**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

**Saida Dr. Moulay Tahar University**

**Faculty of Letters, Languages, and Arts**

**Department of English**

**Suggested Online Lectures of Literary Critical Theories for First Year Master Students (Literature and Civilization)**

**Academic Year 2019-2020**

**Semester II**

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**Unit 3 Phenomenological Literary Analysis**

**Objectives**

-to understand the philosophical perspectives behind the approach, especially the concept of studying how people experience a phenomenon

- be able to write research questions that explore the meaning of that experience for individuals and asks individuals to describe their everyday lived experience.

-to clarify and enlighten how people understand and comprehend certain phenomena

-emphasize personal experiences and comprehensions

**Introduction**

Phenomenology, as its name suggests, is concerned to describe basic human experience (and hence, a concern with phenomena, a word that is derived from the Greek for “appearance”). The point of this is investigate that which is presupposed by natural sciences and other claims to knowledge, and which therefore makes those knowledge claims possible Phenomenological literary analysis is usually associated with critics of the Geneva School: Albert Beguin, Marcel Raymond, Georges Poulet, Jean – Pierre Richard, Jean Rousset, and Jean Starobinski. But one sees it practiced too in various forms by critics such as Gaston Bachelard, Jean - Paul Sartre, Maurice Blanchot, Hélène Cixous, Emmanuel Levinas, and Martin Heidegger. Phenomenology was announced by Edmund Husserl in 1900–1901 as a bold, radically new way of doing philosophy, an attempt to bring philosophy back from abstract metaphysical speculation wrapped up in pseudo-problems, in order to come into contact with the matters themselves, with concrete living experience. It was one of several strong currents in philosophy prominent at the outset of the twentieth century, alongside, for example, Neo-Kantianism, idealism, logicism, hermeneutics, pragmatism, Lebensphilosophie, Existenz philosophy, empiricism, positivism and empirio-criticism. As Husserl originally envisaged it, phenomenology had much in common with William James’ radical empiricism, but more than anything else it was stimulated by Franz Brentano’s ground-breaking work in descriptive psychology, the a priori science of the acts and contents of consciousness. Later, phenomenology blossomed into an extraordinarily diverse set of projects, “a set of infinite tasks”, as Husserl put it. Phenomenological literary analysis is an orientation rather than a rigorous method; it assumes an understanding of consciousness along Husserlian lines as a mental set of processes that aren’t to be grounded, a priori, in a central controlling ego that self - consciously wills (intends) expression.

**The Function of Phenomenological Criticism**

Yet, phenomenological criticism does often resemble biographical criticism in that it searches for “themes” that are the signature of a particular artistic consciousness. Whereas Husserl didn’t believe in mental faculties, phenomenological critics do refer to the imagination (which is a faculty of mind) and some also tend to think in terms of an author’s psychology (the id is a sort of faculty), which puts them in close proximity with psychoanalytic literary analysis. Hence figures like J - B. Pontalis (a psychoanalyst who writes penetratingly about culture) tend to straddle the two domains.

These reservations aside, phenomenological criticism is concerned with the subjective manifestation of an author’s consciousness in words. Reading is considered the “consciousness of consciousness” (Marcel Raymond) and is itself a subjective act in response that must strive to imagine the psychic life of the writer, that is, his or her consciousness as a process of thought that is always in flux. How does this flux relate to the structure of authorial experience? According to Poulet, the thought of the critic should turn into the thought of the author. This view, which was shared by hermeneuts like Schleiermacher at the turn of the nineteenth century, is radicalized in that the process of identification is intersubjective (the interrelating and even merging of subjectivities). It’s not merely a matter of *connaissance* (that is, of simple familiarity). However, some phenomenological readers are also aware of their own consciousness, its themes (preoccupations, obsessions, concerns, interests), and how reading is the sharing of an experience that is deeply felt and expressed in words that have to be worked through by the reader in order to be fulfilled. Speaking of Marcel Raymond ’ s work, the critic J. Hillis Miller wrote that, “ The self - consciousness with which Raymond seeks to identify himself … is … a primitive sense of existence, preceding the identification of any distinct objects, a state of mind more emotive than rational, scarcely differentiated as that of one particular self. ” (1) In Gaston Bachelard’s work, the aim of the critic is to understand a text chiefly by way of empathic self - experience. For example, Bachelard studied the literary image in terms of a psycho - dynamics that revealed a common structure of experience of a surprisingly intimate nature. The trait proper to the image, he said, is its suddenness and brevity. This it shares with language itself. Such perceptions are insights taken from Bachelard’s own experience and applied to what he read.

Husserl, Heidegger, Gadamer

A modern philosophical tendency which stresses the perceiver’s central role in determining meaning is known as ‘phenomenology’. According to Edmund Husserl the proper object of philosophical investigation is the contents of our consciousness and not objects in the world. Consciousness is always of something, and it is the ‘something’ which appears to our consciousness which is truly real to us. In addition, argued Husserl, we discover in the things which appear in consciousness (‘phenomena’ in Greek, meaning ‘things appearing’) their universal or essential qualities.  Husserl (1963) believes, we must return to intuition rather than a range of theories, and experience structures rather than focus on phenomena. Within this framework, the human mind interferes with human nature. Phenomenology claims to show us the underlying nature both of human consciousness and of ‘phenomena’. This was an attempt to revive the idea (eclipsed since the Romantics) that the individual human mind is the centre and origin of all meaning. In literary theory this approach did not encourage a purely subjective concern for the critic’s mental structure but a type of criticism which tries to enter into the world of a writer’s works and to arrive at an understanding of the underlying nature or essence of the writings as they appear to the critic’s consciousness. The early work of J. Hillis Miller, the American (later deconstructionist – see Chapter 7, pp. 176–7) critic, was influenced by the phenomenological theories of the so-called ‘Geneva School’ of critics, who included Georges Poulet and Jean Starobinski. For example, Miller’s first study of Thomas Hardy, *Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire* (1970; he wrote further ‘deconstructive’ studies later), uncovers the novels’ pervasive mental structures, namely ‘distance’ and ‘desire’. The act of interpretation is possible because the texts allow the reader access to the author’s consciousness, which, says Poulet, ‘is open to me, welcomes me, lets me look deep inside itself, and . . . allows me . . . to think what it thinks and feel what it feels’. Derrida (see Chapter 7) would consider this kind of thinking ‘logocentric’ for supposing that a meaning is centred on a ‘transcendental subject’ (the author) and can be recentred on another such subject (the reader). The shift towards a reader-oriented theory is prefigured in the rejection of Husserl’s ‘objective’ view by his pupil Martin Heidegger. The latter argued that what is distinctive about human existence is its *Dasein* (‘givenness’): our consciousness both *projects* the things of the world and at the same time *is subjected to* the world by the very nature of existence in the world. We find ourselves ‘flung down’ into the world, into a time and place we did not choose, but simultaneously it is our world in so far as our consciousness projects it. We can never adopt an attitude of detached contemplation, looking down upon the world as if from a mountain top.

To make it simple, Dasein **is the pre-reflective state of being, which means that it is simply pure existence without us thinking about what is *actually* is.** **The nature of Dasein is inherently social and bounded to this world,** with a unique sense of “mineness” that defines itself as an issue for itself. So **one cannot understand Dasein unless it is expressed as a mode of something, for example, *Being-in-the-world*, *Being-for-itself*, *Being-for-others* etc., and these modes are the primary tools of analysis in his magnum opus*Being and Time*.** The **Dasein acts as the primitive, pre-reflective core which can only reveal itself through its various forms to others and even to oneself**. Dasein is something that is simply postulated as an “essence of Being” but cannot be explained, for any attempt to explain involves self-reflection, which would mean that Dasein has already expressed itself in some form other than pure Dasein itself.

We are inevitably merged with the very object of our consciousness. Our thinking is always in a situation and is therefore always *historical*, although this history is not external and social but personal and inward. It was Hans-Georg Gadamer who, in *Truth and Method* (1975), applied Heidegger’s situational approach to literary theory. Gadamer argued that a literary work does not pop into the world as a finished and neatly parcelled bundle of meaning; rather meaning depends on the historical situation of the interpreter. Gadamer influenced ‘reception theory’ (see Jauss below).

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| **Types of Phenomenology** |  |

There are **three main types** of Phenomenology:

* **Realist Phenomenology** (or **Realistic Phenomenology**):

[Husserl](https://www.philosophybasics.com/philosophers_husserl.html)’s early formulation, based on the first edition of his ***“Logical Investigations”***, which had as its goal the analysis of the **intentional structures** of mental acts as they are directed at both **real** and **ideal** objects. This was the preferred version of the **Munich Group** at the University of Munich in the early 20th Century, led by **Johanes Daubert** (1877 - 1947) and **Adolf Reinach** (1883 -1917), as well as **Alexander Pfänder** (1871 - 1941), **Max Scheler** (1874 - 1928), **Roman Ingarden** (1893 - 1970), **Nicolai Hartmann** (1882 - 1950) and **Hans Köchler** (1948 - ).

* **Transcendental Phenomenology** (or **Constitutive Phenomenology**)

[Husserl](https://www.philosophybasics.com/philosophers_husserl.html)’s later formulation, following from his 1913 ***"Ideas"***, which takes the **intuitive experience** of phenomena as its starting point, and tries to extract from it the generalized **essential features** of experiences and the **essence** of what we experience, **setting aside** questions of any relation to the natural world around us. Transcendental Phenomenologists include **Oskar Becker** (1889 - 1964), **Aron Gurwitsch** (1901 - 1973) and **Alfred Schutz** (1899 - 1959).

* **Existential Phenomenology**:

[Heidegger](https://www.philosophybasics.com/philosophers_heidegger.html)'s expanded formulation, as expounded in his ***"Being and Time"*** of 1927, which takes as read that the observer **cannot separate** himself from the world (and so cannot have the **detached viewpoint** [Husserl](https://www.philosophybasics.com/philosophers_husserl.html) insisted on). It is therefore a combination of the **phenomenological method** with the importance of **understanding** man in his existential world. Existential Phenomenologists include [Jean-Paul Sartre](https://www.philosophybasics.com/philosophers_sartre.html), **Hannah Arendt** (1906 - 1975), **Emmanuel Levinas** (1906 - 1995), **Gabriel Marcel** (1889 - 1973), **Paul Ricoeur** (1913 - 2005) and **Maurice Merleau-Ponty** (1908 - 1961)

**Conclusion**

 Although Phenomenology is a philosophical school of thought, it can have extensive implications for literature, particularly to the study and criticism of mystic literature because of its own hermeneutic nature. The philosophy is an attempt to reform the structure of cognition based upon two pillars: (a) epistemological and (b) methodological. Its epistemological concern whose forming components include love, attraction and intuition has a significant relation with the mystic literature. Further, its methodological concern is based upon suspending the mental pre-judgments and pre-assumptions, and upon reducing the multiple instances to general, but original infrastructures, which can play a crucial role in keeping the mind away from literary stereotypes. Thus, it is deemed effective in making literary criticism and judgment transparent and dynamic. There seems to be a direct relation between the philosophy of phenomenology and literary criticism to the extent that the former can serve the latter by freeing the mind of literary critics from pre-assumptions, pre-suppositions and pre-judgments.

**Summary**

Phenomenology is the **study of experience** and **how we experience**. It studies **structures of conscious experience** as experienced from a **subjective** or **first-person** point of view, along with its **"intentionality"** (the way an experience is **directed** toward a certain object in the world). It then leads to analyses of conditions of the **possibility of intentionality**, conditions involving **motor skills** and **habits**, background **social practices** and, often, **language**.

**Experience**, in a phenomenological sense, includes not only the relatively **passive** experiences of **sensory perception**, but also **imagination**, **thought**, **emotion**, **desire**, **volition** and **action**. In short, it includes everything that we **live through** or **perform**. Thus, we may **observe** and **engage** with other things in the world, but we do not actually **experience** them in a **first-person** manner. What makes an experience **conscious** is a certain **awareness** one has of the experience while living through or performing it. However, as [Heidegger](https://www.philosophybasics.com/philosophers_heidegger.html) has pointed out, we are often not **explicitly conscious** of our **habitual** patterns of action, and the domain of Phenomenology may spread out into **semi-conscious** and even **unconscious** mental activity.

