

## LINGUOSTYLISTIC SIGNIFICANT MEANS OF PORTRAYING CHARACTERS IN THE ENGLISH SHORT STORIES

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*Abstract:*

The article examines the main expressive means of portraying characters in literary works with the help of which writers manage to create versatile portrait characteristics of heroes and achieve great brightness and emotionality of their verbal and artistic representation in modern English literature.

*Key words:* literary work, aesthetic significance of the work, means of expression, portrait characteristics, versatility of images, author's intention

*doi:* <https://doi.org/10.2024/qet2tv39>

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The description of the expressive means and stylistic devices used by English writers is of interest from the point of view of the increased amount of research in the field of modern stylistics. Analysis of the portrait features of characters in the English short stories helps the reader understand the author's intentions and ideas, interpret the events correctly, and evaluate the aesthetic significance of the work.

The research material includes 52 text examples of descriptions of the appearance and behavior of characters, selected from the works by W.S. Maugham, A.K. Doyle, A. Christie.

Characters, literary images, main and minor characters of a literary text are an integral part of the literary work, largely helping the reader to determine the author's intention and his/her worldview. In this regard, it seems interesting to study the mechanisms of the most complete transmission of the author's idea, which, first of all, are realized in a literary text through various ways of presenting the images of the characters, their relationships with others, the very setting of the action, revealing the versatility and depth of the images.

The need for further study and analysis of the ways of representing heroes of literary works, as well as the degree of influence of expressive means on portraying characters, determines the relevance of the study.

Being an integral part of the literary text, as well as fully representing the richness of the individual author's style, the expressive means of language contribute to the creation of a real picture of what is happening in the context of the living embodiment of human emotions, feelings, thoughts, and attitudes. A character's portrait is mainly a combination of the external appearances and internal state of the hero, a complex system of relationships with other characters in the work, as well as his actions, speech, thoughts, and lifestyle [1; 2; 3; 4; 10; 11]. The verbal and artistic portrait of a character is one of the main structural and content components of a literary text, since it simultaneously addresses both the language of the material and the ideological content of the work. In other words, when considering the ideological and thematic content,

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features of the plot and compositional structure, speech style and system of images of the work, a comprehensive study of the expressive means of language contributes to the analysis of various techniques and approaches to portraying characters through the prism of the concept of “expressive means of language” and their key role in character’s description in the English prose [5; 6; 7; 8].

The author introduces the characters to the reader, presenting their verbal and artistic portraits, describing the characters with a certain detail of appearance, face, gestures, clothes, as well as the interaction of characters and related events described in this or that story.

Let us turn to the stories of such English writers as W.S. Maugham, A.K. Doyle, A. Christie who are the masters of artistic expression, known for their exciting plots that combine grotesqueness, humor, irony, and vivid descriptions of the major and minor characters.

The practice of linguistic stylistic analysis of the works by W.S. Maugham, A.K. Doyle, A. Christie shows that the details of the appearances of characters are, as a rule, the important elements of stories in their function of creating the rational and emotional meaning of the text. The way the details for depicting characters are chosen by the author and by what principles the portrait characteristics are presented is determined by the author’s intentions, functional style, and text genre.

For example, the following contextual descriptions of the characters’ appearances demonstrate in detail the individual characteristics of their appearances, at the same time presenting the logical completeness of the images, giving the reader the opportunity to imagine the character, to form an opinion and to show an attitude towards him: 1) Lady Willard was a tall, thin woman, dressed in deep mourning. Her haggard face bore eloquent testimony to her recent grief [3: 48]; 2) He introduced his two companions, Dr. Ames, a capable-looking man of thirty-odd, with a touch of greying hair at the temples, and Mr. Harper, the secretary, a pleasant lean young man wearing the national insignia of horn-rimmed spectacles [3: 56]; 3) They were nice-looking people – the girl, Charmian Stround, slim and dark; the man, Edward Rossiter, a fair-haired, amiable young giant [3: 67]; 4) “I am Mr. Kelada,” he added, with a smile that showed a row of flashing teeth, and sat down [3: 289]; 5) He [Ramsay] was a great heavy fellow from the Middle West, with loose fat under a tight skin, and he bulged out of his ready-made clothes <...> Mrs Ramsay was a very pretty little thing, with pleasant manners and a sense of humor. <...> ... she was dressed always very simply; but she knew how to wear her clothes. <...> You could not look at her without being struck by her modesty [3: 292-293]; 6) A lady dressed in black and heavily veiled, who had been sitting in the window, rose as we entered. <...> She raised her veil as she spoke, and we could see that she was indeed in a pitiable state of agitation, her face all drawn and grey, with restless, frightened eyes, like those of some hunted animal. Her features and figure were those of a woman of thirty, but her hair was shot with premature grey, and her expression was weary and haggard [9: 155-156]; 7) The ejaculation had been drawn from my companion by the fact that our door had been suddenly dashed open, and that a huge man had framed himself in the aperture. His costume was a peculiar mixture of the professional and of the agricultural, having a black top-hat, a long frock-coat, and a pair of high gaiters, with a hunting-crop swinging in his hand. So tall was he that his hat actually brushed the cross-bar of the doorway, and his breadth seemed to span it across from side to side. A large

face, seared with a thousand wrinkles, burned yellow with the sun, and marked with every evil passion, was turned from one to the other of us, while his deep-set, bile-shot eyes, and the high thin fleshless nose, gave him somewhat the resemblance to a fierce old bird of prey [9: 168-169].

