

THE ILLUSION OF REALITY: STYLISTIC ELEMENTS AND THEMATIC DEPTH IN POE'S A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM

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Received: July 30, 2024

Revised: August 30, 2024

Accepted: September 17, 2024

Published: September 27, 2024

ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the use of stylistic elements in the poem A Dream Within a Dream by Edgar Allan Poe and their overall contribution towards the themes of lifespan versus understanding of the poetry's conceptual paradox: reality as opposed to fiction. There are stylistic devices employed in "A Dream Within a Dream" that serve to reinforce the central theme of the poem, the dichotomy of truth and untruth in many works of fiction including cinema. To respond to the identified research gaps, the research employs various aspects of literary style in the linguistic evaluation of several prose works including imagery, symbolism, rhyme, and meter among others. For this purpose, field studies focus on how the different components of style work in the text. It is also a conventional historical inquiry and critical perspective with textual analysis of emotional language that is sparsely distributed within the text. The results show Poe's craft, derivatives, and repetition of symbolisms bring forth blurring effects on the narrators' real world versus imaginary world walls, creating odds on human existence. Both the grain of sand and the shoreline are symbolic motifs that serve to reiterate the futility of the quest for reality undertaken by the speaker as scabbard, tape, with blue stones, thus enriching the themes of the nervous epigram. It stresses the importance of stylistic criticism in analyzing Poe's works and provides a new vantage point on the functions of language as a means of self-contemplation on being.

Keywords: Existentialism, Imagery, Metaphor, Reality, Stylistic Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Edgar Allan Poe remains one of the literary figures in history and the United States who has had the most inspiration, especially through sorrowful gothic themes that often delve into the real and the illusive. A Dream Within a Dream was composed in 1849 and falls under this stylistic premeditation. It serves as an inside most understanding of how unpredictable life is and how someday people know, yet do not know life. Concerning the writing of verse – "the most poetical topic," as he puts it, important concepts based on which primary concepts and images are laid are pronounced in The Philosophy of Composition – an outline of Poe's viewpoint on opposite concepts of art creation. In this work, Poe posits that a poetic work must be purposefully constructed making each word serve the overall emotional impact (Poe, 1846). It is an effective way of poetic creation, which can be seen in A Dream Within a Dream, where the combining

of such tropes as symbolism and imagery with rhythm serves the central ideas of the poem.

A few writers such as T. S. Eliot, have praised Poe's unique style in his poems largely because of the sounds and rhythm which add character to the poetry itself. In the same way, on the matter of sound and melody, Eliot asks this in the case of resonating effects. He believes that creating certain sound patterns in the body of the poem allows the readers to sink viscerally into that poetry, storming all trance-like appetites at once. This interest such as deficiency definition is most enabled when one focuses on the poem, A Dream Within a Dream due to the reasons that, rhyme and repetition so significant to Poe's practices are also the main topics in that poem's tactical to its themes of loss and ambiguity.

In his biography, which is utterly beyond any of Poe's changes and characteristics, attention is

focused on Jeffrey Meyers Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy. Rather, Meyers places Poe's poems in the life context analyzing what inner battles and worldviews underpinned the poet's works. This wider view helps us comprehend that emotional pressure in *A Dream Within a Dream* like the constantly changing and dead ends in life might have a wider basis.

Instead of only biographical works and critiques, modern stylistic paradigms also prevail in the study of the linguistic aspects of Poe's works. Peter Verdonk's *The Stylistics of Poetry: Context, Cognition, Discourse, History* (2013) provides a detailed explanation as to how poetics can be practised comprehensively with context and discourse being prioritized in the sense-making of the text. When applying Verdonk's stylistic methodology in the intricate *A Dream Within a Dream*, it shall be possible to examine in great detail, the impact levied by the various lexis and syntax selected by Poe in enhancing the poem as a whole.

This paper seeks a stylistic analysis of Poe's poem *A Dream Within a Dream* concerned with rhyme, repeating words and images, as well as other Poetic devices. Since this study sought to answer the questions already asked above, these elements were discussed in detail as follows:

- I. How does Edgar Allan Poe use literary devices to convey the theme of illusion versus reality in *A Dream Within a Dream*?
- II. In what ways do Poe's stylistic choices contribute to the emotional intensity and existential reflection in the poem?

Through this analysis, the study offers deeper insights into the linguistic and thematic layers that define one of Poe's most celebrated poetic works.

