

ЗАГАЛЬНЕ, ПОРІВНЯЛЬНО-ІСТОРИЧНЕ, ТИПОЛОГІЧНЕ МОВОЗНАВСТВО

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THE MEANS OF CREATING SUSPENSE IN SHORT STORIES BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edgar Allan Poe is known as the grandfather of horror in American Literature, because he was the first to employ many of his signature style elements in his work. You could probably categorize Poe's writing under any of the basic elements of Gothic literature (setting, tone, presence of the supernatural or evil, etc.), but I think there is the one that shines through in his works the strongest – his suspenseful stories with a dark theme [1, с. 8]. Their traits can be seen in his short story «The Tell-Tale Heart». The story is about an unnamed man who kills the elderly man he lives with because he thinks the man's eye is «evil». Though it appears he will get away with the murder, the narrator gives himself away at the end. Throughout the story, Poe builds suspense and tension over whether the narrator will actually kill the man, and then over whether he will be caught.

Edgar Allan Poe uses many different elements of style in his writing. Most commonly, he uses the first person narration. You can find the first person narration in many of his works, including «The Raven», «The Pit and the Pendulum», «The Fall Of the House Of Usher», and more [1, с. 9]. Throughout the story «The Tell-Tale Heart», the narrator questions his own madness, and it is clear pretty quickly that the narrator is, in fact, mentally unstable. The reader is never sure what the narrator will do next because he is insane, and the rules of logic do not apply to his thoughts or actions. The reader can also not be sure what is real in the story, since the narrator may be

hallucinating. This creates suspense because it takes some time to determine what is real and what is not.

The timing of events in the story helps to build suspense. For example, the narrator goes into the man's room each night for a week and shines a small light on the man's eye while he is sleeping, building the suspense of what he will do. He finally kills the man on the eighth night. The arrival of the police also builds suspense, since it is unclear whether they will uncover the truth. The tension is momentarily relieved when it appears that the narrator will get away, but it builds back up when the narrator decides to have tea with the police and then starts hearing the beating of the heart below the floorboards [2, c. 195].

Most of the story's action takes place at night, which helps to build the tension. The narrator creeps into the man's room at midnight each night, when no one is awake, and the only light seen is the one the narrator shines on the man's eye. Meanwhile, deathwatch beetles tick outside, contributing to the dark and foreboding atmosphere. With this setting, Poe emphasizes the narrator's dark nature and builds terror and suspense surrounding his actions [2, c. 195].

Poe is also known for creating compelling atmosphere in all of his stories. As a literary element, atmosphere is the combination of a specific setting and tone. Poe often creates an eerie or spooky atmosphere through setting stories in remote places (and old houses or cabins) and adding to the already spooky place bad weather and illness. Combined, these elements are common to many of his stories and make the stories uniformly dark and mysterious. «The Fall of the House of Usher» and «The Raven» are two easy examples of atmosphere as a predominant literary element [2, c. 196].

Descriptions are keys to building suspense in the story. For example, the narrator does not describe himself as mad, but rather «very, very dreadfully nervous,» hinting at his instability, which makes him dangerous. He uses extremes in his descriptions, such as calling the eye the «vulture» or the «evil eye,» even though it is clear that the elderly man simply has glaucoma or a similar eye disease. The narrator also uses repetition, such as saying «I undid the lantern cautiously – oh, so cautiously – cautiously» each night when he goes into the room, emphasizing his actions and building suspense [2, c. 198].

Finally, one of Poe's greatest achievements was his ability to create really twisted characters. In addition to untrustworthy narrators in many stories, Poe had an affinity for adding mental or physical diseases and ailments to many of

his stories. As the first author in America to really play off this, you can see where the technique has been expanded into much of our modern day horror. There is simply something innately scary about things humans cannot control and do not fully understand, especially when it is clear they actually exist. Mental disorders in characters are so common to Poe that those who have read enough of his works tend automatically not to trust the sanity of any of his characters [1, с. 13].

So, Edgar Allan Poe is an extraordinary writer and that is why he uses different methods in achieving the creative aims. These are such elements as: the first person narration, the timing of events, dramatic atmosphere, extreme description etc.

References:

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ЗАПОЗИЧЕННЯ У ТЕРМІНОЛОГІЇ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ФОЛЬКЛОРИСТИКИ

Основою будь-якої національної терміносистеми є питома термінологія, утворена на власному мовному ґрунті. Проте, якою би багатою не була природна мова, при творенні термінів вона «не може обійтися своїми власними ресурсами, тому термінологія багатьох галузей знань різних мов послуговується лексичними та словотворчими засобами високорозвинутих літературних мов» [1, с. 6].