared with fire. The use of symbols help the poem to express narrator’s emotions and feelings strongly. Pervasiveness of these symbols/metaphors relate the speaker’s mourning in death of his wife. Furthermore, we see the use of mythological allusion in the poem when the raven perches on the bust of Pallas just above the speaker’s chamber door (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 7, lines 5-6). Pallas is an allusion or reference to the Greek Goddess, Pallas Athena, the goddess of wisdom. The allusions connect us to the universal meaning that will help us to understand the use of language in the literary piece.

Another figurative language is hyperbole. It is an exaggeration of speech that is used for effect. It provokes and attracts the readers to give attention to the lines or sentences in the text. It also helps to express emotions and feelings of the character. In “The Raven”, it emphasizes the narrator’s mental state and his relationship with the raven. In the poem, the narrator claims that he is ‘Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before’ (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 5, line 2), “all my soul within me burning” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 6, line 1), “To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom’s core” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 13, line 2) all hyperbole of language use has a greater impact in the dramatic monologue. We feel and see the narrator’s agony in the power of his monologues.

And the occurrence of the alliteration (consonance and assonance) in the poem has a musical impact. Such as repetition of the consonance, the letter or sound /w/ in **while, weak, weary** (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 1), /f/ in **filled, fantastic, felt** (Stanza 3), **flung, flirt, flutter** (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 7), /d/ sound in **deep, darkness, doubting, dreaming, dreams** (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 5) make the poem rhythmic and influential. Equally, the use of assonance vowel sound /æ/ in **rapping, napping trapping**, and /e/ in **December, ember, chamber, remember** (Poe, *ibid*, stanzas 2-3) as well as /i/ in **fitting, sitting, still, seeming, dreaming, streaming** (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 18). The simile has another impact in “The Raven.” “On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 10, line 5), the poet compares the “dreams and hopes” to a bird’s flight. The narrator’s wife and friends all left him shattering his dreams and hopes. Similarly, tomorrow the raven will also take a flight and leave him alone.

Poe attempts to describe an occasion, the speaker and listener’s mood, emotions, pain, and grief in “The Raven” by using imageries craftily. They are seen vividly and subjected in the poem to signify the objects, things, feelings, and thoughts. For example, “dark night and ancient” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 8, lines 1-4), “as the king from the Night’s Plutonian shore” (Poe, *ibid*, stanza 8, line 5) imageries are used to describe the raven. Equally, raven’s image suggests the death, not only literally but also figuratively. The

sound of rapping and tapping created by the raven at night and the speaker whispering the word “Lenore” and echoing back, gives the gothic picture. And the images of “the silken”, “sad”, uncertain”, and “rustling of each curtain” provide the feelings of terror (Stanza 3, lines1-2). They invite readers to ponder upon the supernatural world.

Moreover, the use of onomatopoeia as such tapping, rapping sound, flung, flutter, croaking, etc. have created excitement with grotesque feelings at night. Effect of these words reign the speaker’s monologues that dominates the whole speech and grabs the readers’ attention until the end. The supremacy of dramatic monologue of the speaker has intensified the occasion in proper use of figurative languages with poetic structures.

Conclusion

“The Raven” is a powerful poem with adept use of the dramatic monologues. The frequency of using poetic structures through figurative languages has boosted the strength of dramatic monologue and made it pedagogically affluent. It will be useful for learners to analyze and understand any kind of poem or literary text through these poetic structures and figurative languages in ELT. The dramatic monologues have played a supreme role in the poem. The poet has used figurative languages and poetic structures intentionally to have a larger impact in the narrator’s dramatic monologue. The narrator, as a speaker, begins with his soliloquy and when he gets the audience/listener as raven he starts confronting it; however, most of the time the narrator’s monologue is evoked by the word “Nevermore.” The figurative language in monologue becomes significant in the occasion of confrontation between the raven and the speaker. The impact of language could be seen in the speech of the speaker and that leads to powerful dramatic monologues through melancholy, emotions, and time to time refrained by the sonorous words “Nevermore.” The use of poetic devices has doubled the effect in the mood and setting of the poem that give us gloomy eerie feelings.

In “The Raven” dramatic monologue begins from the main character’s soliloquy, thinking about his dead wife. He narrates his story as the speaker. The whole poem is about the speaker’s dramatic monologue that takes into height when a bleak bird, raven enters into his room in the dark night. The raven becomes the listener and the occasion of confrontation is reflected in their conversation. Poe has deliberately composed the dramatic monologues with the figurative use of language with poetic structures to bring its impact in the speech of the narrator. The narrator’s grief for the loss of his beloved wife forces him to begin with soliloquy to monologue that continues with the raven until the end. The features of monologues are fully justified in the poem from the beginning to the last. The speaker as a narrator starts his soliloquy, it changes into monologues when there is an entry of the raven, then raven becomes a listener.

The substantial use of figurative language and poetic structures has heightened the effect of monologues. Symbolic use of the word “Nevermore” has a profound effect on narrator’s mental state. It reminds him that his lost love Lenore will never come back to him. And death is inevitable. Repetition of words and sounds, use of allusion, hyperbole, simile and metaphors vitally play an important role to express sorrow and pain of the speaker through monologue. It is clear that use of language gives voices to the words. In the poem death has become a melancholy poetic topic to lead the narrator’s monologue. It has disclosed the narrator’s soul in front of the raven, thus his interaction with the raven meaningfully becomes a dramatic monologue. The narrator’s action, and the occasion of midnight, tapping and rapping sound at his door make him to rise from the subconscious mind to real world. The narrator is desperate to

find solace in the occasion of cold December night. However, it is not possible, one cannot ignore entirely the presence of death. The supremacy of dramatic monologue rules the application of words and phrase repetition. Each and every word is chosen prudently by the poet to create melancholy atmosphere.

The raven witnesses the speaker's misery however the raven refrains to answer his queries. We see the speaker's quoted internal monologue shifts to memory monologues. Self-torturing loneliness opens with the questions however his condition does not improve. His quoted monologue fails to get consolation in the occasion. He is obsessed with "Lenore" and "Nevermore" that create the overall atmosphere. The language unity of effect could be seen in the ABCBBB rhyme scheme. In every stanza at the end, we see the same phrase "Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore,'" that reflects the speaker's agitated soul. Poe is successful to produce a powerful dramatic monologue by using brilliantly poetic structures and figurative language in "The Raven." In the summing up, "The Raven" is a beautiful creation and masterpiece of the poet where we could see the great example of dramatic monologues.

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