

The Form of the Narrative and Writing Style in Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea"

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Article History	Abstract
Original Research Article	<i>Hemingway is an American novelist who is well-known for his prose and objective style. He differs from his time and contemporaries' novelists due to his uniqueness of writing techniques. The readers of his literary works find clarity and simplicity of approach as well as directness in addressing others. The dialogues are the most prominent feature of his novels. The dialogue also gives us an impression on the kind of characters that are exchanging the speech. He has a great experience of writing since he is a journalist, and battle reporter. The current paper is a matter of analyzing the narrative and writing style technique "the iceberg theory" "A style of writing that are utilized by Ernest Hemingway who gives the reader an opportunity to show the intelligence through reading and analyzing events". The Old Man and the Sea is a fiction that was appeared in 1952, it achieved a great reputation in the world of fictional writing. The writer was awarded Nobel prize not only for his writing the novel, but for his using a simple, clear language which is full of allusions, similes, and metaphor. The writer is also succeeding in using soliloquies, personification, and interior monologues.</i> Keywords: Dialogues, Iceberg theory, Narrative, Style, Cognitive reading
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Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited. Citation: Dr. Fahim Cheffat Salman. (2025). The Form of the Narrative and Writing Style in Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea". UKR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (UKRJAHSS), Volume 1(issue 8), 192-195.	

1. Introduction

The Old Man and the Sea is one of Hemingway's distinguished literary work that portrays one situation in the story of a fisherman. Santiago is the protagonist who has a battle with a huge marlin. He keeps on waiting to catch a fish after 84 days passed, nevertheless he feels disappointment. He continues sailing into the depth of the sea until he catches a huge fish. The real battle started at the time of fishing. The fish is dear to him, but he kills it and ties it by his small skiff. The starved sharks eat the marline and the old man goes on pulling the skeleton of the giant fish. Santiago arrives home exhausted, and almost tired, his struggle gives him great respect.

The reader finds special joy when reading the text, the first thing he/she discover in the novel's text is the form of the narrative and the writing style. "in English language we do not read only to achieve a source of information but also as a way to extend our knowledge of the language" (Abbasian & Azeez, 2021, pp.101-105).

According to Ruaf (2021'p. 474) "*Hemingway uses lots of tropology includes metaphors, simile, personification as*

well as many other literary devices to maintain his iceberg method".

The form of the narrative and Hemingway's style do not make the native reader find difficulties because he deals with the actual fictional atmosphere and describes the events in away that they can interact with him. The foreigner may face significant problems in realizing their connotations (Rendy, 2013, p. 5). *The Old Man and the Sea* represents the turning point in Hemingway's form of narration and writing style. It shows the first-person narration of African safari. This stle reflects the writer's awareness of a new dimension to be shown in his era. It can be said that this represents a fundamental change in Hemingway's life as a writer.

The current paper aims at manifesting the form of the narrative and writing style of Hemingway taking this novel as a sample of his unique writing and style. It also aims at focusing on the language style and the way that the writer reflects facts in the novel.

2. Technique in Narrative Fiction

Hemingway does not use the third person's attitude especially in his pre-safari writing. He uses it positively in post-safari writing. By using this style, Hemingway answered the questions that raised by John Atkins who comments the following:

"When I wrote the first two novels I had not learned to write in the third-person. The first person gives you great intimacy in attempting to give a complete sense of experience to the reader. It is limited however and in the third-person the novelist can work in other people's heads and in other people's country. His range is greatly extended and so are his obligations. I prepared myself for writing in the third person by the discipline of writing Death in the Afternoon, the short stories and especially the long short stories of „The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber“ and „The Snows of Kilimanjaro“. (John Atkin, P. 72-73)

According to (Percy, 1963, p. 257) *"The narrator's defined position has its advantages". "It contributes to the intensity and total effects of the story".* The previous experiences of the writer lead him to success in creating an effective narration of *"The Old Man and the Sea"*. For instance, the writer portrays the situation after catching the marlin and lost the major parts of the huge fish to the sharks. The destroyed condition of the fish when it is arrived to the bank of the river is a reference of the conflict and struggle is tolerated in the process. The metaphor is made by Mark Schorer:

"It is an old man catching a fish, yes; but it is also a great artist in the act of actually writing about the struggle. Nothing is more important than his craft, and it is beloved, but because it may be struggled with and mastered, it is also a foe, enemy to all self-indulgence, to all looseness of feeling, all laxness of style, all soft pomposities" (Carlos P.134)

The narration case focuses on Santiago as an old hunter except for some shifts as in the portrayal of the shark. The greatness of the event which involves *"the one single, lasting thing-the stream"*

The classical unities are well noticed in the novel, particularly the unity of setting which is the Gulf. The action is remarkably free from supordinated plots. The focus is on the old man as a protagonist as well as the action intensity clarifies the division of the novel.

3. Language Style

3.1 Analyses of the Language Style

The Old Man and the Sea is an idealistic literary work to the uniqueness language by Hemingway's literary

productions. The language in the current novel is fresh, clear, simple and has the effects of directness. The writer uses white language and chooses more commonly words. He tries his best to avoid using complicated terms or syntax. The writer's talent lies in using simple and short sentences. His major task is to create real people through using dialogues as an effective device. Here is an extract taken from the novel:

"What do you have to eat?" the boy asked.

