The Use of Adjectives: A Comparative Study of Rappaccini's Daughter by Nathanial Hawthorne 1844, and a Rose for Emily by William Faulkner 1930

Rabia Sohail[1], Sumera Shan Ahmad[2]

Abstract

Considering the huge differences in the writing styles and choices of vocabulary of the old and modern short story writers, the aim of this study is to find a comparable pattern of analysis of a short story titled Rappaccini's Daughter by Nathanial Hawthorne (1844) and A Rose for Emily (1930) by William Faulkner a modern writer. The data is in the form of the antonymic adjectives found in both the texts. The frequency of the adjectives and their effects on themes and language of both stories are analyzed separately and the data from both the stories are compared to find the significant changes in the form of writing styles and choice of vocabulary. The data reveal that the old story is rich in adjectives as it has a total number of 267 whereas the modern story has 121 adjectives. The higher frequency of antonyms helps create dramatic effects in the story. It helps to build tension conflicts and contrast, whereas the modern story can be dealt in with by the use of binaries because the words which are mentioned in the text stand in the opposition to what is outside the text. According to the results both stories have more emphasis on characters as compared to the setting. However, the modern story has comparatively more percentage of adjectives utilized for setting as compared to the old story. This provides evidence that the modern story writers put more emphasis on economy of words while describing the characters.

Keywords: adjectives, binary adjectives, word choice, frequency

1. Introduction

Lexical semantics can help study the meaning of a lexical item not only isolation but in relation to the other words found in a given text. Nouns which are modified by adjectives are in a way determined through them. Adjective lexicon derived from the stories; A rose for Emily (Faulkner, 1924) and Rappaccini's daughter (Hawthorne, 1844). The aim is to study these selected stories in order to obtain comparable data in the form of adjectives. Describing words such as adjectives can qualify a noun and provide more information about it. The author of any story chooses adjectives to qualify the characters and objects. Adjectives enable the authors to describe the settings as well. The use of adjectives gives a clearer picture of the characters hence the imagination of the readers is made to become more focused. For instance, in a group of people a teacher asks to write a paragraph on a girl, there would be a variety of responses ranging from differences in age, dresses, color, etc. If they are asked to write a few lines on 'a school girl of 5th grade' the responses would be more focused. The hypothesis of this study is that the adjective lexicon in a particular text gives greater understanding of the characters, how they are described by the author(s), and the characters' thoughts feeling and emotions about the situation in which they are along with their setting.

The study of adjective is conducted on the selected stories as there are some aspects in both of them. The titles of both stories contain the central female characters. A rose for Emily has a significant title as it can be compared to the bunch of bought roses by the ladies for the funeral of Emily. The central figure is focused in the story and it is hypothesized that the maximum number of adjectives would describe her alone. This story is also famous because of its feminist treatment by the author. The title of the second story could easily be by the name of the central female figure. But the author preferred to give the story a title in relation to the father and the daughter as if their relationship is more important than the individual existence of Beatrice. So, on the basis of their feminine treatment both stories are comparable.

A comparative analysis of frequencies gives insight into the style of writing. The older stories were considered having full of flowery language. This was so, because the author had to create the characters and their features in the minds of the readers through the use of words. The modern authors do not have this problem because of stereotyping of characters through the use of filmic adaptations. The modern writers are more concerned about the plot and setting instead of the development and description of characters. The shifting emphasis on setting and plot is indicated through the frequencies of the use of adjectives. Likewise, the modern stories are much shorter in length because of the economic use of adjectives. This study provides empirical evidences to support this notion. How do the patterns of adjectives vary in both stories is a significant question for this study the answer of which can help solve all the above problems? The adjectives found in the stories reveal about the difference in the choice of vocabulary by the author. Patterns of adjectives are a measure of comparing the differences of stories in terms of treatment of gender. More emphasis on female characters would mean a feminist treatment of that particular story by the author. A varied pattern of frequencies in stories would reveal how far the author keeps female characters in focus.

