

Master's Dissertation in MA in English Linguistics: New Applications and International
Communication

**A STUDY OF THE TRANSITIVITY SYSTEM IN FICTIONAL
NARRATIVE: A COMPARISON OF PROCESS TYPES IN
EDGAR ALLAN POE'S SHORT STORIES**

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A Study of the Transitivity System in Fictional Narrative: A Comparison of Process Types in Edgar Allan Poe's Short Stories

1. Introduction

It is broadly believed that linguistic analysis is not merely concerned with the understanding, nor with the evaluation of a text as ``suitable'' or ``non suitable'', in what aspects it fails, or in what aspects is successful (Halliday, 1985: xv) but, rather it deals with the demonstration of why and how a text gets to be the way it is as well as how the reader comes to interpret it in the particular way (Şimşek, 2012: 75). Numerous linguists, for instance Daniel Chandler (2002) or Roman Jakobson (1970: 455) for whom ``language is the central and most important among all human semiotic systems'', have been successful in accounting for aspects of language. However, one of the most substantial theories is M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). For Halliday (2014: 30) ``language provides a theory of human experience'', as it makes sense of our experience and act out our social relationships. This involves that language should be considered as a system of meanings which is accompanied by forms through which these possible meanings can be realized. The theory behind this explanation is widely known as ``systemic'' theory, which is a theory of meaning as choice, whereby a language, or any other semiotic system, will be interpreted as a network of interlocking options (Halliday, 1985: xiv). Halliday (1974) was, in fact, one of the pioneers in transitivity analysis. In his study of William Golding's *The Inheritors*, he analyzed the frequency of transitivity syntactic structures in the development of the novel's theme, in this case the relationship between Neanderthal people and a new tribe they had not met before. Other well known examples are D. Kies's (1992) who also analyzed passivity in George Orwell's *1984*. In other words, the use of transitivity analysis in stylistics research is not new, as for many decades, transitivity analysis has been used to understand the language of writers and speakers, examining in depth the structure of sentences which express semantic processes, the participants involved in these processes, and the circumstances in which processes and participants are involved. By means of using functional analysis, particularly transitivity analysis, researchers have tried to explore the ways in which language structures can produce certain

meanings and ideology which are not always explicit for readers (Mehmod *et al.*, 2014: 79).

The purpose of the present Master's Dissertation is therefore to adopt M.A.K. Halliday's transitivity model in the analysis of four short stories written by Edgar Allan Poe in the twentieth century: "The Tell Tale Heart" (January, 1843); "The Black Cat" (August, 1843); "The Imp of the Perverse" (July, 1845); and "The Cask of Amontillado" (November, 1846). An exploration of the mind of the narrators of each one of these writings will permit to observe how a topic of special interest, namely "Perverseness", also called "the spirit of Perverse" or "Imp of the Perverse" is linguistically construed.

1.1 Hypotheses and Research questions

The investigation will take as point of departure two hypotheses and two research questions strictly correlated with the hypotheses.

The first proposed hypothesis is that it will be possible to find an unreliable narrator in each of the selected works. Thanks to the technique of the first-person narrator, several incongruities in the discourse of each one of these narrators may be found. As these characters reconstruct reality and interpret the storyworld (which is a mental model of the situations and the events that are recounted) from their point of view, sometimes what may be linguistically reflected is that what they express and what they do differ from each other. Thereby, it will be convenient to penetrate and to explore their minds in depth, given that not every event or action told by them seems to be trustworthy.

The second proposed hypothesis is that these narrators' unreliability is linguistically reflected in an ambivalence of feelings which becomes visible at certain turning points in the narrative which mark a shift in the narrators' behaviour and personality. Hence, by using transitivity analysis, it will be possible to see how the story progresses and to analyze the behavior of the narrator in the face of these changes.

RQ1. How are narrators' unreliability and the ambivalence of feelings linguistically reflected in each of these short stories?

RQ2. If there is a correlation between this ambivalence and narrators' unreliability, how it is expressed in the stories? And how is "Perverseness" also related to them?

1.2 Justification of the topic of the study

The reason why these narratives addressing the same theme, were selected as the central issue for the study, is due to the fact that although multiple transitivity analyses were done in previous decades, no previous studies adopting the transitivity model in the analysis of Poe's writings can be found. Indeed, it was possible to find several papers in which many topics such as "love", "hate" and even "Perverseness" are analyzed in Poe's narratives, however; we did not find, works in which the authors carry out a transitivity analysis of these narratives. Thereby, our goal is to go deeper in our study, not simply by examining what is on the surface, but by proposing a new way of analyzing and extracting narrators' perception of the "material" world and the "mental" world (their consciousness), through the transitivity system model of Process Types.

1.3 The organization of the study

After presenting the introduction and the objectives, in the second part of the investigation I will focus on the theoretical framework of the study, which includes certain crucial issues in narratology, such as the figure of the narrator and the concept of focalization, as well as a brief review of transitivity and the different types of processes. This will be followed by a section on Methodology, explaining how the procedure of selecting and analyzing the texts was carried out, as well as which instruments were used for that purpose.

In the fourth part, I deal with the analysis of the four stories. First of all, I have analyzed all transitivity process types in the four stories, and in order to focus on each type individually, I divided the analysis in five sections (Material processes, Mental processes, Verbal processes, Behavioral processes, Relational processes and linguistic implications), in which I examine and compare the process types in each story, with the aim of finding unreliability and contradictory feelings in the narrators' discourse.

Finally, in the conclusion, the main findings, results and limitations of this investigation will be exposed.

2. Theoretical background

In a fiction participants are transported, through a more or less immersive experience, to a storyworld assumed to be imaginary rather than actual.

(Herman, 2009: 186)

2.1 *An approach to the theory and definition of narrative*

2.1.1 *What is narrative?*

Narrative has been of particular interest for humanistic fields in the past decades, coming more and more popular, thanks to the development of structuralist theories of *narrative* in France in the mid to late 1960s. At the same time, narratives also have become a main issue for many different disciplines, such as The cognitive sciences, politics and even medicine, among others (Herman, 2007).

We first draw the premise that *narratology* is the academic study of narrative as a genre, a science which is concerned with the investigation of aspects of narrative involved in a story, developed during the heyday of structuralism in France. Narratologists focused on how to describe narrative viewed as a semiotic system (Fludernik, 2009). It was in fact Tzvetan Todorov who coined this term to designate what other structuralist theorists of story, such as Roland Barthes, Gérard Genette, himself and others, conceived of as a “science of narrative” which was modeled after the “pilot-science” of Ferdinand de Saussure’s structural linguistics (Herman, 2009: 24). Since approximately 1980, the term *narratology* has also been used with the general terms *narrative theory*, *narrative research* and even *narrative studies* (Fludernik, 2009: 158).

Other important terms are on the one hand, *narrativity*, which makes a text (in the widest sense) a *narrative* and on the other hand, *narration*, which is the telling of a story by a narrator, who may address a narratee, and all the process by which a narrative is conveyed (Fludernik, 2009: 157). Taking into account again the word *narrative*, we have to say that according to Herman (2009: 9) it is a mode of representation that is situated in a specific discourse context or occasion for telling. Similarly, Monika

Fludernik (2009: 1) states that the word *narrative* is related to the verb *narrate*. Thus, narrative is associated with the act of narration and therefore, wherever someone tell us about something, for instance, a newsreader on the radio or the narrator in the novel, they are *narrating* some event, or action. But, the problem comes when we have to consider if everything which is narrated by a narrator as narrative. This question can be solved with the distinction made by Gérard Genette ([1972] 1980), between the three meanings of the French word *récit* (‘‘narrative’’). He established a division between *discours* or *récit* proper (utterance or narrative as text), *narration* (the narrative act of the narrator) and *histoire* (the story which is told by the narrator in his or her narrative). The first two will be classed as the *narrative discourse*, and the third one will be classed as story. While the term *narration* makes reference to the narrative act and the term *discours* or *récit* proper makes reference to its product, the story is therefore what the narrative discourse reports, signifies or represents. The author of a novel develops therefore a fictional world and produces the story and the narrative discourse that goes with its product, which is the narrative text (Fludernik, 2009: 3).

Thereby, as can be seen, for a long time human cultures and theorists of narrative have explored the origin, traits and key functions of this genre (Herman, 2007: 3). The complexity to define *narrative* has been of particular interest and many other scholars have also proposed their own view and understanding of what it is. One of them is the cognitive narratologist David Herman, who in his book *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative* (2007: 12), establishes a distinction between ‘‘classical’’ and ‘‘postclassical’’ approaches to the study of narrative. Herman uses, on the one hand, the term *classical approaches*, to refer to the tradition of research which was rooted in Russian Formalist literary theory extended by structuralist narratologists starting in the mid 1960, and then systematized in the early 1980s by different scholars such as Wallace Martin or Seymour Chatman. Moreover, the term *classical* refers also to the Anglo-American tradition in fictional narrative, where many theorists were influenced by the Formalist-structuralist tradition. On the other hand, in the Anglo-Saxon world, a broader definition of narrative has also emerged after the publication of Seymour Chatman’s *Story and Discourse* in 1978. Chatman defines *narrative* as ‘‘a conjunction of discourse and story’’, but considers that narrative covers also other media that are not purely verbal but also oral or written (Chatman, in Fludernik, 2009: 5).

Postclassical approaches, on the other hand, support and embrace the *classical* tradition, but at the same time, develop and add more concepts and methods that were

not available to Barthes or Genette during the growth of structuralism. Structuralists in fact appealed for a cross-disciplinary approach to the analysis of narrative (Herman, 2007: 5). For Barthes (1977: 79): ``narrative is first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances``. In other words, narrative is present in many forms as in myth, tale or comedy, among others, and in every age, in every place and in every society.

Another well known example is provided by Gérard Genette, who defines *narrative* as ``the representation of an event or of a sequence of events`` (Genette, in Herman, 2007: 23). Genette borrowed categories from traditional grammars, using tense, mood and voice in order to characterize the relations found between the narrated world, the narrative in the terms in which it is presented, and the narrating that enables this presentation (Herman, 2007: 2). In conclusion:

``A narrative is a representation of a possible world in a linguistic and/or visual medium, at whose center it will be possible to find one or several protagonists with an anthropomorphic nature, who are existentially anchored in a spatial and temporal sense and who (mostly) perform goal-directed actions (action and plot structure)`` (Fludernik, 2009: 6).

A narrative provides an epistemological structure that helps to make sense of the diversity and multiplicity of events and to produce explanatory patterns for them (Fludernik 2009: 2). And the reader mentally constructs the world which is underlying (Fludernik, 2009: 7).

2.1.2 *Narrator and focalization*

The term *narrator* is used in written texts to refer to both first-person (homodiegetic) narrators and third-person (heterodiegetic) narrators who produce a narrative (Fludernik, 2009: 98). Until the late nineteenth century, the author was considered to be identical with the authorial narrator, however, this concept has changed over the years (Fludernik, 2009: 56).

Following Genette ([1972] 1980), a narrative is homodiegetic if the narrator is the same person as a protagonist on the story level (*diegesis*), but if the first-person narrator is the main protagonist, he calls it *autodiegesis*. In autodiegetic narration, the narrator

does not only participate in the action but is also the main character in the storyworld evoked by the text (Herman, 2009: 66). First-person narrators report therefore what they have experienced as well as what other characters in the story have also experienced. They are potentially untrustworthy and attempt to justify their own behavior or attitudes. By contrast, a heterodiegetic narrator is trustworthy almost by definition, given that she or he gives an objective portrayal of the storyworld (Fludernik, 2009: 153).

Besides the role of the narrator, another important concept is that of focalization, introduced by Genette ([1972] 1980). In Genette's model, focalization is concerned with *Who sees?* *Internal focalization* represents a view of the fictional world directly through the eyes of a character, who can perceive his own thoughts as well as readers can perceive them, but on the contrary, this type of focalization does not allow the narrator to see the thoughts of other characters (Herman, 2009: 61). All in all, a focalizer is the person in the fiction through whose consciousness the focalization is carried out and, therefore, from whose perspective the events in a narrative are filtered (Fludernik, 2009: 36).

Two further terms to be introduced are "implied author" and "implied reader". The former was introduced by Booth ([1961] 1983) as the instance which will guarantee the correct reading of a text, when the unreliable narrator proposes a world view which is different from the intended meaning of the text. The role of this implied author is assumed by an actual author. The implied reader, on the other hand, is the role that readers must adopt in order to fill in the gap between the implied author and the unreliable narrator (Iser, 1974).

With respect to our study, many critics of Edgar Allan Poe consider his tales as autobiographical, at least in part, closely linking the author with his narrators. In fact, it can be said that several of his works reflect particular aspects of his life. However, he is not the protagonist of his tales, but is instead an observer who analyses carefully the events and the actions performed by the characters, trying to solve the mysteries of existence and the exterior world, and driving the reader to explore new dimensions of horror (Hayes, 2004). Thus, it is important to establish in advance the difference between the narrator of the stories, and Edgar Allan Poe himself, who is their author. The narrator is an individual who has a different consciousness from the one of the author. The four narrators appearing in our stories are all first- person and autodiegetic male narrators who have a narrative function, since they present the fictional world,

being the main protagonists that tell their own story, and sharing a common characteristic but at the same time differing from each other. One of these common characteristics, and the one on which this study will focus, is their unreliability.

2.1. 3 The concept of the unreliable narrator

The term “unreliability” was coined by Booth ([1961] 1983). A first-person narrator who shows himself or herself to be untrustworthy in his or her narration is called unreliable. This narrator is deliberately presented as a figure who has not credibility. However, usually narrator’s untrustworthiness is not presented as deliberate falsification (lying) on their own part, but rather through their distorted view of things. Sometimes it may occur that the narrators are too naive to describe what happens in a satisfactory way; may have a different world view from the one reader has, or may present themselves as dishonest individuals. For Herman (2009: 194) in an unreliable narration readers cannot believe in everything which is expressed by the narrator. Readers’ mission is, therefore, to “read between the lines” in order to discover what the storyworld really is and not how the narrator wants to present it. In addition, as Fludernik (2009: 153) expresses, unreliable narration is often connected to mental illness and instability as well as to the voice of a broken mind. These narrators also present themselves as unreliable; since their portrayal of events is exaggerated, or ideologically and morally suspect.

2.2 Edgar Allan Poe and Perverseness in his fiction

Edgar Allan Poe, a short story writer, critic, and poet achieved a professional success in many European countries (Hayes, 2004: 1). However, during the nineteenth century he was not highly regarded by most of his contemporaries in the English-speaking countries, given that at that time he was known mainly as a poet, and his work did not achieve professional success. One hundred years later, in the twentieth century, the perception of his figure as well as the perception of his works changed, and his writings started to enjoy great prestige, becoming even an object of psychoanalytic theory. In fact, three predominant attitudes toward Poe emerged in 1875, prevailed into the twentieth century and have persisted until today: popular claim, measured skepticism and ardent enthusiasm (Hayes, 2004: 2). Many scholars consider Poe in fact as an

important literary figure. Edward H. Davidson in his book *Poe: A critical Study* (1957: 115-125), considers Poe as a verbal landscapist of death. For Poe, horror is seen as a region or as a mysterious middle ground where the rational faculties of thinking and choice have been suspended. In this sense, horror for him is a "psychological" method that seeks to understand and examine in depth the states of mind of the characters, to see what they think, what they say, what they perceive while they are carrying out or undergoing an action, and so on. All in all, he creates a fictional world, where characters interact, feel, and think, and readers process and interpret all this information.

However, the most important term in our investigation is "Perverseness" and any of the other synonyms which Poe uses to refer to this same feeling. When the author speaks of "Perverseness", he does not mean "perverted" with a sexual connotation. We extract the conclusion that this feeling is rather for him the self-destruction of the protagonist, as he insists in "The Imp of the Perverse" that humans are predisposed towards the perverse:

"With certain minds, under certain conditions, it becomes absolutely irresistible. I am not more certain that I breathe, than that the assurance of the wrong or error of any action is often the one unconquerable force which impels us, and alone impels us to its prosecution. Nor will this overwhelming tendency to do wrong for the wrong's sake, admit of analysis, or resolution into ulterior elements. It is a radical, a primitive impulse-elementary" ("The Imp of the Perverse", p. 198).

In the four short stories in the analysis, Poe seems to prompt this concept of the "Perverse" in certain specific parts of the narrative. These parts have been selected as objects of the transitivity analysis presented in the rest of the study.

