



A Narrative Analysis of the Unreliable Narrator In Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart"

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مستخلص

تتفحص هذه الدراسة اسلوب السرد القصصي للراوي غير الجدير بالثقة في القصة القصيرة "القلب الواشي" للكاتب الاميركي إدغار آلان بو. يأخذ الباحث بنظر الاعتبار كلا من النهج الخطابي والنهج المعرفي في الكشف عن الراوي غير الجدير بالثقة معتمدا على تعريف بوث كنقطة انطلاق ومن ثم يذهب الى تحليل الاشارات النصية في القصة. يفترض الباحث ان كلا المنهجين يكملان لبعضهما البعض ومفيدان لتحديد موثوقية الراوي.

Abstract

This study scrutinizes the narrative technique of the unreliable narration in Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Tell-Tale Heart." The researcher considers both the rhetorical and the cognitive approaches in the detection of the unreliable narrator taking Booth's definition as a starting point and then goes to analyze the textual signals in the story. The researcher assumes that both models are complementary and helpful to identify the unreliability of the narrator.

1. Introduction

The narrative technique of unreliable narration is situated in the field of literary narratology and was pioneered and coined by Wayne C. Booth in his (1961,1983) book 'The Rhetoric of Fiction.' Ever since Wayne C. Booth first proposed the unreliable narrator as a concept, it has been considered to be among the basic and indispensable categories of textual analysis. Booth (1983:158-59) states that "I have called a narrator reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say the implied author's norms), unreliable when he does not." According to Booth, the distinction between reliable and unreliable narrators is based on the degree and kind of distance that separates a given narrator from the implied author of a work.

Two approaches deal with the concept of unreliable narration differently. Following Booth's identification of the unreliable narration, proponents of the rhetorical approach link the concept of the implied author to the unreliable narrator. According to the cognitive approach, narratologists have removed the implied author and instead rely on textual signals for the detection of a narrator's

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unreliability. The two approaches have been criticized for their inadequacy of giving a clear account for the detection of unreliable narration. Ansgar Nünning (2008: 34) is a vocal critic of the concept of the implied author, describing it as 'notoriously ill-defined' and arguing that this 'incoherent concept' hardly provides a reliable basis for determining a narrator's unreliability. However, Nünning has also criticized the purely subjective elements of the cognitive model as well. Yacobi (2000:715) has also noted one problem with the cognitive reliance on textual signals indicating that certain signs can be interpreted as signs of unreliability when they may not be designed to elicit that response. One example cited by Yacobi is the inclination to interpret a narrator's lie as a sign of unreliability. However, 'white lies, heroic lies, ironic lies' are "all possibly trust inspiring beyond the domain of fact itself." Wall (1994: 25) goes far away from Nünning and Yaccobi showing that the implied author furnishes the story with many other textual signals of the narrator's unreliability such as conflicts between the narrator's representation of events and the explanations, evaluations, and interpretations of them that the narrator gives.

Greta Olson (2003:93) proposes a model that combines and reconciles between the two approaches for the detection of the unreliable narration. Olson remarks that both models consist of (1) a reader who recognizes a dichotomy between (2) the personalized narrator's perceptions and expressions and (3) those of the implied author (or textual signals). This model is also acknowledged by Phelan and Rabinowitz (2005:4) demonstrating that an adequate model of unreliability needs to combine the latest insights offered by the apparently divergent arguments of rhetorical and cognitive narrative theorists. Nünning (2008:69) supports the model proposed by Olson indicating that both the concept of the implied author and the textual signals are complementary in the study of the unreliable narration:

If we are to make sense of unreliable narration at all, we would be wise neither to rely solely on cognitive explanations, helpful and sophisticated as they may be, nor to be satisfied with rhetorical accounts based on the implied author, but instead take into consideration both the unacknowledged standards and frames of reference according to which readers and critics think they recognize an unreliable narrator when they see one, and the author's agency and the textual signals of unreliability.

2. The Unreliable Narrator

A narrator is the person who recounts, tells or narrates the story. The narrator is the speaker or voice of an oral or written work. The narrator should not be

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confused with the voice of the author. Although it can be, the narrator is not usually the same person as the author. The narrator of the story may have one of several forms, the author, a protagonist or merely a witness.