Some adjectives are similar in meaning. The authors use them in order to avoid repetition of words for the same idea. In such a case the data must be collected in a way as to combine the adjectives having same meaning in a

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[1] Corresponding Author, Institute of Liberal Arts, Department of Linguistics and Communications, University of Management and Technology Lahore, Pakistan, E-mail: ebreez@live.com
[2] Institute of Liberal Arts, Department of Linguistics and Communications, University of Management and Technology Lahore, Pakistan

group and tagged as a single group so that its binary opposite can be identified along with the frequency of their occurrence. for instance Beatrice is mentioned as beautiful 13 times and Giovanni as a young man for 8 times this could be compared to all the times the word old has been mentioned for Lisabeta, Baglioni and Rappaccini.

The adjectives which are in binary opposition to other adjectives found in the same character over the period of time reveal the conflict between the states of mind of the character in two different times of the story. Those binary adjectives can also show the reversal of fortune or dramatic irony in a story. Hence adjectives can be compared to trace the highlighted tragic effect. For instance, when Miss Emily was young, she had short hair and she wore white color at a particular time of her life in the story. But as a spinster she wore black and after her death the narrator could see a long grey hair at the side of the skeleton of Homer Barron. This simultaneously shows reversal of fate and the binary of old age and youth. It creates a shocking and dramatic effect in the story.

1.1. Objectives
- To collect data in the form of adjectives from the two stories
- To find frequency and patterns of adjectives
- To compare the patterns of adjectives of both stories
- To find the emphasis on male and female characters of stories on the basis of varied use of adjectives

2. Literature Review

There are mainly three types of adjectives. Attributive adjectives are found in the phrases which are basically headed by nouns whereas the Predicative adjectives come after the linking copula verbs. On the other hand, nominal adjectives appear as nouns for example happy ones, and the poor. The adjectives are not randomly selected by the author(s). In a given text adjectives lie as binary oppositions. Identification of adjectives in a text is not enough. The relation of adjectives with each other as binaries gives rise to a subtle kind of sense relation.

Antonymy which is a specific kind of sense relation uses adjective pairs as gradable opposites. Paradis (2010) approaches antonymy as an umbrella term for 'form meaning pairing' of binary opposition. The binaries are a pair of two words that are doomed together as their lexico-semantic relations as well as their conceptual linkage that make them categorized as good, bad or superb antonyms (Paradis, 2010). Antonyms are differentiated on the basis of their conventionalized co-occurrence and on the basis of their effects in creative poetic manner. In between these two extremes there exist fewer good pairings of antonymous words. According to Paradis (2010) slow/fast is a good pair of adjectives whereas slow/rapid is better than slow/dull.

Some pairs of antonyms have built in binaries like male/female. Since opposability also has an element of comparison, the focus is towards cognitive semantic approach towards antonymy. Hence it is possible to take these binaries like male and female and collect data of describing adjective words for males and females in both stories and analyze their frequencies.

Rappaccini's daughter has been studied from the perspective of sense relations for instance antonymy and synonymy which are used to analyze the relationship among the characters. If the characters are opposing their speech or description of their characters contain more antonyms, whereas if the two characters are similar to each other their characters description and dialogues have more synonyms. The antonyms found in the speeches of two characters show their contrasting ideas, state of minds, and friction. Antonyms can also highlight the ironic reversal of the fate of characters (Sohail, Naz, Malik, & Baber, 2014). Another study found patterns of antonyms as equivalent with the sequence of arrangement of actions (Rana & Sohail, 2022). This study deals with various aspects of a single story. However, a comparative analysis of two or more stories can be done by following a more focused aspect of sense relations which is antonymy of adjectives.

