

Testing Right Frontier Constraint on Edgar Allan Poe's The Raven

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Abstract: This paper focuses on Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven* as a case study to examine the narrator's conscious experiences and the challenges of interpreting coherence relations within this domain. It examines the concept of Right Frontier Constraint (RFC) from the Segmented Discourse Representation Theory (SDRT) and discusses its relevance in the context of *The Raven*. It further addresses the challenge of clarifying poetical effects through the lens of coherence relations and acknowledges the diversity of reader responses. This paper draws from the work of various researchers who have explored discourse segmentation and coordination, and applies global and micro analysis to further examine the themes of *The Raven*, and Poe's use of poetical effect through the poem's ambiguity and symbolism. The aim of this paper is to elucidate the intricate web of coherence relations within literary works such as *The Raven* while also offering potential avenues for future research to probe into the interpretation of coherence relations in conscious experiences.

Keywords: RFC, SDRT, Poe, Raven, Coherence

1. Introduction

Coherence relations serve to impart meaning and order to the understanding of the world, bringing clarity to the surrounding chaos. According to [1], the core objectives of a coherence theory are twofold. One is to explain how discourses gain coherence, such that they are perceived differently from a series of unrelated utterances. The other is to explain how the inference of unstated propositions results from the coherence establishment process. While contemporary research on coherence relations primarily centers on dialogues and real-life scenarios, the realm of artistic expression, particularly within literature, notably poetry, remains a relatively uncharted territory.

Poetry frequently incorporates deliberate gaps or ambiguities, motivated by artistic, rhetorical, and thematic considerations. Consequently, these intentional gaps can pose challenges when attempting to decipher the underlying coherence relations—the guiding principles that underpin diverse ideas into a cohesive whole. However, literary works may not merely promote the convenient exchange of information but also serve to provoke, challenge, and transcend traditional notions of communication. Literary coherence, therefore, does not always manifest as a linear progression as one might expect in everyday communication. Instead, it may involve a series of leaps, detours, and unexpected connections. These departures from conventional coherence patterns act as stimuli for challenging established paradigms, inciting contemplation, and evoking profound emotional responses.

In this research proposal, Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven* has been selected as the primary subject of analysis, with the specific focus on a comprehensive exploration of the narrator's conscious experiences, i.e., reality, memories and dreams, in accordance with the major eventualities: sitting in the chamber, the echo of Lenore, and the encountering with the Raven. These will be discussed with the application of coherence relations, and the test of Right Frontier Constraint, a claim proposed within the framework of Segmented Discourse Representation Theory (SDRT) as introduced in [2], follows earlier ideas presented in various other theories such as [3]. RFC posits that, in the context of a written discourse, when a new constituent is introduced, it should not be linked to any of the constituents in the preceding discourse. Instead, it should connect with constituents positioned on the "right frontier" of the preceding discourse [4].

The Raven serves as a valuable resource for contemplation regarding the manner in which diverse ideas are amalgamated into a coherent and unified whole. In the first place, *The Raven* is a Gothic narrative poem with its intricate ambiguity that skillfully blurs the boundaries between distinct conscious experiences, posing a challenge to the binary structure of coordination and subordination. Secondly, the poem is rich in symbols and they are open for discussion. Thirdly, despite its narrative framework, *The Raven* places a greater emphasis on crafting atmosphere and evoking emotional effects rather than simply conveying explicit messages. According to [5], the consideration was that poetry is in essence a cohesive whole of effects.

Numerous researchers, including [6], [7] and [8] have observed a hierarchical structure in discourse segmentation and share a common assumption that discourse segments can be coordinated or subordinated to one another [9]. In literary works, subordination introduces complexity, context, and hierarchy, enabling writers to convey a more nuanced and engaging narrative, and coordination joins related ideas, pushing the story forward. However, in *The Raven*, the intricate dynamics of subordination and coordination mystifies the readers. Writers use subordination to incorporate background information, flashbacks, or character backstory, but when the memory encompasses dreams, there might also be simultaneous coordination, and this would challenge the Right Frontier Constraint as one node is not allowed to be simultaneously subordinating and coordinating. Language often follows rules and structures to maintain clarity and coherence. When writers venture into the realm of dreams and fragmented memory, they may indeed push against the conventional boundaries of discourse structures. The result is a narrative that mirrors the disorienting and surreal nature of the experiences it portrays.