Literature Review

The stylistic analysis of Edgar Allan Poe's poetry, particularly *A Dream Within a Dream*, is a significant area of study within literary criticism. This review shows a contribution to the existing body of research in the area with an emphasis on imagery, symbolism, rhyme, and meter which are important components in the comprehension of Poe's creations.

Poe's poetry has been appreciated due to some of the distinct stylistic features it possesses, which range from picturesque language to effective symbolism and intricate rhythm. As revealed by

Imran et al., (2021), the concept of reality and illusion in Poe's *A Dream Within a Dream* is presented through detailed descriptions and elaborate symbols. It also reiterates how such aspects of the poeticisms as reiterative patterns and figurative speeches enhance the themes of the poem describing the stylistic characteristics of Poe. Jaafar (2014) reinforces the thesis of the morpho psychology of imagery and symbolism in the work of the mentioned author, believing that these components are needed to perceive the emotional and philosophical contents of the writer's works. Jaafar (2014) style also extends this type of analysis to one of the poems, exhibiting how the symbolism embedded in the poetic language employed by Poe adds its meaning to the theme in question.

From a rhetorical standpoint, Poe's poetry makes extensive use of symbolism, and *A Dream Within a Dream* also belongs to this tradition. Civelek (2022) investigates the presence of symbolic systems in Poe's art, demonstrating the uses of symbols as attitudes and concepts concerning the mind and existence. Certain images and symbols such as dreams or sand commonly appear in the poem which reflects the shortness of human life and this continues the element of reality and illusions contradiction. Cabigas (2010) also offers some information regarding the symbolism in Poe's poetry, particularly on how symbols and images are employed by Poe to foster a climate of mystery and reflection. According to her, Poe's abstract language helps create the proper ambience for the problems presented in a poet's work.

It should be noted as well that Edgar Allan Poe demonstrates a great command of rhyme and meter: it is a very important element of his stylistic technique. Suparlan et al., (2019) review the analysis of the meter and the rhyme in 'The Bells' by Edgar Allen Poe, contemplating how these factors affect the reader's performance. Even though their analysis is of a different poem, the findings concerning Poe's poetic rhythms are relevant to *A Dream Within a Dream*. The repetition and the rhyme scheme elements of *A Dream Within a Dream* help in creating the feeling of being entranced along with underscoring the central issues in the poem. Memon, Tunio and Awan (2021) perform the pragmatic analysis of rhyme from Rudyard Kipling's poem 'If', which allows comparison with Poe's works in terms of

stylistic devices. Their approach to rhyme and its implications for the work in terms of how this affects the tone and structure of the poem enables one to appreciate the place of rhyme schemes in E. A. Poe's work *A Dream Within a Dream*. Jaafar (2020) proposes schema theory and text worlds as part of cognitive stylistics which explains how the readers make sense of the meanings of poetic works. This stems from the theory which in the case of Poe's poetry seeks to establish how the readers of the poem *A Dream Within a Dream* interpret the images created. Kamiljonovna (2022) views the innovation and stylistic creativity of Poe and their significance for the poetry of the world. Her evaluation of poetry by Poe and its stylistic innovations brings into perspective the legacy of literature that embraces the husband's stylistic aspects. This outlook broadens ways in which Poe's stylistic traits and techniques are perceived as demonstrating that his works in most cases are not confined to his texts but extend to other texts. Even though plenty of studies have been dedicated to the study of Poe's creative style, the picture of *A Dream Within a Dream* remains rather sketchy. Most of the existing analyses tend to be narrow and fragmented, such as concentrating on how a particular figure, like imagery or rhyme, affects a tiny portion of the overall effect of a poem. Similarly, although Imran et al., (2021) gain some understanding of the symbols in the poems used in the study, they fail to thoroughly investigate the impact of the structure of the poems on the content provided. Moreover, most of the existing analyses emphasize the role of Poe within the framework of the development of American poetry as a whole as opposed to *A Dream Within a Dream*. For example, Civelek (2022) and Suparlan et al., (2019) present an analysis of the other poems by the author which are appreciated and informative but do not encompass the special characteristic of the *A Dream Within a Dream* poem. It would therefore appear necessary to conduct another study in the form of a rhetorical, structural, and semantic analysis of *A Dream Within a Dream* by assimilating all the components of the poem. The present study also seeks to address these concerns more thoroughly through the stylistic reading of *A Dream Within a Dream*. Such analysis synthesizes the images, symbols, rhyme and meter of the poem to assess how these aspects together

contribute to the theme of the poem which revolves around the interrelation of reality and illusion. The analysis focuses on the dynamics of these stylistic features aiming at expanding the available knowledge on how Poe's stylistic choices enhance the emotional and philosophical effects of the poem.