3. Methodology

The collection of data requires quantitative method. The data collected from the short stories is in the form of adjectives. Further the data are encoded and represented in the tables. Each adjective is identifiable with the capital first alphabet of the character and the serial number of the table. The frequencies obtained from the tables of both the stories are presented in the form of a table for comparative analysis. Hence the data from qualitative sources were made quantifiable for comparative analysis in the form of frequencies and percentages.

3.1. Data collection
The data are in the form of adjectives found in both the stories as appearing with a liking verb, as adjective phrase and as a part of a noun phrase. Moreover, the adjectives in the form of possessives along with demonstrative adjectives are also collected.

3.2. Sample
The selected two stories are from different literary ages. *A Rose for Emily* by William Faulkner (1930) is gothic story of modern era, whereas *Rappaccini's Daughter*, by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1844) contains flowery language of nineteenth century. Both stories have similarities because they both focus of a central female figure. The titles of the stories are also framed in accordance to the central female figures.

4. Data Representation and Analysis

At first stage adjectives are categorized in accordance with main characters of both stories. Following tables present the data

Table 1 Miss Emily (E)

Characters of A Rose for Emily			
At father's death	After father's death	Spinsterhood	At her death
1.Alone	5.humanized	26.Too virulent (to die)	57.a long strand
2.No traces of grief	6.Old thrill	27.Too furious (to die)	58. long grey hair
3.Broken	7.old despair	28. grown fat	59.Her grey head
4.crazy	8.sick	29. grey hair	60.heavy walnut bed
	9. short hair	30. iron grey	
	10.angel church colored windows	31.(hair of)an active man	61.(pillow) yellow and moldy
	11.white (dress)	32.dear	
	12.tragic	33.inescapable	
	13.serene	34.impervious	
	14.real lady	35.tranquil	
	15.craned silk and satin	36.perverse	
	16.her head high	37.upright torso	
	17.fallen	38.motionless	
	18.a slight woman	39.a little bit high	
	19.thinner than usual	40.faded ink	
	20.cold haughty, black eyes	41.archaic shape	
	21.strained (flesh of face)	42.thin flowing calligraphy	
	22.a light housekeeper's face	43.small fat	
	23.erect	44.black (dress)	
	24strained (flag)	45.thin gold chain	
	25.china painting lessons	46.tarnished gold head	
		47.small and spare (skeleton)	
		48.long submerged	
		49.motionless water	
		50.(voice) dry cold	
		51.small pieces	
		52.coal pressed	
		53.stumbling halt	
		54.pallied hue	
		55.invisible water	
		56 Fatty ridges	

Table 2

Homer Barron (H)		Negro man servant (N)	
Alive	Dead	Young	Old
1.a yankee	10.long sleep	1.going in and out	2.grew greyer
2.big, dark	11.profound and fleshless grin		3.more stooped
3. ready man			4.harsh and rusty voice
4.A big voice			
5.eyes lighter than his face			
6.the center (of laughter)			
7.yellow wheeled buggy			
8. livery stable 9.not a marrying man			

Table 3

The ladies(L)	The old men(O)	The younger men(Y)	Old lady Wyatt(W)
1.quick, curious glances	1. diminishing road	1.Rising generation	1.crazy woman
2. hushed, sibilant voices	2. a huge meadow	2.next generation	2.her great aunt
3. A mass of bought flowers	3. narrow bottleneck	3.modern ideas	3.completely crazy
	4.the most recent decades		
	5.grey bearded		
	6.respectful affection		
	7.brushed Confiderate uniforms		
	8.not good enough		

Table 4: Setting of A Rose for Emily

The house	The room (tomb)
1.downstair windows	15.the violent breaking
2.the top flour	16. pervading dust
3. the craven torso	17. bridal
4.a spaded silhouette	18. faded rose colored (curtains)
5.dark (window was) lighted	19. rose shaded lights
6.back flung door	20. delicate array of crystals
7.heavey lightsome style	21. man's toilet things
8.most selected street	22. tarnished silver
9.stubborn and coquettish decay (of house)	23. a pale crescent
10. ranked and anonymous graves	24. two mute shoes
11.leather covered furniture	25. discarded socks
12.Faint dust	26. even coating
13.tarnished gilt	27. patient, biding dust
14.crayon portrait	28. faint, invisible , dry and acrid dust

