

Pedagogical Stylistic analysis of “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin

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Abstract:

This study is mainly devoted to making a pedagogical stylistic analysis tool of analyzing the selected short fiction “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin. The essential purpose of the study is to analyze the text of the short literary work “The Story of an Hour” particularly lexical categories, (Noun, Verb, Adjective, and Adverb), figures of speech, characters, point of view, and allegorical elements. Additionally, the study is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Mainly, it contains numerical and analytical data. Moreover, The analysis has proved that there are multiple things that, both EFL and ESL learners can study from just one short story including; the subject matter of the story, lexical categories, figures of speech, allegorical elements, style, characters, point of view, author’s writing technique, and social values as well as social and political status in his/her community. In addition to that, The Story of an Hour has revealed the aesthetic value of analyzing texts literary work. Furthermore, throughout the analysis the researcher has found out that short stories are the authentic materials

that teachers can apply in EFL/ESL classrooms in addition to pedagogical stylistics analysis tools. Further, this research gives some implements related to pedagogical stylistics that literature is equally beneficial for both teachers and learners because it provides authentic materials for the learning process and helps to build language skills.

Keywords: pedagogical, Literature, Stylistics Analysis, Short Story, Lexical categories.

تحليل الأسلوب التربوي لـ «قصة ساعة» للقاص الأمريكية (كيت شوبان)

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مستخلص:

هذه دراسة تحليلية، أسلوبية تربوية لتحليل قصة قصيرة مختارة بعنوان «قصة ساعة» للكاتبة الأمريكية (كيت شوبان). والغرض الأساسي من الدراسة هو تحليل نص هذا العمل الأدبي القصير من خلال تحليل (الاسم، والفعل، والصفات، والظروف)، وشخصيات القصة، وجهة النظر، وعناصر الاستعارة. والدراسة ذات طبيعة كمية ونوعية إذ تحتوي على بيانات عديدة وتحليلية. وقد أثبت التحليل أن هناك العديد من الفوائد التي يمكن لدارسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية الاستفادة من دراسة قصة قصيرة واحدة فقط لهذا النوع من الأعمال الأدبية، بما في ذلك؛ موضوع القصة وعناصر المجاز، والأسلوب، والشخصيات وتقنيات الكتابة لدى المؤلف مع الإشارة إلى القيم الاجتماعية والسياسية في المجتمع المعني. وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، كشفت (قصة ساعة) عن القيمة الجمالية لتحليل نصوص العمل الأدبي؛ فقد وجد الباحث من خلال التحليل أن القصص القصيرة هي مواد أصلية يمكن للمدرسين استخدامها في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية / اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية باستخدام أدوات تحليل الأسلوب التربوي. و يقترح هذا البحث بعض الأدوات المتعلقة بالأسلوب التربوي التي يمكن أن تفيد الأدب، وبنفس القدر تفيد المعلمين والدارسين، إذ توفر مواد أصلية تساهم في عملية التعليم والتعلم وبناء المهارات اللغوية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تربوي، أدب، تحليل الأسلوب، القصة القصيرة، الأساليب المعجمية.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this research paper is to analyze the text of the short fiction "The Story of an Hour" by American author Kate Chopin. Analyzing literary works encourages students who study English language as second or foreign

language to improve their skills. It is commonly known that, English learners commit many errors and follow difficult techniques in learning English language, this phenomenon has been noticed closely, when learners entails one of four skills of English language, therefore, this paper deals with analyzing the text of the short story “The Story of an Hour” in particular lexical categories, allegorical elements. Why we use short fiction lies in Edgar Allan Poe’s definition of short-story (1846). He defines it “as a narrative that can be read at one sitting of from one-half hour to two hours, and that is limited to ‘a certain unique or single effect,’ to which every detail is subordinate”. Moreover, it intends to investigate how English language learners benefit from learning English language through analyzing texts of short stories. In addition to that, what skill(s) of English language they better improve during their learning English through short literary fiction.

According to Yang (2009)⁽¹⁾ Short stories are considered as good resources that can be used in language classrooms.

Butler (2002)⁽²⁾ used the phrase “language through literature” (p. 38) this clears that literature is used as a medium to teach English or any other target language which you want to learn. In literature a teacher has to teach poems, short stories, novels, dramas and poetry.

According to Leech (1969)⁽³⁾, stylistics is the study of the use of language in literature. In stylistics, one may focus on the syntactic, phonological, lexical, semantic, and graphological elements of style (Leech and Short, 1981). Fakeye & Temitayo, (2013, p. 51)⁽⁴⁾ State that, the goal of

the stylistic approach is to "decode meaning and structural features of literary texts by identifying linguistic patterns in the text". Further, Pedagogical stylistics enables a student to interpret the stylistic dimension of text. Its basic principle is to make students understand the use of language in the text that they are supposed to study. It also teaches students how the language of literature is different from everyday language.