2.3. Theory of Transitivity

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), developed by the linguist Michael Halliday in the 20th century, is based on the idea that language is seen as a "system of meanings", which construes human experience, names things, constraining them into categories, and construes these categories into taxonomies (Halliday, 2014: 30). It is a complex semiotic system, governed by simultaneous functions which have various levels, or strata: a lexicogrammar stratum, a semantic stratum, and a phonological stratum (Halliday, 2014: 24-26). All these systems at every rank are located in their

metafunctional context. Halliday distinguishes three metafunctions, also known as modes of meaning, which are, according to him, a property of all languages, which are considered to be shaped and organized in relation to these three types of meaning: the *ideational metafunction*, concerned with the representation of human experience; the *interpersonal metafunction*, concerned with the expression of and the attitudes towards whoever we address, as well as 'what we are talking about'; and finally, the *textual metafunction*, concerned with the construction of the text (2014: 29-30). Concerning the ideational metafunction, the author distinguishes two components: the *experiential* and the *logical*. The ideational metafunction is a resource which enables us to construe our experience of the world that lies around us and inside us, by configuring it into clauses (2014: 713). In other words, it serves for the expression of our experience of the real world and the experience of our inner world and consciousness. Within these three metafunctions, the present Master's Dissertation is limited to the transitivity system, which is included in the ideational one.

The transitivity system, according to Halliday, is 'a system that construes the world of experience into a manageable set of Process Types' (Halliday, 2004: 170), 'the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his experience of the processes of the external world' (Halliday, 1974: 134). That is to say, clauses represent actions, events and different processes, and the transitivity system serves to encode how an action is performed, how the speaker or reader encode in language their mental representations of the world, and how they account for their experience of the world around them. In summary, transitivity is considered to be an important and powerful semantic phenomenon, affecting not only the verb, but also its participants and circumstances (Halliday, 1985).

2.3.1 Participants, Processes and Circumstances

Within Systemic Functional Grammar, the clause is the most significant grammatical unit. It is, in fact, 'the unit that enables us to organize the wealth of our experience, both semantically and syntactically, into a manageable number of representational patterns or schemas' (Downing, 2006: 123) As the linguist Angela Downing (2006: 123) explains, we as human beings and language-users, are interested in events, actions, and, especially, in the human participants who are involved in them and the qualities ascribed to those participants. In other words, we want to know what these participants

do, what they say and feel, and under which circumstances. The system of transitivity specifies the different types of process that are recognized in the language, and the structures by which they are expressed (Halliday, 1985: 101).

The semantic schema for the presentation of a process consists of the following components (Halliday 1985: 101 & Downing, 2006: 123):

- the process, which is a technical term for the action, as for example ``hit`` or ``run``, for the state, for instance ``have`` or for the change of state, as ``melt`` or ``freeze`` involved;
- the participant(s) who are involved in the process. In other terms, who or what is doing what to whom;
- the attributes which are ascribed to participants; and
- the circumstances associated with the process, in terms of time, manner and place.

The concept of participant, process, and circumstance, all three, are semantic categories which explain how phenomena of the real world are represented as linguistic structures (Halliday, 1985: 102). Participants are directly involved in the process, since every experiential type of clause has at least one participant and other types even have three participants. The only exception Halliday points out are clauses of meteorological process, such as *it's raining* or *it's snowing* (Halliday, 2014: 175-176). It is important to note that transitivity is not a property of the event itself, but rather of the language users' conceptualization of events, which is manifested through language. In other words, a language user may choose how to encode the same event linguistically as transitive, by including an Agent and an Affected, or as intransitive, by including only one participant, performing the role of Agent or Affected (Martinez, 2002: 641). Many authors categorize processes in a different way, but in this study, I will follow Halliday (1985, 2004, 2014) and Downing and Locke (2006), who identify three main transitivity processes, namely, as Material processes, Mental processes and Relational processes, and three other secondary processes; Verbal processes, Behavioral processes and Relational processes. These share the characteristic features of each of the three main processes.

2.3.2 Material processes: processes of doing-and-happening

Material processes are processes of doing and happening. There are two varieties of this type of processes: “doing to” or dispositive type and “bringing about” or creative type. Material processes express therefore that some entity “does” something, which may be done “to” some other entity (Halliday, 1985: 103). Western linguistics considers that every process has an Actor, who carries out the action, and some processes, but not all, also have a second participant called Goal, which implies “directed at” or “the one to which the process is extended”. Indeed, we can consider it as the person or the entity affected by the process (Downing, 2006: 128). An example is presented below (Halliday, 1985: 103-104):

the lion	sprang
Actor	Process

the lion	caught	The tourist
Actor	Process	Goal

However, not every material process is concrete, or a physical event, they may be also abstract “doing” and “happenings”, such as in the examples provided below (Halliday, 1985: 104):

the mayor	resigned
Actor	Process

the mayor	dissolved	the committee
Actor	Process	Goal

Apart from the figure of the Actor and the Goal, there are other participants that may be involved in a Material process, such as the Scope also called Range; Client, also called Beneficiary; Recipient, also called Receiver; and (less frequently) Attribute. The Goal is affected by the process, but the Recipient or the Client is the one that benefits from it. In contrast, the Scope is not affected by the performance of the process, but it rather construes the domain over which the process takes place or construes the process itself (Halliday, 2004: 192). Some differences between the Goal and the Scope are that the Scope cannot be probed by *do to* or *do with*, while the Goal can. Another distinction is that the Scope cannot be a personal pronoun, and it cannot normally be modified by a possessive. Concerning the Attribute, it really belongs to the realm of Relational processes. Nevertheless, as the author states, it also enters into ‘Material’ processes in a restricted way. Thereby, in certain clauses with an “elaborating” outcome, it may be

used to construe the resultant qualitative state of the Actor or Goal, as in: *They stripped her clean of every bit of jewellery she ever had.* Here, *clean* is the Attribute specifying the resultant state of the Goal: *her*. These types of Attributes are called resultative Attributes, and they cannot serve as Subject. In addition, there is also another type of a non-resultative variant of the Attribute, which is called depictive Attribute, which serves to specify the state in which the Actor or Goal is when it takes part in the process (Halliday, 2004: 194-195).

2.3.3 Mental processes: processes of sensing

Mental processes are processes of ‘‘sensing’’. This process of sensing may be construed as flowing from a person’s consciousness or as impinging on it (Halliday, 1985: 107). Mental processes differ from Material ones and therefore they require a different functional interpretation. While Material processes are concerned with our experience of the material world, Mental processes on the other hand are concerned with our experience of the world of our own consciousness. Mental processes may be of four sub-types: perception, which refers to processes of feeling, seeing, and so forth.; cognition, which refers to processes of thinking, knowing, etc.; emotion/affection, refers to processes of liking, hating, etc.; and desideration, which refers to processes of wanting, and so forth. In a Mental process there is always a conscious participant, the *Senser* and also called *Experiencer*, who perceives, knows and so forth, and a second participant, the *Phenomenon*, that which is perceived, known, or liked (Downing, 2006: 139).

Table 1. Examples of verbs expressing mental processes (Halliday, 2014: 257)

	‘‘like’’ type	‘‘please’’ type
Perceptive	perceive, sense; see, notice, hear, feel, taste, etc.	(assail)
Cognitive	believe, expect, know, think, forget, dream, imagine, etc.	surprise, strike, occur to, convince; remind, escape; puzzle, intrigue
Desiderative	desire, decide, want, wish, agree, resolve, etc.	(tempt)
Emotive	like, adore, regret, enjoy, etc.	

way, in the clause *the notice tells you to keep quiet*, the participant who carries out the role of the Sayer is *the notice*. Thereby, this type of processes does not always require a conscious participant (Halliday, 1985: 129).

2.3.5 Behavioral processes: processes of physiological and psychological behavior

Behavioral processes are processes which reflect physiological and psychological behaviors, such as, coughing, watching, or listening (Downing, 2006: 151). Grammatically, they are situated between Material and Mental processes. The majority of these processes usually have only one participant called the Behaver, who is typically a conscious being, and a Range which is often a cognate (Halliday, 1985: 128).

Table 2. Examples of verbs expressing Behavioural processes (Halliday, 2014: 302)

(i)	[near mental]	processes of consciousness represented as forms of behaviour	look, watch, listen, think, dream, etc.
(ii)	[near verbal]	verbal processes as forms of behaviour	chatter, talk, murmur, etc.
(iii)	-	physiological processes manifesting states of consciousness	laugh, smile, hiss, whine, nod, etc.
(iv)	-	other physiological processes	breathe, sneeze, burp, etc.
(v)	[near material]	bodily postures and pastimes	sing, dance, lie (down),etc.

2.3.6 Relational processes: processes of being and having

Relational processes are, in a wide sense, processes of being. Nevertheless, there are many types of being, which will be expressed as different types of relational processes in the clause. Those which the author identifies are the following (Halliday, 1985: 112):

- (1) intensive ``x is a''
- (2) circumstantial ``x is at a''
- (3) possessive ``x has a''

And each of these types comes in two modes:

- (i) attributive ``a is an attribute of x''
- (ii) identifying ``a is the identity of x''

In the attributive mode, an attribute is ascribed to some entity, as a possession (possessive), as a circumstance of time, place, manner etc. (circumstantial) or as a quality (intensive). The two elements in the attributive mode are the Carrier and the Attribute. The example illustrating this is the subsequent (Halliday, 1985: 113):

Attributive of:

Quality (intensive)

Circumstance (circumstantial)

Possession (possessive)

Sarah	is/seems	wise
the queen	was	in the parlour
Peter	has	a piano
Carrier	Process	Attribute

In the identifying mode, one entity is used to identify another. As the author establishes, the relationship between them is of phenomenon and circumstance of time, manner, place etc. (circumstantial), of token and value (intensive) or of owner and possession (possessive). The two elements in the identifying mode are the Identifier and the Identified (Halliday, 1985: 113).

Identification by:

Token-value

Circumstance (circumstantial)

Possession (possessive)

Tom	is/plays	the leader
tomorrow	is	the tenth
Peter	owns	the piano
Identified	Process	Identifier

The main difference between them is that the ``identifying'' mode can be reversible, but the ``attributive'' mode cannot (Halliday, 1985: 114).

2.3.7 Existential processes

Existential processes are those which represent that something happens or exists. They are usually realized by the verb *there + to be* or some other verb which expresses existence, for instance, *exist* or *arise*, and they are followed by a nominal group which functions as an Existent, which is often an event, but it can be a phenomenon of any type. Oftentimes an existential process contains a circumstantial element, as in *there was a picture on the wall*, and also it is frequently followed by a non-finite clause, as in *there's a patient to see you* (Halliday, 1985: 130).

As a conclusion, below there is a table representing all the process types with their meaning and participants.

Table 3. Process types, their meanings and characteristic participants (Halliday, 2014: 311)

PROCESS TYPE	Category meaning	Participants, directly involved	Participants, obliquely involved
Material: action event	``doing`` ``doing`` ``happening``	Actor, Goal	Recipient, Client, Scope; Initiator, Attribute
Behavioral	``behaving``	Behaver	Behaviour
Mental: perception cognition desideration emotion	``sensing`` ``seing`` ``thinking`` ``wanting`` ``feeling``	Senser, Phenomenon	Inducer
Verbal	``saying``	Sayer, Target	Receiver, Verbiage
Relational: attribution identification	``being`` ``attributing`` ``identifying``	Carrier, Attribute Identified, Identifier; Token; Value	Attributor; Beneficiary; Assigner
Existential	``existing``	Existent	

As a closure to this section, it was possible to draw some general conclusions about *narrative*, the figure of the narrator and focalizer and the transitivity system. In the next section, the process of selecting and analyzing the corpus and the data of the investigation, a summary of each work, as well as, the instrument which were used in order to carry out the analysis, will be explained.

3. Method section

3.1 Corpus collection and analysis

After defining the purpose of this research, various steps were followed in order to collect and analyze the corpus for the study.

First of all, examining critical essays on Edgar Allan Poe's writings, four short stories which were related to the idea of "Perverseness", and therefore, the most suitable and relevant to the proposed objectives of the present study were selected. The election was based on the fact that they have much in common, as they confront the same theme. All of them are written in the first-person, which allows the narrator to tell each story from his point of view.

The first short story, "The Tell-Tale Heart" is a first-person short story published in 1843. The story is told by an unnamed narrator who lives with an old man whose pale, blue eye bothers him. One day, the narrator cannot stand it any more and decides to kill his victim, dismembering the body and hiding the pieces under the floorboards. The next day, the police arrive to his house and the narrator, very calmed and confident, leads the officers over the house. Nevertheless, at some point he starts to hear a low sound, which he identifies as the beat of the old man's heart, coming from under the floorboards, and confesses the crime. The second story, "The Black Cat" is a first-person narrative, published in 1843. From the beginning, the narrator comments on his love for animals, and especially the love for his beloved cat called Pluto. However, at some point, he starts to drink alcohol and his personality changes for the worst. He then starts to maltreat animals, and even kills his cat. Then, he finds a similar cat to Pluto and decides to bring him to his house. One day, when trying to kill this new cat, his wife defends it, so he murders her instead and places her body in a wall. A few days later, the police arrive and the man, completely confident accompanies them into the cellar. Suddenly, after hearing an inhuman sound, the police demolish the wall and find the wife's body inside, with the black cat lying upon her head. Our third story is "The Imp of the Perverse" is also a short story published in 1845. The beginning of the narrative is an essay in which the narrator discusses his self-destructive impulses, embodied as the symbolic metaphor of "The Imp of the Perverse". He then explains how, by using a candle emitting a poisonous vapor, he murders a man. For many years he remains unsuspected, but one day he is suddenly stopped by some "invisible fiend", and finally

confesses his crime, becoming convicted of murder and sentenced to death. The last one, "The Cask of Amontillado" is a first-person short story, first time published in 1846. It is told by a narrator, Montresor, who starts his discourse stating that he has been insulted by his friend, Fortunato, and that he seeks revenge. During Carnival, both men go to the wine cellars of Montresor's palazzo, in search of a rare vintage of amontillado. After descending into the vaults, and finally walking into a crypt, Montresor chains his friend to a stone, entombing him alive.

Secondly, after selecting these readings, I have analyzed all transitivity process types in the four stories, however; only extracts explicitly connected to the theme of "Perverseness", and marking a turning point in the plot, were selected for the analysis, with the aim of validating or rejecting the proposed hypotheses, that is, to see in fact, if it is possible to find ambivalence of feelings reflected through Halliday's transitivity model, and how this is correlated, if so, to the unreliability of each one of the narrators. For example, in "The Cask of Amontillado" two of the various episodes chosen for the investigation are on the one hand, those in which it will be possible to appreciate an active participation of the character, especially when he commits the murder of his friend Fortunato, and on the other hand, the episodes when he is encoded as the Sayer, maintaining a conversation with his friend, as they will permit to find if there is unreliability and contradictory feelings. The stories were analyzed in a chronological order, according to the date of publication: "The Tell Tale Heart" published in January, 1843; "The Black Cat", published in August, 1843; "The Imp of the Perverse" published in July, 1845; and "The Cask of Amontillado" published in November, 1846. In order to accomplish the objectives, a transitivity analysis of the four stories, focusing on the five types of processes –Material, Mental, Verbal, Relational and Behavioral- proposed by Halliday, was carried out. The only type of process which was excluded was Existential, since there are not any examples of the narrator presented as an existent in the corpus.

In the first place, after analyzing all transitivity processes in each story, I examined them individually starting with Material processes, focusing on cases in which each narrator acts directly as the Actor, or active participant, that is to say, the precise moment where they murder or plan to kill the victim, as well as on cases in which they have other semantic roles, such as Goal, Receiver, Beneficiary or Range (passive participation). However, I considered that Material processes will not be sufficient to explain both the unreliability and the ambivalence of emotions. Thereby, the rest of the

processes also had to be analyzed, since they have shown how the narrators encode their experience of their internal and the external world, what they feel before and after killing their victim, how they behave and/or how they interact with the rest of the characters in the story, if there is any possible interaction between them.

In the last part of the study, I have summarized the results and I presented a general conclusion of the study with the limitations that were found.

3.2 The Instruments

The present study employed several tables and figures in the analysis, which present the results (frequencies and percentages) of the different types of processes found in each story, as well as the results obtained after comparing these processes across the four stories. The tables with examples of the different processes in the theoretical part are extracted from Halliday's *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (1985) and the fourth edition of *Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar*, revised. by C.M.I.M. Mathiessen (2014).

Furthermore, in order to retrieve instances of all process types, the present investigation has employed the program Antconc, which is a corpus analysis toolkit for Windows, used for concordancing and text analysis. This software includes seven different tools which allow to search results in a KeyWord in Context format, counts all the words in the corpus and presents them in an ordered list, and also finds the most frequent word in a corpus thanks to Word List, among other tools.

