
The Use Of Stylistic Devices In Shooting An Elephant By George Orwell

In George Orwell's literary composition, "Shooting an Elephant" Orwell uses stylistic devices and rhetorical strategies in order to convey his attitude toward British imperialism, fear of humiliation and Colonial resentment.

George Orwell was an English novelist, essayist, journalist and critic, which was born in Bengal, India in 1903. During his middle years instead of attending university, Orwell decided to take a job in lower Burma with the Indian Imperial Police. Subsequently, he decided to write about his experience in a literary composition, "Shooting an elephant." In this essay, Orwell, the narrator, recites the time when he was working as a colonial policeman in lower Burma and was mocked by numerous local people. One of the primary events in the story occurs when the narrator finds out that an elephant has been demolishing a bazaar, he arrives at the scene and prepares himself to kill the animal. The police officer realizes that the only way to get out of the situation is to exterminate the animal because otherwise he will be laughed at and called weak. Thereafter, Orwell shoots the elephant, which suffers an agonizing death. Afterwards, the narrator perceives that he has committed a mistake because he was peer pressured and even quotes: "I often wondered whether any of the others grasped that I had done it solely to avoid looking fool." An example when Orwell used the ability to use language effectively in order to divulge his attitude towards British imperialism was when he said: "For all that time I had already made up my mind that imperialism was an evil thing and the sooner I chucked up my job and got out of it the better."

This sentence proves that Orwell did not support communism. As well as Orwell was a splendid writer and stirring figure he was an idealist and was a democratic socialist. He stated this fact habitually throughout his life. From Orwell's perspective, all political theories and ideologies were despondent and dismaying. The reason why he thought this way was because from his personal standpoint if impoverished and affluent people did not have a discrepancy such a society would remain controversial. Another quote which demonstrated that he (George Orwell) antipathies communism is: "Theoretically- and secretly, of course - I was all for the Burmese and all against their oppressors, the British." This quotation defines, once again, that Orwell dislikes the socialist system. In this literary composition, Orwell's fear of humiliation is one of the most important topics. An exemplar which shows Orwell's use of language that creates a literary effect on his personal fear of humiliation was when he said: "Here was I, the white man with his gun, standing in front of the unarmed native crowd - seemingly the leading actor of the piece; but in reality I was only an absurd puppet pushed to and fro by the will of those yellow

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faces behind.” This saying verifies that Orwell did not feel comfortable with shooting the elephant, in fact, according to the sentence he felt peer pressured and thought of himself as an object because the force of the Burmese anticipation made him feel like he was incapable of managing this matter.

In this story, it is told that Orwell did not sense the need for slaughtering the immense animal and the only cause which made him compute this action was fear of humiliation. In other words, Orwell killed the mammoth in order to maintain a degree of supremacy. This may be valuable as Orwell might be living his life, not as a policeman, but rather as an individual who is aware of that others have yearnings of him. At the begging of the essay the reader is told by the narrator that the main character, the narrator is poorly treated by the locals of lower Burma, due to this he is concerned about their opinions of him. The third primary subject sutured through this story is colonial resentment of the people of Burma. In this essay George attempts to prove that colonialism is vicious, or as he describes it in the story: “Systematic evil.” George Orwell believes that each and every individual living in Burma is not sinful. Despite that, they all have to comply with a system that causes them to conduct in foolish ways. In this literary composition, Orwell uses his experience of shooting an elephant as a metaphor of colonialism. After terminating the action of assassinating of the virtuous animal Orwell says a very prominent quote: “When the white man turns tyrant it is his own freedom that he destroys.”

The narrator comprehends that the system of governance of Burma is degrading him. For example, he does not aspire to loathe local Burmese people, but he does. In the essay, he portrays himself of being very irritated by them (the Burmese citizens) that he even fantasizes about killing them. A reader can understand that the conventions of colonialism force the main character to behave brutishly for no peculiar reason. Ultimately, this essay relates the political scenario of that time with social reality. The main theme of: “Shooting an elephant” is to divulge disputes between one’s moral conscience and law. Orwell proves that this is the main theme by one action: the significant decision that he has to make of whether he should execute the elephant or not. In only a limited amount of space this essay teaches one an important lesson, due to this; this work is crucial to read today, even though many things now-a-days have been modified.

One of the many lessons that this literary composition teaches is that occasionally people’s decisions become influenced by other individuals, but not always in the correct or righteous way. One can perceive that this is an important moral of the story because one of the main moments of this essay happens when George Orwell is beholden to choose between two undesirable options: killing the elephant and becoming a substantial figure or saving the life of the animal but becoming humiliated. Likewise, Orwell has an internal dispute between his own moral conscience and his personal immoral actions. Consequently, Orwell becomes a puppet for the local citizens by deserting his considerations of moral integrity. In conclusion, an

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individual should contemplate on reading this essay as it teaches a valuable lesson that all human beings should learn.

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