2. Literature Review

There are many studies, and academic papers discussed the issue of learning English language through literature and pedagogical stylistic analysis tools.

Pedagogical stylistics deals with the practice of teaching stylistics in the classroom. According to Clark (2007)⁽⁵⁾, Pedagogical stylistics is an emerging technique used in the classroom to enhance students' language skills and taught them how to analyze literary text at many levels which includes analyzing lexical categories, syntax and phonology and also the relation between different clauses and sentences.

Saira (2022)⁽⁶⁾ intend to find the effectiveness of pedagogical stylistics in the development of English language skills. S/he also concerns with the implementation of tools of pedagogical stylistics in teaching literature and how these are helpful in developing English language skills. Moreover, s/he comes up with the analysis of the short story *A Pair of Jeans* and this analysis is made up to find the word categories, vocabulary and figure of speech. Also they show the importance of short stories

and how this genre makes a student efficient in reading, writing, listening and speaking English. S/he concludes that the tools of pedagogical stylistics enhance the ability of students to analyze and interpret the literary text and its contribution in the classroom.

Özlem (2021)⁽⁷⁾ explores the effectiveness of digital short stories for English preparatory school students' vocabulary knowledge development. Analyzing the results of this study showed that listening to and reading to digital short stories enhanced their vocabulary repertoire. The digital story application encouraged students to read a lot and make them more curious about different language points. Different kinds of stories allowed students to recognize other cultures and learn more about them. Students could observe different perspectives such as human values, morality and lifestyle varieties that influence their personality positively, thanks to various topics in short stories. After the treatment phase of the experimental group, students made presentations in skills and lessons. Students portrayed more self confidence and self-control while using language thanks to vocabulary gained from short stories.

Zainab (2019)⁽⁸⁾ devoted to making a stylistic analysis of four selected short stories. The analysis has confirmed that both of them are distinctive in a certain way in revealing meanings and reinforcing the aesthetic value showing a different impact on literature for many years. The findings of the presented study above, this research has attempted to stylistically analyze selected short stories by O. Henry and

O' Connor. The analysis has been carried out by using two different short stories by each one of them; to state the, there are different linguistic and stylistic categories but the study has limited its analysis to figures of speech besides other techniques, concentrating on certain important devices including deviation, foregrounding, parallelism in addition to their literary effect on meaning and interpretation of literary passages supported by literary criticism. These devices or categories suggested by Leech and Short can be applied by anyone who is interested in style and stylistics of all kinds of literary texts. This subject has been tackled by other researchers but in most of them is limited to one author of whom this research has dealt with and to other stylistic devices. It agrees with the previous studies in some aspects and differs with them in terms of other aspects that they haven't come over them.

Rafiu (2014)⁽⁹⁾ Literature is the media of teaching and learning authentic language. The language of literature is well organized and wonderful choice of diction. Language generally represents literature. The recent historical positions regarding the use of literature in English language teaching, and the inclusion of literary texts may foster the development of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking skills. This is the reason why, he argues for the use of literature for language teaching purposes. More important, he claims consistently that the use of literature for language teaching purposes can promote literary understanding and general linguistic awareness among teachers and learners.

2.1. General overview of author and story

2.1.1. Author's Biography

Kate Chopin ⁽¹⁰⁾ was born Kate O'Flaherty in St. Louis, Missouri in 1850 to Eliza and Thomas O'Flaherty. At age five and a half, she was sent to The Sacred Heart Academy, a Catholic boarding school in St. Louis. Where the nuns were known for their intelligence, and were top of her class. She won medals. After graduation she wrote in her diary advice on flirting, "just keep asking 'What do you think?'". Moreover, in 1870, at the age of twenty, she married Oscar Chopin, twenty-five, and the son of a wealthy cotton-growing family in Louisiana. He was French catholic in background, as was Kate. Furthermore, she was immediately successful and wrote short stories about people she had known in Louisiana. Her first novel, *At Fault*, was published in 1890, followed by two collections of her short stories. As a writer, Kate Chopin wrote very rapidly and without much revision. She usually worked in her home. She was terribly hurt by the reaction to the book and in the remaining five years of her life she wrote only a few short stories, and only a small number of those were published.

2.1.2. A brief overview of the selected short Story "The Story of an Hour"

"The Story of an Hour" is a short story written by Kate Chopin it was published in *Vogue* magazine in 1894. In addition to that it explores the emotional journey of Louise Mallard after she learns that her husband has died in a train crash, Louise is overcome with grief. As a result

she returns to her room alone, Louise's grief transforms into joy, as she realizes that Brently's death will free her from her repressive marriage. Moreover, an overjoyed Louise exits her room. Upon seeing her husband returning home, having been nowhere near the accident, she dies of a heart attack.