4. Analysis

After introducing the theoretical background and the method used for this investigation, the analysis of each text will be presented in the present section. First of all, examples of Material processes in which the narrators are encoded as Actors will be examined. Then, examples will be presented of Mental processes in which they are encoded as Sensors, of Verbal processes, in which they are encoded as Sayers and finally, the secondary processes (Behavioural and Relational) will be also investigated.

4.1 Material processes

Adopting Halliday's transitivity model of analysis, I focused first on material processes, counting all occurrences, and extracting those examples where the narrators present themselves as active participants (Actors), with the intention of finding unreliability in their discourse as well as of identifying examples of certain turning points in the narrative at which there seems to be switch in their personalities. To begin with, in the first analyzed story "The Tell-Tale Heart" (henceforth "TTTH"), from the beginning of the text, many incongruities between the knowledge possessed by the implied author and the knowledge possessed by the narrator can be appreciated, making the narrator emerge as an unreliable source for telling the story. In her book *An Introduction to Narratology* (2009) the narratologist Monika Fludernik states that if there is no difference between the implied author and the narrator, there cannot be an unreliable narrator. And these differences between them can be observed through the representation of the narrator's unstable character are key to the present investigation. The first example chosen is the following:

(1) First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs. ("The Tell-tale Heart", p.515)

(1) "I" → ACTOR; "dismembered" → MATERIAL PROCESS; "the corpse" → GOAL. "I" → ACTOR; "cut off" → MATERIAL PROCESS; "the head and the arms and the legs" → GOAL

In this clause, the pronoun ``I'', which makes reference to the narrator, is considered to be the Actor as he is the one who ``does'' something; the verbs ``dismembered'' and ``cut off'' express Material processes, and ``the corpse'', ``the head'', ``the arms'' and ``the legs'' are the Goal of the Material process. In this case, ``the head'', ``the arms'' and ``the legs'' are instances of hyponymy, which is a word whose semantic field is included within that of another word, the hyperonym (Halliday, 1985) and which is, in this case, ``the corpse'', given that all these three elements are part of a human body. Later on in our analysis, it will be shown that the narrator does not always present himself as the ``doer''. In the section devoted to *Linguistic Implications*, it will be discussed how the four narrators often chose to present themselves as victims of an external passion or feeling which is ``Perverseness'' (in ``TBC''), ``the spirit of the Perverse'' (in ``TIOTP''), any of its synonyms or any other emotions related to these, diminishing therefore their agentivity. But for now, continuing with the above example, in this case, it displays the narrator's premeditation when it comes to murdering his victim, showing that he acts directly as the Actor of the process. Although he explains at the beginning of the narrative that someone who is meticulous in his murder is not mad, stating that he is only nervous, what is linguistically encoded is just the opposite, namely there is direct and an active participation. Yet, the narrator does not always choose to present himself as an actor. Several times he decides to present himself in other semantic roles, such as Goal.

Table 4 and Figure 1 display the frequency and percentage of material processes in ``The Tell-Tale Heart''. 85 instances were extracted from the entire text. 76 of them correspond to the narrator in the semantic role of Actor (89,5 %), 7 the semantic role of Goal (8,2 %) in and 2 as Receiver (2,3 %). Nevertheless, no examples of the character as Beneficiary or as Range were found at these narrative turning points.

Table 4. Total frequency and percentage of Material processes in ``TTTH`` corpus

Material process	Frequency	Percentage
Actor	76	89,5%
Goal	7	8,2%
Receiver	2	2,3%
Beneficiary	-	-
Range	-	-
Total	85	100.0

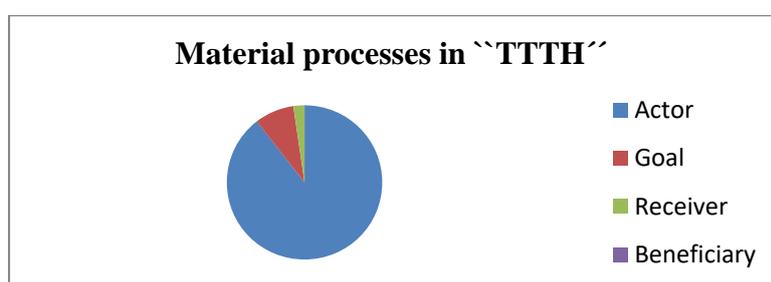


Figure 1. Total percentage of Material processes in ``TTTH`` corpus

Focusing now on the second short story, ``The Black Cat`` (henceforth ``TBC``), right from the start, becomes apparent that we deal with a narrator which cannot be considered as a reliable one. At the beginning of the narrative, he tells his readers that he does not ``expect`` (``The Black Cat``, p. 38) them to believe the story he is about to tell because he can hardly believe it himself. Writing from his prison cell, he wants to confess what has ``destroyed`` (``The Black Cat``, p. 38) him. While addressing the reader directly,; ``some intellect more calm, more logical, and far less excitable than my own`` (``The Black Cat``, p. 38) he hopes that a logical reader will be able to understand his story. Similarly to the narrator in ``TTTH``, this one also tries to convince the reader that he is sane and stable. However, after reading the whole story, it is possible to perceive that what the narrator is telling may not be the result of a sane mind, since his actions do not usually correspond to his thoughts. The chosen example displaying the character as the executioner of the action, corresponds to the episode where he cuts one of his beloved cat's eyes with a pen-knife:

(3) I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! (‘‘The Black Cat’’, p. 39)

(3) ‘‘I’’ → ACTOR; ‘‘took’’ → MATERIAL PROCCES; ‘‘from my waistcoat-pocket’’ → CIRCUMSTANCE: LOCATION IN SPACE; ‘‘a pen-knife’’ → GOAL; ‘‘opened’’ → MATERIAL PROCCES; ‘‘it’’ → GOAL; ‘‘grasped’’ → MATERIAL PROCCES; ‘‘the poor beast by the throat’’ → GOAL, and deliberately → CIRCUMSTANCE OF MANNER: QUALITY; ‘‘cut’’ → MATERIAL PROCCES; ‘‘one of its eyes from the socket!’’ → GOAL

At the same time, the analysis also reveals that, apart from as an Actor, there are also other examples in which the narrator in ‘‘TBC’’ presents himself as the Goal:

(4) In their consequences, these events have terrified- have tortured- have destroyed [me]. (‘‘The Black Cat’’, p. 38)

- As a Beneficiary:

(5) [...] she lost no opportunity of procuring [me] those of the most agreeable kind. (procuring something for somebody, in this case for the narrator, who is omitted in the clause). (‘‘The Black Cat’’, p. 38)

-And as the Receiver:

(6) I was especially fond of animals, and [I] was indulged by my parents with a great variety of pets. (‘‘The Black Cat’’, p. 38)

Table 5. Total frequency and percentage of Material processes in ``TBC`` corpus

Material process	Frequency	Percentage
Actor	101	86,3%
Goal	12	10,3%
Receiver	3	2,5%
Beneficiary	1	0,9%
Range	-	-
Total	117	100.0

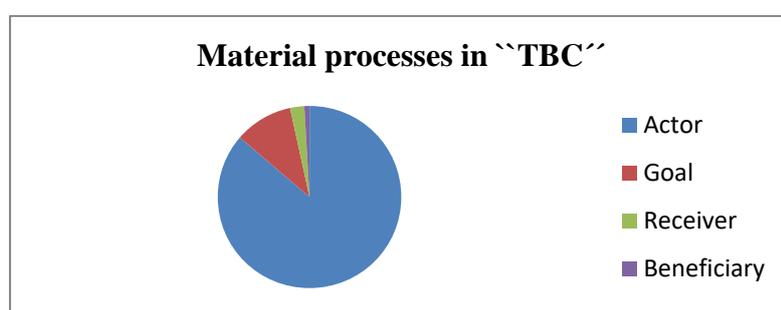


Figure 2. Total percentage of Material processes in ``TBC`` corpus

Table 5 and Figure 2 present the frequency and percentage of material processes in ``The Black cat``. 117 instances of this type of process were extracted from the text. 101 of them correspond to the narrator in the semantic role of Actor (86,3 %), 12 in the semantic role of Goal (10,3%), 3 as Receiver (2,5%) and one (0,9%) as Beneficiary. Nevertheless, as in the previous narrative, no examples of the character presented as Range have been found.

Concerning the third story, ``The Imp of the Perverse`` (henceforth ``TIOTP``), the first nine paragraphs are presented as an essay in which the narrator defines ``the spirit of the Perverse`` (``The Imp of the Perverse``, p. 199), which, as he states, is a radical a primitive impulse controlling our lives. Basically, by addressing his readers directly, the narrator mainly expresses what ``Perverseness`` is; namely, an extreme feeling which emerges as a kind of self-defense we adopt when we perceive someone has injured us. He then explains how carefully he planned the murder of his victim, providing every singular detail, which is internalized for the better understanding of the situation. Thus, there are fewer examples denoting an active participation of the narrator facing the

murder, since the vast part of the text is rather an overview and a detailed explanation about a particular topic of his interest. The only example corresponding to the second part of the story and denoting the character's active participation related to the murder of his victim is the following:

(7) I need not describe the easy artifices by which I substituted, in his bed-room candle-stand, a wax-light of my own making for the one which I there found. The next morning he was discovered dead in his bed, and the Coroner's verdict was—"Death by the visitation of God." ("The Imp of the Perverse", p. 199-200)

(7) ``I'' → ACTOR; ``substituted '' → MATERIAL PROCCESS; `` in his bed-room candle-stand'' → CIRCUMSTANCE: LOCATION IN SPACE; ``a wax-light of my own'' → GOAL; ``I'' → ACTOR; ``there'' → CIRCUMSTANCE: LOCATION IN SPACE; ``found'' → MATERIAL PROCESSES

This excerpt is important as it allows the identification of a sort of negation to explain all the process of the killing, which has to be inferred by readers from the subsequent ``The next morning he was discovered dead in his bed'', hide the actual killing – and thus the narrator's own perverse doing –, is linguistically hidden behind his mere substitution of the bed-side wax-light. In my view, this mechanism favors reader immersion by forcing strong inferential processes in order to spot not only the narrator's agency in the murder, but also his sick, cunning linguistic hiding, which enhances his construction as an unreliable narrator. Moreover, I have found four examples in which the narrator presents himself as Goal as below:

(8) I might possibly be fool enough to confess the murder of which I had been guilty, confronted [me], as if the very ghost of him whom I had murdered—and beckoned [me] on to death. ("The Imp of the Perverse", p. 200)

To conclude with the analysis of Material processes in the analysis of this short story, Table 6 and Figure 3 show that there are only 22 instances of Material process here. 18 of them display the character in the role of Actor (81,9%) and 4 in the role of Goal

(18,1%). Once more, there are no examples of the narrator as Beneficiary, as Range, or Receiver.

Table 6. Total frequency and percentage of Material processes in ``TIOTP`` corpus

Material process	Frequency	Percentage
Actor	18	81,9%
Goal	4	18,1%
Receiver	-	-
Beneficiary	-	-
Range	-	-
Total	22	100.0

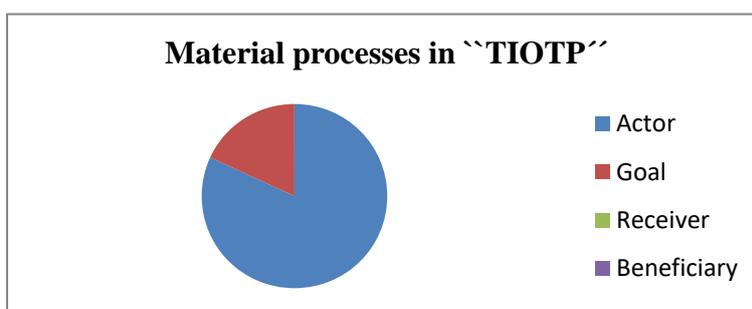


Figure 3. Total percentage of Material processes in ``TIOTP`` corpus

Finally, in the ``The Cask of Amontillado`` (henceforth ``TCOA``), Poe also presents a narrative from the point of view of the killer. The following example exhibits the episode when both men (Montresor the narrator and Fortunato the antagonist) descend to the catacombs, in search for the wine, where Montresor decides to entomb his friend in a niche:

(9) I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche. [...] I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. [...] I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. (``The Cask of Amontillado``, p. 70)

(9) ``I'' → ACTOR; ``Began---to wall up'' → MATERIAL PROCESS; ``vigorously'' → CIRCUMSTANCE OF MANNER: QUALITY; ``the entrance of the niche'' → GOAL; ``I'' → ACTOR; ``laid'' → MATERIAL PROCESS; ``the second tier, and the third, and the fourth'' → GOAL; ``I'' → ACTOR; ``resumed'' → MATERIAL PROCESS; ``the trowel'' → GOAL; ``and finished'' → MATERIAL PROCESS; ``without interruption'' → CIRCUMSTANCE OF MANNER: QUALITY; ``the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier'' → GOAL

Table 7. Total frequency and percentage of Material processes in ``TCOA'' corpus

Material process	Frequency	Percentage
Actor	59	96,7%
Goal	2	3,3%
Receiver	-	-
Beneficiary	-	-
Range	-	-
Total	61	100.0

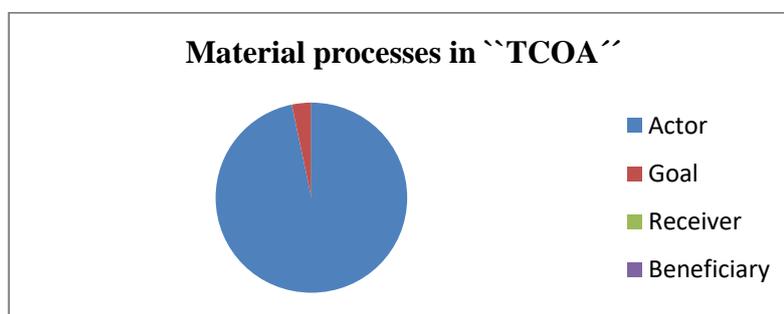


Figure 4. Total percentage of Material processes in ``TCOA'' corpus

Table 7 and Figure 4 display the frequency and percentages of Material processes in ``The Cask of Amontillado'', and show that there are 61 instances of this type of processes in the text. 59 correspond to the narrator in the semantic role of Actor (96,7%) and 2 in the semantic role of Goal (3,3%). Examples of the character as Beneficiary or as Range were not found.

As a conclusion, and in order to make a comparison between the occurrences of Material processes at significant narrative turning points in the four texts, Table 8

representing each narrator in all the transitivity semantic roles connected to Material processes.

Table 8. Total frequency and percentage of each Narrator in Transitivity Material Semantic Roles

Narrator				
Participant Role	``The Tell-Tale Heart``	``The Black Cat``	``The Imp of the Perverse``	``The Cask of Amontillado``
Actor	76 (89,5%)	101 (86,3%)	18 (81,9%)	59 (96,7%)
Active Total	76 (89,5%)	101 (86,3%)	18 (81,9%)	59 (96,7%)
Goal	7 (8,2%)	12 (10,3%)	4(18,1%)	2 (3,3%)
Range	-	-	-	-
Beneficiary	-	3 (2,5%)	-	-
Receiver	2 (2,3%)	1 (0,9%)	-	-
Passive Total	9 (10,5%)	16 (13,7%)	4 (18,1%)	2 (3,3%)
Total	85	117	22	61

As can be perceived, Material processes tend to occur more frequently in ``The Tell-Tale Heart`` (76 instances/89,5%) and in ``The Black Cat`` (101 instances/86,3%), rather than in the two other stories. The largest number of occurrences of the narrator as Goal (12/10,3%) corresponds to ``The Black Cat``, while the smallest (2/3,3%) corresponds to ``The Cask of Amontillado``. In addition, instances of the narrators as Receivers appear only in the two first stories, and as Beneficiary only in ``The Black Cat``. Yet, there are not examples of the characters encoded as Range in any of the texts. Interpreting these results, it is possible to say that Material processes are barely found in ``TCOA`` in comparison with the other texts. If the total number of instances of Material processes in this text (22) is taken into account, 18 occurrences of the narrator encoded as Actor is a considerable number, but if these total instances are compared to the other stories, 18 instances will be not that significant. This may be due to the fact that most of the events and actions in this story are mainly encoded as Mental

processes, in which the narrator adopt the role of Senser or Sayer in Verbal processes in which he narrates the events and familiarize the readers with the notion of ``Perverseness``.