Methodology

The research design for the present study is qualitative and exploratory reclaiming its focus on the stylistic analysis of *A Dream Within a Dream*. The research takes a descriptive stance that looks at the contribution of particular stylistic devices to the meaning and emotions of the poem as a whole. The study emphasizes the peculiarities of stylistic devices in a geological poem by Poe regarding their influence on readers' perception of the work. The object of research is the poem '*A Dream Within a Dream*' by Edgar Allan Poe. The poem was explored as a whole to avoid taking comments out of context. In this analysis, the focus is on the term metonymy and its larger category, metonymic imagism. The poem is read several times to get the researcher accustomed to the language and the form of the work. This close reading helps their imaginations in developing the recurring themes, the information structure and the editorial styles of the information. Imagery, symbolism, rhyme, and meter are the identified key stylistic devices. Each component was examined concerning the position of this device in the decorativeness of the poem. This stylistic analysis study also seeks to answer how stylistic devices assist in enhancing the meaning in the poem. It engages in detailing the connection of theme and content by looking at how the patterning of images and the symbolism within various poems relates to that theme and concept. It is about the synthesis of the isolated analysis of separate stylistic devices and the interaction of them all within a particular poetic piece.

Data Analysis

The analysis focuses on two primary stylistic features: imagery and symbolism. These elements serve as powerful tools in shaping the reader's perception of the themes in Poe's poem, particularly the existential themes of transience, uncertainty, and the illusory nature of reality.

Table 1: Analysis of Stylistic Elements in Edgar Allan Poe's A Dream Within a Dream and Their Contribution to the Central Theme

Stylistic Element	Examples from the Poem	Contribution to Central Theme
Imagery		
Visual Imagery	"Grains of golden sand" slipping through fingers	- Represents the passage of time and the inevitability of loss.
Tactile Imagery	Speaker holding and losing the sand	- Reflects the human inability to grasp and retain reality.
Auditory Imagery	Rhythmic flow of the poem (suggested sound of waves)	- Evokes the ceaseless, repetitive motion of time.
Symbolism		
Grains of Sand	"Grains of golden sand"	- Represents the transient nature of life and moments.
The Shore	"At the shore of a vast ocean"	- Acts as a boundary between reality and illusion.

The A Dream Within a Dream poem has an extensive use of imagery which occupies a big part in aiding the readers in constructing images relevant to the themes of the poem. Poe's imagery encompasses visual, tactile, and auditory ones to elicit the reader's feelings and bind them with the themes more closely. In the course of the poem, Poe paints with the visuals of life to illustrate the ephemerality of existence. The most memorable of these is the image, of 'grains of golden sand' trickling through the speaker's hand. This imagery very quickly brings the picture of life which is always running away from one's grasp despite their attempts to clutch and hold it. Sand is time. It means short sequences or chances, representing the time that is inevitable and the shortness of people. The brightness of such imagery lingers in addition to that it enacts the speaker's pain from futile attempts to maintain looking at reality by clenching the hope that they could face it all.

This individual's literary specialists not only immerse the reader's use of psychological drama but also focus on the sense of touch. The poem-inherent theme gets more connotatively close to the readers when they experience gaining or losing the sand. In this case, the act of letting go of sand from the speaker's hand is an allegory of man's frustration in reality or meaning, thus further

indicating the instability of life and truth. However, A Dream Within a Dream, even if its predominantly pictorial description of the theme is not overburdened with sound imagery, the very structure of the verses as the monotonous movement of air illustrates the incessant flow of time and the inevitable recurrence in the course of existence. Even the movement of the ocean that can be inferred through images of the shore can be placed in the background of the painting as life and time in motion. Within this extending action what can help is to place the actions in terms of specific imagery along with time-framed images which measure time. Some readers have trouble preparing before quite rehearsed imagery cliches. The imagery remains one of the main styles in which Edgar Allen Poe wrote, this is an approach which seems to have grown with the author which I still do not comprehend. "Grains of sand" and a "shore" are the most poignantly working symbols in the poem riveted into the thesis of the poem lightly bathes on the shore that life is fragile and real is only like a mirage.