Not all narrators are reliable. However, some narrators, implicitly or explicitly, do not render honest events that happen to them. A narrator may be reliable or unreliable. If the narrator is reliable, the reader accepts without serious question the statements of fact and judgment. If the narrator is unreliable, the reader questions or seeks to qualify the statements of fact and judgment. An unreliable narrator reveals an interpretation of events that is somehow different from the author's own interpretation of those events. Often, the unreliable narrator's perception of plot, characters, and setting becomes the actual subject of the story. Kenan (2005: 103) manifests that "A reliable narrator is one whose rendering of the story and commentary on it the reader is supposed to take as an authoritative account of the fictional truth." On the other hand, "an unreliable narrator is one whose rendering of the story and/ or commentary on it the reader has reasons to suspect."

The concept of unreliable narrator has been one of the major concerns of literary studies in recent years. This concept was firstly introduced by Wayne C. Booth in his book "The Rhetoric of Fiction" in which he mentions that "I have called a narrator reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say the implied author's norms), unreliable when he does not" (1983: 158-59). According to Booth, the unreliable narrator is linked to the figure of the implied author who is not necessarily the author himself. Unreliable narrators thus differ markedly depending on how far and in what direction they depart from their author's norms. Further, Booth (1983: 378) adds that "If an author wants to earn the reader's confusion, then unreliable narration may help him. On the other hand, if a work requires an effect like intense dramatic irony, whether comic or tragic, the author may find new uses for direct reliable narration." Abrams (1993: 168) defines the unreliable narrator as the one whose perception, interpretation, and evaluation of the matters he or she narrates do not coincide with the implicit opinions and norms manifested by the author, which the author expects the alert reader to share. Additionally, Lodge (1992: 154-5) affirms that unreliable narrators are invariably invented characters who are part of the stories they tell. Even a character-narrator cannot be a hundred per cent unreliable. If everything the narrator says is palpably false, that only tells us what we know already, namely that a novel is a work of fiction. There must be some possibility of discerning between truth and falsehood within the imagined world of the novel, as there is in the real world, for the story to involve our interest.

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However, the unreliable narrator is the one whose ideas, opinions, perceptions, or sense of values do not agree or coincide, implicitly or explicitly, with those of the author, the implied author, or the work as a whole. Baldick (2001:268) identifies the unreliable narrator as the one whose account of events seems to be faulty, misleadingly biased, or distorted. Thus, it departs from the true understanding of events shared between the reader and the implied author. The term 'unreliable narrator' does not necessarily mean that such a narrator is morally untrustworthy or a habitual liar (although this may be true in some cases), since the category also includes harmlessly naive, fallible, or ill-informed narrators. One must also remember that the morality of a narrator does not determine his reliability. We do not for example question the characters' narrative although they admit their immorality. As Seymour Chatman (1978:234), among others, has pointed out, unreliability is a question of discourse, the view of what happens and what the existents are like, not a question of the personality of the narrator.

Narrators can be unreliable for a number of reasons: they might lack self-knowledge, they might be inexperienced, they might be liars or they might even be insane. Many critics have emphasized specific characteristics to identify the unreliable narrators in their rendering of the events of a story. According to Fludernik (2009: 161), a first person narrator is referred to as unreliable when showing him/ herself to be untrustworthy in his/ her narration of the story. The reason for the untrustworthiness of the narrator is not necessarily to be found in intentional fabrication on his/ her part, but rather in distorted view of things. Sometimes "it may be the case that the narrator is too naïve to be able to describe what happens in a satisfactory way; s/ he may also have a world view or moral attitudes which the reader cannot condone." Miettinen (2006: 45) postulates that narrator's reliability may be put to doubt in several ways, and the truthfulness of any fictive narration as such has also been questioned. Unreliable narration is often connected with mental illness and instability as well as the voice of a broken mind.