4.2 Mental processes

In this section I have analyzed the examples of mental processes in which each narrator encodes himself as semantic Senser when narrating the events from his own perspective. The objective is to find those key examples displaying two or more contradictory feelings which will permit to see if there is narratorial unreliability, how this unreliability is related to an ambivalence of emotions, and how this can be examined through transitivity analysis. To begin with, the first example of a mental process in ``TTTH``, shows how the first person narrator comments on how he loved the old man with whom he lives:

(10) I loved the old man. [...] For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye!
(``The Tell-tale Heart``, p. 513)

(10) ``I`` → SENSER; ``loved`` → MENTAL PROCCES: AFFECTION; ``the old man`` → PHENOMENON; ``For his gold`` → PHENOMENON; ``I`` → SENSER; ``had no desire`` → MENTAL PROCCES: DESIDERATION; ``I`` → SENSER; ``think`` → MENTAL PROCCES: COGNITION; ``it was his eye! yes, it was this!`` → PHENOMENON

Three different types of mental processes were found in the excerpt; ``affection`` (loved), ``cognition`` (think), and ``desideration`` (had no desire). The latter (had no desire) could be a synonym of a verb such as *want* or *wish*. However, as the story progresses, at some point the narrator starts to feel remorse:

(11) I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart.
(``The Tell-tale Heart``, p. 514)

(11) ``I'' → EXPERIENCER; ``knew'' → MENTAL PROCESS: COGNITION; ``what the old man felt'' → PHENOMENON; ``pitied'' → MENTAL PROCESS: AFFECTION; ``him'' → PHENOMENON

Ambivalence between the love he assures he feels for the old man and then the pity he suffers for what he did. The narrator's unreliability is seen therefore through this contradiction of thoughts and desire as an attempt to confuse the audience.

Table 9. Total frequency and percentage of Mental processes in ``TTH'' corpus

Mental process	Frequency	Percentage
Senser	35	97,2%
Phenomenon	1	2,8%
Total	36	100.0

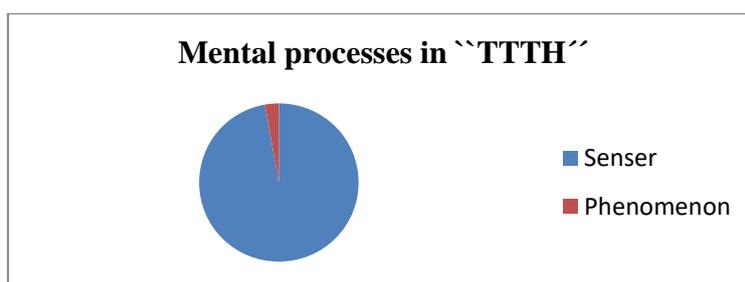


Figure 5. Total percentage of Mental processes in ``TTH'' corpus

As a conclusion, the Table and the Figure above present the frequency and percentage of Mental processes in the story, from which 36 instances were extracted. The vast majority; 35 correspond to the narrator in the semantic role of Senser (97,2%), and only one in the semantic role of Phenomenon (2,8%).

Continuing with ``TBC'', in this story, as in ``TTH'', the narrator also expresses his love for animals at an early age:

[...] (12) I was especially fond of animals, [...], and never was so happy as when feeding and caressing them. (``The Black Cat'', p. 38)

(12) ``I'' → SENSER; ``was especially fond of'' → MENTAL PROCESS: AFFECTION; ``animals'' → PHENOMENON

``To be fond of'' could be considered as a synonym of verbs such as *like* or *love*, displaying, therefore, affection. The narrator refers here to animals in a positive way, using vocabulary of emotion and affection, which denotes his love for them. However, at some point in the course of the story the character changes, and seems no longer in control of his actions, starts to drink and undergoes a personality change, transforming psychologically from a kind person into a perverse character:

Our friendship lasted, in this manner, for several years, during which my general temperament and character — through the instrumentality of the Fiend Intemperance — had (I blush to confess it) experienced a radical alteration for the worse [...] But this feeling soon gave place to irritation. And then came, as if to my final and irrevocable overthrow, the spirit of PERVERSENESS. (``The Black Cat'', p. 38-39)

His anger can be perceived as he starts to abuse physically and psychologically his loved ones, mutilating his cat as was seen in the previous section devoted to Material processes. As the story progresses, at some stage there is a plot twist, introducing a radical change, and now the narrator feels remorse and pity for what he did to the creature:

(13) I experienced a sentiment half of horror, half of remorse, for the crime of which I had been guilty. (``The Black Cat'', p. 39)

(13) ``I'' → SENSER; ``experienced'' → MENTAL PROCESS; PERCEPTION; ``a sentiment half of horror, half of remorse, for the crime of which I had been guilty'' → PHENOMENON

As a conclusion, the Table 10 and Figure 6 show the frequency and percentage of Mental processes in the narrative. 57 instances of this type of process were extracted and all of them correspond to the narrator in the semantic role of Senser, but none in the semantic role of Phenomenon.

Table 10. Total frequency and percentage of Mental processes in ``TBC`` corpus

Mental process	Frequency	Percentage
Senser	57	100%
Phenomenon	-	-
Total	57	100.0

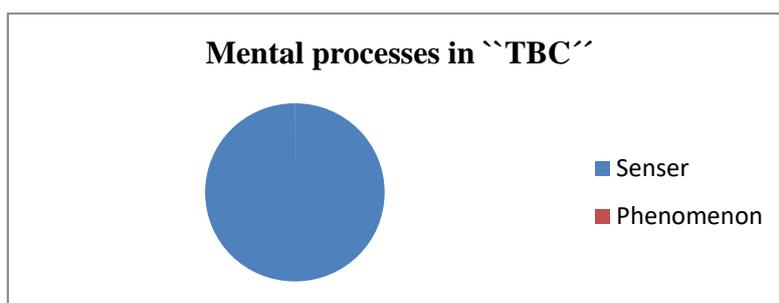


Figure 6. Total percentage of Mental processes in ``TBC`` corpus

Now, we focus on the third story ``The Imp of the Perverse``. As previously explained, from the very beginning we find the term ``Perverseness`` and how it affects the narrator. The two examples I extracted from the text display the astuteness of the character related to the perversity which he blames to be the cause of his murder (example 15), and then his anxiety related to the fear of being suspected (example 16):

(14) For weeks, for months, I pondered upon the means of the murder. I rejected a thousand schemes, because their accomplishment involved a chance of detection. At length, in reading some French Memoirs, I found an account of a nearly fatal illness that occurred to Madame Pilau, through the agency of a candle accidentally poisoned. The idea struck my fancy at once. I knew my victim's habit of reading in bed. I knew, too, that his apartment was narrow and ill-ventilated. But I need not vex you with impertinent details. (``The Imp of the Perverse``, p. 199)

(14) `` I `` → SENSER; `` knew `` → MENTAL PROCCES: COGNITION; ``my victim's habit of reading in bed`` → PHENOMENON

(15) No sooner had I spoken these words, than (1) I felt an icy chill creep to my heart. (‘‘The Imp of the Perverse’’, p. 200)

(15) ‘‘I’’ → SENSER; ‘‘felt’’ → MENTAL PROCESS: PERCEPTION; ‘‘an icy chill creep to my heart’’ → PHENOMENON

Two different types of Mental processes are observed in these examples. On the one hand, in example 14 there is a Mental one of cognition and on the other hand, the second example 15 is of perception. Both are represented straightforward through the character’s consciousness.

To conclude with this story, I present below a Table and a Figure of the total frequency and percentage of the narrator’s semantic roles in Mental processes. There are 23 instances extracted from the text, and all of them correspond to the narrator in the semantic role of Senser.

Table 11. Total frequency and percentage of Mental processes in ‘‘TIOTP’’ corpus

Mental process	Frequency	Percentage
Senser	23	100%
Phenomenon	-	-
Total	23	100.0

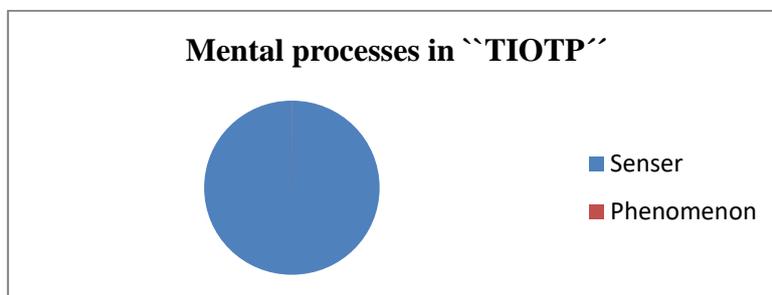


Figure 7. Total percentage of Mental processes in ‘‘TIOTP’’ corpus

In order to close this section, I present two examples displaying two contradictory feelings in the last story, “The Cask of Amontillado”

(16) I was so pleased to see him. (“The Cask of Amontillado”, p. 65)

(16) “I” → SENSER; “was pleased” → MENTAL PROCESS: AFFECTION; “to see him” → PHENOMENON

(17) [...] For a brief moment I hesitated. (“The Cask of Amontillado”, p. 70)

(17) “For a brief moment” → CIRCUMSTANCE: LOCATION IN TIME; “I” → SENSER; “hesitated” → MENTAL PROCESS: COGNITION

Example 16 presents a Mental process of affection, while example 17 is a Mental process of cognition, since the verb “hesitate” expresses that the character is reflecting on something. This role of a Senser confirms his status as the focalizer of the fictional world, that is, the one who perceives, likes, sees, and so forth.

Table 12. Total frequency and percentage of Mental processes in “TCOA” corpus

Mental process	Frequency	Percentage
Senser	11	100%
Phenomenon	-	-
Total	11	100.0

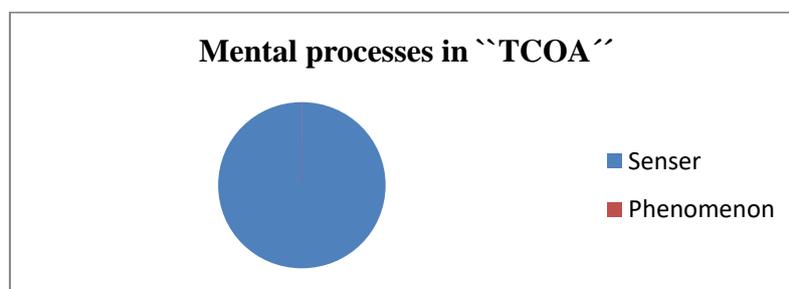


Figure 8. Total percentage of Mental processes in “TCOA” corpus

Table 12 and Figure 8 display the frequency and percentage of Mental processes in ‘‘The Cask of Amontillado’’. 11 instances of this type of process were extracted from the text, and all of them correspond to the narrator in the semantic role of Senser, but none in the semantic role of Phenomenon.

As a conclusion, and in order to make a comparison between the four texts, Table 13 presents each narrator in all the transitivity semantic roles connected to Mental processes. As can be observed, if we interpret the results, the largest number of this type of processes in the whole narrative is found in ‘‘The Black Cat’’ (57 instances/100%), while the smallest amount was found in ‘‘The Cask of Amontillado’’ (only 11 instances 100%).

Table 13. Total frequency and percentage of each Narrator in Transitivity Mental Semantic Roles

Narrator				
Participant Role	‘‘The Tell-Tale Heart’’	‘‘The Black Cat’’	‘‘The Imp of the Perverse’’	‘‘The Cask of Amontillado’’
Senser	35 (97,2%)	57 (100%)	23 (100%)	11 (100%)
Active Total	35 (97,2%)	57 (100%)	23 (100%)	11 (100%)
Phenomenon	1 (2,8%)	-	-	-
Passive Total	1 (2,8%)	-	-	-
Total	36	57	23	11

4.3 Verbal processes

Verbal processes are also very important, since they have permitted to see narrators’ unreliability as well as the interaction between the different characters of each text. In the case of ‘‘The Tell-Tale Heart’’ and ‘‘The Cask of Amontillado’’. Let us start with ‘‘TTTH’’, with the following example:

(18) I went boldly into the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he passed the night. (‘‘The Tell-tale Heart’’, p. 513)

(18) ‘‘I’’ → SAYER; ‘‘spoke’’ → VERBAL PROCESS; ‘‘courageously’’ → CIRCUMSTANCE OF MANNER; ‘‘to him’’ → RECEIVER; ‘‘calling’’ → VERBAL PROCESS; ‘‘him’’ → RECEIVER; ‘‘by name in a hearty tone’’ → CIRCUMSTANCE OF MANNER; ‘‘inquiring’’ → VERBAL PROCESS

These three verbal processes represent the oral interaction between the Sayer, in this case the narrator, and the Receiver, in this case the old man. Once again, it is possible to identify the narrator’s unreliability, because he seems to try to make readers see he takes care of the man, but as was previously seen, Material and Mental processes suggest the opposite.

Table 14. Total frequency and percentage of Verbal processes in ‘‘TTTH’’ corpus

Verbal process	Frequency	Percentage
Sayer	17	100%
Receiver	-	
Target	-	
Total	17	100.0

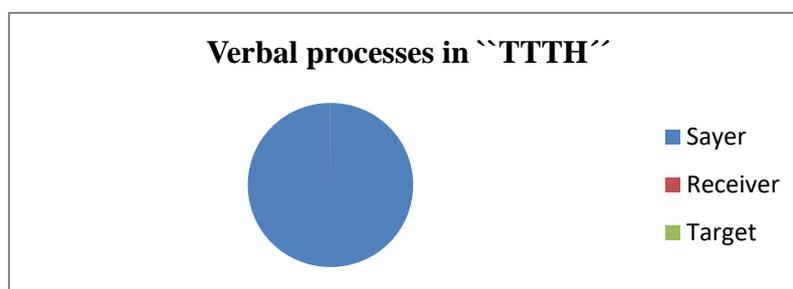


Figure 9. Total percentage of Verbal processes in ‘‘TTTH’’ corpus

17 instances of Verbal processes were extracted from the text, and all of them present to the narrator in the semantic role of Sayer, and none in the semantic role of Receiver or Target.

Regarding “The Black Cat” a large number of examples of Verbal processes are used in the narrator’s attempt to introduce the story to the reader. But mostly, Verbal processes are produced at the end, when he maintains a conversation with the police. This is in fact, the only exchange of words produced in the text which involves another character in the story, and is presented below:

(19) “Gentlemen,” I said at last, as the party ascended the steps, “I delight to have allayed your suspicions. I wish you all health, and a little more courtesy. By the bye, gentlemen, this — this is a very well constructed house.” (In the rabid desire to say something easily, I scarcely knew what I uttered at all.) — “I may say an excellently well constructed house. These walls — are you going, gentlemen? — these walls are solidly put together”. (“The Black Cat”, p. 44)

(19) “I” → SAYER; “said” → VERBAL PROCESS; “Gentlemen [...] I delight to have allayed your suspicions. I wish you all health, and a little more courtesy. By the bye, gentlemen, this — this is a very well constructed house.” (In the rabid desire to say something easily, I scarcely knew what I uttered at all.) — “I may say an excellently well constructed house. These walls — are you going, gentlemen? — these walls are solidly put together” → VERBIAGE

Table 15. Total frequency and percentage of Verbal processes in “TBC” corpus

Verbal process	Frequency	Percentage
Sayer	15	100%
Receiver	-	-
Target	-	-
Total	15	100.0

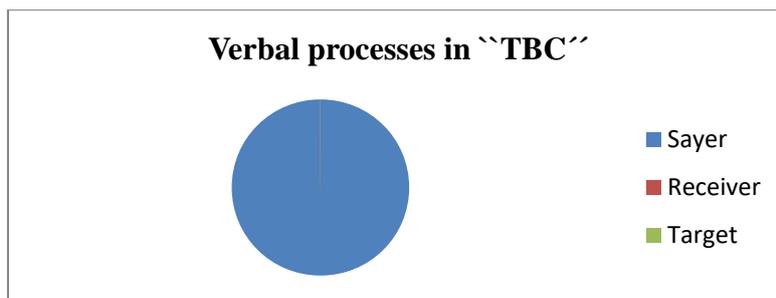


Figure 10. Total percentage of Verbal processes in ``TBC`` corpus

As Table 15 and Figure 10 show, there are 15 instances of Verbal processes extracted from the story, all of them corresponding to the narrator in the role of Sayer.

In the third place, I investigated ``The Imp of the Perverse`` and for that I picked up the following example:

(20) One day, whilst sauntering along the streets, I arrested myself in the act of murmuring, half aloud, these customary syllables. In a fit of petulance, (1) I remodelled them thus; "I am safe—I am safe—yes—if I be not fool enough to make open confession!" (``The Imp of the Perverse``, p. 200)

(20) ``I`` → SAYER; ``remodelled`` → VERBAL PROCESS; ``I am safe—I am safe—yes—if I be not fool enough to make open confession!`` → VERBIAGE

It was difficult to find an example which reflects an interaction between the narrator and the victim or the police as in the previous stories. Thus, I have selected an example of an interior monologue of the narrator which is correlated with the feelings of anxiety and fear he experiences after the crime.