Table 5: Rappaccini

Characters of Rappaccini's Daughter		
Appearance	Character	Possessive adjectives
1.Black dress 2	1.sceintific, untrustful gardener (2)	1.My science, my pride, my daughter 3
2.tall, thin, sickly, poor health 6	2.scientific interest	2. his madness for science, his only defense, his daughter's arm (3)
3.yellow pale color (2)	3.deep deadly science	3.your sister plant, your charge (2)
4.sharp expressions	4.so skilled	4. our chief treasure (2)
5.watchful eye	5.the greatest care	
6.grey hair	6.the direct breathing	
7.weak voice	7.no common laborer	
8.fearful hands	8. fearfully wise	
	9.the famous doctor	
	10.the poisoner Rappaccini	
	11.awful man	

Table 6: Baglioni

Appearance	Character	Possessive/demonstrative adjectives
1.older person, happy, lighthearted 3	1.Sick people	1.their first meeting
	2. marvelous story	2.these old streets
	3. serious doubts	3.what strange smell
	4.faint sweet, (not)agreeable rich smell (2)	4.his own hands, his medicine (2)
		5.your face, your fate, your Beatrice, your life and death, your glove, your apartment (6)
		6.Our worshipful professor, most learned (4)

Table 7: Beatrice

Appearance	Character	Possessive/demonstrative adjectives
1.a young girl, young lady 2	1.the unfortunate, heartbroken child, awful fate 7	1.My heart 4, my father's mad love 3, my father's deadly science, my body, my spirit, my breath, my sister
2.the fair stranger, beautiful girl 13	2. simple nature, loving, gentle human 5	2. her face (2), her grasp (2), her father (2), her lips (2), her experience of life, her breath2, her large bright eyes 3, her press, her hand 2, her breast, her heart 2, her whole strength, her poison, her presence 2, her faith, her grief, her birth, her nature, her love
3. splendid rich flower 6	3. strange unbelievable	3. your own eyes, your breath, your Beatrice, your nature, your memory
4.maiden like, pure true 3	4. the terrible thing, deadly terrible qualities 6	
5. rich sweet voice and tone 3	5.poor Beatrice, poor life 3	
	6.sweet breathe 4	
	7.childlike innocent 2	
	8. queen like air	
	9. worthy to be worshipped	
	10.accursed 4	
	11.dear, dearest 2	
	12. loved	
	13.feared	

Table 8: Giovanni

Appearance	Character	Possessive/demonstrative adjectives
1.the young man 8	1.Heated	1.My teacher, my own eyes, my father's friend, my blood, my system, my friend
2.the beautiful head and mouth 2	2.Surprised	2. his ease, his friends, his mother, his sister, his hand (4), his eyes (3), his whole life, his side, his present state, his face (3), his beautiful flower, his secrets, his coat, his own window, his ideas, his system, his senses, his breast, his head, his frame, his breath, his fright, his anger, his attention
3.Extended hand	3.quick rapid movement (2)	3. your purpose, your worshipful imagination. Your region of unspeakable terror, your lips, your awful father, your breath
4.(face became) pale	4.love (grew) thin and faint	4.this power
	5.unspekable hatred	
	6.fierce anger, lightening flash, dark cloud (3)	
	7.eager enjoyment	
	8hateful ugly deadly	
	10.deep long breath	

Lisabetta was mentioned as old in 5 different phrases in the text.

