Ideological Representations in Edger Allan Poe's Masterpiece The Raven: A Critical Stylistic Study

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Abstract

The current paper is conducted to examine the ideological manifestations framed by text-producer. The study utilizes Jefferies's (2010) analytical framework so as to scrutinize the textual features in the data under scrutiny. The selected data is a narrative poem by Edger Allan Poe. Data is analyzed according to two analytical tools, which are implying/assuming and prioritizing because the analysis is limited to examine the narrative discourse(the data) due to the aforementioned tools. The study aims at finding out answers for the research questions: i) what are the ideological consequences behind using particular linguistic choices. ii) How do the linguistic choices frame meaning. In accordance with the nature of the study, the researcher sets two hypotheses as follows: i) writers utilize certain linguistic choices to construct their own ideologies and ii) ideologies are very often expressed implicitly. After analyzing the available data, the study brings forth some conclusions as follows: 1) By the virtue of the narrative discourse, the analysis reveals the ideological narrative of existential hopelessness. 2) Highlighting "Lenore" as "the rare and radiant maiden" representing an ideological angle on mourning and the eternal eagerness for a lost ideal. 3) The implying of intense internal struggle stated by Poe delves into the ideology of human psychological horror. 4) No text is ideology-free; consequently, ideologies are ubiquitous in the data examined.

Key Words: (Critical Stylistics, Narrative Discourse, Ideology, Context).

التمثلات الأيديولوجية في رائعة إدغار آلان بو الغراب: دراسة أسلوبية نقدية

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الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص التمثلات الأيديولوجية التي يصوغها منتج النص. باستخدام إطار تحليلي لجيفريز (٢٠١٠)، تتناول الدراسة الميزات النصية في قصيدة "الغراب" السردية لإدغار آلان بو. يتم التحليل من خلال أداتين تحليليتين رئيسيتين هما: التضمين/الافتراض والصدارة، وذلك لفحص الخطاب السردي في البيانات المختارة. تهدف الدراسة إلى الإجابة عن الأسئلة البحثية التالية: ما هي العواقب الأيديولوجية لاستخدام اختيارات لغوية معينة؟ كيف تُشكِّل الاختيارات اللغوية المعنى؟ بناءً على طبيعة الدراسة، يضع الباحث فرضيتين. يستخدم الكتّاب اختيارات لغوية معينة لبناء أيديولوجياتهم الخاصة. غالباً ما يتم التعبير عن الأيديولوجيات بشكل ضمني. توصلت الدراسة إلى عدة استنتاجات: ١) يكشف الخطاب السردي عن سرد أيديولوجي لليأس الوجودي . ٢) تمثيل "لينور" كـ "الفتاة النادرة والمشعة" يمثل زاوية أيديولوجية حول الحداد والتوق الأبدي إلى المثالية المفقودة ٣) يظهر التضمين للصراع الداخلي المكثف الذي عبر عنه بو الأيديولوجية الخاصة بالرعب النفسي البشري. ٤) لا يوجد نص خالٍ من الأيديولوجيا؛ وبالتالي، فإن الأيديولوجيات المضمرة اُستعملت بكثرة في البيانات التي تم تحليلها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: (الأسلوبة النقدية، الخطاب السردي، الأيدولوجيا، السياق).

1. Introduction

Language is the means of sending effective and communicative messages. The speaker/writer's function is framed by language use. Language offers, to its users, a variety of choices so as to construct their ideas and socio-communicative intentions. So, ideas, and in particular those ideas that are shared by a community or society which are termed ideologies, are a very important aspect of the world that we live in, and they are, of course, communicated, reproduced, constructed and negotiated using language (Jeffries, 2010, p. 5). The pieces of information used by text

producer are shaped in accordance with the nature of the socio-cultural goals set via the writer/speaker. Thus, studying stylistic choices from a critical perspective is meant to highlight the significance of form-function mapping and to show how the linguistic features play a pivotal role in meaning making. According to Jeffries (2010, p.6), Critical stylistics is not brand-new, it rests upon discursive toolkit conceived by Fairclough (1989) and Fowler (1991). Jeffries is concerned with the stylistic choices and textual analysis, which are made by the text producer whether intentionally or not. Such a text conveys particular ideologies that influence the text recipient and the aim of using critical stylistic tools is to make the text recipient conscious of these ideologies, whether they alter their viewpoints or not (ibid).