**Typical Questions**

* [What is the difference between hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative methodologies?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_is_the_difference_between_hermeneutic_phenomenology_and_narrative_methodologies)
* [Can ontology be disentangled from epistemology?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/Can_ontology_be_disentangled_from_epistemology)
* [What is the role of intuition in research and in general in the development of knowledge?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_is_the_role_of_intuition_in_research_and_in_general_in_the_development_of_knowledge2)
* [What are the specific steps to use in interpretive phenomenological analysis?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_are_the_specific_steps_to_use_in_interpretive_phenomenological_analysis)
* [What does Martin Heidegger mean when he says human beings should be "shepherds of Being"?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_does_Martin_Heidegger_mean_when_he_says_human_beings_should_be_shepherds_of_Being)
* [Is Heidegger's departure from Husserl due to Heidegger's turn to metaphysics? If so, doesn't that make Heidegger's critique of Husserl irrelevant?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/Is_Heideggers_departure_from_Husserl_due_to_Heideggers_turn_to_metaphysics_If_so_doesnt_that_make_Heideggers_critique_of_Husserl_irrelevant)
* [What is meaning?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_is_meaning)
* [What do you think is more effective in terms of expression: the word/written character or the picture/image?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/What_do_you_think_is_more_effective_in_terms_of_expression_the_word_written_character_or_the_picture_image)
* [If subject is not having lived experience of phenomenon, can we conduct phenomenology?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/Phenomenology_If_subject_is_not_having_lived_experience_of_phenomenon_can_we_conduct_phenomenology)
* [Where and how do "phenomenology" and "case research" overlap in qualitative research methods and, next, how to distinguish and choose between them?](https://www.researchgate.net/post/Where_and_how_do_phenomenology_and_case_research_overlap_in_qualitative_research_methods_and_next_how_to_distinguish_and_choose_between_them)
* What Does a Critic Analyze? (On a Phenomenological Approach to Literature)
* What is the experience of having powerful new feelings, ideas and insights aroused by what we read?
* What is the nature of this life-forwarding capacity of literature?
* How do stories and poems exercise the moral imagination?
* What happens when we encounter a literary text?
* How does this encounter compare with other day-to-day experiences?
* How can phenomenology help us to interpret literary texts?
* How can literary texts help us to better understand phenomenology?

**T. D’s Session**

**Practical Application of Phenomenology to Literature**

# Exercise 1 Read Cynthia Ozick’s the Shawl in the light of the IPA to find out the experience of living with a permanent mental disorder as a chronic illness.

**Tip:** Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is a qualitative approach which aims to provide detailed examinations of personal lived experience (Smith et. al). It has three primary theoretical underpinnings. Phenomenology is a philosophical approach, initially articulated by Husserl, which aims to produce an account of lived experience in its own terms rather than one prescribed by pre-existing theoretical preconceptions. IPA recognises that this is an interpretative endeavour because humans are sense-making organisms. In IPA, therefore, the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them. Finally, IPA is idiographic in its commitment to examining the detailed experience of each case in turn, prior to the move to more general claims.

# Exercise 2 Read Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye to find out the experience of living with a permanent disabled vision and Schizophrenia as a chronic disease.

**Possible Answer adapted from** Manuela López Ramírez article “The Theme of the Shattered Self in Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye and A Mercy”, in miscelánea: a journal of English and American studies 48 (2013): pp. 75-91 ISSN: 1137-6368

The splitting of the self is a familiar theme in Morrison’s fiction. All of her novels explore, to some extent, the shattered identity. Under traumatic circumstances, the individual may suffer a severe psychic disintegration. Morrison has shown interest in different states of dementia caused by trauma which, as Clifton Spargo asserts, “has come to function for many critics as a trope of access to more difficult histories, providing us with entry into a world inhabited by the victims of extraordinary social violence, those perspectives so often left out of rational, progressive narratives of history” (Spargo).

In Morrison’s narratives, dissociated subjectivity, like Pecola’s in *The Bluest Eye*, is usually connected to slavery and its sequels and, as Linda Koolish observes, is frequently the consequence of the confrontation between the Blacks’ own definition of themselves and slavery’s misrepresentation of African Americans as subhumans (Koolish174). However, Morrison has also dealt with insanity caused by other emotionally scarring situations, such as war in Sula’s character, Shadrack, or as a result of the loss of your loved ones, sudden orphanhood, as in A Mercy’s Sorrow.

There is no surprise; therefore to note that Morrison in her writing depicts the dramatic destruction of the female teenager’s self and her struggle for psychic wholeness in a hostile world. The adolescent’s fragile identity embodies, better than any other, the terrible ordeal that the marginal self has to cope with to become a true human being outside the Western discourse. There are two main aspects that make the disintegration of the female teenager’s subjectivity more significant than that of others. First, owing to their gender and age, the adolescent is extremely vulnerable and, consequently, more prone to become a victim in adverse circumstances. Secondly, psychic disorders in one’s teens are particularly tragic and appalling, since they map out the future.

Morrison has delved in many of her novels into the impact of psychological trauma on the female teenager’s selfhood. Pecola in *The Bluest Eye* and Sorrow in *A Mercy*, two traumatized girls, poignantly exemplify this impact. In *The Bluest Eye* the dissociation of the female adolescent identity stems from the colonization of Blacks by mainstream culture and the internalization of its standards of beauty, which engender self-hatred. On the other hand, in *A Mercy*, madness is a coping strategy, which helps Sorrow survive in a hostile environment after sudden bereavement. Despite their strong differences, both characters share some obvious similarities, such as their psychotic mental state, ostracism and social victimization.

Trauma, as the root cause of psychological disorders, can be described, in Freudian terms, as a wound inflicted upon the mind (Caruth 3). Psychic distress can be the consequence of a devastating event or can be the result of long exposure to humiliation and abuse, as in tyrannized minority groups. Traumatic experiences might irreparably fracture the subject’s symbolic universe. The loss of a loved one produces an irreversible psychic rupture, which may cause a drastic change in personality as well as mental disorders. Bereavement entails the disintegration of the subject’s protective and nurturing psychological environment, leaving him/ her desolate and helpless. The individual who has suffered a traumatic death in the family might appear to be ‘damaged’, occupying a devalued and marginal position in the midst of the community.

On the other hand, social oppression and power dynamics are two determinant factors in the impact of psychological trauma on selfhood. In these two narratives Morrison highlights the invisible psychic wounds of people who belong to social minorities, using Maria Root’s concept of ‘insidious trauma’, on the “traumatogenic effects of oppression that are not necessarily overtly violent or threatening to bodily well-being at the given moment but that do violence to the soul and spirit” (Brown 107). Social and racial minorities experience insidious trauma as a result of the cruelty inflicted by the dominant group, usually the whites. Hence, they internalize feelings of inferiority and self-contempt, which are projected onto them by the patriarchal Western discourse. Systemic racism, like other types of marginalization and social exclusion, determine the forms which the transgenerational transmission of trauma takes within the family and community. Colonized members of minority groups become oppressors themselves, reproducing the values of the hegemonic group, of which they are victims.

Exercise 3 Read Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying* to provide a phenomenological analysis of meaning for the Animal Imagery. (See Thomas Driedger Enns English 305016 February 2014)

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**Unit 4 Structuralism and Semiotics**

#### Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

* discuss the theoretical postulations of structuralism
* apply structuralist principles to the analysis of literary works.

**Introduction**

In literary studies, structuralism is concerned with an analysis of texts based on some linguistic principles. It is an intellectual movement that made significant contributions not only to literary criticism but also to philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and history. Structuralist literary critics, such as Roland Barthes, read texts as an interrelated system of signs that refer to one another rather than to an external ―meaning‖ that is fixed either by the author or reader. Structuralist literary theory draws on the work of the Russian formalists, as well as the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure and C. S. Peirce. According to Tyson Lois (2006), in literature, one is not engaged in structuralist activity if one describes the structure of a short story to interpret what the work means or evaluate whether or not it is good literature. However, one is engaged in structuralist activity if one examines the structure of a large number of short stories to discover the underlying principles that govern their composition. For example, principles of narrative progression (the order in which plot events occur) or of characterization (the functions each character performs in relation to the narrative as a whole). You are also engaged in structuralist activity if you describe the structure of a single literary work to discover how its composition demonstrates the underlying principles of a given structural system. In other words, structuralists are not interested in individual buildings or individual literary works (or individual phenomena of any kind) except in terms of what those individual items can tell us about the structures that underlie and organise all items of that kind.

**The Emergence of Structuralism**

Structuralism has its roots in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (circa 1915) and argues, essentially, that with respect to signifying systems the whole comes before its parts (5.3). Structuralism argues, moreover, that systems are constructed in terms of simple binary oppositions that establish patterns of identity and difference that encode signs and make them functional as meaningful elements within a system of differentiations and equivalences. A radical claim made by structuralism is that the human subject does not invent language but is preceded by language and is born into it. That sounds odd, until one realizes that DNA is a semiotic system with properties rather like language and that our ability to converse was prepared for long before humans evolved, given that animals had most of the features of speech and the basic sociality to go with it long before we evolved. Because the “ wholism ” of structuralism is so at odds with how people have been habituated to think about language, the movement never became widely popular, though conceptually it really is more robust than, say, New Criticism or traditional historicism. The work by anthropologist Claude Lévi - Strauss is considered a major bulwark of structuralism, though structuralism has been practiced with considerable success by literary critics, among them, Roland Barthes, Gerard Genette, Philippe Hamon, Michael Riffaterre, Tzvetan Todorov, and Julia Kristeva. The advantage to structuralism is that it doesn ’t begin with the assumption that literature is a semiotic representation of some independent mental reality (or content) that exists transcendentally either out in the world or in the writer ’ s imagination. In other words, structuralism abandons the mimetic fallacy of a pre - existing reality, whether mental or concrete, that the writer is translating into signs. Rather, structuralism argues that the reality effect of a text is *produced* by the sign system, not *reproduced* by it. This seems like a small difference, but in fact this shift has very significant consequences from an interpretive point of view. For one thing, it demystifies the idea that a novel is very much like a photograph of some independent reality.

#### Linguistic Roots of Structuralism

#### Structuralism is a grab-bag of a term stuffed with a wide range of writers and writings: the structural anthropology of Lévi- Strauss; the formal linguistics of Saussure and of Chomsky; the early writings of Roland Barthes and Derrida; the writings of the much earlier Russian Formalists as rediscovered and translated in the West during the late 1960’s and 1970’s. What all these writers and writings have in common is the understanding of phenomena (words, poems, narratives, myths, customs, social practice) not as a discrete (separate; distinct) entities but as parts of larger structures or systems. The emphasis is on making sense of things as signs in large sign-systems, and on perceiving the ways in which one sign-system relates to another. Hence, the close association of structuralism with semiotics/semiology, the study of sign systems. A structuralist approach would tend to treat a sign-system as a complete, finished, potentially knowable whole with a notional centre. Structuralism concentrates on “whole systems”. It concentrates on sense making activities.

**It has its roots in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (circa 1915) who argues that with respect to signifying systems the whole comes before its parts (5.3).** It is difficult, then, to boil structuralism down to a single “bottom‑line” proposition, however its essence is the belief that things cannot be understood in isolation ‑ they have to be seen in the context of the larger structures they are part of (hence the term “structuralism”). Structuralism was imported into Britain mainly in the 1970s and attained widespread influence, and even notoriety, throughout the 1980s.

Structuralism, as a new school of thoughts emerged from linguistics and language theories, specifically, **it analyzes the underlying principles and components of litrature and culture to establish a relationship between them. With the help of this established connection, critics draw general conclusions about different works of an individual and the system /soceity which has produced the work.**

**Structuralists percieve this world in the form of structures. According to them, whatever we do practically can be expressed in language. Language has symbols not confined to just oral and written communication. Structuralists, mainly Claude Levi-Strauss and the literary critic Roland Barthes, assert that structuralism scaffolds a belief that understanding things in isolation is difficult, they must be examined, studied or analyzed in the broader context of structures come to the fore when we recieve the world in our way**

The structures in question here **are those imposed by our way of perceiving the world and organising experience, rather than objective entities already existing in the external world.** It follows from this that meaning or significance isn't a kind of core or essence *inside* things: rather, meaning is always *outside.* Meaning is always an attribute of things, in the literal sense that meanings are *attributed* to the things by the human mind, not contained within them.

