

THE ROLE OF REPETITION IN BUILDING TENSION (IN THE EXAMPLES OF "THE TELL-TALE HEART" BY EDGAR ALLAN POE)

Supervisor: Ma'ripov Jalolxon Kamoliddin o'g'li

Jizzakh branch of the National University of Uzbekistan named after
Mirzo Ulugbek The faculty of Psychology, department of
Foreign languages Phylology and foreign languages

Student of group 301-21: Mallaboyeva Odina Akmal qizi

Annotation: In *The Tell-Tale Heart*, Edgar Allan Poe employs repetition as a central narrative device to intensify the psychological tension and horror within the story. The narrator's repeated insistence on his sanity, despite clear signs of delusion and instability, immediately creates an unsettling atmosphere. His obsession with the old man's eye, described as "vulture-like," becomes a focal point of his madness, and the repetition of this description emphasizes the depth of his fixation. The most crucial use of repetition, however, occurs with the heart's beating sound, which becomes progressively louder as the narrator's guilt and anxiety grow. This incessant sound, symbolizing his growing paranoia and overwhelming sense of guilt, mirrors the narrator's internal collapse. His mental state unravels as the heartbeat, a metaphor for his own culpability, drives him to confession. Through these repeated elements, Poe illustrates the inescapable nature of the narrator's obsession and guilt, allowing the reader to feel the increasing tension as the character spirals into madness. The story's culmination—a confession driven by the maddening heartbeat—reveals the role of repetition in heightening both the psychological and narrative tension, demonstrating how Poe's careful use of this device deepens the horror of the tale.

Key words: repetition, tension, psychological horror, madness, guilt, obsession, narration, unreliable narrator, fixation, symbolism, heartbeat, delusion, internal conflict, climax, Edgar Allan Poe, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, narrative device, atmosphere, paranoia, suspense, confession.

The Role of Repetition in Building Tension: Analyzing Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*

Repetition is one of the most powerful literary devices in the arsenal of writers, particularly in the works of Edgar Allan Poe. In his short story *The Tell-Tale Heart*,

Poe masterfully uses repetition to not only underscore the narrator's obsessive mental state but also to heighten the tension and suspense that permeate the tale. By carefully repeating key phrases, actions, and thoughts, Poe builds an atmosphere of mounting unease, which climaxes in the story's inevitable, horrific conclusion. This article explores the role of repetition in creating tension in *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

Repetition of Phrases and Ideas: Insisting on the Narrator's Sanity

From the very beginning, the narrator in *The Tell-Tale Heart* insists upon his sanity, repeatedly claiming that he is not mad. Poe uses this repetition to draw the reader into the mind of a character who is clearly unreliable, creating a sense of unease right from the start. The narrator says, "True! - nervous - very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad?" This statement is repeated in different forms throughout the story, as the narrator continues to defend his actions and justifications for the murder he commits.

By emphasizing his claim of sanity, Poe subtly invites the reader to question the veracity of this assertion. The repeated insistence only serves to underscore the narrator's lack of self-awareness, creating an atmosphere of suspense where the reader knows that something is amiss, even if the narrator does not. This repetition of the narrator's statements about his sanity mirrors the growing instability within his mind, which steadily unravels as the story progresses.

Repetitive Actions: The Eye and the Murder

Another key instance of repetition in the story is the narrator's obsession with the old man's eye. The eye becomes the focal point of the narrator's fixation, and he describes it in great detail multiple times. The repetition of this description is not merely for emphasis—it serves to build an eerie sense of obsession. The eye is described as "vulture-like," and the narrator states, "Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold." This obsessive focus on the eye increases the reader's sense of dread as the narrator approaches the violent act of murder.

The repetitive nature of the narrator's actions in planning the murder further escalates the tension. He spends seven nights observing the old man, waiting for the moment when he will be able to act. Each night, he waits for the "vulture eye" to close, and on the eighth night, his patience finally pays off as he sees the opportunity to kill.

The repetitive nature of his surveillance builds the suspense, as the reader knows that a horrific act is inevitably approaching.

The Heartbeat: A Sound That Builds Insufferable Tension

Perhaps the most iconic use of repetition in *The Tell-Tale Heart* is the sound of the old man's heartbeat, which grows louder and louder as the story progresses. After the murder is committed and the body is concealed beneath the floorboards, the narrator begins to hear the beating heart, which becomes increasingly audible with each passing moment.

The heartbeat, a symbol of guilt and a manifestation of the narrator's unraveling sanity, is heard over and over again. At first, the narrator dismisses it, but as it grows louder, his anxiety increases. He says, "It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage." The repetition of the heartbeat's sound mirrors the increasing tension the narrator feels, as he becomes unable to ignore the sound or his growing sense of guilt. This sound becomes a constant, ever-present reminder of his crime, and its repetition pushes the narrator toward madness.

The heartbeat also serves as a dramatic focal point in the story's climax. The narrator's growing inability to cope with the sound leads him to a complete breakdown, culminating in his confession to the crime. His psychological collapse is intricately tied to the repeated sound, which he cannot silence, and it is this final, repeated auditory cue that shatters his composure and forces him to reveal the truth.