The current study aims at finding out answers for the research questions: i) what are the ideological consequences behind using particular linguistic choices. ii) How do the linguistic choices frame meaning? iii) How does critical stylistics discover the underling power and ideologies of the text? In accordance with the nature of the study, the researcher sets two hypoteses as follows: i) writers utilize certain linguistic choices to construct their own ideologies and ii) ideologies are very often expressed implicitly. The scope of the study is limited to analyze Poe's masterpiece poem "the raven" as a literary discourse in terms of power and ideological manifestations that are represented through semantic and grammatical structures. Besides, the analysis is limited to adopt two tools of Jeffries's analytical modal (2010) of examining textual features from a critical stylistic standpoint, these tools are implying/assuming and prioritizing. As regards the value of the study, the study could be, hopefully, beneficial to

those who have interests in the arena of critical stylistics and discourse analysis and to those who attempt investigating literary discourses from critical angles.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Critical Stylistics

Critical Stylistics, developed by Prof. Lesley Jeffries at the University of Huddersfield, UK, is firmly grounded in stylistics and is a further development of Critical Discourse Analysis (Wodak and Meyer 2009). CDA "itself is not a method of research but a social movement of socio-politically discourse analysts using many different methods of analysis" (Van Dijk, 2011, p. 621).

According to Jeffries (٢٠١٠), critical stylistics examines texts in terms of their conceptual meaning in order to identify the ideological components of a work. It seeks to demonstrate how writings convey reality to the reader or hearer by analyzing both literary and nonliterary texts. Jeffries points out that a few flaws in using the CDA method for analysis. She has thus made an effort to establish a thorough methodology by building a methodical model of analysis that incorporates techniques from both critical and stylistic linguistics. In an effort to demonstrate how linguistic element is able to convey its ideology and she, also demonstrates how a text is capable of sending various functions (ibid, pp. 13–14).

Jeffries originally developed ten textual-conceptual functions (TCFs) of texts, like Naming and Describing or Representing Actions/ Events/States. Each TCF "refers to a feature of the text which is evident in

the lexis and grammar (thus textual) but performs a specific type of role in building the world of the text (hence conceptual)" (Jeffries, 2022, p. 7).

According to Coffey (2013, p. 30), CS integrates stylistics and discourse analysis to comprehend how authors integrate social themes and embed ideologies. CS creates a strong bond between these two, illuminating the function of language in relationships of dominance and power. People have diverse conversational styles, as explained by Tannen (1986, p. 63), which makes sense when speakers from different regions of the nation, ethnic groups, or religious beliefs converse with one another. They probably will not say things precisely as they intended to.

According to Tabbert (2016, p. 36), CS employs analytical methods to encapsulate the essence of texts that deal with power-related ideologies. According to Jeffries (2010, p. 12), critical linguistics and critical discourse have not offered a set of analytical tools for examining texts that are provided with ideologies. Accordingly, Jeffries (2010, p. 1) describes stylistics as a branch of linguistics that focuses on the methodical examination of language style and how it varies according on discussions, context, historical era, and author. One characteristic that sets one debater or confuter apart from another is their particular style. However, stylistics and linguistics are related in a way that allows stylistics to employ linguistic models, analytical methods, and approaches to help with the study of style in its broadest meaning. (ibid).

Giri (2004) defines style as a person's communication style that focuses on how the recipient will understand the message, how that will affect what is said, and how it is conveyed (p. 63).