2. *The Raven: Summary and Challenges*

The story begins with the narrator, grieving the loss of Lenore and finding solace in reading. A mysterious tapping at his chamber door prompts investigation, but he discovers nothing. Later, a black raven appears on Pallas Athena's bust, and engages in a conversation with the narrator, but responding only with "Nevermore." This word becomes a haunting refrain, intensifying the narrator's despair. The poem concludes with the narrator resigned to sorrow, as the Raven's enigmatic presence perpetuates his misery.

Within this enigmatic and somber ambiance, the narrative unveils a triad of characters: the narrator, his beloved and lost Lenore, and the Raven. The intricate interplay among these characters in the narrator's memories, reality, and dreams constitutes the core focus of this analysis and may pose challenges in interpretation. Key stanzas will be selected to provide a global analysis that makes a clear point regarding the core theme of the Raven. In this context, it is postulated that the poem's central theme centers on the narrator's inability to accept the inexorable mortality of his beloved, as well as the bleak fate that characterizes human existence. This failure to reconcile with this harsh reality and the perpetual request to know the unknowable clouds his conscious experiences, confining him within an unending state of suspense. Another challenge is situated in the boundary of the

mentioned conscious experiences, and this requires detailed examination in the global and micro analysis.

3. Global Analysis Proposal

To grasp the poem as a unified entity, it is crucial to discern the points at which the narrator shifts between reality and dream. It is also significant to unravel how these dreams intertwine with his memories. To this end, stanzas 2, 5, 6, 7, 14 and 18 are chosen as the ground for this global analysis.

The first stanza here does not directly contribute to the global analysis, but it sets the scene for the narrative. Here, the scene is set in a dimly lit room of a quiet and eerie midnight, the narrator finds himself in a state of deep contemplation, physically and mentally drained. He was surrounded by peculiar and ancient books filled with forgotten knowledge. While on the verge of dozing off, a soft and rhythmic tapping noise abruptly interrupted his thoughts. Startled, the narrator mumbled to himself, convinced it must be a visitor seeking entry, and nothing more. Note that this part of recollection is written in the past tense.

- 1.1 Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
- 1.2 Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
- 1.3 While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
- 1.4 As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
- 1.5 "Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
- 1.6 Only this and nothing more."

However, in the second stanza, the first-person narrator shifts to the present tense at the beginning, pulling readers from the whirlpool of memory to the present reality (2.1), and then switches back to the past tense to proceed with his recollection (2.2-2.6), in which the narrator sits alone in the room on a December night, trying to find solace in books, but it was in vain. At 2.4, the cause of his sorrow is presented, as it centers around a lady named Lenore, described as a rare and radiant maiden even known by angels, though she remains nameless and lost forever in his world. Stanza 3 and stanza 4 switch back to the scene set in stanza 1, in which the narrator is reconfirming his agitated heart that it is just a visitor and there is nothing more out there.

- 2.1 Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
- 2.2 And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
- 2.3 Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
- 2.4 From my books surcease of sorrow— sorrow for the lost Lenore—
- 2.5 For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
- 2.6 Nameless here for evermore.

(stanza 1 and 2)

The first perceived binary between memory and dream occurs in stanza 5. Here, the narrator experiences standing in a deep darkness with uncertainty and fear, dreaming dreams that no one has ever dared to dream before. This complete silence offers no indication of what lies ahead. The only word that breaks the silence is the narrator's whispered question: "Lenore?" He hears an echo that responds with the same word: "Lenore," but that's all he hears, which leaves him with a sense of eerie emptiness.

As readers come to 5.2, a sudden realization compels the readers to go back and check the previous stanzas: Are stanzas 1 to 5 actually a description of a dream that stands in contrast with 2.1 that depicts a reality? If this is the case, then stanza 1 and 2 form a coordination of contrast, yet the subsequent stanzas coordinate with stanza 1, forming a series of narration which goes forward on the left side of stanza 1— this directly violates the Right Frontier Constraint, which stipulates that, within a given discourse graph denoted as G, any new elementary discourse unit (EDU) seeking attachment to G must be affixed to a node along the Right Frontier of G. If this poem were to fit RFC in accordance

with the aforementioned interpretation of dream and reality, then stanza 2 is to be left unattached. However, even if stanza 2 is removed, it does not affect the coherence of the whole narrative.

On the other side, RFC works when the role of stanza 2 is interpreted as the cause of the narrator's eccentric uneasiness, i.e., it is because of Lenore's death that the narrator experiences this series of eerie events, proving his instability of mental state. If this is the case, then stanza 2 subordinates stanza 1, forming an elaboration.