3. Materials and methods

This current research is attempts to use pedagogical stylistic analysis tool to analyze the text of Kate Chopin's short story "The Story of an Hour". The selected short story for analysis has been chosen from Kate Chopin literary work; to determine how the use of literature is always favorable source for teaching and learning. Since this genre gives all types of information about tradition, culture, real life incidents and many more. So this genre is in demand to be used in the classroom for learning English language. Moreover, it stylistically analyzes the text, categorized the words, parts of speech, and figures of speech.

3.1. Analysis of Words

When learners get exposure to a literary text and add to it their prior knowledge, they can easily improve their language skills; analyze, identify the style used in a text, lexical categories and cultural competence. Moreover, they would be able to differentiate between words wither this word is noun; verb, adjective or it is an adverb. In addition to that, learners would be able to recognize the lexical relation and so on. The following tables show the analysis and classification of some vocabulary used in The

Story of an Hour.

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
Mallard	Affect	Knowing	Gently
Heart	Break	Possible	Away
Trouble	Take	Great	Down
News	Reveal	Veiled	Faintly
Death	Conceal	Near	Even
Josephine	Tell	Receive	Fearfully
Hint	Lead	Careful	Tumultuously
Half	Kill	Tender	Never
Husband	Assure	Sad	Absolutely
Friend	Hasten	Sudden	Yet
Richard	Forestall	Unsolved	Sometimes
Newspaper	Paralyze	Strongest	Often

3.2. Discussion of the result found in the table

It's really impressive and beneficial to experience and examine such elements and multiple issues through just a one short story: including lexical categories, Language skills, allegorical elements and other areas of linguistics; "The Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin proves that the domain of literature worth to be investigated in terms of stylistic analysis of short literary texts. Moreover, after

both teachers and learners process learning and teaching activity through short fiction, they mainly explore numerous information throughout the analysis of the story such as (142) nouns, (78) verbs, (71) adjectives and (20) adverbs. Absolutely, there is no doubt that learning English language through literature particularly the analysis of short literary works' text is the chosen method that should be concentrated on. Additionally, it is imaginable (311) lexical categories just in sitting. Further, EFL learners can easily acknowledge the subject matter of the story, social values; author's writing technique and many more issues. The use of nouns and adjectives are more than other lexical categories, to explore many things such as writer's social and political status in his/ her community through the echo of the vocabulary used. Therefore, literature sources specifically short stories which confirmed that short fictions are the most convenient material that a teacher can bring to the ESL/EFL classroom. Moreover, The Story of an Hour is rich with vocabulary, figurative language and beneficial in language developing skills.

4. Figures of speech

A figure of speech is a part of language that gives a separate meaning from its actual definition to bring a dramatic change. As in stories writers use many figures of speech. By reading, a student learns to use and identify figures of speech and it gives benefit to a learner. To beautify his/her writing student can also make effective use of figures of speech. There are many figures of speech used by Kate Chopin in her story "The Story of an Hour"

Thus EFL learners can experience something new and different which enhance learner's enjoyment. Some of the figurative language used in the story is metaphor, simile, and paradox. Moreover, in "The Story of an Hour" the author depicts the ideology of marriage in a negative view through the main character. This ideology ripples throughout the story, bringing to life the hardships and bondage that wives often unknowingly endured during the late 1800's.

4.1. Structure and Style

In "The Story of an Hour," Chopin employs specific structural and stylistic techniques to heighten the drama of the hour. The structure Chopin has chosen for "The Story of an Hour" fits the subject matter perfectly. The story is short, made up of a series of short paragraphs, many of which consist of just two or three sentences. Likewise, the story covers only one hour in Louise Mallard's life—from the moment she learns of her husband's death to the moment he unexpectedly returns alive. The short, dense structure mirrors the intense hour Louise spends contemplating her new independence. Just as Louise is completely immersed in her wild thoughts of the moment, we are immersed along with her in this brief period of time. This story can be read quickly, but the impact it makes is powerful. Chopin surprises us first with Louise's elated reaction when she first murmurs "free" to herself. She shocks us again at the conclusion when she dies upon Brently's return. The "heart disease" mentioned at the end of the story echoes the "heart trouble" discussed at the

beginning, intensifying the twist ending and bringing the story to a satisfying close.

4.2. Characters Analysis

The Story of an Hour composed of four characters

4.2.1. Louise Mallard

Louise is the main character (protagonist) in the short story. She is the wife of Brently and the sister of Josephine. Moreover, she is young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength. Further, she has heart problems.