2.2. Language and Ideology

The transmission of intents and meaning is language's ultimate objective. Thus, in order to reframe the reality, speakers and writers employ the alternatives that language affords them. The notion of ideology is mirrored in linguistic usage. Ideology is defined as "the tacit assumptions, beliefs, and value systems which are shared collectively by social groups" by Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 144). In Van Dijk's words (1995, p.243), an ideology is defined as "Basic systems of fundamental social cognitions and organizing the attitudes and other social representations shared by members of groups". As a result, they exert indirect influence on the mental images, or models, that serve as the foundation for discourse's contextual embedding and interpretation. Van Dijk (ibid) highlights the following presumptions to provide an overview of his approach to ideologies:

1) Cognitive ideologies; 2) Social ideologies; and 3) Sociocognitive ideologies 4) Ideologies are neither "real" nor "untrue." 5) Ideologies are broad and theoretical. 6) Ideologies can take on several forms depending on the circumstances (pp. 244-7).

"Assumptions, beliefs, and value system shared collectively by social class or groups" is how Simpson (1993) defines ideology. According

to this concept, the central component of any social class or organization is its ideology. Furthermore, the dominant religious, political, and other institutions that use certain language patterns to propagate their ideas are the source of a particular idea's domination. He suggests that a key component of essential rules is the notion that language propagates ideologies (pp.5-6).

2.3 Relating Social situation, Context and Discourse

Van Dijk (2008) shows that we speak about the relationships between language and social contexts in a variety of more or less informal ways. It follows that circumstances, or some of their characteristics, such as class, status, gender, ethnicity, age, power, networks, and communities of practice, are usually believed to have an impact on our speech and writing (p. 118).

Paltridge (2012) defines context as the interplay between the language and non-linguistic aspects of communication events (p. 242). Van Dijk (2009) defines contexts as "mental models of social situations of communication are in many ways interfaces between discourse and society" (p. 29).

The definitions of linguistic context and social, political, economic, historical, or context with respect to a certain region, such as "international context," are included in dictionaries. The underlying assumption in both situations is that context either directly affects a word, passage, meaning, or event or facilitates a (better) understanding of it. Thus, it is generally

accepted that statements made against individuals shouldn't be taken "out of context" (McGlone, 2005 as referenced in Van Dijk 2008, p. 14).

Here is a summary of some of the key principles of context by Van Dijk (ibid): Contexts can be defined as follows: a) participant constructions that are subjective; b) distinct experiences; c) mental models; d) schematic context models; e) contexts govern the production and understanding of language (pp. 16–7).

As regards to discourse, the term is vague and very often intersectioned with text, yet in a variety of cases, the underlying notion discourse is the main idea that language is built according to different forms that people's utterances follow when they take part in different domains of social life. Thus, the preliminary definition of a discourse as "a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)" (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 1). Discourse, according to Van Dijk (2014, p. 322), is most succinctly defined as "the mental model of the communicative situation as it is dynamically construed by the participants, the parameters of such contexts of course have a social foundation as they define the different discursive practices we call genres".

3. Research Methodology

In order to achieve the aims of the study, and to verify or refute its hypotheses, some procedures are considered in what follows:

1. A theoretical part, about critical stylistics and some related notions, is presented.
2. Adopting Jefferies's (2010) analytical toolkits to analyze data under question.
3. Selecting a genre, which is a poem as a literary discourse to be the data.
4. Analyzing selected stanzas to reveal the ideological representations and their effects.

4. The Analytical Part

4.1 Data Collection and Description

Discourse can be spoken or written is. As a result, the genre is an Allan Poe's poem, which is the chosen data for analysis. Poe's poetic collection "The Complete Poems" contains the poem "The Raven." To read the poem, click the following.
link:www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48860/the-raven-5964f5014d47a.