The heroes of the works live their own lives: they talk, laugh, cry quite naturally; sometimes they are upset, they are in love, they are friendly or express dissatisfaction. For example, W. Maugham manages to create a truthful, life-like image of Mr. Kelada in one phrase: 1) Mr Kelada flashed an oriental smile at me [3: 290]; or an unexpected juxtaposition of contrasting statements to emphasize the inconsistency of feelings: 2) I was prepared to dislike Max Kelada even before I knew him. <...> I did not like Mr Kelada. <...> At that moment I did not entirely dislike Mr Kelada [3: 288, 291, 297].

In the story "Mr Know All" by W. Maugham the consistent presentation of the hero's appearances, behavior and lifestyle - the unbearably annoying and self-confident Mr. Kelada - is sharply replaced by the author's desire to force his hero to act contrary to everyone's expectations; and this stylistic device, built on contrast, immediately complicates the image, forces the reader to see and evaluate the hero from the other side, taking into account his tact and nobility in the situation of a lost bet: Mr Kelada was short and of a sturdy build, clean-shaven and dark skinned, with a fleshy, hooked nose and very large, lustrous and liquid eyes. His long black hair was sleek and curly. He spoke with a fluency in which there was nothing English and his gestures were exuberant. <...> He talked of New York and of San Francisco. He discussed plays, pictures, and politics. <...> He was a good mixer, and in three days knew everyone on board. <...> He was hearty, jovial, loquacious and argumentative. He knew everything better than anybody else, and it was an affront to his overweening vanity that you should disagree with him. He would not drop a subject, however unimportant, till he had brought you round to his way of thinking. The possibility that he could be mistaken never occurred to him. <...> We called him Mr. Know-All, even to his face. He took it as a compliment <...> Mr Kelada stopped with his mouth open. He flushed deeply. You could almost see the effort he was making over himself [3: 290-296].

In the system of expressive means phonetic expressive means include a number of techniques (among which, for example, assonance and alliteration occupy a prominent place) that help create the necessary mood and evoke certain emotions. Using these expressive means, the writer influences the reader's emotions, causing a response not only with the help of the meaning of the words, but also with the help of the sound: 1) About nine o'clock the light among the trees was extinguished, and all was dark in the direction of the Manor House. Two hours passed slowly away, and then, suddenly, just at the stroke of eleven, a single bright light shone out right in front of us [9: 181]; 2) It was a wild night. The wind was howling outside, and the rain was beating and splashing against the windows [9: 163]; 3) Outside the wind still screamed, and the rain splashed and pattered against the windows. This strange, wild story seemed to have come to us from amid the mad elements ... [9: 83].

Lexical expressive means are distinguished by great diversity and obvious frequency of their use in literary works. For example, A. Christie achieves great expressiveness in the image of the amateur detective Miss Marple with the help of extraordinary epithets: 1) Miss Marple turned her placid, china-blue eyes towards Mr. Rossiter [3: 68]; 2) "... I've always wanted to have the chance of looking for buried treasure. And, she added, looking at them with a beaming,

late-Victorian smile, “with a love interest too!” [3: 72]; 3) Miss Marple reacted with Victorian gusto. “How interesting! ...” [3: 78];

In the classification of syntactic means, we note the following means, which often appear on the pages of stories by W.S. Maugham, A.K. Doyle, A. Christie: inversion, isolated constructions, parallel constructions, repetition, elliptical constructions and rhetorical questions. For example, repetition demonstrates the character’s emotional rise and desire in conversation to convey confidence in what was said through repeated emphasis on an important word: 1) “Oh, said Miss Marple, “but we’ve got to find the money, haven’t we? You mustn’t give up, Mr. Rossiter. ‘If at first you don’t succeed, try, try, try again.’” [3: 76]; 2) “Exactly,” said Miss Marple. “Very, very significant.” [3: 80].

As the examples show, the expressive means play a key role in the creation of images presented in the context of diversity of a text; they give the accurate narration, clarity, expressiveness and emotional imagination, providing the reader with the direct approach to understanding the author’s intention and the whole system of images of the characters in the literary work.

It is obvious that the role of expressive means in describing characters is significant. Expressive means of the English language play an important role in revealing the characters in a literary work, helping to convey the author’s attitude towards the characters, their lives and relationships, since the characters’ portraits often reflect their mental and emotional state, their mood and relations. The variety of such devices as wordplay, vivid epithets and metaphors makes a literary text interesting for the reader.

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