

# Student's Perspective Toward the Use of Symbols in "Sons and Lovers"<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Sons and Lovers (1913) turned into a singular Lawrence's first massive novel making him probably the greatest younger novelist of his generation. Lawrence used symbols to beautify the expression of his language in his work "Sons and Lover". This study aims to investigate EFL students' perspectives toward the use of symbols in 'sons and lovers'. In another word, the researcher asked to what extent did the EFL students accept the representation of the symbols in the novel? Did the author use the symbols in a good way? Did the symbols deliver the author's message successfully? To answer these questions, the following question was set: " What is the level of EFL students' perspective toward the use of symbols in 'sons and lovers'?. The participants were 54 male and female undergraduate students from grade Four at the Department of English, College of Arts, University of Anbar-Iraq. The study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2021-2022. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The results revealed that the students are aware of the meaning of the symbols in English literature.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Learning English literature exposed the learners to the nature of British and American history. The literature reflexes the social, economic, political, and daily life of the period that the author lived during the artwork. The researcher reviewed the literature and found that the term 'symbol' is existed in most literature such as in Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte; Aurora Leigh by Elizabeth Barrett Browning; As You Like It by William Shakespeare; Night by Elie Wiesel; The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne; A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry; How the Grinch Stole Christmas! By Dr Seuss; Harry Potter Series by J.K. Rowling; The Raven by Edgar Allan Poe; She Dwelt Among Untrodden Ways by William Wordsworth; The Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Samuel Taylor Coleridge; and He Wishes For The Clothes of Heaven by W.B. Yeats. All these works and more show the significant role of symbolism in English literature. To this end, as a common theme being used in many arts, it is significant to reveal the students' perspectives toward the use of the symbols in 'Sons and Lovers' and to see if the students are satisfied with the symbols and the meaning or the message that each symbol represents.

## Aim of the Study

This study aims to reveal the EFL students perspectives toward the use of symbols in the novel 'Sons and Lovers'.

## Question of the Study

To achieve the aim of the study, the following question was set " What are the level EFL students' perspective toward the use of symbols in 'sons and lovers'?

## Significance of the Study

The outcomes of the study will be significance for the university professors who specialized in English literature to be aware of students' knowledge concerning the literature techniques such as symbols, metaphor, simile, eloquence, rhetoric, and assonance. This study is concerned with the symbols used in novel. Knowing students' perspectives and knowledge level is very important for the professors who set the lesson plan.

## Limits of The Study

The study is limited to:

- 1- Participants: the participants were 54 male and female students from the grade 4 at the Department of English.

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- 2- Location: The location of the study is in the College of Arts, University of Anbar, in the Anbar Province in Iraq.
- 3- Duration: The study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2021-2022.
- 4- Instrument: A questionnaire was used to collect the data of the study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The term 'image' is at the start derived from the Greek verb 'Symballein' which means 'to place together' and the associated noun 'Symbolon' which means 'mark', 'take', or 'sign' i. In different words, the term 'image' refers to an object, person, place, or motion that has a means in itself and additionally stands for something large than itself, consisting of a quality, an attitude, a belief, or a fee as Lawrence has said: You can't deliver an incredible image 'which means, any greater than you could deliver a cat a 'which means'. Symbols are natural gadgets of recognition with a lifestyle on their own, and you could by no means explain them anyway, due to the fact their fee is dynamic, emotional, belonging to the Sense-recognition of the frame and soul, and now no longer genuinely mental (Dateller, 1964).

Symbolism refers to a literary movement that originated in France within the final of the 19th century via way of means by Rimbaud, Mallarme, and others. They used symbols to explicit a better invisible international apart from the arena of concrete phenomena. As Baudelaire, one of the essential forerunners of the motion said: Human beings stay in a woodland of symbols, which ends up from the truth that the materiality and individuality of the bodily global dissolve into the darkish and difficult harmony of the unseen global (AL-Emad and Sawai, 2019).

The motion became a riot towards realism and naturalism. British writers had been stimulated through the motion for a while and it has become a dominant pressure in twentieth-century literature. In the broadest concept, Symbolism is an examination of the incorporation of shape with content. It is utilised by writers to boost their writing and deliver perception to the reader. It is a literary tool utilised in literature whilst a few matters aren't to be taken literally. It may be person, events, situation, object, or moves that have a deeper meaning in context (Jaswal, 2017).

By the usage of symbolism, an author feels freedom by including double tiers of meanings in his paintings. It offers a literary painting extra richness and colour and may make the means of the paintings deeper. In some other way, it permits writers to bring their thoughts to their readers circuitously in preference to having to mention them directly, which could make texts appear extra nuanced and complex. Especially in literature, Symbolism elicits situations in readers reason they discover a possibility to get perception into the author's thoughts on how he perspectives the arena and the way he thinks of not unusual place movements and topics, having wider implication (Liu, 2019)

Anber and Jameel (2020) found that Iraqi university EFL students use Emoji faces when they communicate with each other via social media applications in a very limited frequency, and the majority of the EFL students were unaware of most of Emoji faces' meaning and their actual representation.