Sometimes the narrator may be subject to limited knowledge, personal involvement, and problematic value- scheme, and this often gives rise to the possibility of unreliability. Kenan (2005: 103- 6) has identified three sources of unreliability. A young narrator would be a clear case of limited knowledge (and understanding), e.g. the adolescent who tells the disturbing events of his recent past quite often tells things he does not fully know. However, adult and mentally deficient narrators also quite often tell things they do not fully know. Another narrator, because of his personal involvement, e.g. his hatred of a person, may distort the events. Thus, what is suspect in his rendering of the story is his evaluation of the other person's acts rather than his reporting of the events

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themselves. The third potential source of unreliability is the colouring of the narrator's account by a questionable value-scheme. Contrasts and incongruities in the narrator's language alert the reader to a possible unreliability in the narrator's evaluations, though not necessarily in his reporting of facts.

3. The Implied Author

To understand Booth's explanation of the concept of the unreliable narrator it is important to understand the term 'implied author'. Some narratologists distinguish between the real author and what Booth calls the implied author.

Booth (1983:151) identifies the implied author as the author's 'second self', an image that is created by the real author himself to be his spokesman. Even the story in which no narrator is dramatized creates an implicit picture of an author who stands behind the scenes, "whether as stage manager, as puppeteer, or as an indifferent God, silently paring his fingernails." This implied author is always distinct from the "real man". Olson (2003:94) shares Booth the same idea stating that the implied author is a term coined by Booth to exemplify the distance between the real author and his or her work to avoid the problems that can arise with an autobiographical reading of a novel. The personality of the implied author can be a complete opposite of that of the real author. The implied author is a representation of a disguise that the real author uses to tell the story with a certain effect. Schwartz (1988:606) states that the concept of the implied author is the most original part of Booth's approach: an author creates not simply an ideal, impersonal "man in general" but an implied version of "himself" that is different from the implied authors we meet in other men's works.

In effect, it is important to understand that the implied author is a method deployed by the writer himself to help the reader determine the meaning of the text. Many narratologists relate the role of the implied author and its identification to the reader and the reading process. Fludernik (2009:26) says that the implied author is actually not a character but a construct of the reader or interpreter, who tries to determine the 'meaning' of the work in question. On the other hand, Baldick (2001:123) affirms that Booth has coined the term 'implied author' "to designate that source of a work's design and meaning which is inferred by readers from the text, and imagined as a personality standing behind the work." It is also important to distinguish the implied author from the narrator, "since the implied author stands at a remove from the narrative voice, as the personage assumed to be responsible for deciding what kind of narrator will be presented to the reader." Davis and Womack (2002:56) demonstrate that Booth identifies the roles of the implied authors and readers in the reading process, as well as the ideological and ethical ramifications of our reading experiences. According to Booth, the implied author functions as the actual author's 'second self,' the persona that is invariably

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constructed by the reading process or, perhaps more accurately, reconstituted during the act of reading.

The aforementioned definitions revolve around the idea that the implied author is neither a character nor the narrator of the story. It is the creation of the author and/or reader as a second self of the real author; an image that is created during the reading process. Therefore, it is important to note that there exists a distinction between the implied author and narrator of a story. The implied author, as the writers' 'second self,' is the one that creates the narrator. The narrator can then, in turn, tell the reader about one or several protagonists or about him or herself, creating a first-person narrator. The narrator then becomes the spokesperson for the implied author who is created by the writer to be his spokesperson for a reader that he supposes will read the work.

The inventor of this kind of narrator, Wayne C. Booth, in his theory links the unreliable narrator to the figure of the implied author. Booth (1983:74-5) establishes that it is important to distinguish between the author and his implied image in order to avoid pointless and unverifiable talk about such qualities as "sincerity" or "seriousness" in the author. Amigoni (2000:22) speaks of the importance of recognizing the implied author as an authoritative 'shadow' function to the narrator which is of more practical use in analysis. An implied author as 'shadow' is most obvious in narratives where we follow the guidance of a dramatized, unreliable narrator; that is to say a first-person narrator of limited knowledge who has to some degree participated in the story being told.