Table 9: Setting (24)

The apartment	The garden	Time
1.high, ill lighted room	1.The (previous) pleasure place	1. very long ago
2. old building/palace (2)	2.magnificnet flowers (5)	2. old streets
3.ill furnished apartment	3. jewel like richness (4)	3.acnicent friend
	4.individual virtue (2)	
	5.the broken fountain (3)	
	6.a lovely island	
	7.region of unspeakable terror	
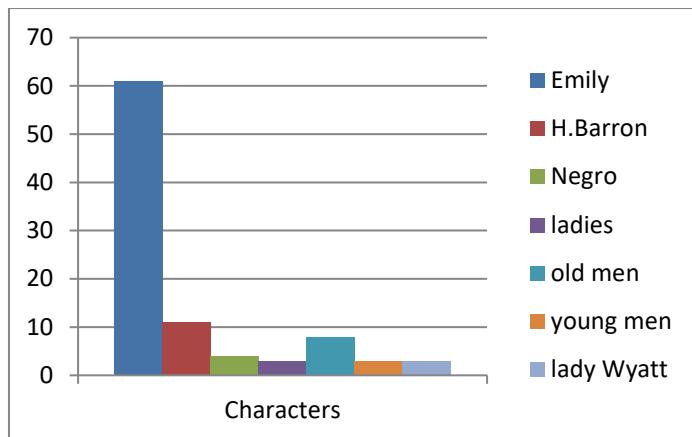
Graph 1

4.1. Analysis

This graph shows that the highest number of antonymic adjectives was found in the depiction of character and dialogue of Miss Emily which is 61. Homer Barron was given 11, the Negro man servant 4, the ladies 3, the old men 8, the young men 3, the old lady Wyatt was given 3 adjectives. This shows that the maximum value was given to the main character Miss Emily.
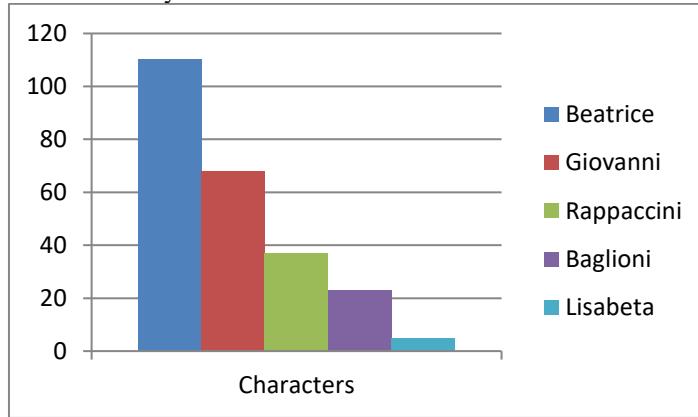
Graph 2

4.2. Analysis

The above graph shows that the highest value was given to the main female figure of the story Beatrice. 110 adjective and phrases containing adjectives were used for and by her. Giovanni was given 68, Rappaccini 37, Baglioni 23 and old Lisabeta was given 5 adjectives. A significant observation is that the adjectives used for Giovanni contained 24 qualifying and 44 possessive adjectives, whereas for Beatrice 65 qualifying and 45 possessive adjectives were used. This shows that the possessive adjectives for Giovanni were 64.7% and for Beatrice 40.9%.

Table 10

Stories	Total adjective	Adjective for setting	%	Adjective for characters	%	for male character	%	Female characters	%
A rose for Emily	121	24	19.83	93	76.85	26	27.96	67	72.04
Rappaccini's daughter	267	28	10.48	243	91.01	128	52.67	115	47.32

4.3. Analysis

This table shows that the writer of A rose for Emily, William Faulkner used economy of words as there are 121 total words and phrases containing adjectives. In the second story there are 267 adjectives. In both the stories emphasis is given more on the characters 76.85% and 91.01% in the first and second stories respectively, whereas the settings were given 19.8% and 10.48% adjectives. However, the differences among both the stories lie in the relative emphasis given to both the stories. In the modern story the emphasis on setting is 9.43% more than the

old story. This is because the modern stories put more emphasis on setting and advancement of action instead of description of characters.