The grains of sand are among the most important elements of the poem. They are the apparent signs of time passing and of a life being ephemeral., Just as the speaker easily loses the little grains in her palm, so is the time and life lost beyond human

reach. This depicts the hopelessness and troubles people face whenever they face very fundamental and actualized aspects of life – time and death. The grains of sand can also be viewed as signifying some of the discrete segments that make up one’s life and more so how soon each one of them passes. The shore in the poem is the line drawn between two worlds the real world and the world of dreams, that is, between reality and fantasy. The shore serves as a liminal space, a place where the tangible (land) meets the intangible (water). In this particular way, it reflects the tension in the poem between the restrictions of reality and that of perception. Watching the sand flow away through the fingers of the speaker standing on the shore, the disenchanting belief that sand symbolizes a human life suspended in more illusions than reality is the tragedy of the whole poem.

In ‘A Dream Within a Dream’ images and symbols complement each other to emphasize the pressing problems of the poem – the transience of life and the unreality of things. Poe evidences strong images together with agonizing tactile sensations of a gradual loss where the speaker cannot grasp the sand – similar to how people can’t reverse time or escape their destiny. Description of the grains of the symbols of the sand enhances this idea, which is the event of time and is also an effort in vain to try and hold the facets of reality. In particular, the theme of confusing the boundaries between reality and illusion is very prominent in the poem. “Are

we to conclude from this illusion, so it can be concluded from this illusion, ‘is all that we see or seem / But A Dream Within a Dream’?” inquires the speaker’s growing discomfort with the very situation of existence. The image of the shore lies somewhere in two extremes- reality: And the phenomenon which is sure to be in the sandpits – that of time and through them. It has been built upon the theme that reality is not merely fragile but composed of fantasies as well. Reality, in Poe’s view, may be nothing more than layers of dreams, with each layer just as elusive as the one before.

A Dream Within a Dream, like any other composition, deals with the specific stylistic inversion of the content. Poetic devices such as imagery and symbolism further serve the overarching ideas of transience and evanescence, which are the major themes of the poem. The imagery of depression as a subject of the poem as well as the symbolic elements such as sand and the shore help in further the ideas of the poem. It is these devices that facilitate Poe’s construction of a touching and persuasive argument on the nature of humanity and existence’s unfolding narrative. Indeed, turning our attention to imagery and symbolism serves not only to prove the poetical genesis and development of the poem but also demonstrates the ability of Poe to make use of the stylistic devices and moves used for readers’ overwhelming psychology and philosophy.

Table 2: Stylistic Elements and Their Contribution to the Theme of Reality Versus Illusion in A Dream Within a Dream

Stylistic Element	Description	Connection to Theme (Reality vs. Illusion)	Examples from the Poem
Symbolism	The use of symbols such as grains of sand and the shore represent concepts like time, existence, and boundaries between reality and illusion.	- Grains of sand represent the fleeting nature of time and existence, as they slip through the speaker's fingers, symbolizing the loss of control over life's tangible aspects. - The shore represents the boundary between two worlds, the tangible and the intangible, reality and illusion.	- "Grains of the golden sand / How few! yet how they creep / Through my fingers to the deep." - "I stand amid the roar / Of a surf-tormented shore."

<p>Imagery</p>	<p>Poe uses vivid visual and tactile imagery to create a sensory experience of reality slipping away.</p>	<p>The visual imagery of sand slipping through fingers evokes the fragility and transitory nature of existence. - Tactile imagery highlights the futile attempt to grasp reality, reinforcing the idea of life slipping into uncertainty, much like a dream.</p>	<p>- "While I weep—while I weep! / O God! Can I not grasp / Them with a tighter clasp?"</p>
<p>Repetition</p>	<p>Repetition of the central question, "Is all that we see or seem / But A Dream Within a Dream?"</p>	<p>- The repetition underscores the speaker's persistent doubt and cyclical existential questioning. It creates a rhythm that mirrors the unresolvable nature of human inquiry into what is real and what is illusion.</p>	<p>- "Is all that we see or seem / But A Dream Within a Dream?" (Repeated in both stanzas)</p>
<p>Metaphor</p>	<p>The overarching metaphor of life as a dream, suggesting that all human experiences may be illusory.</p>	<p>- Life is metaphorically compared to a dream, blurring the boundary between perception and reality, leading the speaker (and the reader) to question the authenticity of existence.</p>	<p>- "All that we see or seem / Is but A Dream Within a Dream."</p>

The second research question looks at the role of the stylistic aspects of Edgar Allan Poe's *A Dream Within a Dream* with particular regard to the theme of reality and illusion. The stylistic analysis of the poem including its symbolism, image, device of repetition and the use of metaphor underscores this philosophical discourse and encourages the reader to ponder where the boundary lies between existence and perception. Symbolism also emerges as an observable and practical stylistic device which is central to the development of the theme of reality and illusion in *A Dream Within a Dream*. In this poem, two serious symbols are given by Poe: these are the hence and the grains of silt.