## THE SYMBOLISM IN SONS AND LOVERS

Sons and Lovers are taken to be certainly considered one of Lawrence's masterpieces, and its miles taken into consideration being the maximum autobiographical novel. He makes a spacious use of symbols in his novel Sons and Lovers. He absorbs nutrients from modernism and makes a few awesome developments, certainly considered one among that's symbolism (Empson, 1999).

The novel "Sons and Lovers" is a look at human relationships Gertrude Morel, due to her turbulent and amazing courting together along with her husband, finally ends up growing deep emotional members of the family together along with her eldest sons. In the radical Sons and Lovers, many symbolic scenes have a stimulant impact on the energy of the plot and movement inside the novel (Edgar, 2007).

Lawrence makes use of symbols in a maximum of his novels for a few reasons, first to find out the recognition of every character. Second for creating an announcement approximately the members of the family among the classes. Thirdly, to reveal to us the darkish depths of human nature (Lawrence, 2006).

The image of the coal- pits in Sons and Lovers may be the very essential reason it has returned to help the economic system with inside the country. In the story, coal pits are set in opposition to the backdrop of the Nottinghamshire coal country, in which the mines shape the financial spine of the community, supplying everyday lifestyles with a type of herbal rhythm, of sleep and awakening, lifestyles and death. The lifestyles of the pits, even though harsh and unforgiving, nonetheless keep a sure rugged honesty, in the marked assessment of the fake sophistication of Gertrude's family (Sinha, 2016).

The image of the swing at Willey Farm represents the rotation courting between Paul and Miriam. As stated by David Morrison that "the swing is going up and down, lower back and forth, simply as their courting does, veering wildly among love and hate". It's additionally incredible that Miriam cannot obtain the identical heights at the swing as Paul, Symbolizing the gaping chasm between their respective intercourse drives. Identically, Paul loves Miriam, however this love abruptly modifications into antipathy. The hate, too, is non-permanent and shortly offers a manner to love. Thus the motion of the swing efficaciously expresses their touch-and-pass relationship. Miriam's incapability to take a seat down at the swing and supply herself over absolutely to the instant is symbolic of her timidity, and absence of bodily courage. This very timidity is similarly symbolized via way of means of how she feeds the hens. Similarly, she has a dependency on elevating the entirety to a religious intensity, and this dependency is symbolized via way of means of the incident of the rose bush (Buell, 2011).

Symbol of the Ash Tree, Lawrence correctly used the image of the Ash Tree to explain the evil and darkish elements of life. It is a complicated image sporting multiple meanings. Where it's far the image of the darkish, ambiguous forces of nature which can be the foreboders of tragedy in human life. It is symbolic of the disharmony that exists between the husband and spouse inside the Morel family. The continual bickering of the dad and mom will become a fear for the youngsters, who lay wakeful upstairs and are not able to coherently understand what could occur ultimately. The tree will become an image of the internal terror of youngsters who strike and moan inwardly. It additionally predicts the destiny doom that's to beset the Morel family (Dalecki, 1965).

One of the maximum symbols in Lawrence's novels is the flower. Lawrence is interested in vegetation, and he makes use of description in the course of his novels. Often a flower will take at the strength of a symbol. The scene of flower selection is quite symbolic. The keys figures – Paul, Miriam, and Clara – select out vegetation. Paul alternatives vegetation with love, like a lover; Miriam with fake reverence: and Clara does now no longer select out them at all (James and Glotfelty, 1999).

This indicates that the flower of affection among Miriam and Paul can be killed due to the fact Miriam appears to be killing existence out of vegetation. The manner she alternatives vegetation indicates that she has no proper existence. When it involves Clara, she states pretty boldly that vegetation has to now no longer be picked as it kills them, suggesting that she does now no longer needs to be picked through any man. Paul alternatives vegetation nearly evidently and spontaneously. This suggests his naturalness and impulsiveness, as a substitute for a spontaneous float of existence. Thus the vegetation characterises the character's" mindset to existence.

The Symbol of the blood tie is likewise very crucial inside the story. It is among the mom Mrs Morel and her son Paul. In the primary occasions of the story, there occurred a quarrel between Mrs. Morel and her husband Mr. Morel, while she has hit him with a drawer which she is sitting on. The harm bleeds profusely and drops of blood fall on the hair of Paul who's inside the palms of Mrs. Morel at the moment. The blood isn't washed out however it receives soaked into the scalp of Paul. This small incident is symbolic of the disillusioned and annoyed dating between the husband and spouse and the later reversal of mindset of Mrs. Morel closer to her husband and the substitution of her sons in the location of her husband. The scene is likewise symbolic of the agreement of spirit among the mom and son that's sealed with a blood tie. An image is an object, action, or person that stands for each itself and something larger, together with a summary idea or emotion (Liu, 2019).

