

SYMBOLISM IN CONVEYING THE AUTHOR'S INDIVIDUAL STYLE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF FRANCIS SCOTT FITZGERALD'S "THE GREAT GATSBY")

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Abstract

The article describes the role of symbolism as one of the main elements of the author's writing style and analyzes the specifics of the usage of symbolism in "The Great Gatsby". The relevance of this topic is due to the insufficient analysis of the notion of the author's individual style and the use of symbolism as one of the elements that make the style of the writer unique.

Keywords: author's style, symbolism, color symbolism, metaphorical contrast.

Introduction

Every writer creates based on his or her worldview, background knowledge, lifestyle and environment, and to a certain extent, the writer's qualities play an important role in the creation of a literary work. This in itself leads to writer's individual style creation. As acknowledged by P.Sebranek, literary work creation is not only a factor of determining the writer's worldview, but the choice of spelling, grammar and punctuation, as well as words, sentence structures, stylistic devices are also the key elements used to express the text. In other words, the author's style is the choice in sentence structures, tone, and word usage distinguishing them from each other and belonging to the author's work.

Color symbolism in *The Great Gatsby*

The stylistic analysis of *The Great Gatsby* reveals and helps to understand the author's attitude to objects, characters, and situations. The author utilized a variety of stylistic means to give figurativeness, emotiveness, expressiveness to his characters and particular circumstances in the novel. Among the literary devices metaphor, epithet, simile, hyperbole, oxymoron, and symbolism appear more frequently.

Of special concern is Fitzgerald's symbolism in the novel. Fitzgerald utilized several color words each of which has symbolic meaning and specific representations. Color expressions not only add brightness to the work, making the story more exciting and helping the reader to feel a deep aesthetic pleasure, but also act as symbols expressing the emotional state of the characters, allowing readers to look into their inner world, showing the general mood prevailing in different areas of life and, thus, expressing the general spirit of the era.

White color was used the most frequently throughout the novel, mostly in the descriptions of Daisy. The author reveals the image created by Daisy, identifying white with silver and gold to demonstrate that in the eyes of Gatsby she is a luxurious girl, an object of dreams and the highest wealth.

Example 1: "*Daisy and Jordan lay upon an enormous couch, like silver idols weighing down their own white dresses against the singing breeze of the fans*" [Fitzgerald, 2004: 89].

Example 2: "*Her face bent into the single wrinkle of the small, white neck*" [Fitzgerald, 2004: 90].

Example 3: "*... high in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl...*" [Fitzgerald, 2004: 92].

The author also uses this color to create a metaphorical contrast between how Daisy portrays herself and how she really is. For instance, her imperfection is manifested in the fact that she mindlessly spends her life in constant parties and holidays and does not think about the meaning of her existence: Example 1: *“And what we do with ourselves this afternoon? And tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, and in the next thirty years?”* [Fitzgerald, 2004: 91].

Example 2: *“Sometimes she and Miss Baker talked at once, unobtrusively and with a bantering inconsequence that was never quite chatter, that was as cool as their white dresses and their impersonal eyes in the absence of all desire”* [Fitzgerald, 2004: 12].

The real Daisy opens up to the reader and the white color here symbolizes not only the purity and nobility that Daisy flaunted diligently, but also hypocrisy, indifference and emptiness. Apparently, in *The Great Gatsby* Fitzgerald equates white color more with pale, coldness, and suggests that the color not only symbolizes joy, purity and nobility, but can also denote impersonality and indifference.

Black also appears frequently in the novel and symbolizes sadness, and mourning. The author sets the picture of Gatsby's death and funeral using this color.

Example 1: *“But when I'd shouted “hello” several times in vain, an argument broke out behind a partition, and presently a lovely Jewess appeared at an interior door and scrutinized me with black hostile eyes”* [Fitzgerald, 2004: 130].

Example 2: *“About five o'clock our procession of three cars reached the cemetery and stopped in a thick drizzle beside the gate — first a motor hearse, horribly black and wet, then Mr. Gatz and the minister and I in the limousine, and a little later four or five servants and the postman from West Egg in Gatsby's station wagon, all wet to the skin”* [Fitzgerald, 2004: 133].

As it is clear, black here complements the depressive atmosphere. Fitzgerald shows an extremely negative attitude towards the color. In the second example black color is associated with an unpleasant physical and mental state of the characters, and in the first example, with the hostile mood of the character.

One of the most important scenes of symbolism is the valley of ashes. This is one of the strongest images of the wastelands of the 1920s. It symbolizes darkness and misfortune, and if it is compared with one of the Gatsby's parties, then the colors will be completely different. Gatsby parties are made up of vibrant colors of the rainbow. This is the biggest difference in color symbolism. To describe this area and its inhabitants, Fitzgerald refers mostly to black, various shades of gray and faded colors. The author adheres to traditional views on the symbolism of these colors, such as dullness, apathy, not associating them with positive emotions and optimism. In the first chapter, for example, Fitzgerald shows the mourning meaning of black color: *“The whole town is desolate. All the cars have the left rear wheel painted black as a mourning wreath, and there's a persistent wail all night along the north shore”* [Fitzgerald, 2004: 10].

Red color in the novel was used to characterize Tom. A man is constantly surrounded by things of this color, and sometimes he himself blushes with anger. Red has long been associated with fire, and this element characterizes Tom: he is strong, energetic, self-confident, active, impulsive and aggressive.

In creating a picture of the decoration of the Tom and Daisy's home, Fitzgerald utilized white and red which symbolize together the merging of the couple's worlds into one, showing that they influence each other, and each brings something of their own to the family: *“Their house was even more elaborate*

than I expected, a cheerful red-and-white Georgian Colonial mansion, overlooking the bay” [Fitzgerald, 2004: 8].

Concerning the yellow and green colors, the yellow color in the novel symbolizes feigned joy, idleness, and not deep sincere happiness. The author shows it when describing “girls in yellow dresses”, who not only dress, but also think and express themselves in the same way. Fitzgerald does not provide their names. The author deliberately calls them “girls in yellow”, showing the absence of their personal opinion: “*She held my hand impersonally, as a promise that she'd take care of me in a minute, and gave ear to two girls in twin yellow dresses, who stopped at the foot of the steps” [Fitzgerald, 2004: 34].*

The symbol of green color in the novel is taken from the green light at the end of the dock near Daisy's house. The color itself represents calmness. This warns Gatsby that he should not pursue his dream of Daisy's return because his chance has passed and everything is as it should be. Green color shows many of the thoughts, ideas, attitudes and choices that Gatsby has made throughout his life. The green color also denotes ambition to move forward in life, to succeed. Gatsby tries constantly to become a successful figure in society. Since he was a boy, he had set a schedule for himself, hoping to become a very respected, famous person. This brings back to the green color, which is used to indicate action in accordance with the character of Jay Gatsby: “*Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter — to-morrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther.*” [Fitzgerald, 2004: 139].

Apparently, the colors are used repeatedly as symbols, and shades to develop the mood and tone in different scenes of the novel. The color symbolism used by the author in the novel helps to create implicit meaning, and lets the author to express his complex ideas and convey deeper meanings.

Conclusion

To sum up, literary devices used throughout the novel emphasize author's individuality, his perception of the characters, their states and events taking place in the novel. They also convey expressiveness, imagery and provide insight into the author's language by making the novel more vivid.

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