Structuralism gives importance to the underlying structure of a literary text. It pays great importance to the structural similarities within various texts, whereas the individual work content is neglected. First as visible or a surface phenomenon for example activities and objects of everyday life. Second, Structuralists see the world as invisible where there are structures underlying all the phenomena to make understanding of the world. Furthermore in Structuralist theory, a text is free from context, history, and readers’ interpretation and isolated from the author itself. **Meaning of any text then solely comes from rules and underlying system which governs it**. ” What we see on the surface are the traces of a deeper history; only by excavating beneath the surface will we discover the geological strata or the ground planes which provide true explanations of what we see above” ( Selden 69). Structuralists also see language as scientific where sign is made of both signifier and the signified. ” **Words are not symbols which correspond to referents, but rather are signs which are made up of two parts: a mark either written or spoken, called the signifier and a concept called signified”** (Selden 53).

The structuralist school emerges from theories of language and linguistics, and it looks for underlying elements in culture and literature that can be connected so that critics can develop general conclusions about the individual works and the systems from which they emerge. In fact, structuralism maintains that "...practically everything we do that is specifically human is expressed in language" (Richter 809). Structuralists believe that these language symbols extend far beyond written or oral communication. For example, codes that represent all sorts of things permeate everything we do: "the performance of music requires complex notation...our economic life rests upon the exchange of labor and goods for symbols, such as cash, checks, stock, and certificates...social life depends on the meaningful gestures and signals of 'body language' and revolves around the exchange of small, symbolic favors: drinks, parties, dinners" (Richter 809). Hawkes says that “structuralism is fundamentally a way of thinking about the world which is predominantly concerned with the perception and description of structures. (2003: 6) Put simply, an element in any given situation has no significance by itself, and in fact it is determined by its relationship to all other elements involved in that situation. The full significance of any entity or experience cannot be perceived unless and until it is integrated into the structure of which it forms a part. (Hawkes, 2003: 7) The world comprises systems and logic and structures which are accessible through processes of reason. In structuralism individual objects are seen as part of a greater whole. Nothing is observed as independent entity. Rather a presentation of wholistic culture with its identifiable values. The underlying forms/structures are seen as the medium of transmitting meanings. The structuralists believe that language is a system of relation and difference. They adhere meanings from the basic patterns of language and the binary oppositions. They believe that language is the key-process in the creation and communication of meanings. All perceptions and understandings are formed by language.

* + **What is Struturalist Criticism?**

Some scholars define it as the observation of the utilization of linguistics (the study of language) and semiotics (the study of signs) to portray the major ideas in a piece of work.

De Saussure opened up the way for an understanding of communication in terms of sign-systems in general. In his view, words do not simply mean things in themselves. Words are the product of systematic yet shifting relations between sounds in the air or marks on paper (signifiers) and those aspects or experience which sounds or marks are taken to refer to (signifieds). Words ‘mean’ by virtue of assumed and broadly agreed relations amongst people who speak the same language and therefore draw the same sign-system. (Pope 176)

Saussure **emphasised that the meanings of words are (what we might call) *relational****.* That is to say, no word can be defined in isolation from other words. **The definition of any given word depends upon its relation with other 'adjoining' words.** For example, that word 'hut' depends for its precise meaning on its position in a 'paradigmatic chain', that is, a chain of words related in function and meaning each of which could be substituted for any of the others in a given sentence. The paradigmatic chain in this case might include the following:

hovel shed hut house mansion palace

Levi-Strauss, on the other hand, developed a model which sought to systematise understanding of symbolic interation within cultures.He used sets of fundamental oppositions such as ‘nature v. Civilization’, ‘wild v.domestic’and ‘raw v. Cooked’ to produce an overview of how whole societies interact coherently. Strauss believes that all cultural artifiacts and practices do not only have a functional but a symbolic dimension. (Pope 177) He also points out that myths, dramas, and narratives in general rehearse ans resolve the contradictions experienced within societies, thereby, allowing cultures to maintain a sense of coherence.

#### Structuralism in Literary Theory

Structuralism is used in literary theory, for example,

...if you examine the structure of a large number of short stories to discover the underlying principles that govern their composition...principles of narrative progression...or of characterization...you are also engaged in structuralist activity if you describe the structure of a single literary work to discover how its composition demonstrates the underlying principles of a given structural system. (Tyson 197-198).

Northrop Frye, however, takes a different approach to structuralism by exploring ways in which genres of Western literature fall into his four mythoi (also see Jungian criticism in the Freudian Literary Criticism resource):

1. theory of modes, or historical criticism (tragic, comic, and thematic);
2. theory of symbols, or ethical criticism (literal/descriptive, formal, mythical, and anagogic);
3. theory of myths, or archetypal criticism (comedy, romance, tragedy, irony/satire);
4. theory of genres, or rhetorical criticism (epos, prose, drama, lyric) (Tyson 240).

**Structuralism argues**, moreover, **that systems are constructed in terms of simple binary oppositions that establish patterns of identity and difference that encode signs and make them functional as meaningful elements within a system of differentiations and equivalences**. **A radical claim made by structuralism is that the human subject does not invent language but is preceded by language and is born into it. That sounds odd, until one realizes that DNA is a semiotic system with properties rather like language and that our ability to converse was prepared for long before humans evolved, given that animals had most of the features of speech and the basic sociality to go with it long before we evolved.** Because the “ wholism ” of structuralism is so at odds with how people have been habituated to think about language, the movement never became widely popular, though conceptually it really is more robust than, say, New Criticism or traditional historicism. The work by anthropologist Claude Lévi - Strauss is considered a major bulwark of structuralism, though structuralism has been practiced with considerable success by literary critics, among them, Roland Barthes, Gerard Genette, Philippe Hamon, Michael Riffaterre, Tzvetan Todorov, and Julia Kristeva. **The advantage to structuralism is that it doesn’t begin with the assumption that literature is a semiotic representation of some independent mental reality (or content) that exists transcendentally either out in the world or in the writer ’ s imagination.** **In other words, structuralism abandons the mimetic fallacy of a pre - existing reality, whether mental or concrete, that the writer is translating into signs.** **Rather, structuralism argues that the reality effect of a text is *produced* by the sign system, not *reproduced* by it**. This seems like a small difference, but in fact this shift has very significant consequences from an interpretive point of view. For one thing, **it demystifies the idea that a novel is very much like a photograph of some independent reality.**

#### Peirce and Saussure

Two important theorists form the framework of structuralism: Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure. Peirce gave structuralism three important ideas for analyzing the sign systems that permeate and define our experiences:

1. “iconic signs”, in which the signifier resembles the thing signified (such as the stick figures on washroom doors that signify “Men” or “Women”;
2. indexes, in which the signifier is a reliable indicator of the presence of the signified (like fire and smoke);
3. true symbols, in which the signifier’s relation to the thing signified is completely arbitrary and conventional [just as the sound /kat/ or the written word cat are conventional signs for the familiar feline]” (Richter 810).

These elements become very important when we move into deconstruction in the Postmodernism resource. Peirce also influenced the semiotic school of structuralist theory that uses sign systems.

* **Sign Systems**

The discipline of semiotics plays an important role in structuralist literary theory and cultural studies. Semioticians “...appl[y] structuralist insights to the study of...sign systems...a non-linguistic object or behavior...that can be analyzed as if it were a language” (Tyson 205). Specifically, “...semiotics examines the ways non-linguistic objects and behaviors 'tell' us something. For example, the picture of the reclining blond beauty in the skin-tight, black velvet dress on the billboard... ‘tells’ us that those who drink this whiskey (presumably male) will be attractive to...beautiful women like the one displayed here” (Tyson 205). Lastly, Richter states, “semiotics takes off from Peirce - for whom language is one of numerous sign systems - and structuralism takes off from Saussure, for whom language was the sign system par excellence” (810).

**French Structuralism**

Structuralism rose to prominence in France through the application by the French anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss, of Saussurian structural linguistics to the study of such **phenomena as myths, rituals, kinship relations, eating conventions**. These were understood as **signifying systems and therefore open to a linguistic type of analysis in which attention was focused not on empirical or functional matters but on myth or ritual as a set of relations in which meaning was created by differences between signifying elements.** **This use of language as a model for understanding aspects of reality that are predominantly non-linguistic in character established structuralism,** particularly in the1960s, **as a powerful alternative to positivistic or empiricist methods of analysis.**

**Literature** seemed especially **appropriate to a structuralist approach since it was wholly made up of language.** Thus **structuralist literary criticism tends to emphasise the system of conventions which makes literature possible and to attach little importance to authorial or historical considerations or to questions of meaning or reference.** As **language** from a Saussurian point of view **is seen as a signifying system in which the relations between the elements that make up the system are crucial, so literature could also be seen as embodying systematic sets of rules and codes which enable literature to signify.** A structuralist analysis involves uncovering the patterns in the text and their meanings. Meanings are attributed by the human mind; no word can be explained in isolation, and therefore structuralism in literature means analyzing literature with reference to its underlying structure of specific literary genre. Structuralism says that in every text there may be a structure to interpret it. They found out repetitive complex structure patterns. They interpret literature in relation to structures of language. Structural analysis is the examination of different elements that form an organization or set of systems to uncover their interrelationship.

Structuralism provides innovative grounds for the analysis of prose literature. The role of the fiction is no longer for representing the concrete reality but for manufacturing new, relational, and pluralistic realities in language spaces. These are some of the outcomes of literary structuralism.

Reading literary texts structurally, we learn how to think about what we read, to interpret our readings, and to re-write them in our own perspectives.

By considering **literary texts as ‘paroles’ which must be understood in relation to ‘langue’ or the underlying signifying system,** **structuralist literary criticism inevitably concerned itself predominantly with poetics as a general science of literature.** **Individual texts were used mainly to exemplify general characteristics of literature as a whole**. Tzvetan Todorov and Gerard Genette are most associated with this approach. The most famous structuralist critic was Roland Barthes. Some of the Barthesian formulas are: **regarding the “text” as an open-ended site of signification which should consequently be handled differently from the “work,” transferring the task of producing meaning from the author to the reader, and considering characters not as psychological entities but as “participants” in the formation of textual discourse**. Later, Barthes gradually moved away from a strictly structuralist position. His article ‘Science versus Literature’ points the way towards post-structuralism which has been the dominant influence on more recent literary theory. Roland Barthes: Barthes was originally a structuralist before he wrote ―Death of the Author, a piece encouraging critics to forgo the analysis of the author‘s intention. His valid argument was that most of the time, even authors didn‘t quite understand what they were trying to say, and the only true human/literature relationship that mattered was the relationship between the novel and the reader. Thus, post- structuralism was hailed by some as the ― “Birth of the Reader”.

Barthes divided the story into 561 “lexies,” or units of meaning, then classified them into five codes that he deemed to constitute the basic structure of all stories. (His theory is analogous to the assumption that all sentences are governed by an identifiable set of grammatical structures.) The five codes are: the proairetic code, which includes indications of actions; the hermeneutic code, which poses questions that provide suspense; the cultural code, which includes references to common knowledge; the semic code, which reveals character and theme; and the symbolic code, which also deals with theme, but it does so through contrasting elements such as love and hate, life and death, male and female. (Cited in Dobie 156)

**Roland Barthes’s Semiotics**

Barthes’s major critical concern was to explore how a culture’s system of values and various ideologies are encoded in the culture’s languages and other social interactions. Barthes stressed that these values and ideologies were spread throughout cultures through stereotypes or “mythologies.” Barthes believed that language was a powerful force that served to influences the way people understood the world around them. Language, according to Barthes, is always controlled by various cultural, social, and political ideologies and serves to structure the way we conceptualize the world in which we reside. Barthes’s theoretical work, then, served to challenge institutions and languages that allowed for one group of people to govern and control another. What Barthes was ultimately contending, then, was that most of what we consider to be natural within a culture is, in fact, based upon relative and subjective historical social, political, and cultural constructs. Barthes’s later work in semiotics (which is the study of signs and symbols), developed out of conception of the relativity of language. Through his study of signs and symbols, Barthes concluded that unlikely objects are signs and always function as part of a larger systems of signs in which the true meaning and intention of the signs themselves.

