



THE USE OF DYNAMIC AND TYPOLOGICAL METHODS IN THE WORKS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE

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Article history:		Abstract:
Received:	14 th August 2025	This article explores the use of dynamic and typological methods in the psychological poetics of Edgar Allan Poe’s prose. The study focuses on how Poe represents the evolution of mental states through inner monologues, hallucinations, and dual consciousness. Based on analyses of “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Black Cat,” “William Wilson,” and “The Fall of the House of Usher,” the paper identifies and interprets four main psychological types – obsessive, dualistic, neurotic, and sadistic. Drawing on the theories of S.Freud, C.Jung, and E.Fromm, the article reveals the psychological depth of Poe’s characters and his mastery in dramatizing mental disintegration.
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INTRODUCTION

One of the main features of Edgar Allan Poe's creative work is his artistic approach directed toward expressing the subtle, complex, and often tormented layers of human psychology. In his works, artistic psychologism is primarily manifested through dynamic and typological methods. Through the dynamic approach, the writer depicts the gradual transformation of a character's mental state over time, while the typological approach focuses on creating a psychological type – a person embodying a specific mental condition.

MAIN BODY

In Poe's works, the dynamic style appears in harmony with the development of events, revealing the evolution of the hero's emotions and mental turmoil. For example, in "*The Tell-Tale Heart*," the protagonist's gradual descent into paranoia, inner torment, and psychological pressure leading to self-destruction illustrates a dynamic portrayal of inner crisis. Poe conveys this process through the hero's thoughts, his hearing of his own heartbeat, and the blending of real and imaginary sounds. As a result, the reader observes the process of mental breakdown from an internal perspective, through the narrator's consciousness – a vivid manifestation of psychological dynamism in Poe's art.

Table 1. The Four-Stage Psychological Evolution of the Hero

Stage	Mental State	Analysis
1.	Believes himself rational and responsible	The narrator justifies himself: "How, then, am I mad? The disease had sharpened my senses..."
2.	Loses peace after the crime	Mental instability increases; inner monologues become frequent
3.	Hallucination of the heartbeat intensifies pressure	The hero struggles with his conscience
4.	Loses willpower and confesses	The dynamic method culminates in mental collapse

"I felt that I must scream or die! – and now – again – hark! louder! louder! louder! louder!" (E.Poe, "The Tell-Tale Heart")

These lines mark the climactic point of the character's psychological portrait. His internal tension reaches its peak; the mental balance collapses, and he is compelled to reveal his crime. The gradual transformation of the hero's psyche is

conveyed through the dynamic psychological approach, allowing Poe to portray guilt, conscience, and confession with powerful artistic impact.

As the table shows, Poe's protagonist is not static but undergoes a consistent mental transformation, making his spiritual crisis more emotionally intense. Ultimately, the hero succumbs to the pressure of conscience and confesses – demonstrating Poe's mastery in dramatizing inner psychological processes.

TYPOLOGICAL APPROACH IN POE'S WORKS

The typological approach in Poe's art manifests through the creation of characters who represent psychological types. For instance, in "The Black Cat," the narrator, who commits murder yet attempts to rationalize his actions, embodies the modern individual tormented between crime and punishment. Unlike traditional literary heroes, he appears as a neurotic figure struggling with his own mind and subconscious. This is a strong example of typological psychologism in Poe's work:

"Yet, mad am I not – and very surely do I not dream." (E.Poe, "The Black Cat")

This statement reveals that while the narrator insists on his sanity, his denial itself exposes his mental disturbance.

Furthermore, Poe constructs psychological complexity structurally as well. In "The Fall of the House of Usher," characters embody inherited melancholy and mental decay, representing the idea of psychic heredity and inner continuity. Here, the heroes function not as realistic individuals but as metaphoric embodiments of psychological states. Poe's characters can be grouped into four main psychological types: *obsessive, dualistic, neurotic, and sadistic*. Each type embodies a distinct mental mechanism and reveals the diversity of Poe's psychological realism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Obsessive Psychotype. Obsessive personalities are fixated on a single thought or emotion, unable to control their repetitive impulses. In "The Tell-Tale Heart," Poe creates a brilliant example of such obsession.

"Please, pay attention: this idea has haunted me day and night." (E.Poe, "The Tell-Tale Heart")

The hero's constant repetition of the same idea drives him into deep torment, ultimately pushing him toward murder. According to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, such cases arise from the suppression of instinctive energy, which later erupts in socially unacceptable forms. Poe's hero undergoes precisely this sequence: obsessive thought → inner isolation → hyper-awareness → psychological explosion → confession.

"It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night." (E.Poe, "The Tell-Tale Heart")

The phrase "idea entered my brain" signifies an intrusive, unconscious impulse rather than a conscious decision – a core feature of obsession. Poe thus demonstrates how an externalized thought can dominate and destroy the mind from within.

2. The Dualistic (Psychic Duality) Type. Dualistic personalities experience an internal conflict between two contradictory selves. Poe's "William Wilson" is a classic portrayal of this type:

"Let me annihilate, even for the moment, my double – the detested and hated rival of my own private self." (E.Poe, "William Wilson")

Here, the protagonist's "double" represents his moral conscience. In killing his double, he destroys his own moral self – a symbolic act of spiritual suicide. This narrative dramatizes the tragic outcome of inner dualism, where rejecting one's moral shadow leads to self-destruction. Poe's depiction echoes C.Jung's concept of the "shadow", making the story a profound psychological parable.

3. The Neurotic Type. Neurotic characters are overly sensitive, anxious, and emotionally unstable. Roderick Usher, in "The Fall of the House of Usher," embodies the neurotic psychotype. His hypersensitivity to sound, light, and sensation, along with his isolation and fear of the unknown, make him an archetype of pathological anxiety.

"I shall perish, I must perish in this deplorable folly. ... I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results." (E.Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher")

Roderick's fear of future events – not for what they are, but for their consequences – reflects typical neurotic dread. Through this character, Poe explores the breakdown of psychological balance and the loss of control under inner pressure. His portrayal aligns with Freud's repression theory, Jung's individuation process, and Erich Fromm's description of the modern alienated man.

4. The Sadistic Type. Sadistic personalities find pleasure in domination and the suffering of others. In "The Tell-Tale Heart," the murderer exhibits both sadistic and neurotic traits, taking perverse satisfaction in his crime while being haunted by guilt.

"It is the beating of his hideous heart! ... They heard! they suspected! they knew! ... I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer!" (E.Poe, "The Tell-Tale Heart")

This passage expresses the culmination of sadistic ecstasy merging with psychological torment. The hero's violent outburst and confession signify the final stage of inner collapse – where sadism turns inward, transforming pleasure into agony.

CONCLUSION

Edgar Allan Poe's application of dynamic and typological methods enables the deep artistic exploration of human psychology. Through dynamic progression, he portrays the evolution of madness and guilt; through typology, he constructs universal psychological patterns – obsessive, dualistic, neurotic, and sadistic. His ability to blend these approaches gives his prose an enduring psychological and philosophical depth, making him one of the pioneers of literary psychologism in world literature.

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