An unreliable narrator is created when the narrator's norms and values differ from those of the implied author (or 'second self' of the author). The unreliable narrator is a literary device used by the implied author to decrease the distance between him and the reader. The one thing that all unreliable narrators have in common is that they depart from their author's or implied author's norms, creating a bigger gap between the implied author and themselves and making the one between the implied author and the reader smaller. A reader will react differently to different types of implied authors and this reaction helps to determine the reader's response to the work. Fludernik (2009:27) indicates that a reader only realizes that a first-person narrator is unreliable because he assumes that the implied author holds views different from those held by the first-person narrator. Thus, unreliable narrative discourse generates the impression that the implied author is communicating with the reader behind the first-person narrator's back. The narrator is intentionally presented as a figure whom the reader discovers to be lacking in credibility.

4. Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart"

Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" is a story about a murder case. The narrator secretly gets into an old man's room and watches him sleep at midnight every

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day. Eventually, the narrator kills the old man, cutting his dead body into pieces and hides them under the floorboards in his room. When the police come and ask him questions, he begins to hear the old man's heart beating under the floorboards. As the beating gets louder and louder, he ends up admitting that he kills the old man.

5. Analysis and Discussion

The incongruities between the knowledge and beliefs of the implied author and the narrator are what makes the narrator an unreliable one. If there is no difference between the narrator and the implied author, there can be no incongruities between them and the unreliable narrator would according to Booth's definition not exist. The discrepancies between the norms of the implied author and the narrator emerge through the representation of the narrator's unstable character reflected in the surging narration, his indirect invitations to the reader to judge the character and events in the story, the narrator's own incoherent judgments, and his tendency to confuse the reader by his many digressions. An unreliable narrator is created when the narrator's norms and values differ from those of the implied author (or 'second self' of the author). The textual signals make the attentive reader aware that the narrator's norms and values differ from those of the implied author. As such, a helpful way of approaching the narrator's unreliability is by looking for what might be left out of the story, or what the narrator misses, but the reader sees. The more carefully we read, the more the narrator actually reveals to us. If we go too fast, he loses us in his web of words.

In Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart", like many of his stories, some of the key characters and narrators, are represented as ambiguous in connection to their mental health and it is stated on several occasions even by themselves, whether implicitly or explicitly, that they are not mentally reliable. The unreliability of the narrator is present right from the very beginning in the story:

TRUE! – nervous – very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? (P.3)

How, then, am I mad? (P.3)

You fancy me mad. (P.3)

would a madman have been so wise as this? (P.3)

And have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over acuteness of the senses? (P.5)

If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer... (P.5)

In the excerpts above, the narrator is characterized as an unreliable narrator by repetitive, horrific and questionable expressions which will be repeated several times throughout the story. We can see repetition right away with the narrator accusing the reader of thinking that he is "mad", meaning mentally unstable. And

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then, desperately, he tries to convince the reader that he is justified. There is no possible way for the murderer to know what the reader is thinking. Yet still he insists the reader is thinking that he is mad and then tries to combat this thought. Perhaps he is nervous or in denial. Obviously, the murderer is frantically trying to convince the reader he is not, in any way, unstable, evidenced by this repetition. Indeed, the mental state of the narrator is at issue from the first line of the story although he appears obsessed with conveying to his audience that he is sane. This effort, however, only increases the reader's conviction about his lack of sanity. Fludernik (2009: 86) states that the narrator of Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" is unreliable since his insanity is clearly discernible in the discourse strategies he uses: "protestations, unnecessary repetitions and obfuscation."

Another striking evidence of the narrator's unreliability is his accumulation of direct addresses to the reader and his conscious attempts to direct the reader's sympathy. The reader is directly addressed many times in this short story:

*Now this is the point. **You** fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But **you** should have seen me. **You** should have seen how wisely I proceeded –with what caution –with what foresight –with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him... (P.3)*

*Oh, **you** would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! (P.3)*

*–do **you** mark me well? I have told **you** that I am nervous: so I am. (P.5)*

*If still **you** think me mad, **you** will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. (P.5)*