Table 16. Total frequency and percentage of Verbal processes in ``TIOTP`` corpus

Verbal process	Frequency	Percentage
Sayer	6	100%
Receiver	-	-
Target	-	-
Total	6	100.0

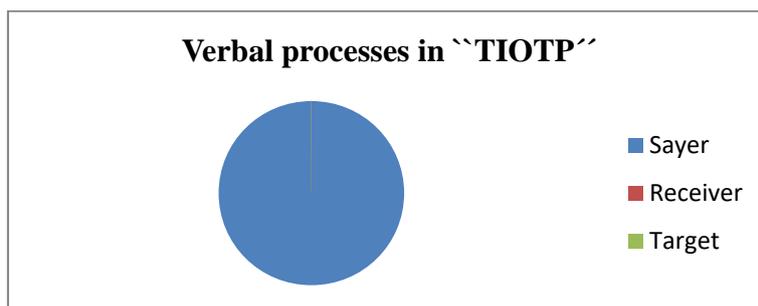


Figure 11. Total percentage of Verbal processes in ``TIOTP`` corpus

There are only 6 instances of this type of process in the text as can be seen in Figure 11 and Table 16. However, as stated, the majority of them are verbs like, *say* or *answer* which has to do with the first part of the story, in which the narrator basically comments on ``Perverseness``.

Finally, in ``The Cask of Amontillado`` I also identified Montresor as an unreliable narrator, as when referring to Fortunato, his friend and the victim of his rage, with this language, he shows his contradictions. Verbal processes are predominant in the second part of the narrative (paragraphs 5 - 85) since the story is presented as a dialogue between the two main characters. Furthermore, numerous examples of verbal irony can be identified, such as, when Montresor refers to Fortunato as his friend, concerned about his health, but then puts him down. However, the most important example illustrating irony and humour at the same time appears in Montresor's use of vocabulary denoting affection, such as ``My dear Fortunato``, ``My friend``, ``to your long life``. His double moral and the vocabulary of affection, and the verbal irony, demonstrate that he knows from the beginning that he will kill his ``friend``, suggesting that he is an unreliable source for telling the truth about what happened that day:

(21) I said to him—"My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts." ("The Cask of Amontillado", p. 65)

(21) "I" → SAYER; "said" → VERBAL PROCESS; "to him" → RECEIVER;
 "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day!
 But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts." →
 VERBIAGE

Table 17. Total frequency and percentage of Verbal processes in "TCOA" corpus

Verbal process	Frequency	Percentage
Sayer	40	97,6%
Receiver	-	-
Target	1	2,4%
Total	41	100.0

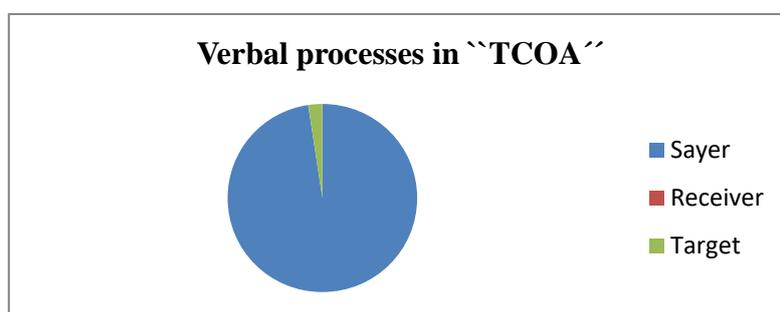


Figure 12. Total percentage of Verbal processes in "TCOA" corpus

The results show 41 instances of Verbal process types in this story, as can be observed in Figure 12 and Table 17. There are 40 instances of the narrator as Sayer (97,6%), one as Target (2,4%), but none as Receiver. In comparison with the other three stories, this one has the largest number of verbal process, and this is due to the fact that there is a constant exchange of words between the two participants.

To close this section, Table 18 compares the Verbal processes from each of the four narratives.

Table 18. Total Frequency and percentage of each Narrator in Transitivity Verbal Semantic Roles

Narrator				
Participant Role	``The Tell-Tale Heart``	``The Black Cat``	``The Imp of the Perverse``	``The Cask of Amontillado``
Sayer	17 (100%)	15 (100%)	6 (100%)	40 (97,6%)
Active Total	17 (100%)	15 (100%)	6 (100%)	40 (97,6%)
Receiver	-	-	-	-
Target	-	-	-	1 (2,4%)
Passive Total	-	-	-	
Total	17	15	6	41

As can be observed in Table 18, Verbal processes are predominant in ``The Cask of Amontillado`` and less predominant in ``The Imp of the Perverse``. This may have to do with the fact that the two characters in the last story maintain a dialogue in the second part of the text, while in ``The Imp of the Perverse`` there is no direct interaction with other characters, Concerning the first two stories, Verbal processes correspond mostly to the direct interaction with the police.

4.4 Behavioral processes

Behavioral processes, along with Relational ones are the least frequent in all the analyzed stories. However, we have to bear in mind that this does not mean they are not important in our investigation. Indeed, they are strongly connected to the other type of processes, that is to say, they have also helped to identify the unreliability of the narrators, through contradictions in what they claim to do, say, and feel. The chosen example from the first text is the following:

(22) I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. (``The Tell-tale Heart``, p. 515)

(22) ``I'' → BEHAVER; ``smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done'' → BEHAVIOR

In ``TBC'' we can find the following example:

(23) I soundly and tranquilly slept; aye, slept even with the burden of murder upon my soul! (``The Black Cat'', p. 43)

(23) ``I'' → BEHAVER; soundly and tranquilly [...] aye, [...] even with the burden of murder upon my soul! → BEHAVIOR

This is the example from ``The Imp of the Perverse'':

(24) I am not more certain that I breathe, than that the assurance of the wrong or error of any action is often the one unconquerable force which impels us, and alone impels us to its prosecution. (``The Imp of the Perverse'', p. 198)

(24) ``I'' → BEHAVER; ``breathe'' → BEHAVIOR

And from ``The Cask of Amontillado'' the following clause has been analyzed:

(25) I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face (``The Cask of Amontillado'', p. 65)

(25) ``I'' → BEHAVER; `` continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face'' → BEHAVIOR

The first two examples (22 and 23) display the episode when, after committing the crime, both narrators feel satisfied with what they did. This allows again of the identification of contradictory feelings, because at the end of both narratives, the narrators are overwhelmed by a sound they hear, and that expresses that they are not totally confident as they have been trying to make readers believe. In the third example

(24), the character is commenting on what “Perverseness” is. It is in fact the only clause encoding a behavioral process extracted from this narrative. And the last example (25) presents also an event when the narrator wants readers, and his friend Fortunato, to believe that he is his friend. However, readers know from the beginning that his intentions towards the antagonist are not good.

As a conclusion, Table 19 presents each narrator in the role of Behaver. Few instances were found in “The Imp of the Perverse” and “The Cask of Amontillado” respectively, while there are seven and nine occurrences, respectively, in “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Black Cat”.

Table 19. Total frequency and percentage of each Narrator in Transitivity Behavioural Semantic Roles

Narrator				
Participant Role	“The Tell-Tale Heart”	“The Black Cat”	“The Imp of the Perverse”	“The Cask of Amontillado”
Behaver	7 (100%)	9 (100%)	1 (100%)	2 (100%)
Passive Total	7	9	1	2

4.5 Relational processes

As the analysis is mostly limited to Material, Mental, Verbal and Behavioral processes, which are the most frequent in each one of the narratives, examples of Relational processes will also be mentioned. To begin with, the example selected to be analyzed in the first story is related to the questioning of the man about his mental state:

(26) TRUE!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? (“The Tell-tale Heart”, p. 513)

The exclamation “True!” and the emphasis in the repetition of the adverb “very” may make the reader doubt the legitimacy of the narration of the events. Using his words cautiously, tries to catch readers’ attention to himself as a reliable source of information. However; it is not the kind of attention he expects, as he intensifies even more, the idea that he is a kind of maniacal and insane character, whose unreliability will be appreciated through his perception of himself and the world which surrounds him.

Table 20. Total frequency and percentage of Relational processes in “TTTH” corpus

Relational process	Frequency	Percentage
Carrier/Attribute	9	100%
Identifier/Identified	-	-
Possessor/Possessed	-	-
Total	9	100.0

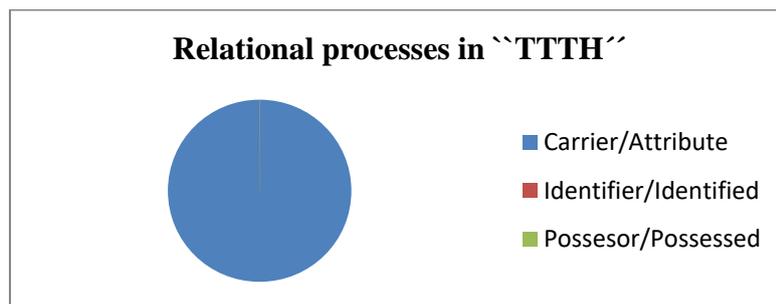


Figure 13. Total percentage of Relational processes in “TTTH” corpus

Table 20 and Figure 13 display the frequency and percentage of Relational processes in this story, and shows that there are 9 instances of this type of process, all of them correspond to the character encoded as Carrier.

Similarly in “The Black Cat”, the character also intensifies the idea that he is not mad and pretends us to make believe that what he narrates is the effect of a sane mind:

(27) Yet, mad am I not— and very surely do I not dream. (“The Black Cat”, p. 38)

Table 21. Total frequency and percentage of Relational processes in ``TBC`` corpus

Relational process	Frequency	Percentage
Carrier/Attribute	6	85,8%
Identifier/ Identified	-	-
Possessor/ Possessed	1	14,2%
Total	7	100.0

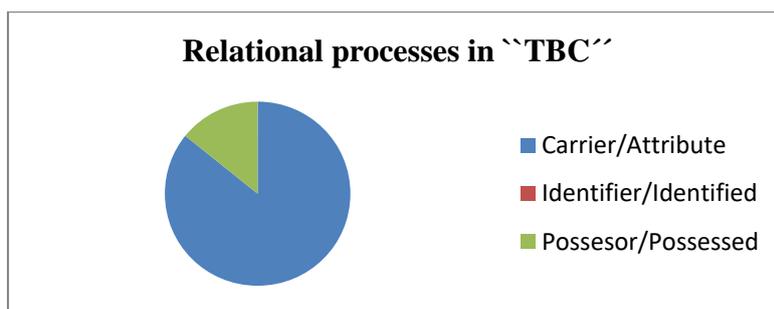


Figure 14. Total percentage of Relational processes in ``TBC`` corpus

The above Table 21 and Figure 14 display the frequency and percentage of Relational processes in ``The Black Cat``. 7 instances of this type of process were extracted from the text. 6 correspond to the character in the role of Carrier (85,8%) and only one in the role of Possessor (14,2%).

In ``The Imp of the Perverse``, the narrator is mostly presented as a Carrier, as in the following example:

(28) I became blind, and deaf, and giddy; and then some invisible fiend, I thought, struck me with his broad palm upon the back. The long imprisoned secret burst forth from my soul. (``The Imp of the Perverse``, p. 200)

(28) ``I`` → CARRIER; ``became`` → RELATIONAL PROCESS; ``blind, and deaf, and giddy`` → ATTRIBUTE

This clause denotes different physiological and psychological states affecting the narrator. In Table 22 and Figure 15, it is possible to see the 5 instances of this type of

process extracted from the text. The narrator is encoded in all these clauses as a Carrier to whom an Attribute is ascribed.

Table 22. Total frequency and percentage of Relational processes in ``TIOTP`` corpus

Relational process	Frequency	Percentage
Carrier/Attribute	5	100%
Identifier/ Identified	-	-
Possessor/Possessed	-	-
Total	5	100.0

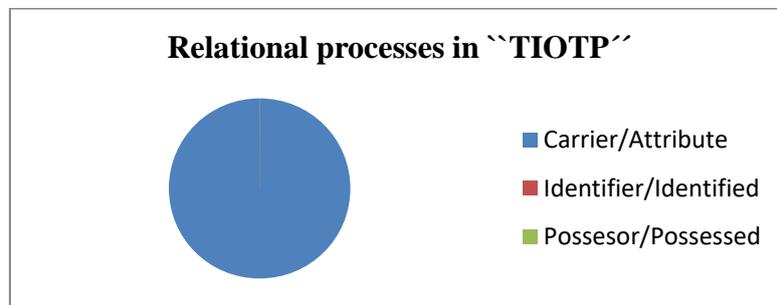


Figure 15. Total percentage of Relational processes in ``TIOTP`` corpus

There are only two example of Relational processes in ``The Cask of Amontillado``. However, they are not relevant to the study, since they do not reflect unreliability or contradictory feelings and therefore they will be not analyzed and included.

As a conclusion, in Table 23, we can see that the story which contains more Relational processes is ``The Tell-Tale Heart`` (9/100%) while the story which contains the fewest is ``The Cask of Amontillado`` (2/100%). There is only one example of a Possessor in the four narratives and it was found in ``The Black Cat``.

Table 23. Total frequency and percentage of each Narrator in Transitivity Relational Semantic Roles

Narrator				
Participant Role	``The Tell-Tale Heart``	``The Black Cat``	``The Imp of the Perverse``	``The Cask of Amontillado``
Carrier/Attribute	9 (100%)	6 (85,8%)	5 (100%)	2 (100%)
Identifier/ Identified	-	-	-	-
Possessor/Possessed	-	1 (14,2%)	-	-
Passive Total	9	7	5	2

4.6 Linguistic Implications

As previously stated, Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) is based on the idea that language is governed by simultaneous functions, and that the context of situation is built into the grammatical configuration of a clause (Halliday, 1985). In our investigation there are several examples in each story which seem worth of a deeper examination:

(29) The disease had sharpened my senses- not destroyed- not dulled them. (``The Tell-tale Heart``, p. 513)

(30) The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. (``The Black Cat``, p. 39)

(31) Had I not been thus prolix, you might either have misunderstood me altogether, or, with the rabble, have fancied me mad. As it is, you will easily perceive that I am one of the many uncounted victims of the Imp of the Perverse. (``The Imp of the Perverse``, p. 199)

(32) My heart grew sick on account of the dampness of the catacombs. (source)

We draw from the premise that the speaker/writer makes his own choices and he is the one who decides which particular words he wants to use, which function he wants to assign them, and in which particular manner he wants to bring them into the text, as he is the one who narrates what he does, sees and perceives and gives us the role of interpreting this piece of information transmitted. And all this is possible because there is a relation between the participants and the semantic roles attached to them.

These examples above are particularly interesting since they suggest that the narrators employ oftentimes detransitivizing devices (Martínez 2002) in order to reduce their own agency in the text. This way, when it comes to introducing the term “Perverseness”, any of its synonyms or any other feeling related to these ones, the narrators assign them the role of an animated object, that is to say, they present them as a powerful feeling controlling their lives, which seems to guide them to commit their crimes, and that it will be impossible or at least very difficult to get rid of them. Thus, after introducing into the text these emotions, then they choose to present themselves as their victims, and as a result, their active participation is therefore linguistically reduced, since deliberately they prefer to show themselves as an affected participant “hiding” therefore their actions. When I say “hiding” their actions, I refer to the fact that, even though there is active participation by them later in each text, which correspond to the moment when they narrate how they plan to kill their victim, how they execute it and what they do afterwards, before commenting on that, they say that all this is due to the fact that they are sort of “possessed” or “pushed” by this feeling, which is “Perverseness” or alcohol, as in “The Black Cat”.

In order to do this, there are different detransitivizing devices employed, as it is possible to observe in the examples above. In the first example (29), the narrator employs a type of metaphor which is *personification*, attributing human forms or characteristics to abstract entities or emotions and reducing therefore his participation in the clause. In this case, “the disease”, although the narrator has never stated clearly what it is, could be assumed to refer to the perverse as it is also the same type of feeling seen in “The Black Cat”. Moreover, he employs *metonymy*, by making a body part stand for the whole character, in this case, referring to “my senses”. To continue, in the second example (30), the narrator also utilizes *personification*, since he gives human form to an abstract emotion, “fury”. This way, he expresses that he is under its control, and his active participation is therefore again reduced. The same phenomenon occurs also in the third (31) and fourth (32) examples. In the third one (31), the narrator

presents himself as the victim of the Imp of the Perverse. Syntactically, the clause encodes a Relational process in the identifying mode, which semantically presents the narrator as an affected participant (Goal) of an involuntary process. And to conclude with the last example (32), here the narrator also uses both *personification* and *metonymy*. On the one hand *personification*, because he assigns human characteristics to his heart, making it an affected participant of an involuntary process, but at the same time, he uses *metonymy* because the heart also stands for the whole character.