The most obvious symbol in the poem is the continuation of the speaker losing the sand trapped in their fingers. This image expresses time and a person's life as an unresolvable queue from which

the speaker cannot cut. The inability to hold on to the sand makes the speaker frustrated and rejuvenated because life and existence are something constant and it's wrong to expect outstripping means to tame everything. The way the sand slips away gives reason to think that the speaker is slowly losing faith in life as it is or in life as a dream. The imagery of the sand spans both poles simultaneously whereas the sand represents reality it symbolizes in a more accurate instead life and time that is never the same again. The figurative language used conveys surprise when the speaker complains about the sand slipping away. One argument confirms what may, or may, not be for absolute truth.

The shoreline boundaries are also very powerful symbols in the poem because they constitute the division of two worlds, in this case, the real and

metaphysics. The sea and the shore are used as metaphors for the transitional zone regarding the surface and unrealistic sphere of human life. The persona stands at this junction, grappling with the question of whether the feelings, thoughts and experiences he undergoes are actual or mere fantasies. In a more concrete sense, the shoreline is a physical embodiment of the binary opposition of the phenomenal and the non-phenomenal. Here, for example, tightening images of standing at the shore as ocean waves are breaking there can be an ocean which symbolizes the vast unknown that overwhelms the man standing at the edge reinforcing the tension between there is a reality and its concrete experience and a dream level perception. The shore and grains of sand are symbolic loops at the same time and also fit into the poem's quest on the illusory and the real. In these symbols, the speaker's crises of existence are visible, where the chronology of life and the feeling of nostalgia seem to evaporate.

Perhaps the most noteworthy additional element Poe has added, however, is the use of convincing imagery. 'To feel the sand slipping through my fingers' is a visual representation depicting the idea of possession turning to nothingness. The image of sand slipping away is very potent and the despair that accompanies such moments fills people at all times and places; it is a telling image of humanity's precarious position on this planet. Just as he had selected their colors, by selecting the sand, Poe presented the idea that all these feelings are temporal, where one minute there is something closed, meaty and tangible, and in the next minute it is gone. The image further illustrates the notion that even that which is real and solid (the sand) does not take long to turn into something that cannot be seen or held and leaves the speaker of the poem baffled if at all, life is a real and enduring entity. Only in this case, the figure describes the feeling of remaining unreal as if the reality were simply a bodiless dream growing distant with discouraging inevitability. Besides the imagery, the poem also employs tactile imagery specifically to highlight the sense of touch in the case of sand slipping through fingers. This tangible one reinforces that there is something real that the speaker feels he is reaching for and the very experience of losing it suggests the transitory nature of life and the possibly illusory nature of reality.

This element of the poem steers the speaker's argument towards a sense of annoyance and hopelessness, and in a way resonates with every human's struggle of attempting to keep something from vanishing, only for it to vanish into thin air, like a dream away out of reach. Repetition is perhaps one of the most visible adjustments in *A Dream Within a Dream*, and it serves to address the issue at the core of the poem which is the conflict between reality and illusion. The repetition of the question, "Is all that we see or seem / But A Dream Within a Dream?" is also repeated all through the poem and helps to highlight the malaise of the speaker. The reoccurrence of this question emulates the constant unsettling of the speaker by the questions of life. Poe uses this approach in both stanzas because he knows that the speaker's indecision does not wane. Such repetitions introduce a circular approach of writing that ends up mirroring the objective of the poem concerning cycles of quests instead of cycles of answers on the concept of existence. The repeated question serves to bring forth the widening gaps in the speaker's understanding of what is real and what is an illusion. The poetry generalizes this inner conflict of the speaker, who is stuck in some circle of doubts over certainty, and the people seem to be stuck in a limbo; the limbo between what is real and what is a mere manifestation of the dream.

Furthermore, the repetition contributes to an equilibrium that translates the spell of existentialism into dance. As the speaker grows tired of the same question and moves towards another, the thin line between truth and falsehood gets further intertwined and added to the whole premise.