- 5.1 Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
- 5.2 Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
- 5.3 But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
- 5.4 And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
- 5.5 This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"—
- 5.6 Merely this and nothing more.

(stanza 5)

Then, in stanza 6, the narrator feels an intense sense of unease, and returns to his chamber. As he settles in, he hears a tapping sound at the window, which is louder than before. The narrator, trying to reassure himself, believes it is just the wind causing the noise. However, he is still curious about the source of the tapping and decides to investigate the mystery. However, 6.1 is open to further interpretation. If it is built on the premise that the narrator has been dreaming, then could it be that what comes back into the chamber is not literally the narrator's physical presence, but his subconscious? In this half-wake-half-asleep condition, he turns around in sorrow and pain. With this regard, stanza 6 is marked as the transition between the dream of the echo of Lenore, and the encounter with the Raven, which will be introduced in stanza 7.

- 6.1 Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
- 6.2 Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
- 6.3 "Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
- 6.4 Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
- 6.5 Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
- 6.6 'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

(stanza 6)

In stanza 7, this is the first time that the Raven appears in the poem as a focal symbol, and it will initiate a series of "Nevermore" as a response to each question of the narrator. Pallas (Athena), the Greco-Roman goddess of wisdom, contrasts with the bird's perch on the statue. In various cultural contexts, ravens are generally associated with death due to their scavenging behaviour, and the Raven perching on the goddess of wisdom could be interpreted as the death of rationality. This could be a message telling the readers that this entire poem shall not be interpreted on the basis of reason, and it also coincides with the aforementioned broken Right Frontier Constraint. Furthermore, the clear sense of boundary between dream and memory is still in suspense as at this point, and it is not known whether the encountering with the Raven is a dream or not. In this stanza, the Raven is not speaking because no question is asked. This silence seems to be a strange harmony. When the thinker does not ponder on the unfathomable, the unfathomable does not burden the thinker. On the other hand, although ravens are very intelligent birds, one would still sound like a lunatic if one claimed that ravens have linguistic capacity. In fact, ravens can mimic sounds but lack the capacity for coherent and meaningful communication. Nevertheless, the narrator's obsession with the Raven's "Nevermore" is to such an extreme that his soul shall be lifted nevermore. This absurdity reflects humanity's relentless pursuits of the unknowable and intangible, ultimately leading to futile inquiries.

- 7.1 Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
- 7.2 In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
- 7.3 Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;

7.4 But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—

7.5 Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—

7.6 Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

(stanza 7)

In stanza 14, the narrative intriguingly shifts towards the dense air and the ephemeral presence of Seraphim, prompting us to consider that the encounter with the Raven might be a dream. This explanation arises from the incongruity of witnessing a Seraphim, a heavenly being, in the physical world. In such a context, it seems implausible for a Seraphim to touch the earthly realm, hinting at the idea that the Raven's presence is possibly sanctioned by these angelic figures. However, when symbolism is taken into perspectives, it is reasonable that Seraphim symbolizes the predetermined fate of human mortality. The realization that everything, including ourselves, is finite and will eventually fade into the relentless river of time further exacerbates the narrator's descent into madness. Simultaneously, in line with Poe's focus on creating a specific emotional impact, Seraphim contributes to the poem's aesthetic effect and creates a supernatural atmosphere that effectively separates the poem's domain from the realm of reason, heightening its otherworldly atmosphere.

14.1 Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer

14.2 Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

14.3 "Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee

14.4 Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore;

14.5 Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!"

14.6 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

(stanza 14)

However, in stanza 18, the narrative once again shifts to the present tense, employing the recurring present progressive phrase, "...still is sitting/On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door." This reverts readers back to stanza 2, where the present tense was initially introduced. It implies that the Raven's initial appearance in the poem is, in fact, in stanza 2. Although not explicitly mentioned, its presence assumes an unseen and silent form. This serves as a reminder that when the narrator tells this story, the Raven is still perching there and watching him. As stanza 14 serves as compelling evidence to suggest that the realm in which the narrator encounters the Raven is, in fact, a dream, this perspective challenges the earlier notion that line 2.1 represents reality. Instead, it proposes that the entire narrative actually unfolds within the realm of a dream. Throughout this narrative, the narrator never truly departs this state of dream. This implicit presence of the Raven in stanza 2 intensifies the prevailing sense of despair, and is a violated expectation for readers who examine the poem closely. This illustrates how language can possess a dynamic and fluid quality, introducing a symbol indirectly and revealing it through the craft of words and the reader's subsequent realization. Furthermore, as a symbol, the Raven's nightmare-like repetition of "Nevermore" represents non-sense, and the narrator is constantly in search for a sense with each question he asks the Raven. The contrast of sense and non-sense justifies the proposed core theme of the Raven, and challenges the traditional discourse analysis that mainly focuses on sense and the sensible. Human existence itself is a paradox in which both coherence and incoherence motivate the pursuit of Truth. Thus, understanding the absurd, the nonsensical, and the capricious nature of thoughts can foster a more sophisticated appreciation of the significance and necessity of coherence relations.