**Conclusion**

According to Eagleton (1996), structuralism, as the term suggests, is concerned with structures, and more particularly with examining the general laws by which they work. Literary structuralism flourished in the 1960s as an attempt to apply to literature the methods and insights of the founder of modern structural linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure viewed language as a system of signs, which was to be studied ‘synchronically’ that is to say, studied as a complete system at a given point in time- rather than ‘diachronically’, in its historical development. Each sign was to be seen as being made up of a 'signifier' (a sound image, or its graphic equivalent), and a ‘signified’ (the concept or meaning). For instance, the three black marks c - a – t are a signifier which evoke the signified ‘cat’ in an English mind. The relation between signifier and signified is an arbitrary one: there is no inherent reason why these three marks should mean ‘cat’, other than cultural and historical convention. Each sign in the system has meaning only by virtue of its difference from the others. ‘Cat’ has meaning not ‘in itself’, but because it is not ‘cap’ or ‘cad’ or ‘bat’. It does not matter how the signifier alters, as long as it preserves its difference from all the other signifiers; you can pronounce it in many different accents as long as this difference is maintained. 'In the linguistic system,' says Saussure, 'there are only differences': meaning is not mysteriously immanent in a sign but is functional, the result of its difference from other signs. Finally, Saussure believed that linguistics would get into a hopeless mess if it 53 concerned itself with actual speech or parole as he called it. He was not interested in investigating what people actually said; he was concerned with the objective structure of signs which made their speech possible in the first place, and this he called langue. Neither was Saussure concerned with the real objects which people spoke about: in order to study language effectively, the referents of the signs, the things they actually denoted, had to be placed in brackets.

**Summary**

In this unit, you have learnt that structuralism in general is an attempt to apply linguistic theory to the study of literature. As Eagleton notes, you can view a myth, wrestling match, system of tribal kinship, restaurant menu or oil painting as a system of signs and a structuralist analysis will try to isolate the underlying set of laws by which these signs are combined into meanings. It will largely ignore what the signs actually 'say', and concentrate instead on their internal relations to one another. Structuralism, as Fredric Jameson has put it, is an attempt ―to rethink everything through once again in terms of linguistics.‖

**Typical questions**

* Using a specific structuralist framework (like Frye's mythoi)...how should the text be classified in terms of its genre? In other words, what patterns exist within the text that make it a part of other works like it?
* Using a specific structuralist framework...analyze the text's narrative operations...can you speculate about the relationship between the... [text]... and the culture from which the text emerged? In other words, what patterns exist within the text that make it a product of a larger culture?
* What patterns exist within the text that connect it to the larger "human" experience? In other words, can we connect patterns and elements within the text to other texts from other cultures to map similarities that tell us more about the common human experience? This is a liberal humanist move that assumes that since we are all human, we all share basic human commonalities.
* What rules or codes of interpretation must be internalized in order to 'make sense' of the text?
* What are the semiotics of a given category of cultural phenomena, or 'text,' such as high-school football games, television and/or magazine ads for a particular brand of perfume...or even media coverage of an historical event? (Tyson 225)

**T.D’s Session**

**Exercise 1** Read D. H. Lawrence’s: *the Lovely Lady* in the light ofRoland Barthes’ Five Codes

**Exercise 2** Read William Faulkner’s short story “A Rose for Emily” to find out the Semiotic hidden codes

**Exercise 3**  Read James Joyce’s’ short story “Araby” applying the structural approach

**Exercise 4**  Read Shakespeare Hamlet from Barthes’s perspective notions of semiotics.

**Possible Procedural Help to exercise 4**

A theorist approaching Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* through the perspective of Barthes’s notions of semiotics would focus on the ways in which the play enacts and critiques particular mythologies and stereotypes of Elizabethan England, such as rights of succession, phallocentric ideological rule, and conflicts between the arising Protestant faith and Catholicism.

Possible Answer to Exercise 2

**Theoretical Framework**

The student will relievedly use one of semiotic theories developed by Roland Barthes. In analyzing the text line per line, Barthes uses five system of codes approach. The codes are merely expressive but they are both manipulated. They act upon each other to form a kind of meaning which is resulted from a narrative work of art.

The five levels of coding are:

a. Action Code or Proairetic Code is the main equipment of a text. It establishes what actions are conventionally prescribed in certain situations and how much of each action is, must, or must not be shown.

b. Hermeneutic Code has the purpose to get the truth of a puzzle or question that probably appears in the text.

c. Cultural Code has the connection with any system of knowledge or system of value which is hidden in the text

d. Semic code let readers label persons and places in the narrative in an adjectival way

e. Symbolic Code delivers the meaning that come from binary opposition, and dialogues or process of contrastive elements to describe the symbols of a narrative and defines the major rhetorical device in literature.

According to Barthes, there are two ways in judging the values of the work. They are “readerly” and “writerly” text. **“Readerly” text is the meaning of the work has been determined and takes the reader to final conclusion**. “**Writerly” text is the text which has various meanings and it depends on the reader’s interpretation about the work**.

**ANALYSIS**

**Proairetic Code**

The story begins with the funeral of Miss Emily. Then, the story backs to the time of Miss Emily’s life. The townspeople explain about Miss Emily when she was alive.

The first thing they tell is about the arrival of a deputation at her house. They wanted to confirm Miss Emily about her taxes that have never been paid.

“…I have no taxes in Jefferson”

“But there is nothing on the books to show that, you see. We must go by the- “

“See Colonel Sartoris. I have no taxes in Jefferson.”

“But, Miss Emily- “

“See Colonel Sartoris.” (Colonel Sartoris had been dead almost ten years.)

“I have no taxes in Jefferson. To be!” The Negro appeared. “Show these gentlemen out.” (p.1)

This event indicates „to ignore‟. Miss Emily ignored the explanation of the deputation‟s explanation about her taxes, and she kept standing that the deputation has to see Colonel Sartoris to confirm about her taxes. In fact, Colonel Sartoris had death. And Miss Emily did not care about that. She ignored their explanation.

When the bad smell came from Miss Emily’s house, many people asked Judge Stevens to overcome it.

“But what will you have me do about it, madam?” he said.

“Why, send her to stop it, the woman said. “Isn’t there a law?”

“I’m sure that won’t be necessary,” Judge Stevens said. “It’s probably just a snake or a rat that nigger of hers killed in the yard. I’ll speak to him about it. (p.3)

This event indicates “to complain”. The townspeople complain about the bad smell that came from her house. But the judge did not deliver the townspeople’s complaint to Miss Emily. He only asked ordered them to sprinkle lime around her house to cover the smell.

The memory backs to the time when Miss Emily‟s father was alive. During his life, Miss Emily’s father controlled of her actions. She could not have any relationship with other people especially the young man. Because he considered his family’s social status is higher than the other’s. And it made her to be still alone until the age of thirty.

The action code here is “to protect”. Miss Emily’s father protected her longer than she needed thus it caused her did not have any friend or any lover.

The next important event is when Miss Emily fell in love to “a Yankee-a big, dark, ready man, with a big voice and eyes lighter than his face” (p-2). After her father passed away, she went outside and met Homer Baron, she fell in love to her directly.

This event indicates “rebellion”. By making a special relationship with Homer Baron, Emily has encroached upon her family tradition. She has rebelled to her family because she makes a special relationship with a low class people. In south, a nigger is considered as the low class people. A white southern woman was forbidden to have a love relation with the African American man. As the townspeople says: “Poor Emily. Her kinsfolk should come to her.” (p.4). The townspeople’s comment about her family emphasize that her family would not like their love relation and it would cause them to get up from their grave.

Then, the townspeople tried to separate Miss Emily from Homer Baron, because he was a gay. And it was impossible for him to marry Miss Emily. The proairetic code here is “redemption”. The townspeople tried to save Miss Emily from Homer Baron withmany ways. First, they asked the Baptist Minister to talk to her, but it did not work. Then they asked her relations in Alabama to talk to her. It also did not work. Even, they seemed to get married, because Miss Emily bought the equipment for the man.

But Homer Baron disappeared. The last time the townspeople saw him one night in the kitchen of Miss Emily’s house. After the leaving of Homer Baron, Emily had never come out. She only stayed in her house passing her life in loneliness. This scene indicates “to isolate”. The departure of Homer Baron made her disappointed and it caused her to lock herself in her house. No one knew what was happening inside her house except the Negro men who served her. Until she was sick and caused her to die.

The story backs to the present time. After the funeral, the townspeople go into Miss Emily’s house that has never been entered by other people except her servant.

This event indicates “to investigate”. The townspeople enter Miss Emily’s house to investigate the mysterious house because they have never known the content of the house.

They explore the house and find a mysterious room above the stairs. The situation inside the room surprises the townspeople. The room seems to be set for the bridal.

“A thin, acrid pall as of the tomb seemed to lie everywhere upon this room decked and furnished as for a bridal: upon the dressing table, upon the delicate array of crystal and the man‟s toilet things backed with tarnished silver,” (p-7).

The corpse that lies in the bed makes them more surprised. It is the corpse of Homer Baron. In this scene, the action code is “to prevent”. From the situation of the room and the corpse of Homer Baron, the townspeople know that Miss Emily tried to prevent her love. She tried to prevent Homer Baron by killing him and made him to be by her side forever. And that is the cause of the bad smell that came from her house many years before.

Another fact is also can be seen from the corpse. It is the activities of Miss Emily when she isolated herself in the house. She had been sleeping with the corpse pretending that they were husband and wife. It can be seen from the condition of the corpse that “it had apparently once lain in the attitude of an embrace” (p-7) and the pillow next to the corpse: “Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head” (p-7).

Miss Emily had tried to prevent her love by doing an illogical thing.

**Hermeneutic Code Analysis**

A Rose for Emily is one of William Faulkner’s short story that contains many puzzles that make the readers feel confuse to understand about it.

The main question of this short story comes from the title of the short story.

From the beginning until the end, the writers cannot see that the sentence says there is a rose that has been given to Emily. The word “rose” only appears in the mysterious room of Miss Emily’s house. But it still cannot answer the question. The readers can get the answer only from the interpretation about rose. On this short story, Emily is like the rose that can be admired but cannot be touched. She is described as the figure that can be admired but cannot be touched too. So the townspeople compare Miss Emily with the rose.

The next questions that comes to the reader’s mind is the cause of the bad smell of the house, the usage of the arsenic, Homer Baron existence, and the activities of Miss Emily to endure her lonely life inside the house.

The writer gathers this question because these answers reveal in the same time. It blows up when the townspeople enter the mysterious room.

The bad smell comes from the corpse that lies in the bed. The arsenic is used to kill Homer Baron to prevent Miss Emily’s love. Homer Baron is in Miss Emily’s house that has become useless after the death picks him up. And the activities of Miss Emily in her house are taking care of her „death husband‟.

**Cultural Code Analysis**

There are many cultural references that are available in A Rose for Emily. Most of them related to the culture of southern honor. Through The Grierson Family it can be seen the importance of honor in the south.

The first cultural reference can be seen in the early of the story.

“…dating from that day in 1894 when Colonel Sartoris, the Mayor-he who fathered the edict that no Negro woman should appear on the streets without an apron –remitted her taxes, the dispensation dating from the death of her father on into perpetuity. Not that Miss Emily would have accepted charity. Colonel Sartoris invented an involved tale to the effect that Miss Emily’s father had loaned money to the town. Which the town, as a matter of business, preferred this way of repaying” (p-1)

The abolition of Emily’s taxes by Colonel Sartoris is caused by her father’s merit to the town when he was alive. It is common because in South, the social status and wealth has the relationship with the governmental power. The wealth can determine the governmental system (Bertram Wyatt Brown, 70). The second cultural reference is also can be seen from the text above. The black women in South have to work as a domestic servant for the whites. Thereby, their appearance in the street with an apron indicates their job as a servant.

The third cultural reference is about the treatment of Miss Emily’s father to her.

The culture of the parents’ behavior to their children in South is reflected through her father. In the story, Miss Emily’s father is described as the father who controls his entire daughter’s life. He protects his daughter redundantly. Brown states in his book Southern Honor Ethics & Behavior in the Old South:

“The southern parent of high gentility perceived the child as a moral figure to be molded as if made of clay, not as an independent personality with talents, interest, and temperaments to be developed for individualistic rather than family needs” (p-132).

The parents are allowed to do anything they want to their children for the family needs although their children have their own talents and interests.

The last cultural code is the townspeople’s opinion about Miss Emily and The Grierson Family. Since the beginning of the story, the author describes the townspeople opinion and observation to Miss Emily’s entire life. Every action she does is never missed by them. It is related to her status and reputation as an honor woman. In south, as Brown states in his book Southern Honor Ethics & Behavior in the Old South “the opinion of others is an indispensable part of personal identity and gauge of self-worth” (p-34). It means that opinion of the society is very important in judging someone’s status or identity.

From the cultural code it can be known that the white and black people are the two opposite races. The culture in south considers the black people have the lower status than the white people. The whites consider themselves as the master of the blacks.

Miss Emily and Homer Baron also symbolize the opposition of the south and north culture. In south, the whites treat the black cruelly and they do not have any right in any aspect of life. For example; the way of using public services, the opportunity to have job, schools and others. On the contrary, The North, as Stephen and Abigail Thernstrom state in their book America in Black and White “was indeed a promised land, a place where black would find freedom systematic racial subordination and oppression” (p-55). There are not many separations between black and white people in the north. The black people have more freedom in North.