In this poem, the battle wins a poetic war of reality and illusion and is made possible by the use of language in the picture. The poem's most important metaphor is life is a dream, meaning all that we take as real may rather be fake. This central metaphor runs with *Life is just A Dream Within a Dream*, so the title of the poem itself suggests *The Overarching Issues of the Poem*. This conception is similar to the philosophy that advocates that life is a dream and therefore nothing is permanent. Reality may be substituted with a metaphor that, *The Tension: Life is a Dream*. *The Tension: Life is a Dream*. A Man's outlooks on the logical world depend on his socio-historical conditions as he is an individual. The said idea extends forward and

postulates that all one's experiences in life may just be mere illusions for there is nothing in depth that can be physically established.

The metaphor takes the reader rather further by asking what if we consider that which is real to be delusional, an idea which adds to the theme of the poem. It is evident that the thematic aspects of *A Dream Within a Dream*, such as reality vs illusion, are also affected by the stylistic devices, including symbolism, imagery, repetitiveness, and metaphorical instruments. Symbolic imageries that comprise the grains of sand and the shore evoke metaphors of life's ephemeral nature and the impermanence of human existence. The speaker's manner of questioning his existence is made more persuasive by the use of structure as well as forms which suggest a real and an illusional circumstance. Such devices serve not merely to heighten the inner sentiments in the poem but also inspire readers to wonder what existence is.

Findings and Discussions

In comparing Edgar Allan Poe's *A Dream Within a Dream* with the existing stylistic comparison of this poem several problems are identified regarding the deployment of the themes of fragility, transience, and reality as reflected through the use of various imagery and symbolism. Drawing from such previous analyses, this paper aimed to contribute to the knowledge of the extent to which Poe combines such techniques to trigger deep philosophical and existential thoughts. In the selected poem, Jaafar (2014) sharpened visual images and their ability to carry the meaning of a more complicated idea or capture the feelings that the idea creates. Jaafar explains that in the case of poetry, this imagery is not merely descriptive; rather it serves to illustrate quite profound and complex emotions or philosophies. This opinion in question is quite relevant to the one taken by Poe in *A Dream Within a Dream* considering that the author utilizes images to explain the notion of time and human life- perhaps the most powerful one leaves a hand with a handful of grains that flows away slowly.

The Deconstruction of *A Dream Within a Dream* by Memon et (2021) supports Jaafar's (2014) culture-based studies that view the "grains of sands" metaphorically in terms of the impermanent recurrence of life as well as the passing of time. The relevance of these findings is that they support

the view of *A Dream Within a Dream* imagery functioning at a deeper philosophical level applicable to readers' concerns with existential issues like mortality. Memon et al., (2021) present a textological analysis of Rudyard Kipling's poem *If*, examining the advances in the emotional interpretation of the poet's work with a particular focus on the image of a symbol. The authors defend their point of view on the importance of symbolism in poetry arguing that it is an effective tool in poetry enabling poets to express ideas and feelings that could be most intricate using a small and often physical symbol. This particular argument has special significance given Poe's use of symbolism in *A Dream Within a Dream* where the grains of sand as symbol of time, and life and the rippling water as illusion and reality stand as the boundaries between the two sides. Memon et al (2021) state emphatically that symbols are often multiplicative to the extent of the poem's themes. The underlying associations in Poe's work however are that the grains of the sand are effective in illustrating the erosion of time, the brevity of certain instances, and the humans' inability to celebrate moments forever. In the same manner, the shore plays the role of picturing a demarcation line between the present, and are present and the dream world, bringing out the vestibule within which the speaker is located in a state of conflict between that which is real is fictitious and vice versa. This manner of representation has a positive effect on how the poem is understood emotionally because the reader gets more than an acceptance of the aspect of 'that which is time' but more abstract aspects. The present research extends this idea, which postulates that Poe uses his symbols as the continuum between the effect and cognitive aspects of the poetry. Imran et al., (2021) scrutinize the peculiar elements of style contained in Poe's *A Dream Within a Dream* but emphasizing the work of imagery and symbolism in the rendering of themes. Their research findings illuminate the importance of the grains of sand in particular, as one type of imagery aiding in the communication of the speaker's sense of despair and even hopelessness. Quite interesting is their observation that this is filmed pictorially and the reader understands – its just like the streamer of sand is escaping and you may wish to hold onto something very narrow and impossible to. Imran et al., (2021) do not forget about the symbolism in the poem as well, but

especially regarding the idea of reality and its transience. Yet, the most meaningful interpretation of the shore is another one, according to the authors of this article, by revealing it as a boundary separating the waking world and the world of dreams, they make too clear the inner turmoil of the speaker rather than existence. Most closely how the current situation describes this fact, can consider the shore as a transition zone both, physically from the world and mentally, as the inner world, is where the narrator comes face to face with the reality of life's shortness and the deception of the world itself. Imran et al., (2021) corroborate the viewpoint that through the use of imagery and symbol within *A Dream Within a Dream* the reader is transported into a philosophical sphere where the line between reality and fantasy is fluid.