To go back to the start of this novel, we will see that there are masses of symbols that we will see. Firstly, don't forget the egg cups that William wins on the honest after which provides to his mother. The egg cups are an image of William's love and affection for his mother, and they display the very near bond that lies among those characters. In an equal way, whilst her husband returns from the bar overdue on that day, the gingerbread he has delivered for the kids is an image of his love for his family, even though he struggles to explicit it via his moves and phrases so often (Sylvan, 1961).

These symbols deliver a concept of a way to locate extra on this compelling novel. Moreover, the image of burned potatoes symbolizes Miriam's overall absorption in Paul. In while the charred bread symbolizes Paul's overall absorption in Miriam. optimism and consideration are symbolized on the stop of the unconventional with the assistance of the gold phosphorescence of the city. Hence, the symbolism makes use of in Sons and Lovers is pretty easy and clean to understand. They are in no manner complicated however instead assist in a higher knowledge of the unconventional (Sinha, 2016).

## PREVIOUS STUDIES

Jaswal (2017) found that The most used symbols in Sons and Lovers were the weather and flowers. There are certain symbols used by Lawrence which clearly attract the attention of the audience to observe the actual character of Paul

Morel as a philanderer. All these symbols have a psychological trends that provides good image to judge the characters. It is only through symbols that one could venture into the subconscious and unconscious of people mind.

AL-Emad and Sawai (2019). Conducted a study that aims to analyzing the symbolism in Sons and Lover to highlight analysis of the different symbolic and their significance in the development of the novel as well as the characters. His used of Symbolism in most of his novels mean to explicate his views on a variety of thoughts which emanate out of his basic philosophy of life.

## METHODOLOGY

The participants of the study is 45 male and female students from Four Grade at the Department of English. Table 1 shows the distribution of the participants.

**Table 1:** Participants of the study

Males	26
Females	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>

### Instrument of the Study

To achieve the aim of the study and collect the data, a questionnaire was built. To judge the usability of the instrument, it's validity and reliability were calculated. The questionnaire was reviewed by a jury member from specialists in the field of literature, methodology, and linguistics. The jury recommendations and suggestions were taken in consideration. Also, the questionnaire's reliability was calculated by distributed it to a pilot sample consisting of five students (out of the sample of the study) after 10 days, the instrument was redistributed to the same sample under the same conditions. A Cronbach Alpha was used to calculate the reliability coefficient; the value was revealed to be 0.89, which is considered acceptable.

### Procedures of the Study

To achieve the aim of this study and to collect the data, the researcher followed the following procedures:

- 1- Identified the Novel as a model and the participants of the study from the Department of English.
- 2- Reviewed the literature and identified the symbols of the novel.
- 3- Interpreted the symbols based on events and the author's realization.
- 4- Established the questionnaire via Google Workspace (Google Form) to be able to distribute the questionnaire to all participants via the following link: <https://forms.gle/vi4Znm5YNVUymFFV9>
- 5- Collected the data and analysed them statistically.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

To answer the question of the study which states " What are the EFL students' perspective toward the use of symbols in 'sons and lovers' a mean scores and standard deviation were used. The results of the questionnaire items are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Means and Standard Deviation of the Items.**

Item No.	Symbols	Mean	Std.	Rank	Level
1.	Ash- tree	4.33	0.94	1	Very High
2.	The swing	3.14	1.16	7	Medium
3.	The flowers	3.90	1.08	4	High
4.	The death	3.21	1.15	5	Medium
5.	The blood tie	4.31	0.96	2	Very High
6.	Orange Moon	3.99	1.25	3	High

7.	Fire	3.19	1.21	6	Medium
8.	Stockings	3.07	1.27	8	Low

Table 2 shows that symbol entitled " Ash- tree " has the highest mean score 4.33 which rank the first. This indicate that the students have very high perspective that this symbol has represent the meaning of dark, mysterious forces of nature which are the foreboders of tragedy in human-life. Then in the second rank came the symbol entitled " The blood tie " with mean score "4.31" which indicated that the students have very high perspective that it represent the contract of soul between the mother and son which is sealed with a blood tie. As a high level, the symbol entitled " Orange Moon " has a mean score "3.99" which came in the third rank, this indicates that the students have high perspectives that "Orange Moon" represents the emotional lives of the characters. In the last rank came the symbol entitled "Stockings" with mean score "3.07". This symbol represents a sense of women's imprisonment. This result indicated that students' perceptions were low concerning the representation of the symbol to the women's confinement.

These results indicate that the students are aware of the meaning of the symbols in the English literature. This results are due to the students' interest on learning British literature and the literature that represents and reflects the English values, culture, and society. The good and rich background of the university professors are reflecting on the students' knowledge and awareness of the English literature aspects.

## CONCLUSION

The finding of the study revealed that the Iraqi EFL students cannot only learn British and American literature, but they can even understand the techniques and instruments of the English artists such as the symbols, Emoji, allegory, and allusion similes, and motifs. The students' perspectives toward the use of symbols by the authors ranking between medium and very good. The low and medium perspectives may due to the influence of the Iraqi culture and language styles. The symbol "Stockings" in the Iraqi culture and language style refer to dress only, but in the novel it refers to women's confinement. The author used symbols to boost the express of his language.

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