5. Findings and results

Many differences, but also various common patterns can be observed in the four stories. However; all of them share something in common, namely, the fact that the narrator introduces the reader to a crime that he has committed pushed by a s feeling which he calls ``Perverseness`` in ``The Black Cat`` or ``the spirit of the Perverse`` in ``The Imp of the Perverse``.

In order to finish our investigation, Tables 24 and 25 and Figure 16 present a global comparison of the four narrators both as active and passive participants in transitivity semantic roles corresponding to the five types of processes examined.

Table 24. Total frequency and percentage of Process Types in the four short stories

Process type	Frequency	Percentage
Material	285	53,5%
Mental	127	23,8%
Verbal	79	14,8%
Behavioral	19	3,6%
Relational	23	4,3%
Total	533	100%

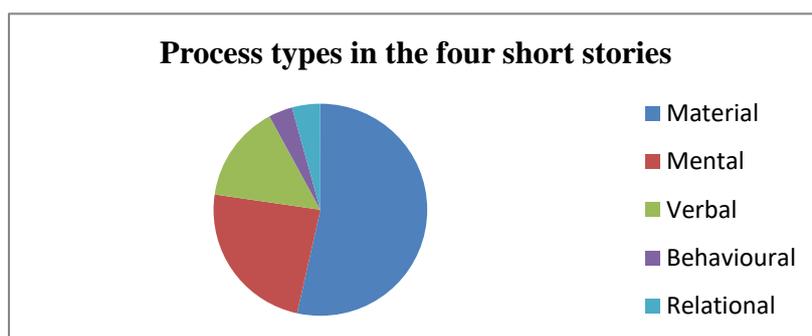


Figure 16. Total percentage of Process Types in the four short stories

Table 25. Total frequency and percentage of each Narrator in all the Transitivity Semantic Roles

Narrator				
Participant Role	``The Tell-Tale Heart``	``The Black Cat``	``The Imp of the Perverse``	``The Cask of Amontillado``
Actor	76 (89,5%)	101 (86,3%)	18 (81,9%)	59 (96,7%)
Senser	35 (97,2%)	57 (100%)	23 (100%)	11 (100%)
Sayer	17 (100%)	15 (100%)	6 (100%)	40 (97,6%)
Behaver	7 (100%)	9 (100%)	1 (100%)	2 (100%)
Active Total	135 (87,7%)	182 (88,8%)	48 (84,2%)	112 (95,7%)
Goal	7 (8,2%)	12 (10,3%)	4 (18,1%)	2 (3,3%)
Phenomenon	1 (2,8%)	-	-	-
Range	-	-	-	-
Beneficiary	-	1 (0,9%)	-	-
Receiver	2 (2,3%)	3 (2,5%)	-	-
Target	-	-	-	1 (2,4%)
Carrier/Attribute	9 (100%)	6 (85,8%)	5 (100%)	2 (100%)
Identifier/Identified	-	-	-	-
Possessor/Possessed	-	1 (14,2%)	-	-
Passive Total	19 (12,3%)	23 (11,2%)	9 (15,8%)	5 (4,3%)
Total	154	205	57	117

As can be observed in Table 24 and Figure 16, there is a predominance of the total number of Material processes (285 instances/53,5%) in the four stories. More than half of all the types of processes found in the four stories (533/100%) correspond in fact to

Material processes. By contrast, the processes which appear less in all the narratives are Behavioural (19 instances/3,6%). Table 25 shows that the largest number of occurrences of the narrator in an active role corresponds to ``The Black Cat`` (135/87,7%), while the lowest to ``The Imp of the Perverse`` (48/84,2%). Consequently, the largest number of occurrences of the narrator in passive roles correspond again to ``The Black Cat`` (23/11,2%), but only three occurrences more than in ``The Tell-Tale Heart`` (19/12,3%), and in this case, the lowest number correspond to ``The Cask of Amontillado`` (5/4,3%). In conclusion, ``The Black Cat`` is the story which contains the largest number of occurrences of the narrator in active roles and passive roles in the whole story (205 in total), while ``The Imp of the Perverse`` is the story which contains the lowest number of occurrences of the narrator in active roles and passive roles in the whole story (57 in total).

Focusing on each story individually, starting with ``The Tell-Tale Heart``, the results that have been found are diverse. First of all, it has to be stated that it was possible to divide the story into three main parts. In the first part (paragraph 1), just from the start, the narrator states he is methodic and calm, telling his audience that he is not mad and trying to justify the murder of the old man. However, his confused language shows many discrepancies between his statements and his actions. And all these dissimilarities perceived between what he states and what he really does is provided by the implied author, whose objective is to unmask him. The narrator in this story presents himself above all, as a Carrier of the attribute mode, and as a Senser. Yet, I have also identified in this first paragraph a material process: *The disease had sharpened my senses—not destroyed—not dulled them*. But in this case, as previously stated in a similar example, his ``senses`` could be considered syntactically as the affected participants. Therefore, several detransitivizing devices are employed, which lower the transitivity of a clause, such as *metonymy* by making a body part stand for the whole character and *personification*, giving human forms or characteristics to abstract entities or emotions to reduce therefore the character's participation. In the second part (paragraphs 2 to 13), he assures that he loves the old man, and narrates the eight nights he spies on him and on his eye. However; the analyzed examples: *First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs* (example 1) in the section devoted to material processes and *I loved the old man. [...] For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye!* (example 10) and *I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled*

at heart and *I loved the old man* (example 11) (both mental) reflect his unreliability, which is perceived through the ambivalence between his madness which he relates to the perversity that pushes him to commit the crime, and a feeling of remorse for what he did. Thereby, the only thing we are able to notice is that what he says is just the opposite of what he does, because his description of the murder demonstrates that what he did was carefully planned. There is above all a predominance of Material processes and Mental processes in this section. On the one hand, Material processes show that he is the one who ``does`` which is done ``to`` some other entity, in this case, to the old man. And on the other hand, Mental processes permit us to see his own consciousness. All in all, his unreliability is visible since his insanity is clearly discernible in the discourse strategies he uses: ``protestations, unnecessary repetitions and obfuscation``. The contradiction between his behavior and the expressed intentions demonstrate the breakdown of the continuum that is presumed to exist between thought and deed (Fludernik, 2009: 86). In the last part (paragraphs 14 to 18) the narrator comments on how the police arrive at his house. In this last part of the story, from which the example of the narrator as Behaver was extracted (example 23), there is a predominance of Material (22 occurrences), Mental (8 occurrences) and Verbal processes (7 occurrences).

Similarly, in ``The Black Cat`` Poe creates an atmosphere of suspense till the end. The story is very similar to ``The Tell-Tale Heart``, as in both, narrators kill their victims in an act of perversity, and try to hide their bodies. We have selected the most prominent excerpts which have allowed the researcher to observe the narrator's untrustworthiness reflected in the duality between the perversity which pushes him to commit the murder, according to him, and then the guilt. In the first part of the story (paragraph 1), the narrator presents himself in different semantic roles, but most commonly as an Actor, as an affected participant (Goal) and as a Carrier of an attributive mode. He states that he is not mad, and so the murders that he commits are the result of an external passion. In the second part (paragraphs 2 to 28), he comments on his love for animals, and especially for his beloved cat, but soon, he explains that something makes him act in a perverse way, and his temperance and character experience a radical alteration for the worse: the positive vocabulary he used while referring to his younger period of life, is now experiencing a radical alteration and his personality changes as a result of the ``the Fiend Intemperance`` (``The Black Cat``, p. 38) (``Intemperance`` was used in Poe's time to describe excessive drinking) and ``the

spirit of PERVERSENESS'', which is ``one of the primitive impulses of the human heart — one of the indivisible primary faculties, or sentiments, which give direction to the character of Man'' (``The Black Cat'', p. 39), according to him. I have identified in fact the same type of unreliable narrator as in the previous story. In this part, the importance of his thought is reflected by straightforward Mental processes, and his unreliability is also seen in his attempt to confuse his audience. To that purpose, he employs a carefully selected vocabulary, seeking to make the unreasonable, reasonable. However, a transitivity analysis did not fully permit to know if he is in full possession of his faculties, thinking rationally or if he is completely mad, because of alcohol and the perverse, and why sometimes he feels compassion and love, and why sometimes he feels hate. What was simply assumed is what he tells his audience, as he ``interprets his own behavior in the light of an elaborate philosophy of perverseness'' (Carlson: 134), so we can only evaluate his perception of everything which surrounds him and to question and interpret his intentions behind such atrocity. In the third part (paragraphs 29 to 32) there is a predominance of Material and Verbal processes, and these last processes correspond to the oral interaction between the police and the character. As a conclusion, there seems to be a constant ambivalence of positive feelings, expressing love, guilt, remorse, among others, and negative feelings, expressing fury, perversity, hate, and so on.

Concerning the third story, ``The Imp of the Perverse'', there are also three main parts into which it can be divided. In the first part, which correspond to the first nine paragraphs, it is worth noting that the story is presented as an essay in which the narrator, addressing his readers directly, and using *generic plurals*, like *we*, defines ``the spirit of the Perverse''. Most of the events are encoded as Material and Mental processes, since the narrator seeks to transmit what he considers as perverse. So, as previously stated there are only a few examples denoting an active participation of the narrator facing the murder in the entire story. At first, the figure of an unreliable person can be identified when the narrator states that he is one of the victims of the Imp of the Perverse. From that moment, it can be assumed that what he will tell us is the result of an uncontrolled action, and consequently of something which seems to involve some kind of a perverse incident. Then, in the second part (paragraph 10), the narrator explains how carefully he planned the murder of his victim, providing every singular detail. In this part, there is an alternation of mainly two types of processes; Material and Mental. In the third part (paragraphs 11 to 17), once the murder has been accomplished,

the feeling of guilt chases the narrator, as he does not want to be suspected of the man's death. Thus, there is ambivalence observed between perversity and guilt, related to this fear of being suspected of the murder.

In these two previous stories I have identified the figure of unreliable narrators who try to convince us that they are sane, but whose actions involve premeditation. However, in this story, the narrator clearly states what the term "Perverseness" is and how it affects people, and therefore, it seems at first that there is not unreliability; since he confesses that pushed by this feeling he killed as a result of self-defense. Yet, there are many other possible ways of identifying when a narrator is not entirely sincere. In this case, he seems to be fallible as he presents himself at the mercy of these emotions, and as a result he may have a distorted view of what surrounds him. But this is in fact a common trait we see at this point in all the three analyzed stories.

After reading "The Imp of the Perverse" the reason for committing murder in the other narratives is more comprehensible. In our last story, however, the figure of the unreliable narrator omits relevant and necessary information and we do not know exactly the reasons of his perversity for committing the crime. This text is also divided in three parts. In the first part (paragraphs 1 to 3) the character is encoded mostly as Senser of a Mental process and as Actor of Material process. He introduces the story commenting that he must punish his friend for the thousand injuries he had borne as best as he could. In the second part (paragraphs 4 to 74) what we see is a dialogue between the two men. The narrator here is mostly encoded as a Sayer and as an Actor. On the one hand, he adopts the role of Sayer because there is a direct and constant interaction between both characters, and Montresor with his vocabulary of affection seems to care about his friend. On the other hand, he is presented as an Actor when he narrates their way to his palazzo in search for the wine. Moreover, Verbal processes, and especially examples of *verbal irony* suggest that even if we assume as true everything which he tells us, his true motivation for killing Fortunato is opposed to what was stated, and that causes the reader to doubt whether or not the narrator is a reliable source for reporting what happened. In the third part (paragraphs 75 to 89), although we know from the beginning that Montresor wants to be avenged, Fortunato does not know his real intention. It is noticed that the murder that Montresor plans is accomplished in a deliberate way, since he carefully plans his steps. In this part, there is a dominance of Material processes of "doing" and "happening". The ambivalence found is often between humor and "Perverseness". "Perverseness" is here correlated with the desire

of revenge, which seems to arise from a sort of jealousy, but we do not know it with certainty and we can only guess.

As a conclusion, it is possible to state that the study validates the two hypotheses established at the beginning. In the first place, there is a figure of an unreliable narrator in each one of the four stories, as well as a switch in their personalities, which have been revealed by such a powerful tool as transitivity analysis.

The results show that in "The Tell-Tale Heart", "Perverseness" is not yet defined and not controlled. Similarly, in "The Black Cat", it is defined, but as something irrational, as the narrator does not know why it controls his life. In "The Imp of the Perverse", "Perverseness" is fully described, but never controlled. And in the last one, it is not explicitly mentioned, but it seems to be the cause of the narrator's revenge. Different techniques and mechanisms used by the characters have permitted to identify their unreliability which was closely linked to this ambivalence of feelings, visible when they acted in a deliberative way, but then thoughts of remorse, pity or any other type of emotion suddenly come to them. There are several detransitivizing devices, too, such as *metonymy*, *generic plurals* and *personification* of abstract entities or emotions, that narrators take advantage of. They use these devices on purpose in order to diminishing their agentivity in the clause.

One thing is clear, the common trait in all of them is that their discourse seems to reflect a type of a maniacal and nervous person who is afraid of the image he is projecting to the audience, and this fact may make readers question from the beginning their state of mind and consequently the trustworthiness of their narration. This idea is intensified when in "The Tell-Tale Heart", "The Black Cat" and "The Imp of the Perverse", the narrators ask the reader directly if they are mad or not. This technique also allows knowing from the start that maybe their actions will not correspond to their thoughts. But the only story which seem to be slightly different in this aspect is "The Cask of Amontillado". As stated, "Perverseness" or any other feelings related to it appear in the first stories, but not in this one. I consider that maybe it is due to the fact that this story was the last story written by Poe. Hence, it can be assumed that in this case this feeling also pushes the character to do what he does.

Furthermore, is the analysis has revealed a constant contradiction in these texts. The narrators constantly state that they are not mad because a sick mind would not execute such action as killing someone, but then they present themselves as the victims of

passions. And therefore, even if there is an active participation of the characters in each text, and even if they state that they are victims of the perverse, it will be risky to say if all of them are totally aware of their acts, or if they are madmen, who, pushed by ``Perverseness`` commit these horrible deeds against their will. So it seems that they are playing with the audience, trying to make the unreasonable, reasonable, but what we extract is that there is a constant alteration of feelings, which is visible at certain key points, in which they switch their behaviour. Their unreliability is therefore perceived through these changes and contradictions, in a distorted view of things and in the fact that they may also have moral attitudes which could be suspected. In addition, they are also fallible as they present themselves to readers as being at the mercy of their own feelings and passions, thus linguistically reducing their agency.

6. Conclusions

One of our objectives of this study was to combine literature and linguistics, that is to say, to apply linguistics to literature. Adopting Halliday's transitivity model in the analysis of four of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories, the analysis has tried to reveal some of the linguistic mechanisms whereby Poe's narrators are presented as unreliable sources of information.

Initially, the hypotheses of the investigation were that it would be possible to find ambivalence in the narrators' feelings in each story, and that these would be correlated with the unreliability in their discourse. After carefully analyzing each story with the intention of validating or rejecting our hypotheses, we came to the conclusion that indeed, it is possible to find contradictions between what these narrators claim to do, feel, and say. These contradictions have been linked to narratorial unreliability. And this connection was discovered when narrators claiming to be in full possession of their faculties, acted with premeditation killing their victims, but then these emotions which they experience constantly appear. So, as the plots develop, we realize that the narrators are not reliable, since an unreliable narrator linguistically presents the story, from his own point of view, and readers' mission is to distinguish between what is true and what is false, and to explore in depth the story and the thoughts of the characters and not simply assume what is on the surface.

The personality of the narrators was built throughout each text by means of the system of transitivity. At the beginning, these narrators seem to try to provoke a kind of feeling of sympathy, seeking to demonstrate that they are sane, but what they do is the opposite, as they intensify the fact that they may be mad and dishonest. However, many scholars of Poe's works have debated about the true intentions and the mind of the narrators, so it will be risky or at least difficult to identify completely what happens in their minds, if they are totally sane, or mad, or if they are constantly using language to manipulate readers' perception of the events in the story. It will be also difficult to know why Poe wrote this kind of story, creating this type of narrator who accomplishes these terrible crimes. As we process the story which is told, we build a mental representation of the fictional world, in the same way as the narrators perceive it, but in this investigation, the crucial aim is to extract what is linguistically reflected. In this way, the results obtained after analyzing the transitivity processes in selected extracts

from each story, have revealed unreliability in the discourse of the narrators, as well as contradictory feelings which arise from their unstable state, affected by the perverse, as they explain in "The Black Cat" and "The Imp of the Perverse".