Continuing with the stylistic study of Poe's 'The Bells', Suparlan et al., (2019) have examined the mechanisms through which Poe creates sound with images and how the reader is moved emotionally and thematically. A similar handling of the theme is perhaps absent in *A Poison Tree* as there is very little visual imagery employed in the poem. However, the poem's rhythmic movement still aids the reader's psyche by reflecting the unending flow of time. Contained within this set and such refrains, 'Is all that we see or seem / But A Dream Within a Dream?' is a repetitive structure that creates a rhythmic spin that mimics time's eternal movement and the cycle of life and being. This interactive nature of sound patterns is consistent with the suggestions of Suparlan et al., (2019). This concern is appropriate for this work because, in *A Dream Within a Dream*, the rhythmic flow acts as useful visual imagery in the poem that complements its more existential themes. One more way to put it is that the central question in effect seeks to draw out the reader's ever-inquisitive regard to the question from an almost infant imagining way where nearly intricate chain-like thoughts are brought into an emulation of the speaker's swinging thoughts towards possibly the brevity of life.

Cresson (1977), dealing with details of Poe's stylistic development in her doctoral dissertation, offers thorough remarks about the language, form, and stylistics of Poe in several of his works. According to Cresson, Poe succeeds in these objectives by attempting to combine the concepts of poetry with the patterns of philosophy through

the use of stylistic means that appeal to the emotions and sentiments of people. In *A Dream Within a Dream* too, the comment is very appropriate because these elements of Poe's style such as the visual or tactile imagery, the use of symbolism or the rhythmic patterns achieve a parallel meditation on time, reality and existence. Cresson's findings support the argument in this study that stylistic innovations by Poe are not ornamental but assist in the development of refined ideas of deep meaning. Due to the conscious organization of images and themes, he manages to make the reader share not only the intellectual but also the emotional estimation of his ideas on existence. This particular concept of actually being one's style concerns layers of meaning and structure, a feature of Poe's artwork elaborated by Cresson, and pronounced in *A Dream Within a Dream*, which is further applicable.

In this particular case, the present paper seeks to extend the current state of research by examining *A Dream Within a Dream* from a more complex point of view. It is hoped that this will help readers appreciate the interaction between different stylistic devices in the poem and the key themes that Poe seeks to convey, which have not been addressed in the available literature and help complement discussions on Poe's stylistic innovation. There are in particular alternatives to revelatory poet analysis of the prose through accusing realism or postmodernism, which the very critique of the poem *A Dream Within a Dream* seems to rebut. How others analyze the content or context has nothing to do with how the content or context is dealt with in the present research. *A Dream Within a Dream* aid in the comprehension of the distinction between reality and illusion, a theme which has also been addressed by other scholars. For example, Jaafar (2014) examines the symbolic features in a certain group's poems and concludes that the symbols in poetry usually represent not the topic of interest, but something far more sophisticated – ideas and thoughts.

In this context the grain of sand and the shore, which represent the concepts of temporality and transient existence respectively in Poe's poem, can also be said to reinforce the idea that images can have powerful symbolic meanings, Szokolczai & Jaafar explain. According to Jaafar's work, it is understood that symbols should be understood, as they always are, in a broad sense and often bear two

or more meanings breaking the closure of reality and perception.

