

# The Depiction of Metaphorical Aspects in the Selected Literary Work by the American Dramatist Eugene O'neill

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**Abstract:** This paper is to present the metaphorical aspects of Eugene O'Neill's selected plays. Revising the dramatic and literary life of the father of American drama. The main objective of this study to find out some tragic, metaphorical aspect in the plays such as *Desire under the Elm*; *The strange interlude* and *the long day's journey into night* and *The Hairy Ape*. The analysis is the narrative analysis, as well as the data analysis is the documentary analysis. The tool is in interpretive in data analysis. In data collection. The tool is the secondary data, the researchers look to the metaphorical expressions and their effects. In short, the main aim is to find metaphorical expression in the plays of Eugene O'Neill selected plays. The analysis is qualitative as well as to conduct the narrative technique because the study is dealt with stories, actions, and character to narrate their events.

**Index Terms:** American drama, Eugene O'Neill, Family relationship, Psychology, Tragedy. Metaphor

## I. INTRODUCTION

Historically, the dramatist, Eugene Goldstone O'Neill was born on October 6, 1888, in a hotel room on Broadway, New England, as the son of James O'Neill and Ella Quinton. As his family was sweltering. Today's playwright must crack into the roots of today's sickness as he feels: the death of the old god and the failure of materialism, provide any new fulfillment to the outstanding primitive religious instinct. He finds a meaning for life and acts with the fear of death. (Robinson, 1994; Yandell, 2017)

These revealing words of O'Neill provide key elements to our understanding of the playwright. No other playwright introduced the American drama in dramatic realism and naturalism as it was started by Russian playwright Anton Chekov, Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen and Swedish playwright, August Strindberg. In his personal life, O'Neill had documented himself as the most noticeable American playwright. He had his achievements: he has rewarded the Pulitzer awards for *beyond the horizon*, *Anna Christie*, *strange interlude* and *a long day of traveling at night*. He won the highest international recognition. (McGovern, 2018)

It is reported that O'Neill was the genius behind the greatest change that came over American theatre, symbolize the year 1920s and 1930's the highest period in history.

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He has written things of current interest by open-handed American drama requiring its genius and authority, dynamism and force. American theatre was found to be in a desperate need for reform and dynamism. (Kennedy, 2018) There were famous playwrights before O'Neill had trapped in a stereotyped pattern and worn out condition. He showed himself to be the chief worn out a dramatic rise against the conventions and the romantic banal and established himself as the symbol of a renaissance that paralleled on the stage that is called a renaissance in poetry. And he was an untiring experimenter. (Kennedy, 2018)

O'Neill experimented with a variety of dramatic ways and modes. When he was successful in a way in stylishness, he was going to move to another and this experimentation continued from the beginning to the end. His works involve characters that inhabit the margins of society, who participate in depraved behavior when they struggle to keep their hopes and desires but ultimately slide into disillusionment and hopelessness. "Characters face life and death or give up fighting. Defiant courage is the keynote of them all. A never-failing spirit of defiance is the chief quality of O'Neill's tragic heroes. They are unable to direct forces that they do not understand or master (Eisen, 2017). In this paper, the researcher wants to reveal the tragedy and psychological aspect of modern American drama. It is represented by the father of American drama and his dramatic plays (Chelliah, 2017; Eisen, 2018)

This paper describes that Eugene O'Neill is a great realist in the ground of drama and literature throughout his lifetime, he has committed himself to dramatize live vibrant human beings. He is one of the influential American dramatists, the creator of a serious American, almost one, who has gone to the International Center of conservation in America. As a dramatist of the modern era, Dramatist is said, (Higgins, 2018)"It has said that he has taken a lot of parts in the modern dramas and his dramatic world is nothing but a type of drama that illustrations the mind and conscience of men the quantity of its exaggeration is too large, in the twentieth century adventurists. It is countless to retain it carefully. As this drama is related to the intuitive school, it is generally called the common level of reality, the nature of tragedy (Higgins, 2018).