The poem is chosen because of the narrative style that was employed in its composition. Narrative discourse is rich of underlying meaning and is used by writers to communicate their views.

4.2. Model of the Analysis

The model used in this study is the textual feature analysis tools developed by Jefferies (2010). Since the study's inception, the researcher has excluded the other model tools in an effort to minimize duplication and irrelevant issues. As a result, as noted in Section 1, the study is constrained to using just two analytical techniques: implying/assuming and prioritizing in order to meet the study's objectives (for a comprehensive list of all the tools, see Jefferies 2010). The two tools used in analyzing the data to find the ideological representations are listed below:
(Taken from Tabbert &Ibrahim, 2023, pp. 29-30)

Textual-Conceptual Function Critical Stylistics	Textual-Conceptual Function Textual Stylistics	Formal Realisation/List of Analytical Tools Critical Stylistics	Form(s) in Textual Stylistics
Implying and Assuming	Alluding	Relates to Pragmatics (Levinson 1983): existential and logical presupposition, implicature according to the cooperative model of interaction by Grice (1975, 1978) (maxims of quality, quantity, relation, manner)	Definite noun phrases and of logical presuppositions Triggers of conventional implicatures
Prioritising	Prioritising	Relates to sentence structure: three ways in which the English language may prioritise elements of its structure: exploiting the information structure (clefting), transformational possibilities (active/passive voice) or subordination possibilities	Placement in syntactic structure (subordination or fronting)

5. Analysis and Discussion

According to Widdowson (1998) "analysis is not the systematic application of a theoretical model, but a rather less rigorous operation, in effect; a kind of ad hoc bricolage which takes from theory whatever concept comes usefully to hand (p. 137)". Accordingly, for the analysis to be explicable, it is divided into two parts in what follows:

5.1. Implying and assuming

Implying and Assuming are connected to the semantic notion of presupposition and the pragmatic idea of implicature. Implicitiry and

presupposition are two strategies for expressing meaning that extends beyond a proposition's explicit language. While inference of implicit meaning depends on the reader or hearer's understanding that a speaker or hearer has imparted an additional meaning by saying something that seems to be uncooperative on the surface, presupposition incorporates a range of acknowledged triggers (See Jeffries, 2014).

The analysis of some selected data is shown below:

Lines 1-2:

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

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

The phrase "midnight dreary" conjures up images of doom and devastation as well as a gloomy, menacing environment. Assuming the reader is aware of the fatigue frequently brought on by prolonged emotional or cerebral exertion, the term "weak and weary" describes a condition of both physical and mental depletion. Assuming the reader identifies such books with enigma and occult wisdom, "forgotten lore" presents information that is archaic and cryptic.

Ideological Representations:

Gothic Tradition: Gothic literary traditions emphasize themes of darkness, mystery, and the supernatural. The nocturnal setting and the reference to lost lore are consistent with these traditions. Romanticism: The narrator's exhaustion and reflection point to a romantic concern with personal experience and emotional complexity.

Lines 25-26:

"Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,

Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;"

"Darkness" suggests an unfamiliar and maybe dangerous environment, supposing that the reader equates darkness with unpredictability and terror. If the reader comprehends that "wondering, fearing, doubting, and dreaming" are reactions to the unknown and the paranormal, then this list of strong emotions is identified.

Ideological Representations:

Existentialism: The narrator's struggle with deep-seated worries and uncertainties is indicative of existential themes of facing uncertainty and looking for purpose in life. Romanticism: The focus on strong, unique feelings is in line with the values of emotional depth and firsthand experience.

Lines 37-38:

"Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore."

"Flirt and flutter" suggests a rapid, almost comical movement, presuming the reader is able to picture the raven making a theatrical debut. "Stately Raven of the saintly days of yore" elucidates a creature with a significant and ancient presence, presuming that the reader is aware of the literary and folkloric significance of ravens.