In the old story the female figure Beatrice is given the central position. The frequency of total adjectives for females 47.32 is lesser that total adjectives for the combined value of all the males which is 52.67. This might be because the central figure Beatrice is the only female character in a patriarchal and conventional society. In the modern story the females are given 72.04 whereas for male characters it is 27.96. Faulkner also describes the old deteriorating social values but his treatment is modern so, more adjectives are used for female characters. Faulkner's feminist treatment and more emphasis on the female characters make it a modern story.

5. Findings

- The modern stories are written in a way that there is economy of words as it is shown through the results. This study proves that the selected modern story has 9.43% lesser use of adjectives. It shows that the modern stories are short in order to cater to the needs and time constraints of their audience.
- The controlled use of adjectives in the modern stories show a remarked change in writing style of the stories. In the old story more adjectives are used for description and dialogues of the characters. Hence the b results show that, more emphasis was given to the character development than the actions.
- Both stories have more values of frequency of adjectives used for characters than the setting. However, the modern story has more percentage of the adjectives used for setting as compared to old story. This shows that the trend of describing the settings of the story has increased over the period of time.
- There has been found no repetition of any sort of adjectives in the modern story, whereas the old story is full of repetitive adjectives for description of characters. For instance, Beatrice is described as beautiful and Giovanni as young for many times in the text.
- The possessive adjectives used by Giovanni were 64.7% and by Beatrice the score was 40.9%. This reveals that the female figure was not even given hold on any possessions. Even her existence was taken as granted by her father and lover. She was possessed by her father and used as an experimental object.

6. Discussion

This study includes the data in the form of possessive and demonstrative adjectives along with qualitative adjectives. The use of possessive adjectives was found to be very frequent in the old story, whereas in the modern story the use of possessive adjectives was almost negligible. The study could only focus on a particular type of adjectives to compare data from more stories of different ages.

The stories selected for this study may not be fully representative of the particular age. However they represent individual styles of the story writers. More contemporary writer's work can be taken into account to find comparable frequencies of the use of adjectives. The adjectives found in the form of binaries can be further explored using the same data. The frequencies of adjective binary pairs can be compared to the adjectives found freely in the stories.

The possessive adjectives found in both the stories could be analyzed separately because the older story is full of possessive adjectives. The male characters use more of it. Even there is mentioning of Your Beatrice but there is no mention of Your Giovanni. This could be of concern to the feminist researchers to be able to differentiate Rappaccini's daughter on the basis of frequency of possessive adjectives. Even the title of the story does not state "Beatrice" but this female character is treated as a possession.

7. Conclusion

The comparison of an old and modern story in terms of adjectives shows that the old story contains more adjectives as compared to the modern story. The adjectives are used more for characters than the setting in both stories. However the modern story reveals the changing trend of putting more emphasis on the setting. The modern writer has more feminist handling of the story as the total frequencies of females are more than the males. On the other hand the older story has more adjectives for males as compared to the females. This shows that his treatment of the story is less feminist. The polarity of adjectives in a particular text reveals the conflicts and tensions in it.

7.1. Future recommendations

This method of identifying, encoding, and counting the frequencies of adjectives can be used to compare texts of different ages. More studies can be conducted to analyze other stories of the same authors to compare the same author's use of antonymic adjectives over the period of time. This study focused on only characters and setting. More researches can be conducted to find the use of antonymic adjective that describe plot, so that a shifting focus on plot in modern stories can be analyzed. The data of this research can be used to do a comparative gender study of only the possessive adjectives. The modern texts are full of binaries the opposite of which are not explicitly found in the same text, they have economy of words. The modern texts have such adjectives the binary of which are either absent or hinted in the text. Studies using deconstruction of antonymic adjectives can be conducted. The stories contained the binary adjectives as the language needed to convey the dramatic effects. The data is in the form of adjectives. More words that stand in opposite to each other like prepositions in and out and adverbs slowly/rapidly can be picked and analyzed.

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