4.2.2. Brently Mallard

Brently is Louise's husband, and he is Richard's friend. At the beginning of the story, he is presumed dead from an accident on the railroad. He is a kind and loving husband, but his presence still oppresses his wife. He walks on the door at the end of the story, having been far away from the scene of the accident.

4.2.3. Josephine

Josephine is Louise's sister. She is the one who tells Louise that Brently has died. Josephine worries for her sister because Louise has a heart condition. While she was locked in her room, Josephine frets that Louise might make herself sick.

4.2.4. Richards

Richards is Brently's friend. He is the person who first saw Brently's name listed in the newspaper as a casualty of the accident.

4.2.5. Point of view

The Story of an Hour is written in an omniscient third

person point of view, an outside narrator relate the story and the reader is privy to the thoughts and actions of more than one character, although the majority of the story focuses on the experiences of Mrs. Mallard.

4.2.6. Paradox : Revealed in half-concealing (Paragraph 2).

Joy that kills (Paragraph 23), the phrase is also ironic, since the doctors mistakenly believe that Mrs. Mallard was happy to see her husband alive.

Metaphor/Personification: Storm of grief (Paragraph 3)
Physical exhaustion that haunted her body (Paragraph 4)
Breath of rain (Paragraph 5)
Clouds that had met (Paragraph 6)
Thing that was approaching to possess her (Paragraph 10)

4.2.7. Alliteration: Song which someone was singing (Paragraph 5) the sounds, the scents (Paragraph 9)

Oxymoron Monstrous joy (Paragraph 12).

4.2.8. Simile She carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory (Paragraph 20).

5. Conclusion

Teaching English language through literature by the use of pedagogical stylistic analysis is what teachers can bring with them to classroom, since it enables students to analyze literary works. Moreover, this research aims to analyze the text of the short fiction “The Story of an Hour”. After applying the anatomy tools of analysis on the text of The Story of an Hour, students acknowledge that how such a short story helps in developing English language skills; by means of incidents happening in the story, knowledge

of grammar, lexical categories, functional words, lexical relations and story's subject matter. In addition to that, characters, point of, layout, allegorical elements and figurative language. Furthermore, The Story of an Hour is rich with vocabulary, simple language, shorter in length, easy to read (one sitting), theme, also they learn many aspects related to English language, and most of all they can easy analyze the text of the story. Furthermore, Short literary fiction would definitely help an English language learner to increase his\her language skills. Particularly, the anatomical dissection that applied on the text of The Story of an Hour by using pedagogical stylistic analysis provides students with a great opportunity to learn the English language; it sharpens their critical thinking; also learners pick new words and new concepts more quickly. Additionally, this research gives some implements related to pedagogical stylistics that literature is equally beneficial for both teacher and a learner because it provides authentic material for the learning process and helps to build language skills. And these language skills would be useful in personal life as well as in professional life. To conclude it can be said that literature in particular short stories increases student language proficiency and fluency because it gives knowledge of words, vocabulary and also helps a learner to get broader perspective and students must be able to use English.

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(9) **Rafiu (2014)** Literature is the media of teaching and learning authentic language.

(10) **Chopin, Kate.** See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kate_Chopin

Appendix

The Story of an Hour

By Kate Chopin

Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death. It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half concealing. Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, with Brently Mallard's name leading the list of "killed." He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message. She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her. There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair. Into this she sank, pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her soul. She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which someone was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves. There were patches

of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window. She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and shook her, as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams. She was young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength. But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. It was not a glance of reflection, but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought. There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But she felt it, creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the color that filled the air. Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will—as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself a little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under her breath: "free, free, free!" The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulses beat fast, and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body. She did not stop to ask if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. A clear and exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial. She knew

that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome. There would be no one to live for her during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination. And yet she had loved him—sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love the unsolved mystery, count for in the face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being! “Free! Body and soul free!” she kept whispering. Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to the keyhole, imploring for admission. “Louise, open the door! I beg; open the door—you will make yourself ill. What are you doing, Louise? For heaven’s sake open the door.” “Go away. I am not making myself ill.” No; she was drinking in a very elixir of life through that open window her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own. She breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long. She arose at length and

opened the door to her sister's importunities. There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory. She clasped her sister's waist, and together they descended the stairs. Richards stood waiting for them at the bottom. Someone was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, composedly carrying his grip-sack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of the accident, and did not even know there had been one. He stood amazed at Josephine's piercing cry; at Richards' quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife. But Richards was too late. When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease—of joy that kills. Copyright © by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. All rights reserved.

Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour" originally published 1894.