18.1 And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting

18.2 On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;

18.3 And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,

18.4 And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;

18.5 And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor

18.6 Shall be lifted—nevermore!

(stanza 18)

Building on this observation, it is also worthy of attention that there are two types of violated expectations presented in the poem. In the first type, it is about the Raven's "Nevermore" to the narrator's request of Lenore; in the second type, it is in line 5.2 where the binary between memory and dream is first presented, and in line 18.1 where the present tense overthrows the established trinity of reality, dream and memory. The former violated expectation lies within the narrative to develop the story further, and the latter sits between the story and readers, creating an effect of surprise. This differentiation between the function of the plot and the effect sensed by readers necessitate the potential exploration for a clear definition and application of violated expectation.

4. Micro Analysis Proposal

In the micro analysis of the poem, this paper hypothesizes that the narrator experiences a gradual deterioration of mental state, and this is in accordance with each "Nevermore" he received as a reply. Stanza 8, stanza 10, stanza 14 to stanza 18 are selected for the following micro analysis. Some stanzas that previously occurred in global analysis also reoccur in this section, but their functions and focuses vary.

Before centering on the analysis of the narrator's declining mental state, it is necessary to have an overview of how he reaches to this condition. Here stanza 3 and stanza 4 are presented as a backdrop. In these stanzas, the eerie and unsettling experience of hearing a soft, uncertain rustling of purple curtains in the chamber fills the narrator with fantastic terrors. He tries to remain calm by convincing himself that it's just a late visitor at his door, repeating this thought to ease his fear. Somehow, the narrator's fear gives way to curiosity, and thus gathers the courage to open the door and address the visitor, apologizing for his initial hesitation due to being asleep. However, when he finally opens the door, there is no one but darkness. This mysterious encounter leaves the narrator in a state of uncertainty and apprehension, and this foreshadows his later deterioration of sanity.

- 3.1 And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
- 3.2 Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
- 3.3 So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
- 3.4 "'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
- 3.5 Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
- 3.5 This it is and nothing more."
- 4.1 Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
- 4.2 "Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
- 4.3 But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
- 4.4 And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
- 4.5 That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;—
- 4.6 Darkness there and nothing more.

(stanza 3 and 4)

Here, stanza 8 is selected for micro analysis because there is the Raven's first "Nevermore", which is in response to the narrator's questioning of its name (8.5-8.6). At this point, the narrator is even smiling because he finds this Raven entertaining and intriguing. However, when considering the symbolic significance traditionally associated with ravens, which is often linked to death, this stanza takes on a tone of mockery and taunting toward death. His love for Lenore is unwavering, and he derives comfort in cherishing her memory, all the while nurturing the hope of a reunion beyond the veil of death. At this point, death is powerless and cannot sever the bond of love. Then, in stanza 9, the author shifts back to his inner monologue, and continue to marvel at the Raven's unique presence. Note that stanza 9, stanza 11, and stanza 12 interpret the narrator's ongoing inquiry into the Raven,

and stanza 8~13 follow a coordinating structure, with scenes shifting between the description of the Raven, and the narrator's own contemplation.

- 8.1 Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
- 8.2 By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
- 8.3 "Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
- 8.4 Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
- 8.5 Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
- 8.6 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."
- 9.1 Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
- 9.2 Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
- 9.3 For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
- 9.4 Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
- 9.5 Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
- 9.6 With such name as "Nevermore."

Stanza 10 is selected for micro analysis because there is the second "Nevermore", and it is to the narrator's lament that all his friends and hopes have left, and this Raven will also depart (10.5-10.6). The narrator is intrigued by the Raven's presence and engages in a conversation with it, wondering about the meaning of the Raven's "Nevermore".

- 10.1 But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
- 10.2 That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
- 10.3 Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered—
- 10.4 Till I scarcely more than muttered "Other friends have flown before—
- 10.5 On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before."
- 10.6 Then the bird said "Nevermore."