Moreover, the analysis has also revealed new findings. To begin with, there are linguistic choices used in each text in order to reduce or hide narrators' active participation. This phenomenon is produced when different entities, such as emotions and feelings like "Perverseness", "Spirit of the Perverse" any of its synonyms or any other types of feelings related to them, are presented as active and sensing animated participants. Furthermore, human parts of the body of the narrators like "my senses" (in "TTTH") or "my heart" (in "TCOA") are also presented as animated participant capable of sensing. Hence, there are several detransitivizing devices, such as *metonymy*, *generic plurals* or *personification* whose function is to assign to hide or reduce the active participation of the narrator. Thus, narrators state that they are pushed by the perverse and the nervousness that this feeling causes, trying to justify every step and every action they commit. So, although there is an active participation of each narrator in each story, it could be interpreted that these actions may be carried out because they are simply guided or provoked by this feeling and that everything that happens next is its result. For example, if we take into account "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Black Cat", which are the first stories written by Poe, the term "Perverseness" does not appear directly in "The Tell-Tale Heart" but it does in "The Black Cat". At this point, in the first story, we do not know yet what this feeling represents or how it affects the character, whereas in "The Black Cat" the term is introduced and superficially described. However, we have to wait to analyze the third and the fourth stories in order to clarify these doubts, as in "The Imp of the Perverse", "Perverseness" is fully described by the narrator, and he clearly states that it is a radical impulse we cannot control. In "The Cask of Amontillado", the term does not appear directly, but we can guess what it is because we just already know the feeling from previous stories, and Poe may have assumed that we will be able to identify it. Thus, there also seems to exist a progression of the feeling through the four texts.

There are various limitations faced while carrying out the present study. One of them is that each story is, above all, rich in Material and Mental processes, but the other types of processes are on the contrary, less frequent, causing a disequilibrium between them. The reason for this undoubtedly deserves further investigation beyond the scope of this

study. Nevertheless, this did not affect much the investigation, since narrators' unreliability and contradictory feelings seem to be presented mainly through Material and Mental processes, and, to a less extent, Verbal, Behavioural and Relational processes standing in contradiction. Before writing this Master's Dissertation, the intention was to test the main aspects concerning "Perverseness" and to see how this is correlated linguistically with the figure of the unreliable narrator and his different feelings. At this point, it is possible to state that both hypotheses were validated. In fact, transitivity analysis has revealed a correlation between ambivalence of feelings and unreliability, which seems to arise from the "Perverseness" that controls the narrators' lives. This seems to make them transfer on purpose human characteristics or at least the capacity of sensing and acting to personifications of these feelings, which are portrayed as semantic Actors gaining control over the narrators, who are encoded as Goal, and therefore their active participation reduced.

To conclude, Halliday's system of Process types has been a useful tool in the analysis of narratorial unreliability in Poe's short stories since it not only allows a glimpse into the mind of the characters, but also into their interpretation of the storyworld. Further studies may be also accomplished if we wish to continue to develop this project in the future. This way, apart from carrying out a transitivity analysis comparing the stories, it will be worth investigating many other aspects of the story and many other aspects of functional grammar, not simply analyzing the topics, characters or settings, but going deeper in their analysis, exploring how narrators conceive the storyworld from their point of view and how readers conceive it, exploring what other techniques, if possible, narrators use in order to hide their agency, among many other aspects.

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8. Appendix

THE TELL-TALE HEART

TRUE!—nervous—very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses—not destroyed—not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily—how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture—a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees—very gradually—I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded—with what caution—with what foresight—with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it—oh so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly—very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! would a madman have been so wise as this? And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously—oh, so cautiously—cautiously (for the hinges creaked)—I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights—every night just at midnight—but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not

the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber, and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he has passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.

Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I felt the extent of my own powers—of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back—but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness, (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers,) and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.

I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in bed, crying out—"Who's there?"

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening;—just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief—oh, no!—it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he

had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself—"It is nothing but the wind in the chimney—it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "It is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he had been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions: but he had found all in vain. All in vain; because Death, in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel—although he neither saw nor heard—to feel the presence of my head within the room.

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little—a very, very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it—you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily—until, at length a simple dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell full upon the vulture eye.

It was open—wide, wide open—and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness—all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person: for I had directed the ray as if by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot.

And have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the sense?—now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eve. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror must have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment!—do you mark me well I have told you that I am nervous: so I am. And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some

minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me—the sound would be heard by a neighbour! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once—once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone, stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs.

I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye—not even his—could have detected any thing wrong. There was nothing to wash out—no stain of any kind—no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all—ha! ha!

When I had made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock—still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart,—for what had I now to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbour during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises.

I smiled,—for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I

took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search—search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct:—It continued and became more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definiteness—until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

No doubt I now grew *very* pale;—but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased—and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound—much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath—and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly—more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations; but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men—but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed—I raved—I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder—louder—louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God!—no, no! They heard!—they suspected!—they knew!—they were making a mockery of my horror!—this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! and now—again!—hark! louder! louder! louder! louder!

“Villains!” I shrieked, “dissemble no more! I admit the deed!—tear up the planks! here, here!—It is the beating of his hideous heart!”

THE BLACK CAT

FOR the most wild, yet most homely narrative which I am about to pen, I neither expect nor solicit belief. Mad indeed would I be to expect it, in a case where my very senses reject their own evidence. Yet, mad am I not — and very surely do I not dream. But to-morrow I die, and to-day I would unburthen my soul. My immediate purpose is to place before the world, plainly, succinctly, and without comment, a series of mere household events. In their consequences, these events have terrified — have tortured — have destroyed me. Yet I will not attempt to expound them. To me, they have presented little but Horror — to many they will seem less terrible than baroques. Hereafter, perhaps, some intellect may be found which will reduce my phantasm to the common-place — some intellect more calm, more logical, and far less excitable than my own, which will perceive, in the circumstances I detail with awe, nothing more than an ordinary succession of very natural causes and effects.

From my infancy I was noted for the docility and humanity of my disposition. My tenderness of heart was even so conspicuous as to make me the jest of my companions. I was especially fond of animals, and was indulged by my parents with a great variety of pets. With these I spent most of my time, and never was so happy as when feeding and caressing them. This peculiar of character grew with my growth, and in my manhood, I derived from it one of my principal sources of pleasure. To those who have cherished an affection for a faithful and sagacious dog, I need hardly be at the trouble of explaining the nature or the intensity of the gratification thus derivable. There is something in the unselfish and self-sacrificing love of a brute, which goes directly to the heart of him who has had frequent occasion to test the paltry friendship and gossamer fidelity of mere Man.

I married early, and was happy to find in my wife a disposition not uncongenial with my own. Observing my partiality for domestic pets, she lost no opportunity of procuring those of the most agreeable kind. We had birds, gold fish, a fine dog, rabbits, a small monkey, and a cat.

This latter was a remarkably large and beautiful animal, entirely black, and sagacious to an astonishing degree. In speaking of his intelligence, my wife, who at heart was not a little tinctured with superstition, made frequent allusion to the ancient popular notion, which regarded all black cats as witches in disguise. Not that she was ever serious upon this point — and I mention the matter at all for no better reason than that it happens, just now, to be remembered.

Pluto — this was the cat's name — was my favorite pet and playmate. I alone fed him, and he attended me wherever I went about the house. It was even with difficulty that I could prevent him from following me through the streets.

Our friendship lasted, in this manner, for several years, during which my general temperament and character — through the instrumentality of the Fiend Intemperance — had (I blush to confess it) experienced a radical alteration for the worse. I grew, day by day, more moody, more irritable, more regardless of the feelings of others. I suffered myself to use intemperate language to my At length, I even offered her personal violence. My pets, of course, were made to feel the change in my disposition. I not only neglected, but ill-used them. For Pluto, however, I still retained sufficient regard to restrain me from maltreating him, as I made no scruple of maltreating the rabbits, the monkey, or even the dog, when by accident, or through affection, they came in my way. But my disease grew upon me — for what disease is like Alcohol! — and at length even Pluto, who was now becoming old, and consequently somewhat peevish — even Pluto began to experience the effects of my ill temper.

One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that the cat avoided my presence. I seized him; when, in his fright at my violence, he inflicted a slight wound upon my hand with his teeth. The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer. My original soul seemed, at

once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured, thrilled every fibre of my frame. I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity.

When reason returned with the morning — when I had slept off the fumes of the night's debauch — I experienced a sentiment half of horror, half of remorse, for the crime of which I had been guilty; but it was, at best, a feeble and equivocal feeling, and the soul remained untouched. I again plunged into excess, and soon drowned in wine all memory of the deed.

In the meantime the cat slowly recovered. The socket of the lost eye presented, it is true, a frightful appearance, but he no longer appeared to suffer any pain. He went about the house as usual, but, as might be expected, fled in extreme terror at my approach. I had so much of my old heart left, as to be at first grieved by this evident dislike on the part of a creature which had once so loved me. But this feeling soon gave place to irritation. And then came, as if to my final and irrevocable overthrow, the spirit of PERVERSENESS. Of this spirit philosophy takes no account. Yet I am not more sure that my soul lives, than I am that perverseness is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart — one of the indivisible primary faculties, or sentiments, which give direction to the character of Man. Who has not, a hundred times, found himself committing a vile or a silly action, for no other reason than because he knows he should not? Have we not a perpetual inclination, in the teeth of our best judgment, to violate that which is Law, merely because we understand it to be such? This spirit of perverseness, I say, came to my final overthrow. It was this unfathomable longing of the soul to vex itself — to offer violence to its own nature — to do wrong for the wrong's sake only — that urged me to continue and finally to consummate the injury I had inflicted upon the unoffending brute. One morning, in cool blood, I slipped a noose about its neck and hung it to the limb of a tree; — hung it with the tears streaming from my eyes, and with the bitterest remorse at my heart; — hung it because I knew that it had loved me, and because I felt it had given me no reason of offence; — hung it because I knew that in so doing I was committing a sin — a deadly sin that would so jeopardize my immortal soul as to place it — if such a

thing were possible— even beyond the reach of the infinite mercy of the Most Merciful and Most Terrible God.

On the night of the day on which this cruel deed was done, I was aroused from sleep by the cry of fire. The curtains of my bed were in flames. The whole house was blazing. It was with great difficulty that my wife, a servant, and myself, made our escape from the conflagration. The destruction was complete. My entire worldly wealth was swallowed up, and I resigned myself thenceforward to despair.

I am above the weakness of seeking to establish a sequence of cause and effect, between the disaster and the atrocity. But I am detailing a chain of facts — and wish not to leave even a possible link imperfect. On the day succeeding the fire, I visited the ruins. The walls, with one exception, had fallen in. This exception was found in a compartment wall, not very thick, which stood about the middle of the house, and against which had rested the head of my bed. The plastering had here, in great measure, resisted the action of the fire — a fact which I attributed to its having been recently spread. About this wall a dense crowd were collected, and many persons seemed to be examining a particular portion of it with every minute and eager attention. The words “strange!” “singular!” and other similar expressions, excited my curiosity. I approached and saw, as if graven in bas relief upon the white surface, the figure of a gigantic cat. The impression was given with an accuracy truly marvellous. There was a rope about the animal’s neck.

When I first beheld this apparition — for I could scarcely regard it as less — my wonder and my terror were extreme. But at length reflection came to my aid. The cat, I remembered, had been hung in a garden adjacent to the house. Upon the alarm of fire, this garden had been immediately filled by the crowd — by some one of whom the animal must have been cut from the tree and thrown, through an open window, into my chamber. This had probably been done with the view of arousing me from sleep. The falling of other walls had compressed the victim of my cruelty into the substance of the freshly-spread plaster; the lime of which, had then with the flames, and the ammonia from the carcass, accomplished the portraiture as I saw it.

Although I thus readily accounted to my reason, if not altogether to my conscience, for the startling fact 'just detailed, it did not the less fall to make a deep impression upon my fancy. For months I could not rid myself of the phantasm of the cat; and, during this period, there came back into my spirit a half-sentiment that seemed, but was not, remorse. I went so far as to regret the loss of the animal, and to look about me, among the vile haunts which I now habitually frequented, for another pet of the same species, and of somewhat similar appearance, with which to supply its place.

One night as I sat, half stupefied, in a den of more than infamy, my attention was suddenly drawn to some black object, reposing upon the head of one of the immense hogsheads of Gin, or of Rum, which constituted the chief furniture of the apartment. I had been looking steadily at the top of this hogshead for some minutes, and what now caused me surprise was the fact that I had not sooner perceived the object thereupon. I approached it, and touched it with my hand. It was a black cat — a very large one — fully as large as Pluto, and closely resembling him in every respect but one. Pluto had not a white hair upon any portion of his body; but this cat had a large, although indefinite splotch of white, covering nearly the whole region of the breast.

Upon my touching him, he immediately arose, purred loudly, rubbed against my hand, and appeared delighted with my notice. This, then, was the very creature of which I was in search. I at once offered to purchase it of the landlord; but this person made no claim to it — knew nothing of it — had never seen it before.

I continued my caresses, and, when I prepared to go home, the animal evinced a disposition to accompany me. I permitted it to do so; occasionally stooping and patting it as I proceeded. When it reached the house it domesticated itself at once, and became immediately a great favorite with my wife.

For my own part, I soon found a dislike to it arising within me. This was just the reverse of what I had anticipated; but I know not how or why it was — its evident fondness for myself rather disgusted and annoyed. By slow degrees, these feelings of

disgust and annoyance rose into the bitterness of hatred. I avoided the creature; a certain sense of shame, and the remembrance of my former deed of cruelty, preventing me from physically abusing it. I did not, for some weeks, strike, or otherwise violently ill use it; but gradually — very gradually — I came to look upon it with unutterable loathing, and to flee silently from its odious presence, as from the breath of a pestilence.

What added, no doubt, to my hatred of the beast, was the discovery, on the morning after I brought it home, that, like Pluto, it also had been deprived of one of its eyes. This circumstance, however, only endeared it to my wife, who, as I have already said, possessed, in a high degree, that humanity of feeling which had once been my distinguishing trait, and the source of many of my simplest and purest pleasures.

With my aversion to this cat, however, its partiality for myself seemed to increase. It followed my footsteps with a pertinacity which it would be difficult to make the reader comprehend. Whenever I sat, it would crouch beneath my chair, or spring upon my knees, covering me with its loathsome caresses. If I arose to walk it would get between my feet and thus nearly throw me down, or, fastening its long and sharp claws in my dress, clamber, in this manner, to my breast. At such times, although I longed to destroy it with a blow, I was yet withheld from so doing, partly it at by a memory of my former crime, but chiefly — let me confess it at once — by absolute dread of the beast.

This dread was not exactly a dread of physical evil — and yet I should be at a loss how otherwise to define it. I am almost ashamed to own — yes, even in this felon's cell, I am almost ashamed to own — that the terror and horror with which the animal inspired me, had been heightened by one of the merest chimaeras it would be possible to conceive. My wife had called my attention, more than once, to the character of the mark of white hair, of which I have spoken, and which constituted the sole visible difference between the strange beast and the one I had destroyed. The reader will remember that this mark, although large, had been originally very indefinite; but, by slow degrees — degrees nearly imperceptible, and which for a

long time my Reason struggled to reject as fanciful — it had, at length, assumed a rigorous distinctness of outline. It was now the representation of an object that I shudder to name — and for this, above all, I loathed, and dreaded, and would have rid myself of the monster had I dared — it was now, I say, the image of a hideous — of a ghastly thing — of the GALLOWS! — oh, mournful and terrible engine of Horror and of Crime — of Agony and of Death!

And now was I indeed wretched beyond the wretchedness of mere Humanity. And a brute beast — whose fellow I had contemptuously destroyed — a brute beast to work out for me — for me a man, fashioned in the image of the High God — so much of insufferable wo! Alas! neither by day nor by night knew I the blessing of Rest any more! During the former the creature left me no moment alone; and, in the latter, I started, hourly, from dreams of unutterable fear, to find the hot breath of the thing upon my face, and its vast weight — an incarnate Night-Mare that I had no power to shake off — incumbent eternally upon my heart!

Beneath the pressure of torments such as these, the feeble remnant of the good within me succumbed. Evil thoughts became my sole intimates — the darkest and most evil of thoughts. The moodiness of my usual temper increased to hatred of all things and of all mankind; while, from the sudden, frequent, and ungovernable outbursts of a fury to which I now blindly abandoned myself, my uncomplaining wife, alas! was the most usual and the most patient of sufferers.

One day she accompanied me, upon some household errand, into the cellar of the old building which our poverty compelled us to inhabit. The cat followed me down the steep stairs, and, nearly throwing me headlong, exasperated me to madness. Uplifting an axe, and forgetting, in my wrath, the childish dread which had hitherto stayed my hand, I aimed a blow at the animal which, of course, would have proved instantly fatal had it descended as I wished. But this blow was arrested by the hand of my wife. Goaded, by the interference, into a rage more than demoniacal, I withdrew my arm from her grasp and buried the axe in her brain. She fell dead upon the spot, without a groan.