The writer finds several codes in proairetic aspect which most of them focuses on Miss Emily’s action. The cultural code gives the reader clear explanation about the southern honor and caused the madness of Miss Emily. It means that regarding the social status too high will cause a very bad damage to the member of the family.

**Conclusion**

In “A Rose for Emily”, the meaning of the work can be got from the proairetic code, the hermeneutic code and cultural code. The proairetic code gives the reader explanation about what happen to the main character during her life and the cause of her madness. The hermeneutic code gives the reader the explanation about the madness of the main character.

Finally the writer concludes that the meaning of “A Rose for Emily” is regarding the family status too high will cause the bad effect to the member of the family. After analyzing all the codes in this short story, the writer finds the similarity within the cultural code. It is about the culture of the white to indifference the African American people.

Finally, from those five hidden codes, there are three hidden codes found which make the writer concludes that this short stories as *‘writerly’* literary works. The texts force the readers to interpret them to get their meanings because they cannot be seen from the surface.

Thus the readers have to analyze those short stories with appropriate theory which on this case Barthes’s semiotic theory on five codes.

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**Unit 5 Psychoanalytic Criticism ( Freud and Lacan)**

**Objectives**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

* discuss the origin of psychoanalysis criticism
* apply psychoanalytical method in the analysis of works of literature.

**Introduction**

According to Kelly Griffith (2002), psychoanalysis criticism, also called psychological criticism or Freudian theory, is a vast critical category, which often employs many approaches. First it investigates the creative process of the arts: what is the nature of literary genius, and how does it relate to normal mental functions? Such analysis may also focus on literature's effects on the reader. How does a particular work register its impact on the reader's mental and sensory faculties? The second approach involves the psychological study of a particular artist. Most modern literary biographers employ psychology to understand their subject's motivations and behaviour. The third common approach is the analysis of fictional characters. Sigmund Freud's study of Sophocles‘Oedipus Rex in his work, The Interpretation of Dreams (1895) is an example of this approach, which tries to bring modern insights about human behaviour into the study of how fictional characters act. While psychoanalytical criticism carefully examines the surface of the literary work, it customarily speculates on what lies underneath the text—the unspoken or perhaps even unspeakable memories, motives, and fears that covertly shape the work, especially in fictional characterisations. In this unit, you will learn the origin and application of psychoanalysis to the study of literature.

**Psychological and Psychoanalytic Criticism**

Psychological criticism deals with a work of literature primarily as an expression, in fictional form, of the personality, state of mind, feelings, and desires of its author. The assumption of psychoanalytic critics is that a work of literature is correlated with its author’s mental traits:

1. Reference to the author’s personality is used to explain and interpret a literary work.

2. Reference to literary works is made in order to establish, biographically, the personality of the author.

3. The mode of reading a literary work itself is a way of experiencing the distinctive subjectivity or consciousness of its author.

This theory requires that we investigate the psychology of a character or an author to figure out the meaning of a text (although to apply an author’s psychology to a text can also be considered biographical criticism, depending on your point of view). For example, alcohol allows the latent thoughts and desires of the narrator of “The Black Cat” to surface in such a way that he ends up shirking the self-control imposed by social mores and standards and becomes the man his psyche has repressed his whole life. (Deborah 147)Critical Encounters in High School English Teaching Literary Theory to Adolescents, Second Edition [Language & Literacy Series] [Language and Literacy] by Deborah Appleman [Teachers College Press,2009] [Paperback] Second (2nd) edition.pdf MB **Uploaded:** 2016-02-21 05:10:00

As we saw earlier, psychoanalytic criticism consists of the application of various theories developed by Freud to literature and culture, which can be seen as expressions of individual and collective psychology. Central to Freud’s contribution were the features of dream language that correspond to practices within imaginative written expression, in particular, *displacement,* *condensation, secondary revision, symbolization,* and *projection.*

* *Displacement* is substitution rather like the figure of metaphor, but in displacement one forgets and disconnects the relationship between the analogy. In *Paradise Lost,* the female figure of Sin is the displaced, hellish, monstrous figure, guarding the gates of Hell that stands for Eve after the fall. Sin is displaced in that she turns up long before we are even introduced to Eve in the epic, as if Milton had repressed the connection.
* *Condensation* takes place when a whole is encountered in terms of one of its split off parts that has become dissociated. The smile of the Cheshire Cat in Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* that remains behind after the Cat vanishes is a condensation. Notable is that smiles don’t generally exist in isolation as things in themselves. Here the dissociative aspect of the condensation is most evident.
* *Secondary revision* speaks to how people fill in their dreams with content as they recall them. This filling in is part of the dream work, too, Freud said. When we read, we “revise” the text by means of a tendency to fill in the gaps and render details in our own terms. How I imagine a street of St. Petersburg in Dostoyevsky’s fiction has as much to do with my imagination as it does with his description. Here day - dreaming facilitates the reading process.
* *Symbolization* is discussed in “On Dreams” (1901). Freud wrote that “ the majority of dream - symbols serve to represent persons, parts of the body and activities invested with erotic interest; in particular, the genitals are represented by a number of often very surprising symbols, and the greatest variety of objects are employed to denote them symbolically. ” (1) This speaks to *psychosexual* symbolization, the idea of which in the beginning of the twentieth century scandalized polite society whose norms foreclosed the idea that sexuality might be a mental preoccupation. Freud insisted that whether something is a symbol or not required work with the patient in terms of making free associations and that not everything in a dream is symbolic. However, in the Grimms’ fairy tale of the frog and the princess, there is some agreement that the frog is a psychosexual symbol for the male scrotum. The incredulity with which people take this suggestion is a good indication that the symbol is a successful displacement that represses the unacceptable associations that one would have to make in the context of the frog asking for a kiss. (Freud would call our discomfort with this argument “resistance.”)
* *Projection* is yet another form of dissociation in which one ascribes a characteristic to another which one has oneself. If I ask someone, “Why are you so angry?”, it may well be me who is the angry party. In Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick,* there is considerable projection at work with respect to the white whale. Ahab projects a whole narrative on to the whale with which Moby Dick obviously has nothing to do.

Aside from Freud’s work on unconscious processes and his reading of literary texts (Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky, etc.), there is well known work by Carl Jung, one of Freud’s followers who broke away to develop his own theories of symbolization. Jung ’ s ideas became popular after World War Two, particularly with respect to his development of archetypal analysis. He had postulated that the unconscious is collective and contains patterns of psychic energy that are realized in dreams as images. The images are universal symbols relative to psychological development and represent what are, ultimately, social-psychological relationships in the context of one’s life cycle (Lebenslauf*)*. The archetypal image is primordial and supposedly a phylogenetic residue of inherited experiences. Archetypal critics such as Northrop Frye dispensed with the phylogenetic argument and noted that primordial images and figures turn up in the history of literature with such regularity that the textual record really speaks for itself. Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism* is a magisterial analysis of literary symbolism and types based on archetypal analysis. It had its heyday in the 1960s.

Beginning in the 1970s there was a switch to Lacanian psychoanalysis. Jacques Lacan was a medical doctor who in the early 1950s began giving an extraordinary series of lectures (he called them seminars) that went on for some three decades and by the late 1960s attracted some hundreds of listeners. Lacan’s ideas had sources in surrealism, existential Hegelianism, and structuralism. Various slogans, which served as points of reference, still give the flavor of Lacan’s teachings: the unconscious is structured like a language, there is no Other of the Other, a signifier presents a subject to another signifier, and woman does not exist. These are provocative statements that obviously require substantial explanation. Two hallmarks of Lacanian criticism are (i) Lacan’s concept of the “mirror stage” (self -perception as misrecognition, self -perception as paranoid perception) and (ii) retroaction (that the subject comes to be a subject retroactively in the wake of the signification of an Other [e.g. Society]).

Much of Lacan’s thinking is inspired by philosopher Jean - Paul Sartre’s work on concrete relations with others in *Being and Nothingness* and by anthropologist Claude Lévi - Strauss’s work on the primacy of social structure – the order of the symbolic – in his *Elementary Structures of Kinship*. It is the hybridizing of these two major influences together with Freud that makes up the core of Lacanian thinking.

**Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)**

While there is a sense that we must become familiar with Freud and psychoanalysis, we must also become *unfamilia*r with his terms because they have permeated our language and our world view so completely that we are not aware of his influence on our thinking.    Freud’s words such as the unconscious, free association, repression, the Oedipus Complex, memory, sexuality, and dream analysis are some of the expounded and accepted concepts still used today to understand the human mind. Some of the criticism of his work (of which there is much) is; while Freud claims to be scientific, his theories came out of his study of a few patients who were “neurotic” and displayed serious mental instability as well as characters from literature, mythology, history and the Bible. To learn about Freud, let us look at him through his terminology. We must remember that these words reflected new concepts in the early 1900’s and spoke to a new way of thinking.

* *Repression*

            Freud describes repression as a device operating unconsciously to make the memory of a painful or threatening events inaccessible to the conscious mind.  Resistance is defined as the unconscious defence against awareness of repressed experiences in order to avoid the resulting anxiety.

* *The Oedipus Complex*

            “The oedipal vision exhibit’s a distinct patriarchal bias: it reduces politics to an activity of fathers and sons while relegating women to the role of passive objects of male desire” (Josie Brunner 1998).  Female patient’s recounted “tales of molestation by their fathers” at such a rate that Freud believed these events had not actually happened and proposed a theory in which the women wanted these events to happen (Fredrick Crews 7).  Freud’s theory, in which children desire the sexual *desire*of the parent of the opposite sex, is known as the Oedipus Complex.  This erotic attachment, of the child to the parent of the opposite sex, has its roots in Sophocles’ play [Oedipus Tyrannus](http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~engl4904/psychoanalysis.html#oedipus1) written 2500 years ago.

* Free Association

            Freud developed this method after he abandoned the use of hypnosis as a cathartic procedure. The purpose was to investigate the patient’s spontaneous flow of thoughts (free association), to reveal the unconscious mental processes at the root of the neurotic disturbance.

* *Femininity*

            “Throughout history, people have knocked their heads against the riddle of the nature of femininity …Nor will you have escaped worrying over this problem- those of you who are men, those of you who are women this will not apply - you are yourselves the problem” (Sigmund Freud).  From this quote, it is apparent why Freud is often criticized by feminists.  There is an element of misogyny in Freud’s work.

* *Dream Analysis*

            It was through dream analysis that Freud discovered the Oedipus Complex.  He believed that the dream expressed what the conscious state was afraid to express. By looking at a dream one could look at the unconscious.

* *Unconscious/Conscious*

            Each person houses two major compartments: the unconscious and the conscious.  This is how Freud came up with the notions that humans are fundamentally split subjects in which the conscious and unconscious have NO access to each other.  It is like a *split*subject within oneperson.  Involved in these compartments are the *Id, Ego*and*Superego.*

* *Id*

            The Id is part of the unconscious but only portions of it are repressed.  Freud associates it with the passions and he attributes to it qualities like unruliness and lack of control. The Id always obeys the dictates of the pleasure principle, no matter what the consequences.

* *Ego*

            Freud associates the Ego with reason and common sense.  Its relation to the Id is one of intelligent guidance and severe restraint.

            “The functional importance of the Ego is manifested in the fact that normally control over the approaches to motility devolves upon it. Thus in its relation to the Id, the Ego is like a man on horseback who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse: with this difference, that the rider tries to do so with his own strength while the Ego uses borrowed forces. The analogy may be carried a little further. Often a rider, if he is not to be parted from his horse, is obliged to guide it where it wants to go; so in the same way the Ego is in the habit of transforming the Id’s will into action as if it were its own”. *Freud*

* *Superego*

            This is the ideal Ego. The Superego functions as the mirror in which the Ego sees what it should be, but never can be.  For example, the boy understands that he is like the father but he also knows that there are ways in which he can never be like him.

* *Sexuality*

            Freud sees everyone as bisexual, but this bisexuality repressed.  This results in an early version of the Oedipus Complex in which the father is both loved and hated, and the mother is both desired and resented by the child.  Sexual definition means definition in relation to the penis.