Ideological Representations:

Supernatural: The raven's appearance and its eons-old associations fit nicely with Gothic literature's supernatural themes, which emphasize mystery and the otherworldly.

Symbolism: Romantic and Gothic obsessions with symbols and their deeper meanings are reflected in the raven's status as a symbol of the past and impending doom.

Lines 45-46:

"Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—

_Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"

Assuming the reader understands that these descriptions are meant to arouse dread and reverence, the words "ghastly grim and ancient raven" depict a strange, ancient presence. Assuming the reader understands the allusion to Pluto, the Roman deity of the underworld, "Nightly shore" and "Night's Plutonian shore" refer to a place connected to darkness and the underworld.

Ideological Representations:

Death and the hereafter: Common themes in Gothic literature, allusions to the underworld and the ancient nature of ravens draw attention to death and the hereafter. mystery and the unknown: The ideological emphasis on mystery and humanity's obsession with the unknown are highlighted by the usage of legendary and ominous imagery.

Lines 79-80:

"Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

_Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!"

"Seraphim" suggests a celestial, divine presence, supposing that the reader recognizes these as angels of high rank. Assuming that the reader is aware of its meaning from ancient literature, "Nepenthe" alludes to a legendary concoction that causes regret.

Ideological Representations:

Religious Imagery: Romantic and Gothic traditions of fusing the divine with human experience are reflected in the usage of Seraphim and nepenthe, which combine religious and mythical aspects. Escape from Grief: Nepenthe's request that people forget Lenore emphasizes themes of escape and the difficulty in coping with deep sadness, emphasizing the emotional suffering and fragility of people.

Lines 101-102:

"Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."

_Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

Assuming the reader interprets Lenore as a representation of perfect, lost love, the phrase "rare and radiant maiden" alludes to an idealized, even ethereal figure. Assuming the reader understands the finality and futility in the raven's warning, "Nevermore" alludes to the impossibility of achieving this objective.

Ideological Representations:

Idealized Love: Romantic ideas of idealized and unachievable love are reflected in the image of Lenore as a flawless, heavenly creature. Irreversible Loss: by emphasizing themes of irreversible loss and the pointlessness of yearning for things that can never be recovered, the raven highlights existential grief and human frailty.

By dissecting these lines with an emphasis on implying and assuming, we can see how deeply Poe explored existential, Gothic, and Romantic themes. The word choices create a complex tapestry of horror, sadness, and the paranormal that reflects larger ideological concerns about the frailty of people, the pursuit of meaning, and the unavoidable nature of loss.

5.2. Prioritizing

According to Jeffries (2010), there are a number of techniques for prioritizing information in English phrases, and each one has the effect of emphasizing some parts of the phrase above others. According to Jeffries (ibid), there are three ways to prioritize things in English: subordination, sentence structure changes, and information structure organization. Now, let's concentrate on a few crucial lines from Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" and examine their ideological representations as well as their use of the critical stylistic technique of prioritizing.(For further information, see Jefferies' 2010 modal.)

Selected Lines for Analysis

1. "Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,"

2. "And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain"

3. "Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,"

4. "Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—"

5. "Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"

6. "And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor / Shall be lifted—nevermore!"

Line 1: "Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary," Emphasizing the Time and State: "Once upon a midnight dreary" establishes a dark and unsettling atmosphere from the outset by emphasizing the time at the beginning of the line. "Weak and weary": The narrator's status is highlighted, emphasizing both bodily and emotional tiredness, which sets the reader up to recognize the narrator's precarious situation.

Ideological Representations:

Gothic Atmosphere: The description's gloomy tone and its emphasis on midnight create a feeling of mystery and foreboding. Human Vulnerability: Romantic literature's primary themes of human weakness and emotional struggle are reflected in the narrator's fatigue.

Line 2: "And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain"

Sensual and Emotional Detail: "Silken, sad, uncertain rustling": Adjectives that imply a gloomy and anxious mood put the sensory details front and center.