To prove his sanity, the narrator invites the reader to see into his mind offering the reader an opportunity to verify his claims. The first-person point of view allows the reader to see into the mind of the narrator who commits so heinous a crime. The reader, thus, sees what the narrator sees and thinks. The first-person point of view allows the reader to share in the narrator's oscillation between sanity and insanity, as he first boasts of his cool and calculated planning. The reader cannot agree with the narrator's argument that he is sane, calculating, and methodical because his confused language exhibits that he is disordered, despite his meticulous and well thought out plans to carry out the murder and the concealment of the body of the old man after the dismemberment. In his endeavor to touch the feelings and sympathy of the reader, the narrator loses his control and forgets that he is proving himself unstable and unreliable. The narrator's painful insistence in proving himself sane only serves to intensify the idea of his madness. The narrator seeks to convince readers that his ability to engage in systematic action must prove him to be sane, despite the fact that such action is directed toward committing a heinous crime.

Importantly, the narrator is entitled to uninterruptedly tell his own story and thoughts. Since he says *how calmly I can tell you the whole story (P.3)*, all the readers become his audiences .

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The narrator also exhibits another source of unreliability which is his explicit contradictions and other discrepancies in the narrative discourse. However, when he is telling his story, he tells it in a delirious way, which is contrary to what he asserts, "calmly." Also, readers can find that the narrator has serious fancy, since something he says is impossible to happen. In the first paragraph, the narrator states firmly that:

Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? (P.3)

Actually, people cannot hear the voice from heaven and hell, so it must be his fancy. Although he denies the truth that he is mad, readers are aware of his unreliability in his account of himself.

Noticeable also are the discrepancies between the narrator's statements and actions. The discrepancies between the narrator's actions and his narrative, the incongruities between the norms in his narrative and those in his actions, are the signals provided for the reader by the implied author that unmask the unreliable narrator in the story:

Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture –a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees – very gradually –I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever. (P.3)

In the excerpt above, the narrator admits that he loves the old man and that there is no personal grudge between them. The only thing that bothers the narrator is the man's pale blue eye which he resembles as that of a vulture. Despite the narrator's protestations to the contrary, this is a sign of his madness as he compares the old man's eye to a vulture's eye and explains his decision to "take the life of the old man" in order to free himself from the curse of the eye. The narrator is fully guilty of the act of murdering the old man, but he justifies his action by pointing out the terror with which the pale blue eye with a film over it has caused him. It is also very unusual that the one thing that bothers the narrator and drives him to commit the murder, more than anything else, is one of the old man's eyes, "a pale-blue, film-covered eye like that of a vulture", that disturbs him greatly to the point that he calls it an "evil eye." Thus, while he

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acknowledges having committed the vile act, he suggests that he has been driven to do so by forces beyond his control. Reasonably, this is by all means not a justification for the crime committed by the narrator unless there is something wrong with his mental state.

Yet, another source of the narrator's unreliability is the contradictions between the narrator's explicit comments on other characters and his implicit characterization of himself. There is only one narrator in the story: the man. Therefore, readers have no choice but to receive all the information he gives. The reader generally accepts the literal meaning until textual signals indicate that this meaning no longer applies. However, the reader must perceive the unreliability of the narrator if he wishes to penetrate beyond the mask of external appearances and to investigate what happens below the surface. The unreliable narrator of the story thus reconstructs the "reality" in the action of the story in terms of his own peculiar points of view. Thus, interpretation of reality is left up to the reader, who cannot rely on the convenience of such a kind of point of view. Instead, the reader is constantly involved in a difficult search after the true meaning of the events. The following excerpt shows the moments the narrator enjoys in terrifying the old man just before brutally murdering him. First, the narrator establishes himself as an omniscient narrator; a narrator who is all-knowing and all-seeing:

*Presently I heard a slight groan, and I **knew** it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief –oh, no! –it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I **knew** the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I **knew** it well. I **knew** what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I **knew** that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. (P.4)*

Actually, it is impossible for a person to recognize the cause of such a kind of sound with this absolute certainty. Here the narrator has given himself a narrative position; an authoritative position through which he tries to affect the narrative schemas created by the readers. The verb '**knew**' is used in the above excerpt five times by the narrator to convince the reader of his account of the old man's condition. It is difficult to sort out what is known and what is not known and what kind of knowing is involved. The narrator exhibits his knowing everything and

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yet he knows nothing. It is the instability in his character, the unreliability, that is hinted at here. After that the narrator gives a complete account of what the old man thinks and feels when he hears a sound in his room:

His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself –"It is nothing but the wind in the chimney –it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "It is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he had been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions: but he had found all in vain. All in vain; because Death, in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel –although he neither saw nor heard –to feel the presence of my head within the room. (P.4)

The narrator tries to convince the reader that he is able to penetrate into the mind of the old man and see how it works. He says that the old man feels the presence of my head within the room *although he neither saw nor heard (P.4)*. All this account of the events shows contradictions in what the narrator is telling and what actually happens which causes unreliability to emerge.