            “There is an interesting contrast between the behaviour of the two sexes . . . When a little boy first catches sight of a girl’s genital region, he begins by showing irresolution and lack of interest; he sees nothing or disavows what he has seen. . . It is not until later, when some threat of castration has obtained a hold upon him, that the observation becomes important to him . . . A little girl behaves differently. She makes her judgment and her decision in a flash. She has seen it and knows that she is without it and wants to have it.” *Freud*

**Carl Jung**

Carl Jung was a disciple of Freud but they disagreed on the importance Freud placed on “repressed sexual tendencies in the production of nervous disorder. He felt greater importance should be given to the effects of emotional conflict and stresses and strains of the patient at the time of breakdown” (Tiera 23).

Jacques Lacan (1901-1981)

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 Jacques Lacan was a French psychoanalyst. After receiving a medical degree, he became a psychoanalyst in Paris.  Lacan is infamous for his unusual methods of treatment, such as the fifteen minute therapy session.  Like Freud, Lacan gives us much terminology with which to understand his theories.  Some of these terms are: the phallus, the Lack, the Real, the Symbolic, Imaginary and the Mirror Stage.  Many of these terms have complex meanings, and to provide a definition is a somewhat onerous task that does not successfully flesh out their full implications.  However…

* *The Imaginary*

            Lacan describes the Imaginary as the pre-linguistic realm in which the child is born.  There are no words in the Imaginary; it is the realm in which the child has not yet learned language.  Because there is no language, the child does not yet have categories of knowing things or definitions for knowing things.  The child does not distinguish between itself and the mother.  This does not have to be an actual 'mother' but whatever is representative of the 'maternal.'  The maternal could be a blanket or a pillow that the child cannot distinguish itself from.  The Imaginary is the realm of pre-verbal images and fantasies.  The images of the Imaginary are closely related to mirror-images.  The Imaginary is best represented by what Lacan refers to as the Mirror Stage.

* *The Mirror Stage*

            The Imaginary is closely related to the Mirror Stage because the Mirror Stage happens within the Imaginary realm. We can see an example of the Mirror Stage in the myth of Narcissus. The myth of [Narcissus](http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~engl4904/psychoanalysis.html#narcissus) is not an exact analogy of Lacan=s Mirror Stage, but the elements are there. The Mirror Stage occurs in the Imaginary realm, when the child is between 6 and 18 months. The child sees its reflection in a mirror and recognizes that it is separate from its surroundings. One must remember that this is a visual recognition because this happens before the child has learned language. The child recognizes itself as separate in the mirror but it is a *mis*recognition. It is a misrecognition because the mirror gives the child an illusion of autonomy and wholeness. So, in its mirror images, the child thinks that he can see a person (or subject) that is separate from everything else and a complete being.  The mirror image is also known as the *ideal* image because that image has a completeness that the person (or subject) does not have. The mirror image is *outside* of the person. The mirror image is outside of the subject=s self, but the subject still defines itself in relation to that image.  It=s time to step back and remember that the mirror stage happens before the child has language.  This means that the mirror stage can only be known when the subject has language through which it can think.  Thus, the mirror stage is known after the fact; it is known retrospectively.

* *The Symbolic*

            The Symbolic is that realm in which the subject has language; it is the realm in which the mirror stage is retrospectively known.  The Symbolic realm is the realm of language and culture.  The child is ushered into the Symbolic realm with the resolution of its Oedipus Complex.

* *The Oedipus Complex*

            Lacan theorizes the Oedipus Complex somewhat differently than Freud.  He likes to conceptualize the Oedipus Complex as a linguistic transaction.  The Oedipal paradigm is a paraphrase of the play [Oedipus Tyrannus](http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~engl4904/psychoanalysis.html#Oedipus1).  For Lacan, the paraphrase is: the child identifies with its mother, the mother desires the father and then the child competes with the father for the mother’s affections. However, it must be understood that the family is a set of symbolic relations that always transcend the actual persons who are identified by means of them.  Mother and father signify *cultural* positions for no actual mother and father can live up to or be all that the symbolic role represents.  The Oedipal paradigm is resolved when the child fears The Name of the Father.  This resolution is the child’s entrance into the Ssymbolic realm.

* *The Name of the Father*

            The Name of the Father is not the actual person but is the authority figure.  For example, when your mother says; "Wait until your father gets home," she is invoking The Name of the Father.  It must also be understood that The Name of the Father is not necessarily a male position; females can also occupy the position of The Name of the Father.  (The Name of the Father is also sometimes referred to as The Law of the Father.)

* *The Phallus*

            The phallus is The Name of the Father that ushers the child into the Symbolic realm.  The phallus is NOT the same as the penis.  The phallus is the primary signifier in Lacan’s theory.  It stands for both the penis and the LACK of the penis.  Thus, because it also signifies a LACK of a penis, women can also be in the position of authority.  Women can also occupy the position of the phallus.  It is only in the Symbolic order that the phallus is known because the phallus is a signifier; signifiers are only known with the subject’s entrance into language.

* *The Lack*

            Lacan has a notion of Lack that he gains from another [creation myth](http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~engl4904/psychoanalysis.html#creationmyth).  This story relates to his belief that the human subject derives from an original whole which was divided in half and that its existence is dominated by the desire to recover its missing part.  This division is sexual in nature, for when sliced in half the being has lost its sexual androgyny, reducing it to the biology of either a man or a woman.  Lack first begins when an infant is separated from the mother at birth.  This Lack relates to the impossibility of it being both biologically male and female.  This Lack is real, indicating that it occurs outside the Symbolic.  The only way the subject can compensate for the Lack is by fulfilling its biological destiny, by living out its own gender and forming new unions with members of the opposite sex.  The subject learns the concept of the Lack only after its entrance into the Symbolic realm.  In the life of the subject, there will be other objects besides the mother that get value when the subject identifies an object as that missing component of its self; this is the Lack.  For example, advertisements capitalize on our desire for what we lack.

* *The Real*

            The Real is hard to define because it is outside of the Symbolic realm.  This means that it is beyond language.  The Real is what we cannot define but it is also NOT the Imaginary.  The only way we have of conceptualizing the Real is by likening it to death.  Lacan likens it to death because it is the only thing that we know is outside of the Symbolic realm; it is that which is beyond language.

* *The Signifier*

   A signifier is a physical medium (such as a sound, symbol, and image) that expresses meaning.  The signifier is distinct from the actual concept or thing that is being referred to.  The signifier is also distinct from the idea that you form upon hearing the word.  So signifiers are any system of representation; this could include traffic lights, body language and drawing.  Signifiers are arbitrary and conventional.

* *Shifting Signifier*

            A shifting signifier is a signifier that represents two or more meanings.  The meaning of a signifier can change depending on context.  The shifting signifier is demonstrated in the [Charlie Brown](http://flash.lakeheadu.ca/~engl4904/psychoanalysis.html#CharlieBrown) comic strip when Charlie Brown tells Lucy that he is depressed.  The patient who states “I am depressed” has reduced a whole set of present symptoms, interpersonal experiences and personal history into the single signifier depressed.  The job of the psychoanalyst is to interpret what the patient means by signifying “I am depressed.”  The shifting signifier comes into play, as each different person interprets the signified. A simpler example of a shifting signifier can be found in the word *pitcher.*  Pitchercould mean a container that holds a liquid, or it can mean the person who throws the baseball over home plate.

**Feminine Psychology**

The study of psychology has historically been approached from the male perspective. A new branch of feminine psychology grew out of the women’s movement of the 1960’s. These new theories counteracted the predominant thinking, research and practices that had become outdated in light of the feminist revolution. Feminist psychology takes in to account both sex as a biological difference and gender, as a set of socially determined norms and values. A key component of female centered psychology is that problems are viewed in a sociopolitical and cultural context. Women’s experiences are taken into account, and definitions of mental illness are adjusted to reflect distress that could, as a result of these contexts, be seen as normal.

The work of early psychoanalysts ignored the life events and experiences of women, preferring to cover many conditions with the blanket term neurosis. Psychologist Karen Horney considered neurosis to be a common condition in both males and females, but believed that it is only when we are overwhelmed by external conditions that the condition surfaces. Horney sought to assert that “womb envy”, in which males are envious of women's ability to create life was a counter theory to “penis envy”. These theories, while extreme, help to explain the struggle of women during the 19th century to gain a distinct psychological identity. (Horney)

In her influential feminist text *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution*, Shulamith Firestone suggests that Freud's “Penis Envy” theory was not completely redundant, if every time he used the term penis, it was replaced with the term power. Feminine psychology takes into account the cultural influences of women’s experiences and their historical position in society as the weaker sex. It also focuses on the balance required by women to partake in traditional roles such as motherhood together with modern roles, such as being economically independent or as career women.

***The Theory in Practice: Informal Psychoanalytic Reading of The Yellow Wallpaper***

   The first person narrator goes from mild depression to severe psychosis; the fact that the narrator is experiencing mental illness indicates that Lacanian psychoanalysis might apply the wallpaper must be symbolic; because the narrator sees it as a chain of pattern running along the wall, it can be seen to symbolize the chain of signifiers   the narrator’s loss of her baby signifies a castration (the resolution of her Oedipus Complex) and thus her entrance into the Symbolic realm of language; the story does not start until after the narrator has lost her baby because before that she can have no language to describe her story  at first she has trouble describing what she sees on the wallpaper; this is parallel to a child’s difficulty with language when it enters the Symbolic; again it symbolizes the narrator’s entrance into the Symbolic realm  she gets better and better at describing the yellow wallpaper until she is entirely immersed in the Symbolic and language  the narrator gets angry with the wallpaper because she understands it (this shows how one must always think through the limits of language) when the narrator gets behind the wallpaper she realizes that words don’t refer to things, they can only refer to other words (for example, there is a disjointedness between her definition of hysteria and her husband’s definition)  at the end of the story, the narrator enters the Real because she has left theSymbolic realm – she gets out of the wallpaper (language) that has had her trapped since her entrance into the Symbolic (the wallpaper and, by extension, the room)

* **Random Thoughts**

The following takes the form of excerpts from a listserv conversation in which Lacan was discussed. The authors of these comments were members of the group that produced this website…

            At a lecture I attended, the professor said, “Greek tragedy is the fall of a great man from place of eminence in the world.  This is not always precipitated by what he has chosen but the edict of the gods.”  He compared it to Elizabethan tragedy which does involve choice of the character.  It is the character's choice that determines if it is a tragedy.  This made me think about comments on the Oedipus story and how there was no choosing by Oedipus; he was just a baby when the oracle came down.  The Oedipus story is a Greek myth so fits in with my professor’s description.  Freud and Lacan both studied Oedipus; it is the resource material/research that their theories came out of.  They then applied the theories to the patients - like the theory was the template and so the information from the patient was slotted according to the structure of the theory.

            In the Oedipus story the oracle determined what was going to happen.  Even when Oedipus was put on the mountain to die it could not change the oracle because the shepherd found him. Even when he was banished from the second king's kingdom it did not prevent him from doing the evil that was his fate; he was to kill his father.  The drive to do this was not from conscious choices.  That is what Lacan says; the strongest drives and ambitions that determine the course of our lives are not the conscious ones but the unconscious ones.  He couldn't conclude anything else from the Greek myth.  I think Lacan interpreted the myth correctly.  The question is did he look at the right material to found his theory on?

            Let me reiterate the difference between the phallus and the penis.  When someone signifies “penis” they are talking about the male organ that is used to pee out of (and various other activities).  One gets a mental image in their head of what the penis is.  It exists.  It's a thing.  When someone signifies “phallus” you should not get an image of a penis.  This is, perhaps, is much different than the definition that we are used to.  It doesn't help that my dictionary defines “phallus” as “penis” (don’t believe everything you read).  But let me tell you something I discovered that may help.  The second definition that my dictionary offers is this: the sexually undifferentiated tissue in an embryo that becomes the penis *or* the clitoris.  And so in this way, the **PHALLUS** is not just a penis. It connotes femaleness as well.  I said something in class that I will repeat here, but I'll be more explicit this time. The penis is something that you can see on a naked male. It is **SOMETHING**. It's a thing. On a woman, you see “nothing”.  Her sexual parts can be likened to a “hole” or a place of absence, that is to be filled up (although this view is, in my opinion, completely wrong and untrue, not to mention damaging, and make NO mistake that this is not my personal view of it). The trouble of thinking of the phallus as not being a penis, but having to do with femaleness as well, is made by thinking about a woman as “not having” a penis, or having a void instead.  This is why I'm hoping that my second dictionary definition will help.