## II. STUDIES ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND TRAGEDY ASPECT IN O'NEILL PLAYS

### A. *In the Strange Interlude*

It is nothing but a perfect

study of Neurosis. The central theme may be stated as Nina's search for the self, her search of pleasure and her attempt at the avoidance of pain. Being one of the most ambitious plays. Based on the play strange interlude, four different characters were carried through a searing emotional crisis in their lives over a period of twenty-eight years. Nina Leeds is the heroine of the play, has involved to an aviator. Her puritanical father did not permit too many of her fiancés and prevented her from making love and the lover Gordon was killed in the World War I. Nina was left with severe mental pain and being a scholar, she was withdrawn, isolated, and severe in self-discipline. After the death of her lover, she leaves the home and becomes a nurse. She attempts to calm her guilt by sacrificing her body to wounded ex-serviceman. She dedicates her life to the struggle against her fate. Gordon is a symbol of love in escaping from the proud mask of the father.

In the Strange Interlude, (Wood, 2019) O'Neill explores the concept of metaphorical items from the beginning, the character of Nina Leeds is dominated by her vague dream of Gordon Shaw. The character of her father, Marsden, and Darrel all fight against the reality of life whereas Gordon and Sam Evans are the only men in Nina's life who approach reality. Almost all the characters in the play have their existence fixed but the action is conceived as psychic duration. Here in the play, the psychological complexes are represented by four main characters. Both the male and female characters express their inner feelings psychically. The characters similar Nina, Edmund Darrell, Marsden and Sam Evan are possessed with deep psychology. O'Neill delicacies the male characters as 'inferior'. Nina is measured the strongest. The character in the sense that she initiates the action of the play. She acts, and the men react out of their need for her. She is the source of life and identity in the woman herself. She is the center of focus for the four men, three of them are sexual partners. For these men, she is the source of life and well-being. (8).

### B. *The Desire under the Elms*

This is a play about the teenagers longing to hold the patrimony of their father and hatred of him. It is largely caused by his authority over them due to his possession of the farm, but O'Neill embodies Freudian psychology with which its highlight on the attachment between mother and her son. Hostility between son and daddy which strengthens the inner meaning of the Greek tragedies with their desirability for incest is clearly evident in the play (3, 9). (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2019; King, 2018) This play is set on a farm in New England and here the characters are presented as overpowered with emotions and unconscious influence expressed in terms roughly equivalent to the Oedipus complex. O'Neill strengthens *Desire under the Elms* by integrating into a single complex of Freudianism. Each character has a lust for material possession particularly for the farm and each has a sexual lust that leads to his or her final downfall (10). The characters move suddenly with life and initially, both the male and female characters are possessed with psychological complexes. Specifically, the story settings on the three characters Eden, Abbie and Ephraim. Eden owns a complex psychological i.e. mother complex whereas Abbie burns with the desire to have sexual intercourse with Eden exhibits her

abnormal psychology. Ephraim plays a minor role. He is also offered with psychological complications.

The stage is subject that mediated between the unconscious and the ego. At his mother's death and in the following years his anima, his need for love has never been able to establish psychic equality with his need to possess the form. As Rod W. Horton says "opposing the persona, there is presumed to exist in the unconscious a contrary force, the anima which trends to check every outward manifestation of human behavior. Thus, a kind of dialectical opposition is set up within the individual which is not properly resolved results in frustration and neurosis" (12).

### C. *The Hairy Ape*

The hairy Ape is the expressionistic play of Eugene O'Neill selected plays. It has shown the different perspective of the conflicts and struggles in the figurative form in life. The expressionist is the term used by the first painter of American culture and society (13). The play represents the great idea of fighting, is a great distinguish from painting from the representations. The concept of depressions represent fighting, conflict, struggle, and the bad relationship among the characters in the plays, According to M.H Abrahams point that the vital feature of Expressionism is an essential revolt against realism. The representative world as objectively, the playwright adopts the direct experience by identifying the world as it appears to his state of mind. This work implies that mental illness is representative of anxiety-ridden recent man in an industrial and technological civilization which is nomadic toward chaos. It is regarded as the radical revolt against the tradition of the people in the society and cultures.

(Ibrahim *et al.*, 2019) The dramatist, O'Neill has produced in *Nina Leads* a female counterpart who needs a spiritual union and so she makes a quest for happiness in sex and a moral existence lying across all values and gives herself to men without love. She is neurotic, tense, frustrated and vindictive. Through this sort of behavior, she is said to have possessed abnormal psychology. Thus, the character of Nina is formed in this drama as a powerful heroine whose character has manifested with a deep psychological study of womanhood. Through the representation of the character Nina, O'Neill has consciously search to generate a heroine who would personify a cross-section of all womanhood. What he actually created is nothing but an embodiment of his ambivalent feeling towards the sex, a female who is a victim in the society (16).