And then, the narrator continues to contemplate the Raven's purpose, all while comfortably reclining on a cushion and surrounded by soft, luxurious surroundings that remind him of his lost Lenore.

- 11.1 Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
- 11.2 "Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store
- 11.3 Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
- 11.4 Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
- 11.5 Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
- 11.6 Of 'Never—nevermore'."
- 12.1 But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
- 12.2 Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust and door;
- 12.3 Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
- 12.4 Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
- 12.5 What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
- 12.6 Meant in croaking "Nevermore."
- 13.1 This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
- 13.2 To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
- 13.3 This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
- 13.4 On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,
- 13.5 But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,
- 13.6 She shall press, ah, nevermore!

(stanza 11-13)

The turning point of his mental condition is stanza 14, which it depicts the mental stage of trying to forget the deceased Lenore. Stanza 14 is in contrast with the narrator's longing for Lenore, and this

sudden explosion of emotion is the result of the narrator's inner conflict between longing for Lenore and knowing that what is dead and gone can never come back alive. The narrator's mental condition starts to collapse at this point.

- 14.1 Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
- 14.2 Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
- 14.3 "Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
- 14.4 Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore;
- 14.5 Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!"
- 14.6 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

(stanza 14)

After the mental breakdown in stanza 14, the Raven's next "Nevermore" responds to the narrator's inquiry of the balm tree in paradise (15.5~15.6), denying his hope of paradise. The next "Nevermore" answers the narrator's question of whether Lenore is in the Eden (16.3~16.6), and at this point, the last hope of reuniting with Lenore in the Eden is also denied. The Raven's "Nevermore" in stanza 17 tells the narrator that it will not leave, symbolizing his eternal entrapment in sorrowful memory of his lost Lenore (17.5~17.6). In the end, line 18.3 entails the recurring motif of dream, and the narrator's soul can no longer be lifted.

- 15.1 "Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
- 15.2 Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
- 15.3 Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
- 15.4 On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
- 15.5 Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
- 15.6 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."
- 16.1 "Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!
- 16.2 By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
- 16.3 Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
- 16.4 It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
- 16.5 Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
- 16.6 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."
- 17.1 "Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting—
- 17.2 "Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
- 17.3 Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
- 17.4 Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
- 17.5 Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
- 17.6 Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."
- 18.1 And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
- 18.2 On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
- 18.3 And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
- 18.4 And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
- 18.5 And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
- 18.6 Shall be lifted—nevermore!

(stanza 14-18)

In these stanzas, each "Nevermore" parallels with each other, and with each "Nevermore", the narrator's mental condition worsens at an accelerating speed. Parallel coherence is typically used to emphasize the equality or similarity between elements in a text, but the graduality of mental deterioration is supposed to be a subordinating development. This is the case where parallelism can be used in a more gradual fashion to achieve specific rhetorical or stylistic effects.

5. Conclusion

After the previous discussion, it is a tenable idea to believe that the whole poem is a description of a dream that consists of two sub-dreams in a coordinating linear development. René Descartes ushered in a modern understanding of individual consciousness via his theorem "Cogito, ergo sum," marking the separation of the mind from the physical world. This divorce of mind and world is also seen in Poe's *The Raven*, in which the transcendent force of unity and arrangement is shattered, mirroring the enigmatic sentiment and conundrum expressed in Poe's famous words: "What you see or seem is but a dream within a dream."

This project proposal pays homage to Edgar Allan Poe while aiming to address certain overlooked aspects essential for comprehending and deconstructing his profound intellectual prowess. In addition, this proposal presents the following discussion with the purpose of inspiring further research in the field of discourse analysis.

RFC may have limitations in delineating coherence relations within conscious experiences, as the dynamics of coordination and subordination may not consistently adhere to a linear framework. While RFC is a valuable tool for analyzing literary intricacies, it should not be the sole determinant of literary interpretation; interpretation remains the ultimate goal, with RFC serving as a facilitative tool. Further research can refine RFC, making it a more sophisticated instrument for literary analysis. Additionally, exploring the disjunction between authorial intent and reader response, as exemplified by the violated expectations in the global analysis, encourages future research in discourse analysis to investigate implicit elements within literary works and how specific effects are achieved through language or its absence.

This proposal presents the necessity for ongoing exploration and investigation within the realm of discourse analysis. Literature, as a mirror of the human experience, is a multifaceted domain that calls for a more encompassing analytical framework. The limitations of current coherence relations underscore the importance of evolving understanding to better address the interplay between literature and the intricacies of human consciousness.

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