**Conclusion**

In this unit, our focus was on psychoanalysis criticism. Jide Balogun (2011) avers that psychoanalysis could be considered from the perspectives of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Jacques Lacan and Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961). The centrality of psychological criticism is to define literature as an expression of the author‘s psyche pivoted on his or her unconscious being which requires an interpretation like a dream. Psychological criticism deals with a work of literature primarily as an expression, in fictional form, of the personality, state of mind, feelings, and desires of its author. The assumption of psychoanalytic critics is that a work of literature is correlated with its author's mental traits. In psychoanalytic criticism, reference to the author's personality is used to explain and interpret a literary work. Also, reference to literary works is made in order to establish, biographically, the personality of the author. The mode of reading a literary work itself is a way of experiencing the distinctive subjectivity or consciousness of its author. This theory requires that we investigate the psychology of a character or an author to figure out the meaning of a text. You also learnt in this unit that the leading tradition in psychological criticism is that of Freud. According to its followers, the meaning of a work of literature depends on the 101 psyche and even on the neuroses of the author. Thus, a literary work is valued based on the author‘s unconscious.

**Summary**

In literature, psychoanalytic critics believe that the unconscious mind of the author is revealed in his works. Thus, the psychoanalytic critic may begin with a study of the elements in a writer's biography that shape his imagination and then apply this to the work. He may also use the work as the equivalent of a confession and then go on to draw conclusion about the writer from this. Psychoanalytic criticism believes that literature provides a fruitful and complex source for the analysis of the human mind. It helps to reveal to us things about the relation between the conscious and the unconscious mind, language and reality. A psychoanalytical interpretation of a work can help to solve the mysteries involved in complex and symbolic themes. Furthermore, psychoanalysis criticism investigates the creative process of the arts: what is the nature of literary genius, and how does it relate to normal mental functions? Such analysis may also focus on literature's effects on the reader. How does a particular work register its impact on the reader's mental and sensory faculties? Another approach involves the psychological study of a particular artist. Most modern literary biographers employ psychology to understand their subject's motivations and behaviour. Finally, another common approach is the analysis of fictional characters like in Freud's study of Sophocles‘Oedipus Rex in his work, The Interpretation of Dreams.

**Typical questions**

* How do the operations of repression structure or inform the work?
* Are there any Oedipal dynamics - or any other family dynamics - are work here?
* How can characters' behavior, narrative events, and/or images be explained in terms of psychoanalytic concepts of any kind (for example, fear or fascination with death, sexuality - which includes love and romance as well as sexual behavior - as a primary indicator of psychological identity or the operations of ego-id-superego)?
* What does the work suggest about the psychological being of its author?
* What might a given interpretation of a literary work suggest about the psychological motives of the reader?
* Are there prominent words in the piece that could have different or hidden meanings? Could there be a subconscious reason for the author using these "problem words"?

T.D.’s Session

**Practical Application of Psychoanalysis Theory**

**Task: Consider** [John Clare](https://www.poemhunter.com/john-clare/poems/)’s poem “I am-yet what I am” in the light of the accompanying guide notes to sketch a psychological analysis of the poem.

* What it suggests about the writer’s emotional, mental and spiritual states and processes, as well as those of his time;
* How you as a *modern reader* relate to-and perhaps identify with or project onto-the events, characters and situations represented;
* What *language of the text* suggests about the nature of expression and repression in general, and the relation of both to our understanding of tensions between conscious and unconscious states;
* *Auto/biography*: what is known about the writer’s life, both from himself and from others? What seems to be revealed or concealed in the work at hand? What are (not) being told, and why?
* *Chioce of psychological model:* which of the following emphases seems to best answer both the demands of the particular material and your own particular aims?
* Freudian notions of a tension between the *unconscious and consciousness*; and psychodramas such as the *Oedipus complex* and *hysteria*; or the relations between *ego, super-ego* and *id*?
* *Transactional analysis* of teacher-learner and learner-learner as well as writer-reader relations, where the text functions as a “transitional” object and item of exchange at various moments?

I am: yet what I am none cares or knows,  
My friends forsake me like a memory lost;   
I am the self-consumer of my woes,  
They rise and vanish in oblivious host,  
Like shades in love and death's oblivion lost;   
And yet I am! and live with shadows tost  
  
Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,  
Into the living sea of waking dreams,  
Where there is neither sense of life nor joys,  
But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteems;   
And e'en the dearest- that I loved the best-   
Are strange- nay, rather stranger than the rest.  
  
I long for scenes where man has never trod;   
A place where woman never smil'd or wept;   
There to abide with my creator, God,  
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept:  
Untroubling and untroubled where I lie;   
The grass below- above the vaulted sky.

**Posssible sample answer**

**About the Poet**

John Clare was a British poet best known for his idyllic depictions of the English countryside. He was born in 1793 in a village in East England to a farming family. Like his father, Clare took to farming as a child while also receiving an education. As he grew into adulthood, he worked in various capacities, including as a gardener and as a militia-member. Clare's first collection of poetry, Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery, was released in 1820. As the title indicates, the collection is indicative of Clare's adoration of rural England, the landscape, and its people.

A psychological approach to this poem might begin with the writer-text relation (how the poem relates to Clare’ life) then move to the reader-text relation (e.g. how you and I relate to the poem). Both might lead to larger inferences about language, the un/conscious, and expression and repression in general, as well as to reflection upon the similarities and differences between early-nineteenth-and twenty-first-century notions of sanity and insanity, normality and abnormality.

*“I”dentity Crises*. The profound sense of self-alienation and estrangement from others that pervades the first two stanzas might be traced back to Clare’s adolescence. For it was then that Clare’s lifelong love for Mary Joyce, a local farmer’s daughter, was thwarted by the intervention of the father. Clare was of farm-labourer stock and apparently was not considered a suitable match. It was then, too, in the early 1800s, that land around Clare’s native village of Helpstone was “enclosed” (i.e. taken over by a local landowner for private parkland and conversion to sheep farming). This resulted in the dislocation, both physical and mental, of many farm-labourers, including Clare and his family. Against all this could be set the idyllic vision projected in the last stanza of early childhood as a time of security and belonging. Such interpretations might be backed up by appeal to Clare’s autobiographical writings (1821-41) as well as to his other poems. Many of these poems are marked by a sense of paradisal childhood state that was subject to personally traumatic and socially dramatic change. Consequently, it could be said that Clare had trouble maintaining a viable sense of self when challenged by **others**: his “*super/ego*” fragmented under the pressure of an internal or external “*id*”.

But whatever the cause or explanation, it is matter of record that Clare was first admitted to an asylum at epping in 1837. He escaped in 1841 and tried to walk back to Northampton, believing he was married to his childhood sweetheart. He was then committed to Northampton General Lunatic Asylum. There he lived for the remaining twenty-three years of his life and wrote many poems, including this one (c. 1844). All this information may help us explore—even though it can only crudely explain— a number of the poem’s recurrent concerns:

* the sense of a self divided against itself (“I am – yet what I am....the self consumer of my woes”;
* the absence of confronting others (“friends forsake me like a memory lost”)
* a loss of clear distinction between consciousness and unconsciousness (“the living sea of walking dream ...”); all that remains is a present sense of belonging contrasted with a past sense reintegration with nature, the “id” and all that is “not I”- a “death-wish”, even.
* *The “forming” of desire* Psychological reading might move in other directions and dimensions too. Formally, they might point to the expressively irregular rhythms, the moving caesura (right from the first line) and the “dashing” punctuation. At the same time they would note the controlling, if not calming, influence of the highly regular versification and metre: three stanzas each with six ten-syllable lines, the first with alternating rhymes throughout, the last two concluding with couplets. Such a high degree of patterning might be seen negatively as a symbolic attempt to repress the semiotic flux beneath- a kind of verbal straitjacket. But it might also be seen positively as a saving vestige of civilization, turning what otherwise be an anguished animal cry into a recognisably human harmony. A rather different, contextual reading might relate the poem’s substance and structure to the sense of “confinement” experienced in many early nineteenth-century (and later) asylums. This might even be extended to notions of “enclosure”: the privatisation of fields and property resulting in the privatisation of bodies and minds. In this way the personal would be released as political, and vice versa. The psychology invoked would be grounded in society and history, not simply in the notion of the universal human psyche. There might also be some recognition that this poem was written over a decade before the birth of Freud and half a century before the formal institution of psychoanalysis.Perhaps, then, the most appropriate contemporary intellectual framework for the poem *at that time* was religious and spiritual (as in its last verse) and not psychological at all (as in the aforementioned analysis).
* *A personal-political response.* As modern readers, however, with a crucial responsibility this cannot be detached from the ways in which we, collectively and individually, respond to the text (i.e. our “response-ability”). What sense do we make of the poem? More pointedly, what sense does it make of us? Personal responses are of-course varied. But if we regard psychological transaction as what takes place between reader and reader as well as between reader, text and writer, then we take have an obligation to try to tease out some of our responses. Inevitably, some of these will turn out to be idiosyncratic; others may be common; and all are in some sense shareable.(Possible responses)

I too, like Clare in the last verse, associate childhood with a time when I “sweetly sleep”. Now I often do not sleep too well. As I get older I also recognize, perhaps with Clare (ll.11.12), that friends and family can become “strange”, either through death (the ultimate estrangement) or through changing relationships. More generally, there is the tricky matter of fears for one’s own sanity, as well as general uncertainty about what “sanity” and “normality” actually mean nowadays. After all I am a member of a species which is gradually tearing itself and the rest of the planet to pieces, not withstanding claims to scientific rationality and progress.(“Enclosure” too, I recall, was hailed as a mark of progress and civilization—though by the *enclosures* rather than the enclosed). In other words, you do not have to have been in a mental asylum or formally certified as insane to have anxieties about your own and other people’s sanity. At the same time, as I reread Clare’s verse, I take comfort from its vision of at least potential harmony and (re-)union. (Pope 155)

**Exercise 2:** Analyse D. H. Lawrence’s short story “Two Blue Birds” through Lacan’s three major theoretical areas: the real, the imaginaire, and the simbolyc.

**Exercise 3:** Read Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* to find out how the protagonist character constructs his identity according to Lacan’s views

**Possible Answer:**

Lacan wrote about *Hamlet* in his famous essay “Desire and Interpretation of Desire in *Hamlet*,” in which he examined the linguistic structure of the play and argued, counter to Freud’s rather psychosexual reading of the play, that Hamlet is assuming the role of the “phallus”—that is, the role of his father or patriarch—in the play and, hence, is increasingly removed from any sort of reality and central identity, which in turn greatly upsets his psyche. Hamlet constructs his identity at the start of the play under the influence of his dead father’s identity (something which Shakespeare highlights by giving Hamlet and his father the same name). A theorist making use of Lacan’s notion of the mirror stage might also argue that Hamlet perfectly exemplifies someone who lacks a core, fundamental identity, and possesses an identity which only reflects others’ identities. Shakespeare presents Hamlet’s psychic state and identity as constantly shifting throughout the play without offering any suggestions of there being a core or fundamental identity within him. Instead, Shakespeare figures Hamlet as possessing a psyche which is in a state of near constant flux, just as Lacan conceptualized all people who emerge from the mirror stage as being lacking in a core identity. While a Lacanian theorist would not suggest that Shakespeare invented a theory of the mirror stage in the play, he or she might suggest that Shakespeare’s play reflects, itself, an element of human psychology that would be conceptualized three centuries later by Lacan.

**Exercise 4:** Consider the psychological conflicts and state of mind of the characters as they are evidenced within Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* (*1813*)

**Possible Answer**

Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) is among the most widely read and studied English novels of the 19th century and one which has been studied from a variety of theoretical perspectives. It can be considered as a psychological masterpiece, dealing with the nature of human psychology, its growth and individual accomplishment. Part of the novel’s appeal can be traced to its psychological richness and depth. Austen’s characters, in *Pride and Prejudice* in particular, seem to think and act like real people, and the worlds Austen creates around her characters seem logical and realistic, hence theorists study the novel for the insight it offers into 19th century England and, moreover, human psychology and gender relations. The novel is regularly interpreted from a psychoanalytic theory perspective, with theorists who theorist might speculate as to the ways in which the character of Elizabeth Bennet reflects the ideals and subconscious desires of Austen herself.

Austen provides a profound reflection on the truth of human life and action, through the psychological development of her protagonists. In the text, Austen reviews the inner complexities of Elizabeth and Darcy and the change they undergo, through self knowledge. Darcy undergoes inner development redeeming himself from his pride and arrogance resulting from Elizabeth’s continuous indifference towards him. While the psychological growth in Elizabeth results from the truth that is revealed to her in his letter about the flaws in herself and her family. This letter acts as a driving force for Elizabeth’s psychological growth which frees her from all her prejudices against Darcy making way for their relationship to blossom.