## II. THE REPRESENTATION OF SON IN THE PLAYS OF O'NEILL

Psychically, the representation for all the sons in the play *The Desire under the Elm* on the patriarchal morals of greed cannot be modified, complemented or disciplined by the anima energies of love. That is why Eben is passionately bound to his mother and love. Eden hurts from the psychic spirit of wanting love because of mother fixation (Yingying, 2018). The theme of his mother's curse that Eben introduces runs throughout the action. It is linked with some of the developments like the growth of Eben's personality

through incest. Eben succeeds home news that his father had got married again. It makes all 3 of them with anger and frustration. Simon and Peter decide to leave for California at once. Eben wants to make a deal with them. He identifies whether his father has hidden gold for three hundred dollars to each Simon and Peter will write off their share of the farm to Eben. In a language full of lust, hatred and animal imagery, Eben describes his adventure with Minnie. Eben's obsession with Minnie exhibits his complex psychology. The wishes and the desire of the mother are essentially uncovered in an idealized and exalted mother. The dependence of Eben's desire on his mother is the eternal width of Eben's drama. Eben is jumped into severe psychological pain at the thought of his mother being exchanged in his father's affection by somebody else Abbie. (King, 2018; MCGovern, 2018) O'Neill marks the use of the mother archetype to probe into Eben's personality. Eben's internal conflict is the psychological core of O'Neill's play is an investigation of Eben's personality created on the relationship with his mother, is the chief basis of Eben's tragedy. The female character who enjoys unusual psychology is Abbie. Like Eben, she wants the farm. Her immediate reaction to the farm is one of the gluttonies and possessiveness. Abbie's burning desire for Eben displays her odd psychology. Abbie is a compelling character. (Amani *et al.*, 2017) .The analysis of the tragic points in the plays of Eugene O'Neill. The study has revealed a different type of tragedy and psychological aspect in the plays of Eugene O'Neill so as to reveal the tragedy of modern times. (Adam, 2016; Krishnan and Ramesh, 2018)

**Methodology:**

These studies are depicted in modern drama as contained in Table 1. It revealed the picture and struggle of the characters in the plays. (Frich, 2018) The tragedy has happened because of different action leading to the dark side of the American culture and society. These actions of the plays lead to the disintegration of the American family than the society (Weller *et al.*, 1989). (Morone and Kersh, 2018) The tragic action includes loneliness, sexuality, incest, murder, suicides, and revenge. These actions are referred to as psychological factors to human beings. In this study, the researcher uses the metaphor theory to depict the issues or the picture of analysis. The main purpose is to separate among these types of metaphorical expression in the selected plays. The type of analysis is narrative because the researchers have dealt with stories that reflect the past days.

**Results and discussion**

TABLE 1: The metaphorical Analysis

1.	Parrett: it is funny mother kept in touch with you so long when she is finished with anyone. She is finished. She is always proud of that. Metaphor. Act one	metonymy
2.	Rock "s face is a set of expressions of tired callous, He looks like a miner wop	Simile

	gangster – Act 4	
3.	Larry: I do not care where he is, accepted. I wish it is thousands of miles away! ( then as he sees surprised at his vehemence he adds hastily) He is a pest. Act two.	Hyperbole
4.	Peter (with sardonic bitterness) Here it is stone a top on the ground –stones atop o stone – Makin stone walls- -year atop o year –him 'n' me "n' then Eben Makin.P13	Metonymy
5.	Joe: (chucking) Getting drunk every day for twenty years not give you de Brooklyn boys. You need not be scared. this is hyperbole Act one .P25	Hyperbole
6.	Larry; Lo sleep is good, better is death: in soon. P 17	Antithesis

**III. CONCLUSION**

In sum, the conclusion of this paper is to reflect the metaphorical expression in Eugene O'Neill selected plays such as Desire under the Elm; The strange interlude and the long day's journey into night and The Hairy Ape.and reviewing the dramatic life of Eugene O'Neill. The study also narrates some tragic action in these plays. The researcher searches for various types of metaphorical expressions that depict tragic positions, these metaphorical expressions are simile, hyperbole, metonymy, and symbol. After the close reading of the text, the researchers find different types of metaphor and reviews the life of the dramatist. The technique which is used for analysis is a qualitative method and narrative analysis. It is particularly the narrative technique for interpreting data and the documentary analysis for data collections. Finally, Eugene O'Neill is the father of American drama, he depicts all the social problems of American society to provide us with a moral lesson.

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