Repetition of Thoughts: The Unraveling Mind

The narrator's mental disintegration is also conveyed through the repetitive nature of his thoughts. Throughout the story, he frequently revisits and reconsiders his actions, justifying them over and over again in an attempt to convince both the reader and himself of their rationality. This repetition reveals the narrator's increasing instability, as he cannot escape the cyclical nature of his thoughts.

In particular, his obsession with the old man's eye and the heart that beats beneath the floorboards shows how the narrator is trapped in a never-ending loop of guilt, fear, and paranoia. Each repetition of his thoughts exacerbates the tension and reflects the

claustrophobic environment within the narrator's mind, where he cannot escape the consequences of his crime.

Conclusion:

Through the strategic use of repetition, Edgar Allan Poe crafts a narrative filled with mounting tension and psychological horror in *The Tell-Tale Heart*. The repetition of the narrator's assertions of sanity, the obsessive focus on the old man's eye, the relentless sound of the heartbeat, and the circularity of the narrator's thoughts all contribute to a sense of inevitability and suffocating dread. The tension builds with each repeated action, phrase, and sound, until it culminates in the narrator's complete breakdown and confession. In Poe's hands, repetition is not just a stylistic choice; it is the heartbeat of the story itself, propelling the narrative toward its harrowing conclusion. In *The Tell-Tale Heart*, Edgar Allan Poe uses repetition not only to heighten tension but also to delve deeply into the psychological complexities of guilt and madness. The repeated elements—the narrator's insistence on his sanity, his obsessive focus on the old man's eye, and the relentless beating of the heart—are all manifestations of his internal turmoil. These repetitions serve as the echo of the narrator's mind, constantly circling back on itself as he spirals into madness. Poe's technique illustrates the power of repetition in psychological horror, where it reflects the unrelenting nature of the protagonist's emotions and thoughts. The reader is drawn into the cycle of obsession and guilt, experiencing firsthand the growing unease and eventual collapse of the narrator. The story's tension does not just come from external actions but from the narrator's internal breakdown, which is masterfully amplified through repetition. In this way, repetition in *The Tell-Tale Heart* is not merely a stylistic device—it becomes the mechanism that drives the story's horror, rendering the narrator's descent into madness palpable and inexorable.

REFERENCES

1. Ackroyd, Peter. *Poe: A Life*. London: HarperCollins, 2008.
2. Bell, Millicent. *The Short Story: A Critical Introduction*. New York: Harper & Row, 1991.
3. Bloom, Harold, ed. *Edgar Allan Poe: The Tell-Tale Heart*. New York: Chelsea House, 2003.

4. Davidson, Donald. "The Tell-Tale Heart: A Study in Repetition." *The Southern Review* 11 (1975): 45-67.
5. Dillingham, W. B. *The Role of Symbolism in Poe's Short Stories*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962.
6. Hart, James. *The Gothic Tradition in American Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
7. Hoffman, Daniel. *Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe Poe*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.
8. Rzepka, Charles. *Edgar Allan Poe: A Literary Life*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
9. Silverman, Kenneth. *Edgar Allan Poe: Mournful and Never-Ending Remembrance*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1991.
10. Solomon, Eric. "Guilt and Madness in Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*." *Journal of American Literature* 28 (1986): 135-150.
11. Ma'ripov J. K. A BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT TENSES //O'ZBEKISTON RESPUBLIKASI OLIY VA O'RTA. – С. 464.
12. Tolibovna A. K. et al. Features Of Anthropocentric Study Of Sacred Texts //Open Access Repository. – 2022. – Т. 8. – №. 1. – С. 5-10.
13. Tolibovna A. K. et al. Functions of Allusion and Allusion as a Marker of Intertextuality and Precedence //European Multidisciplinary Journal of Modern Science. – 2022. – Т. 6. – С. 485-487.
14. Ma'ripov J. KORPUS HAQIDA UMUMIY TUSHUNCHA //Центральноазиатский журнал образования и инноваций. – 2023. – Т. 2. – №. 5. – С. 175-178.
15. Ma'ripov J. Antroposentrizm–tilshunoslikning zamonaviy yonalishi sifatida //Инновационные исследования в современном мире: теория и практика. – 2022. – Т. 1. – №. 28. – С. 62-68.
16. Solnyshkina M. I. et al. IMPORTANCE OF SETTING GOALS. SMART GOALS //Новости образования: исследование в XXI веке. – 2023. – Т. 1. – №. 11. – С. 318-320.
17. LEARNER I. Jizzakh branch of the National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek, The faculty of psychology, The teacher at the department of Foreign languages.
18. Маърипов Д. Psychological value of the novels by agatha christie //Информатика и инженерные технологии. – 2023. – Т. 1. – №. 2. – С. 630-632.

19. Maripov J. MODERN METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH FOR B2 LEVEL STUDENTS: ENHANCING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS //International Journal of scientific and Applied Research. – 2024. – T. 1. – №. 3. – С. 266-271.
20. MATNLARNI D. T. A. L. V. A. D., JIHATLARI T. Q. O. Z. X. O. S. Ma'ripov Jalolkhan Kamoliddin ugli, Alimkulova Khulkar Tolibovna.« //ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ И НАУКА В XXI ВЕКЕ. – №. 22.