This hideous murder accomplished, I set myself forthwith, and with entire deliberation, to the task of concealing the body. I knew that I could not remove it from the house, either by day or by night, without the risk of being observed by the neighbors. Many projects entered my mind. At one period I thought of cutting the corpse into minute fragments, and destroying them by fire. At another, I resolved to dig a grave for it in the floor of the cellar. Again, I deliberated about casting it in the well in the yard — about packing it in a box, as if merchandize, with the usual arrangements, and so getting a porter to take it from the house. Finally I hit upon what I considered a far better expedient than either of these. I determined to wall it up in the cellar — as the monks of the middle ages are recorded to have walled up their victims.

For a purpose such as this the cellar was well adapted. Its walls were loosely constructed, and had lately been plastered throughout with a rough plaster, which the dampness of the atmosphere had prevented from hardening. Moreover, in one of the walls was a projection, caused by a false chimney, or fireplace, that had been filled up, and made to resemble the rest of the cellar. I made no doubt that I could readily displace the bricks at this point, insert the corpse, and wall the whole up as before, so that no eye could detect anything suspicious.

And in this calculation I was not deceived. By means of a crow-bar I easily dislodged the bricks, and, having carefully deposited the body against the inner wall, I propped it in that position, while, with little trouble, I re-laid the whole structure as it originally stood. Having procured mortar, sand, and hair, with every possible precaution, I prepared a plaster which could not be distinguished from the old, and with this I very carefully went over the new brick-work. When I had finished, I felt satisfied that all was right. The wall did not present the slightest appearance of having been disturbed. The rubbish on the floor was picked up with the minutest care. I looked around triumphantly, and said to myself — “Here at least, then, my labor has not been in vain.”

My next step was to look for the beast which had been the cause of so much wretchedness; for I had, at length, firmly resolved to put it to death. Had I been able

to meet with it, at the moment, there could have been no doubt of its fate; but it appeared that the crafty animal had been alarmed at the violence of my previous anger, and forebore to present itself in my present mood. It is impossible to describe, or to imagine, the deep, the blissful sense of relief which the absence of the detested creature occasioned in my bosom. It did not make its appearance during the night — and thus for one night at least, since its introduction into the house, I soundly and tranquilly slept; aye, slept even with the burden of murder upon my soul!

The second and the third day passed, and still my tormentor came not. Once again I breathed as a free-man. The monster, in terror, had fled the premises forever! I should behold it no more! My happiness was supreme! The guilt of my dark deed disturbed me but little. Some few inquiries had been made, but these had been readily answered. Even a search had been instituted — but of course nothing was to be discovered. I looked upon my future felicity as secured.

Upon the fourth day of the assassination, a party of the police came, very unexpectedly, into the house, and proceeded again to make rigorous investigation of the premises. Secure, however, in the inscrutability of my place of concealment, I felt no embarrassment whatever.

The officers bade me accompany them in their search. They left no nook or corner unexplored. At length, for the third or fourth time, they descended into the cellar. I quivered not in a muscle. My heart beat calmly as that of one who slumbers in innocence. I walked the cellar from end to end. I folded my arms upon my bosom, and roamed easily to and fro. The police were thoroughly satisfied and prepared to depart. The glee at my heart was too strong to be restrained. I burned to say if but one word, by way of triumph, and to render doubly sure their assurance of my guiltlessness.

“Gentlemen,” I said at last, as the party ascended the steps, “I delight to have allayed your suspicions. I wish you all health, and a little more courtesy. By the bye, gentlemen, this — this is a very well constructed house.” (In the rabid desire to say something easily, I scarcely knew what I uttered at all.) — “I may say an excellently well constructed house. These walls — are you going, gentlemen? — these walls are

solidly put together”; and here, through the mere phrenzy of bravado, I rapped heavily, with a cane which I held in my hand, upon that very portion of the brick-work behind which stood the corpse of the wife of my bosom.

But may God shield and deliver me from the fangs of the Arch-Fiend! No sooner had the reverberation of my blows sunk into silence than I was answered by a voice from within the tomb!— by a cry, at first muffled and broken, like the sobbing of a child, and then quickly swelling into one long, loud, and continuous scream, utterly anomalous and inhuman — a howl — a wailing shriek, half of horror and half of triumph, such as might have arisen only out of hell, conjointly from the throats of the damned in their agony and of the demons that exult in the damnation.

Of my own thoughts it is folly to speak. Swooning, I staggered to the opposite wall. For one instant the party upon the stairs remained motionless, through extremity of terror and of awe. In the next, a dozen stout arms were tolling at the wall. It fell bodily. The corpse, already greatly decayed and clotted with gore, stood erect before the eyes of the spectators. Upon its head, with red extended mouth and solitary eye of fire, sat the hideous beast whose craft had seduced me into murder, and whose informing voice had consigned me to the hangman. I had walled the monster up within the tomb!

THE IMP OF PERVERSE

IN THE consideration of the faculties and impulses—of the prima mobilia of the human soul, the phrenologists have failed to make room for a propensity which, although obviously existing as a radical, primitive, irreducible sentiment, has been equally overlooked by all the moralists who have preceded them. In the pure arrogance of the reason, we have all overlooked it. We have suffered its existence to escape our senses, solely through want of belief—of faith;—whether it be faith in Revelation, or faith in the Kabbala. The idea of it has never occurred to us, simply because of its supererogation. We saw no need of the impulse—for the propensity. We could not perceive its necessity. We could not understand, that is to say, we could not have understood, had the notion of this primum mobile ever obtruded

itself;—we could not have understood in what manner it might be made to further the objects of humanity, either temporal or eternal. It cannot be denied that phrenology and, in great measure, all metaphysicianism have been concocted a priori. The intellectual or logical man, rather than the understanding or observant man, set himself to imagine designs—to dictate purposes to God. Having thus fathomed, to his satisfaction, the intentions of Jehovah, out of these intentions he built his innumerable systems of mind. In the matter of phrenology, for example, we first determined, naturally enough, that it was the design of the Deity that man should eat. We then assigned to man an organ of alimentiveness, and this organ is the scourge with which the Deity compels man, will-I nill-I, into eating.

Secondly, having settled it to be God's will that man should continue his species, we discovered an organ of amativeness, forthwith. And so with combativeness, with ideality, with causality, with constructiveness,—so, in short, with every organ, whether representing a propensity, a moral sentiment, or a faculty of the pure intellect. And in these arrangements of the Principia of human action, the Spurzheimites, whether right or wrong, in part, or upon the whole, have but followed, in principle, the footsteps of their predecessors: deducing and establishing every thing from the preconceived destiny of man, and upon the ground of the objects of his Creator.

It would have been wiser, it would have been safer, to classify (if classify we must) upon the basis of what man usually or occasionally did, and was always occasionally doing, rather than upon the basis of what we took it for granted the Deity intended him to do. If we cannot comprehend God in his visible works, how then in his inconceivable thoughts, that call the works into being? If we cannot understand him in his objective creatures, how then in his substantive moods and phases of creation?

Induction, a posteriori, would have brought phrenology to admit, as an innate and primitive principle of human action, a paradoxical something, which we may call perverseness, for want of a more characteristic term. In the sense I intend, it is, in fact, a mobile without motive, a motive not motivirt. Through its promptings we act without comprehensible object; or, if this shall be understood as a contradiction in terms, we may so far modify the proposition as to say, that through its promptings we

act, for the reason that we should not. In theory, no reason can be more unreasonable, but, in fact, there is none more strong. With certain minds, under certain conditions, it becomes absolutely irresistible. I am not more certain that I breathe, than that the assurance of the wrong or error of any action is often the one unconquerable force which impels us, and alone impels us to its prosecution. Nor will this overwhelming tendency to do wrong for the wrong's sake, admit of analysis, or resolution into ulterior elements. It is a radical, a primitive impulse-elementary. It will be said, I am aware, that when we persist in acts because we feel we should not persist in them, our conduct is but a modification of that which ordinarily springs from the combativeness of phrenology. But a glance will show the fallacy of this idea. The phrenological combativeness has for its essence, the necessity of self-defence. It is our safeguard against injury. Its principle regards our well-being; and thus the desire to be well is excited simultaneously with its development. It follows, that the desire to be well must be excited simultaneously with any principle which shall be merely a modification of combativeness, but in the case of that something which I term perverseness, the desire to be well is not only not aroused, but a strongly antagonistical sentiment exists.

An appeal to one's own heart is, after all, the best reply to the sophistry just noticed. No one who trustingly consults and thoroughly questions his own soul, will be disposed to deny the entire radicalness of the propensity in question. It is not more incomprehensible than distinctive. There lives no man who at some period has not been tormented, for example, by an earnest desire to tantalize a listener by circumlocution. The speaker is aware that he displeases; he has every intention to please, he is usually curt, precise, and clear, the most laconic and luminous language is struggling for utterance upon his tongue, it is only with difficulty that he restrains himself from giving it flow; he dreads and deprecates the anger of him whom he addresses; yet, the thought strikes him, that by certain involutions and parentheses this anger may be engendered. That single thought is enough. The impulse increases to a wish, the wish to a desire, the desire to an uncontrollable longing, and the longing (to the deep regret and mortification of the speaker, and in defiance of all consequences) is indulged.

We have a task before us which must be speedily performed. We know that it will be ruinous to make delay. The most important crisis of our life calls, trumpet-tongued, for immediate energy and action. We glow, we are consumed with eagerness to commence the work, with the anticipation of whose glorious result our whole souls are on fire. It must, it shall be undertaken to-day, and yet we put it off until to-morrow, and why? There is no answer, except that we feel perverse, using the word with no comprehension of the principle. To-morrow arrives, and with it a more impatient anxiety to do our duty, but with this very increase of anxiety arrives, also, a nameless, a positively fearful, because unfathomable, craving for delay. This craving gathers strength as the moments fly. The last hour for action is at hand. We tremble with the violence of the conflict within us,—of the definite with the indefinite—of the substance with the shadow. But, if the contest have proceeded thus far, it is the shadow which prevails,—we struggle in vain. The clock strikes, and is the knell of our welfare. At the same time, it is the chancicleer—note to the ghost that has so long overawed us. It flies—it disappears—we are free. The old energy returns. We will labor now. Alas, it is too late!

We stand upon the brink of a precipice. We peer into the abyss—we grow sick and dizzy. Our first impulse is to shrink from the danger. Unaccountably we remain. By slow degrees our sickness and dizziness and horror become merged in a cloud of unnamable feeling. By gradations, still more imperceptible, this cloud assumes shape, as did the vapor from the bottle out of which arose the genius in the Arabian Nights. But out of this our cloud upon the precipice's edge, there grows into palpability, a shape, far more terrible than any genius or any demon of a tale, and yet it is but a thought, although a fearful one, and one which chills the very marrow of our bones with the fierceness of the delight of its horror. It is merely the idea of what would be our sensations during the sweeping precipitancy of a fall from such a height. And this fall—this rushing annihilation—for the very reason that it involves that one most ghastly and loathsome of all the most ghastly and loathsome images of death and suffering which have ever presented themselves to our imagination—for this very cause do we now the most vividly desire it. And because our reason violently deters us from the brink, therefore do we the most impetuously approach it. There is no passion in nature so demoniacally impatient, as that of him who,

shuddering upon the edge of a precipice, thus meditates a Plunge. To indulge, for a moment, in any attempt at thought, is to be inevitably lost; for reflection but urges us to forbear, and therefore it is, I say, that we cannot. If there be no friendly arm to check us, or if we fail in a sudden effort to prostrate ourselves backward from the abyss, we plunge, and are destroyed.

Examine these similar actions as we will, we shall find them resulting solely from the spirit of the Perverse. We perpetrate them because we feel that we should not. Beyond or behind this there is no intelligible principle; and we might, indeed, deem this perverseness a direct instigation of the Arch-Fiend, were it not occasionally known to operate in furtherance of good.

I have said thus much, that in some measure I may answer your question, that I may explain to you why I am here, that I may assign to you something that shall have at least the faint aspect of a cause for my wearing these fetters, and for my tenancing this cell of the condemned. Had I not been thus prolix, you might either have misunderstood me altogether, or, with the rabble, have fancied me mad. As it is, you will easily perceive that I am one of the many uncounted victims of the Imp of the Perverse.

It is impossible that any deed could have been wrought with a more thorough deliberation. For weeks, for months, I pondered upon the means of the murder. I rejected a thousand schemes, because their accomplishment involved a chance of detection. At length, in reading some French Memoirs, I found an account of a nearly fatal illness that occurred to Madame Pilau, through the agency of a candle accidentally poisoned. The idea struck my fancy at once. I knew my victim's habit of reading in bed. I knew, too, that his apartment was narrow and ill-ventilated. But I need not vex you with impertinent details. I need not describe the easy artifices by which I substituted, in his bed-room candle-stand, a wax-light of my own making for the one which I there found. The next morning he was discovered dead in his bed, and the Coroner's verdict was—"Death by the visitation of God."

Having inherited his estate, all went well with me for years. The idea of detection never once entered my brain. Of the remains of the fatal taper I had myself carefully disposed. I had left no shadow of a clew by which it would be possible to convict, or even to suspect me of the crime. It is inconceivable how rich a sentiment of satisfaction arose in my bosom as I reflected upon my absolute security. For a very long period of time I was accustomed to revel in this sentiment. It afforded me more real delight than all the mere worldly advantages accruing from my sin. But there arrived at length an epoch, from which the pleasurable feeling grew, by scarcely perceptible gradations, into a haunting and harassing thought. It harassed because it haunted. I could scarcely get rid of it for an instant. It is quite a common thing to be thus annoyed with the ringing in our ears, or rather in our memories, of the burthen of some ordinary song, or some unimpressive snatches from an opera. Nor will we be the less tormented if the song in itself be good, or the opera air meritorious. In this manner, at last, I would perpetually catch myself pondering upon my security, and repeating, in a low undertone, the phrase, "I am safe."

One day, whilst sauntering along the streets, I arrested myself in the act of murmuring, half aloud, these customary syllables. In a fit of petulance, I remodelled them thus; "I am safe—I am safe—yes—if I be not fool enough to make open confession!"

No sooner had I spoken these words, than I felt an icy chill creep to my heart. I had had some experience in these fits of perversity, (whose nature I have been at some trouble to explain), and I remembered well that in no instance I had successfully resisted their attacks. And now my own casual self-suggestion that I might possibly be fool enough to confess the murder of which I had been guilty, confronted me, as if the very ghost of him whom I had murdered—and beckoned me on to death.

At first, I made an effort to shake off this nightmare of the soul. I walked vigorously—faster—still faster—at length I ran. I felt a maddening desire to shriek aloud. Every succeeding wave of thought overwhelmed me with new terror, for, alas! I well, too well understood that to think, in my situation, was to be lost. I still

quicken my pace. I bounded like a madman through the crowded thoroughfares. At length, the populace took the alarm, and pursued me. I felt then the consummation of my fate. Could I have torn out my tongue, I would have done it, but a rough voice resounded in my ears—a rougher grasp seized me by the shoulder. I turned—I gasped for breath. For a moment I experienced all the pangs of suffocation; I became blind, and deaf, and giddy; and then some invisible fiend, I thought, struck me with his broad palm upon the back. The long imprisoned secret burst forth from my soul.

They say that I spoke with a distinct enunciation, but with marked emphasis and passionate hurry, as if in dread of interruption before concluding the brief, but pregnant sentences that consigned me to the hangman and to hell.

Having related all that was necessary for the fullest judicial conviction, I fell prostrate in a swoon.

But why shall I say more? To-day I wear these chains, and am here! To-morrow I shall be fetterless!—but where?

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitely settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved, precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity—to practise imposture upon the British and Austrian *millionaires*. In painting and gemmary, Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack—but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skillful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him, that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him—"My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchesi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me—"

"Luchesi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchesi—"

"I have no engagement;—come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are encrusted with nitre."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchesi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a *roquelaire* closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honour of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed

down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white web-work which gleams from these cavern walls."

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Nitre?" he asked, at length.

"Nitre," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi—"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True—true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily—but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damps."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mould.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are imbedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"*Nemo me impune lacessit.*"

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The nitre!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grave. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said; "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said, "a sign."

"It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my *roquelaire*.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still

ornamented in this manner. From the fourth side the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavoured to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchesi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the nitre. Indeed, it is *very* damp. Once more let me *implore* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labours and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaux over the mason-work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall; I replied to the yells of him who clamoured. I re-echoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamourer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said—

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he! he!—a very good joke indeed—an excellent jest. We shall have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo, the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"For the love of God, Montresor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud—

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again—

"Fortunato—"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in reply only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labour. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat!*