The last signal of the narrator's unreliability in this short story is the contradictions between the narrator's account of events and his explanations and interpretations. The narrator, till the end of the story, is still obsessed with his sense of acute hearing that he hints to at the very beginning of the story. After his brutal murder and the concealment of the dismembered body of the old man under the floorboards in the room, he begins to hear a noise that he believes to be the heartbeat of his victim. He eventually leads the police to the body confessing his crime:

My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they [the police] sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct: –it continued and became more distinct[...] until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.[...] It was a low, dull, quick sound –much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath – and yet the officers heard it not. [...] It grew louder –louder –louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. [...] I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! –and now –again! –hark! louder! louder! louder! louder! –

"Villains!" I shrieked, "dissemble no more! I admit the deed! –tear up the planks! –here, here! –it is the beating of his hideous heart! (PP.6-7)

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The above excerpt shows clearly the incongruities between the events the narrator narrates and his explanations and justifications of what he seems to hear. However, a dead heart will not beat unless it is an outcome of the murderer's fancy or a sense of guilt. When the police come, he hears the sound of the old man's beating heart again. Other than the narrator himself, no one hears. The beating of the heart thus occurs within the narrator himself. It is established at the beginning of the story that he is over-sensitive that he can hear and feel things that others cannot. Clearly, the narrator, who has just finished the gruesome act of dismembering a corpse, cannot cope with the highly emotional challenge to say that he hears the beating of the heart . This factor causes his heart rate to accelerate to the point that his heartbeat is pounding in his ears so loudly that he cannot stand the psychological pressure any longer. Thus he confesses to his horrible deed. The narrator's "tell-tale" heart causes him to convict himself.

6. Conclusions

The narrator of Poe's short story "The Tell-Tale Heart" provides for an example of an unreliable narrator. The narrator's unreliability relies on his attempts to confuse the reader, to digress and thus bury his omission of relevant information. For this to be detected, the researcher has taken into consideration the narrator's limited knowledge, his personal involvement in the event, and his problematic value- scheme.

The study has proved the narrator unreliable by his unnecessary repetitive, and questionable expressions. Throughout the whole story the word **mad**, for example, is used by the narrator to convey that he is not mad but has developed a sense of acute hearing; a sense which only proves the contrary.

The study has further shown that the narrator is unreliable due to his accumulation of direct addresses to the reader and his conscious attempts to direct the reader's sympathy. He is constantly trying to gain the reader's sympathy throughout the story. His motivation for this is that he wants to avoid taking responsibility for his actions, more specifically the eventual murdering of the man and perhaps most significant, for proving his sanity.

At another point, the analysis of the textual signals in the story has proved that the narrator is unreliable because of the frequent discrepancies between his statements and actions. The discrepancies between the narrator's actions and his narrative, the incongruities between the norms in his narrative and those in his

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actions, are the signals provided for the reader by the implied author that unmask the unreliable narrator in the story. In this respect, the narrator has held beliefs, norms and actions differ markedly from those of the implied author, the reader and the text as a whole.

The many textual signals embedded in the discourse create a distance between narrator and reader, and between narrator and implied author. They provide the means for the observant reader to obtain a clear insight into the narrator's motivations, thereby hindering the reader to identify himself with the narrator. Furthermore, these signals can be interpreted as communication from the implied author to the reader. The purpose of the signals in this sense is to emphasize the difference in morals between the narrator, and the implied author, that is to say 'the second self of Edgar Allan Poe.' By receiving these textual signals, the reader is able to distinguish between the narrator and the implied author.

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