Furthermore, Cresson (1977), in her expressed stylistic approach to Poe's literary heritage an emphasis on the components of the poem dedicated to the relationships with metaphorical symbols of walls and prisons in the wish of the poet to encapsulate and immobilize the beholden subject within the inevitable circumstances to changing with time. Her results are well matched to this study whereby the meaning of the sand which is running out of the speaker's hand choking the person between reality and fantasy these days becomes restlessly engrossed in searching for the meaning of life. Imran et al., (2021) conducted an extensive imagery analysis in their work *A Dream Within a Dream* wherein they affixed these representational forms as tactile and visual means of coping with the dichotomy of the torture that is – being in the chaos of life and the transience of it. They stress how the inefficacious tactility of sand sifting away from the speaker's hands represents the elusiveness of time, which is where the outcome of this study regarding the contrast between reality and illusion fits. Imran and the co-authors also pointed out the fact that the visual images from the poem and its philosophical content combine well with the reader's perception, and this current research agrees with such an idea. By extending the discussion of the images used by Poe's *The Bells*, Suparlan et al., (2019) note that the strong inclusion of sensory trips in most of Poe's works is purposeful and meant to create higher emotional tension. This is also true in *A Dream Within a Dream* where the imagery used reflects the central idea of doubt and makes the reader question the authenticity of the events. As Suparlan devoted his study to *The Bells*, so in the present research, the authors seek to understand how the applicable sensory imagery constructed by Poe adds more layers of philosophical uncertainty to his pieces. The stylistic device of repetition has been addressed by several authors, among which is Memon et al., (2021) who consider the use of repetition in Rudyard Kipling's poem *If*. Memon and co-authors highlight that the device of repetition is also a decorative element but instead emphasizes and underlines the ideas and strategies of the poem. Also, in *A Dream Within a Dream*, the speaker often repeats the phrase "Is all that we see or seem / But A Dream Within a Dreams?"

accentuated the philosophical angst of the speaker as well as the never-ending self-torturing doubts within mankind. Memon et al., (2021) propose that reuse in Kipling's works is rhythmic and serves to enhance the philosophical and moral teachings resident in the poem. In this case, repetition serves as a metrical device, generating the sense of a return on the part of the narrator who finds himself in a state of bewildering questioning. This aligns with Cabigas (2010) who studied the function of repetition in Poe's works and attested to its insistent purpose of rousing philosophical contemplation in the readers, as it appears in *A Dream Within a Dream*.

The idea of treating life as a dream has special importance in Poe's design of plots that are concerned with the conflict between what is real and what is only imagined. Civelek (2022), in her stylistic analysis of *The Black Cat* and *The Tell-Tale Heart*, has rightly pointed out that metaphor is very important in his work because it helps detail a lot of psychological and philosophical aspects. In *A Dream Within a Dream*, the metaphor of life as a dream removes the borders between the perception of the world and its real state, which is also the theme that Poe employs over and over again. Civelek's conviction is in line with the current research in which the metaphor in Poe's aphorism enhances the engagement of the audience's reason towards the text. The metaphor prompts the reader to reflect on the nature of reality, whether what we experience in life is that which we claim to experience or whether it's simply the figments of our imagination, which is quite existential., Imran et al., (2021) in particular pay attention to the problem of differentiating reality from illusion in *A Dream Within a Dream* and come to conclusions which are similar to the present study. They note that the stylistic aspects, particularly metaphor, repetition and imagery are effective in conveying the complexity of the speaker's reality and his illusion.

Awake to confidential limitations of effective horror in the works of Poe as Imran, S. et al., Their argument stands on the proposition that the said effects are largely explained through a rhetorical style, what is more. Concerning these approaches in the current study what is aimed at is instead of a more descriptive approach investigating how stylistic devices function in embodying the core theme. There is also past stylistic research on A

Dream Within a Dream that has been conducted even though it has been followed with the stylistic approaches of other scholars. Moreover, it tries to redress that sort of disequilibrium explaining how those targeting stylistic devices concern illusion and reality that has to be at every sharp edge, for instance, how image-making seeks to obliterate illusion with persuasive effectiveness.

Conclusion

Through the analysis of symbolism, imagery, repetition and metaphor, this analysis has further explained how Poe mixes up reality and fantasy, which causes the readers to raise questions regarding the actual aspect of living. All these three common metaphors grain of sand, shore and a dream, portray the inability of the abuser the speaker to reach for reality and indicate how fragile and insubstantial human life is. This study also illustrates how the stylistic devices in the works of Poe were used to instil feelings of uneasiness and distress and reasoned doubt over one's being. Further, the present work fills in this gap in the existing body of literature by describing this problem more systematically as focusing on how the relative 'weight' of single individual stylistic devices contributes to creating 'air' dominated by the tension between reality and illusion. Earlier studies focused primarily on the emotional and thematic reading of Poe's ultra-figurative styles, whereas this study analyses the discourse on reality into which those styles were geared. In general, this study enhances comprehension of how A Dream Within A Dream invites the reader's attention to a philosophical resolution of the definition of being. Also, it reinforces the view of stylistics as an effective tool which would help to clarify complicated issues in Poe's art and how the poet presents his particular concerns in a new linguistic situation.

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