"Purple curtain": By highlighting the rich yet ominous environment, the particular description of the color and substance of the curtain adds to the scene's depth.

Ideological Representations:

Emotional Landscape: In keeping with Romanticism's emphasis on the unique emotional experience, the narrator's interior condition is vividly depicted via the prioritizing of sensory details and feelings. Mystery and Foreboding: Two essential components of Gothic fiction are suspense and impending disaster, which are enhanced by the ominous rustling of the curtains.

Line 3: "Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,"

Emphasis on Action and Emotion: "Deep into that darkness peering": The narrator emphasizes his or her contact with the unknown by emphasizing the action of staring into the darkness. "Wondering, fearing": The narrator's strong emotions are highlighted, highlighting her extreme curiosity and terror.

Ideological Representations:

Investigating the Unknown: The Gothic concept of delving into the unknown and facing anxieties is reflected in the emphasis placed on staring into the darkness. Psychological Tension: The Gothic and Romantic narratives' fundamental themes of psychological tension and dread are highlighted by the emphasis on wondering and worrying.

Line 4: "Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—"

The emphasis is on descriptive words that portray the raven as a frightening and enduring creature. The description reads, "Ghastly grim and ancient Raven." Adding to the impression that the raven is departing from a strange and otherworldly realm is the emphasized phrase "Nightly shore."

Ideological Representations:

Mysterious Elements: Gothic literature is known by its spooky and foreboding elements, which are reinforced by the raven's description being prioritized. Timelessness and Mysteries: The poem's ominous mood is further enhanced by the ancient and nocturnal characteristics that highlight the raven's timeless and mysterious features.

Line 5: "Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"

Anguish and Searching for Solace: "Is there—is there balm in Gilead?" The narrator's persistent inquiry highlights her frantic yearning for comfort and healing. The appeal, "I implore!" is stressed, emphasizing how urgent and frantic the narrator is.

Ideological Representations:

Desperation and Hopelessness: By emphasizing the need for balm, the author highlights themes of desperation and the need for consolation, which in turn reflects existential misery and human frailty. Religious Allusion: The allusion to Gilead has religious overtones, implying a more in-depth ideological investigation of faith and the pursuit of spiritual solace.

Line 6: "And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor / Shall be lifted—nevermore!"

Finality and Despair: "My soul from out that shadow" highlights the narrator's unavoidable misery by highlighting the soul's connection to the shadow. "Nevermore!" The last word is highlighted, emphasizing how dismal and final the narrator's situation is.

Ideological Representations:

Existential Despair: Existential themes of unavoidable pain and the absence of salvation are reflected in the emphasis placed on the soul's captivity and the finality of "nevermore."

Gothic Fatalism: The focus on the immovable shadow is consistent with Gothic literature's emphasis on gloom and fatalism. Through a prioritized analysis of these chosen lines, we can see how Poe deliberately highlights particular aspects to create a mood of supernatural dread, mystery, and despair. This reflects larger ideological concerns with existential sadness, the unknown, and human frailty.

6. Conclusions

The study draws the following conclusions in light of the collected data, data analysis, and discussion:

1. Poe's stylistic decisions help to build intricate ideas.

2. The writer's personal views can be revealed through the use of the accepted techniques of implying/assuming and prioritizing to reshape the readers' world.

3. Emphasizing allusions to mythical and theological themes, such as "Seraphim" and "balm in Gilead," make the text ideologically framed.

4. Poe emphasizes the notion of human weakness via implicating.

5. By the virtue of the narrative discourse, the analysis reveals the ideological narrative of existential hopelessness

6. Highlighting "Lenore" as "the rare and radiant maiden" representing an ideological angle on mourning and the eternal eagerness for a lost ideal.

7. The implying of intense internal struggle stated by Poe delves into the ideology of human psychological horror.

8. No text is ideology-free; consequently, ideologies are ubiquitous in the data examined.

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