"No, I will eat at home; do you want me to make the fire?"

"No, I will make it later on, or I may eat the rice cold."

Here the reader may notice that the words used by the writer are near to the colloquial. The writer tries to be more economical use of language and away of artificial words to describe the important situations or climax. The writer expresses his pride through his own speech especially when he puts the fish beside him. The language in this paragraph is distinguished from other paragraphs *"all his pain and what was left of his strength and his long gone pride"*. The speaker is very near from the readers to a certain extent. For example:

"You're my alarm clock." the boy said.

"Age is my alarm clock," the old man said. "Why does old man wake so early? Is it to have one longer day?"

"I don't know," the boy said. "All I know is that young boys sleep late and hard."

"I can remember it," the old man said. "I'll waken you in time."

The repetition of the rhythms and the easy phrases dig in the depth that the explicitly of the language denies. It often reflects the strong hidden feelings. The writer uses the effective metaphorical devices to show the description of his writing style. He knows enough what he is writing about to the extent that he omits the issues that the reader may expect. Thus Hemingway composed narrative and speech which seems simple and natural on the surface. It merges realistic elements with stylized and heightened.

3.2 The Form of the Narrative

A question might be raised how Hemingway formed this writing style? The answer is belonged to his personal experiences. *"His use of short sentences and paragraphs and vigorous and positive language, and the deliberate avoidance of gorgeous adjectives are some of the traces of his early journalistic practices"*. The writer has accustomed with using economical side of language, he is

a way of redundancy. His description is in details and full of facts seeking for preciseness. Hemingway was far-famed as “*Papa Hemingway*”. It denotes to his major participation to the advancement of a modern form on narration and writing style in American literature.

Storm Jameson has commented “*the craft of the novelist*”. She commented on Hemingway’s fame: It is this simplicity, this appeal to our crudest interests, which explain writer’s intelligence. Critics praised his directness and simplicity as well as his influence as one of the stylist writers. “*neatly expressed in the praise of the Nobel prize Committee about his powerful style- forming mastery of the art, of writing modern fiction*”.

3.3 Methodology

Ernest Hemingway utilized a method called “iceberg method”. This theory means that he uses explicit meaning without addressing directly through the deeper meaning. It must not be plain on the explicit context, but it might not flash over implicitly (Trodd, 2007).

Generally speaking, using the iceberg theory is highly depending on the literary devices that’s why the writer prefers the simple expressions in his writing the story. For instance, the writer resembles his small boat’ flag of a subdued troops. (Hemingway, 2009, p.1). After that the mood has been change and compares Santiago’s eyes with the blue color of the water sea (Hemingway, 2009, p.2).

sailor sometimes speaks to sea animals as if they are friends and sometimes curses the wars. The writer also uses some other devices to render his iceberg method. He uses illusion to manifest religious beliefs. These beliefs are Catholic, Cuban Villagers.

3.4 Mechanism of Narration

Hemingway has his journalistic style in addressing his readers, but here he impeded a special type of mechanism. The mechanism of narration in “*The Old Man and the Sea*” provides the readers with an objective, simple, clear, and direct views. He allows himself to be involved with what the hero thinks and acts, this issue is very clear at the beginning of the novel, the narrator informed us the Santiago is an intelligent hunter and has the experience of old fisherman “*everything about him was old except his eyes*” (p. 10).

The Narration form itself manifests the loss, and endurance of Santiago. Santiago has a double function journey allegorical test of spirit, and fishing mission fulfilled through Hemingway’s narration and writing style. The writer tries to a void complex style and subplots. He focuses on Santiago’s journey from home to sea. Through the reading of the novel, one can trace the writer’s ability to craft a mechanism narration that associates realism with

allegory, at the same time he can save an economic of language. The stylistic elements and narrative forms attract the readers to think of the deeper meaning about human conditions.

Conclusion

“*The Old Man and the Sea*” represented Hemingway’s mastery of manifesting a narrative form and writing style. Through symbolic imagery, exploring themes of persistence, and minimalist prose. The style of the writer permits the novella to function as an actual tale of a fisherman and immortal allegory of human patience and endurance against the conditions of life.

The novella seems to the reader as simple texts and natural on the explicit context, but in fact it intentional done. Hemingway’s technique of writing is widely used. He indicates to the type of language he holds which is characterized by clarity, directness, and simplicity.

The novel represents an example of Hemingway’s talent. It reflects the writer’s ability in setting such submerged example of writing to express the kind of literary art. The writer conveys a routine experience that simulating common people a universal importance.

In “*The Old Man and the Sea*”, The writer utilizes Iceberg approach to make the reader shares with him and find out the themes and the hidden meanings. He uses the literary devices in an extensive way such as metaphor, personification, simile, and symbols. All the literary devices in the novel support to express his personal joy of getting his ends.

Santiago represents a real person who suffers a lot to find his opportunity. His life is portrayed through the events of the novel which conveys the simplicity of man. The man who confronts a battle to maintain his dignity. Santiago’s insistence conveys a lesson to other people that ethic must control us more than material. He believes in one’s ability in achieving victory that is clear through his saying “*man can be destroyed but not defeated*”.

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