Throughout the novel, Austen depicts a psychological journey through her two main characters Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy for the purpose of psychoanalytic interpretation. The work, then, deals with the psychological growth of Elizabeth and Darcy through self discovery and attaining their individual accomplishment.

Elizabeth, who prides herself for her keen perceptive abilities to judge people on first impression, is be fooled by her own judgment about herself. Her perceptive abilities fail her frequently because her judgments are influenced by vanity, which prevents her from reasoning objectively and seeing the truth of the situation. Darcy, who appears to hit her pride at their very first meeting, becomes the object of her prejudice. She nurtures her prejudice against him until towards the end of the novel when she is confronted with truth about her own self and the truth about the people around her; hence undergoing a psychological change of knowing herself. Darcy likewise faces several insults and indifference from Elizabeth which leads to his growth. Elizabeth’s continuous criticisms and bashing makes him realize the flaws in him and compel him to make amendments for them. Incidents in the story establish the relationship between personality, psychological growth and personal accomplishment. The novel also investigates the different stages through the process of psychological growth which these two characters undergo and the incidents that results into the accomplishment. This well expressed in Elizabeth words:

How despicably I have acted! I, who have prided myself on my discernment! I, who have valued myself on my abilities! who have often disdained the generous candour of my sister, and gratified my vanity in useless or blameable mistrust! How humiliating is this discovery! yet, how just a humiliation! Had I been in love, I could not have been more wretchedly blind! But vanity, not love, has been my folly. Pleased with the preference of one, and offended by the neglect of the other, on the very beginning of our acquaintance, I have courted prepossession and ignorance, and driven reason away, where either were concerned. Till this moment I never knew myself. (Austin ch. 36: 188)

Austin’s novel gives an insight of the ways the thoughts, attitudes, and actions of the individual reflect the time of the society in which they take place. The time Austen wrote this novel, Victorian society was going through a transformation. Society opened up the scope of elimination for class distinction from the society. This evolutionary process is reflected in every thought, sentiment and action in the story and is a key to understanding the forces that lead to individual development. The product of such an evolutionary process is the marriage of Elizabeth and Darcy, members of two different classes.  By the time Elizabeth’s father protests against Elizabeth accepting Darcy’s proposal in Chapter 59, Elizabeth is able to reply, “I love him. Indeed he has no improper pride. He is perfectly amiable. You do not know what he really is; then pray do not pain me by speaking of him in such terms,” showing us just **how greatly her opinion of Darcy had changed** throughout the novel (Ch. 59)

Austen’s novel remains one of the most debated, studied, and theorized literary texts in the English language.

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**Unit 6 Reader Response Criticism**

**Objectives**

* The student will understand the meaning of informational, expository or persuasive texts, using a variety of strategies and will demonstrate literal, interpretive, inferential and evaluative comprehension.
* Students will examine their own personal reader characteristics that they bring to each individual text.
* Students will respond to a piece of literature by using ideas and concepts from the specific text to support conclusions and establish connections.  
  Students will recognize the importance text.
* Students will compose a formula to explain "meaning" in the context of reader response theory and critically evaluate this formula to assess its credibility.

**Introduction**

This type of criticism focuses on the activity of reading a work of literature. Reader response critics turn from the traditional conception of a work as an achieved structure of meanings to the responses of readers to the text. By this shift of perspective a literary work is converted into an activity that goes on in a reader’s mind, and what had been features of the work itself—narrator, plot, characters, style, and structure—is less important than the connection between a reader’s experience and the text. It is through this interaction that meaning is made. Students seem most comfortable with this school of criticism. Proponents believe that literature has no objective meaning or existence. People bring their own thoughts, moods, and experiences to whatever text they are reading and get out of it whatever they happen to, based on their own expectations and ideas. For example, when I read “Sonny’s Blues” I am reminded of my younger sister who loves music. The story really gets to me because sometimes I worry about her and my relationship with her. I want to support her and am reminded of this as I see that Sonny’s brother does not support Sonny. (Appleman 148)

**Origin of the Theory**

Reader response criticism was quite significant in the 1970s and had its source in Germany in the Konstanz School where Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser were active. Like the Geneva School, the Konstanz School was quite aware **that a literary work doesn’t exist on the page, only instructions for constructing it exist there**. **Literary works, therefore, only truly exist insofar as they are constituted in the consciousness of a reader**. But that said, how do readers actually constitute a text? What do we do with the instructions on the page? How do we handle aspects of a text for which information isn’t given? Wolfgang Iser **famously spoke of gaps, blanks that the reader is required to fill in** by means of implication, reason, fantasy, and so on.

In America, Norman Holland, a psychoanalytical critic, investigated how readers read subjectively, **arguing that reading a text properly never actually happens**, **given all the personal psychological issues we transfer onto the experience of reading.** For example, **it’s difficult to imagine reading a novel without identifying with or against certain characters.** **Whether we like a novel or not seems to have quite a bit to do with our own psychological make up**, which is why, for example, feminism became very popular, given that it promoted literary readings women could identify with and get excited about in terms of their content. Reader response, hermeneutics, psychoanalysis, and phenomenology are sympathetic critical orientations. What tends to turn critics away from such approaches is that **they are perceived to argue for reading as an arbitrary subjective act**, which is **problematic when one considers that in a research institution like a university, one is supposed to be getting at absolute truth, never mind the process of how one actually reads** (5.7)

* **Defining Reader Response**

Reader Response is a critical theory that stresses **the importance of the role of the reader in constructing the meaning of a work of literature.**[Lois Tyson](https://www.carleton.edu/departments/ENGL/Alice/Footbibliography.html#tyson) offers this definition: “**Reader-response theory…maintains that what a text is cannot be separated from what it does…reader-response theorists share two beliefs: (1) that the role of the reader cannot be omitted from our understanding of literature and (2) that readers do not passively consume the meaning presented to them by an objective literary text”** ([170](https://www.carleton.edu/departments/ENGL/Alice/Footbibliography.html#tyson)).  Reader-response theorists **recognize that texts do not interpret themselves**.  Even if all of our evidence for a certain interpretation comes from the work itself, and even if everyone who reads the text interprets it in the same (as improbable as that might be) it is still we, the **readers, who do the interpreting, assigning meaning to the text.** Reader response criticism not only allows for, but even **interests itself in how these meanings to change from reader to reader and from time to time.**

Among many dramatic changes in literary theory over the past thirty years, one of the most striking has been the growing prominence of what has come to be called **reader-response criticism.** Building on M. H. Abrams’s well-known “triangle” **of author, work, and reader**, Terry Eagleton has in **fact characterized the history of modern literary theory as occurring in three stages**: **a Romantic** “preoccupation with the author**,” a New Critical** “exclusive concern with the text;” and finally, “**a marked shift of attention to the reader** over recent years”(1983, 74). The various theories of reader response are characterized as sharing a concern with **how readers make meaning from their experience with the text**. While literary criticism is equally concerned with making meaning, **the focus is generally more on extracting meaning from the text rather than making explicit the processes by which readers, or the critic, make meaning**. In some cases, **they refer to, or characterize, a hypothetical reader's responses**; less commonly, the responses of actual readers are cited as evidence for claims about the reader/text transaction. **These theories therefore assume that the text cannot be understood or analyzed as an isolated entity.** **It is often assumed that reader-response criticism represents a relatively unified position**.

According to Stanley Fish and Wolfgang Iser, **focus is on the experience of an individual reader.** For the reader, **the work is what is given to the consciousness**; **one can argue that the work is not something objective, existing independently of any experience of it, but it is the experience of the reader.** Like phenomenology, **we can suspend the ultimate reality or knowability of the world and describe it as it is given to consciousness.** Criticism can thus take **the form of a description of the reader’s progressive movement through a text, analyzing how readers produce meaning by making connections, filling things left unsaid.**

Writers who have been called “reader- response critics” embrace an extremely wide range of attitudes toward, and assumptions about, **the roles of the reader, the text, and the social/cultural context shaping the transaction between reader and text.** One particularly contentious issue has centered on the relative influence of the reader, the text, and the reading **situation on how the reading transaction is shaped** Steven Mailloux (39-53) has charged, on the one hand, **that some reader-response critics who privilege the influence of the text on readers’ responses are no more than New Critics in disguise,** assuming that at bottom, the text determines (or ought to determine) everything else. **On the other hand, some critics have come very close to insisting that the text is no more than an inkblot, whose meaning is created entirely by the reader.** And, more recently, still others have argued that to focus exclusively on the reader/text trans-action is to ignore the crucial influence of social, cultural, or situational contexts on the nature of this transaction.

It is also necessary to bear in mind that many theorists who might not identify themselves as reader-response critics have, in recent years, expressed **increasing interest in the meaning and conduct of the reader/text transaction**. Such critics and scholars come from as wide a range of different disciplinary perspectives as feminism, Marxism, phenomenology, rhetoric, perceptual and cognitive psychology, psychoanalysis, pragmatics, and aesthetics.

**Summary**

Reader-response criticism attempts to describe what happens in the reader’s mind while interpreting a text. Reader-response theory emphasizes the creative role of the reader. According to its proponents, the literary and aesthetic experience of reading a novel or poem is the product of a dialogue between reader and text. A reader-response critic might also explore the impact of a particular text on his or her own ideas or values. For example, one might reflect on how a particular character seems admirable or unlikable and why. One might reflect on how one’s religious, culture, or social values affect readings. It also overlaps with gender criticism in exploring how men and women may read the same text with different assumptions.

**Typical questions**

How does the interaction of text and reader create meaning?

What does a phrase-by-phrase analysis of a short literary text, or a key portion of a longer text, tell us about the reading experience pre-structured by (or built into) that text?

Do the sounds/shapes of the words as they appear on the page or how they are spoken by the reader enhance or change the meaning of the word/work?

How might we interpret a literary text to show that the reader's response is, or is analogous to, the topic of the story?

What does the body of criticism published about a literary text suggest about the critics who interpreted that text and/or about the reading experience produced by that text? (Tyson 191)

**T.D.’s Session**

**Practical Application of Reader-Response Theory**

**Exercise 1 Read F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and see “How did you feel while reading?”**

While you are reading the book write down all the things that go on in your head in a “stream of consciousness” style.

As you read, you will be making a record of images, associations, feelings, thoughts, judgments, etc.

You will probably find that this record will contain:

Questions that you ask yourself about characters and events as you read.

(Answer these yourself when you can.)

Memories from your own experience, provoked by the reading.

Guesses about how you think the story will develop, and why.

Reflections on striking moments and ideas in the book.

Comparisons between how you behave and how the characters in the novel are behaving. Thoughts and feelings about characters and events.

Comments on how the story is being told. For example, any words and phrases or even whole passages that make an impression on you, or motifs which you notice the author keeps using.

Connections to other texts, ideas, and courses.

An outline of the chapter, no longer than a paragraph. Try date each entry, and note down the time and place, as well as the mood you are in while reading. Note down the page number you are reading when you make an entry. Do not try to rewrite the book.

**Possible Answer**

**THE GREAT GATSBY**

**Anticipating/retrospection**

All these descriptions give me a feeling of misery and loneliness. I think something terrible will happen soon or later. I guess it was Daisy who drove the car. Because if it's Gatsby, he ought to stop the car.

**Picturing**

Doctor T. J. Eckleburg’s eye is vivid. I feel that I see a movie.

The author describes one row of apartment houses in a very active, pictorial way, so that we can imagine the scene very easily. It’s really touching for me. I like this sentence, especially ‘one slice in a long white cake’.

**Interacting.**

(Contrasting feelings about the character of Gatsby.) I want to scold Gatsby and say ‘stupid’ one hundred times. His behaviors are just like a naive kid. He has too much desire and demand. His actions are pathetic. I think I can understand the feeling of Gatsby. It’s because I had the same experience with him. It’s a sorrow that when a man must leave his lover, and his lover love another man during this period. Now I can understand that why Gatsby perpare five years to wait for Daisy.

**Evaluating**

I think Nick has done a great job in describing some ways. For example: p. 2, 1.17: the earth lurches away from the sun. All he wants to say is the coming of the night; however, he just transfers in another way. Nick isn’t the onlooker in this story. He is the guide of this story. He directs our emotions and feelings and the thought about Gatsby. We’ll love Gatsby’s personalities unconsiously because of Nick’s narration although he is not as objective as he mentioned in chapter 1, ‘I’m inclined to reserve all judgements.’

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