

## **Mental Illness in Literature**

*Seeing and Recognizing Mental Illness in Conrad's 'The Idiots', Poe's 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' and Scott Fitzgerald's Tender is the Night*

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## Abstract

The central theme in ‘The Idiots’ by Joseph Conrad, ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ by Edgar Allen Poe and *Tender is the Night* by F. Scott Fitzgerald is mental illness. These texts demonstrate mental illness through genetically inherited insanity, doctor patient relationship and self-perception of mental illness in that they all explore the thin line between sanity and lunacy. This thesis uses Lillian Feder’s book *Madness in Literature*, Michel Foucault’s *Madness and Civilization* and theories by Freud as the main theoretical framework. Expressions of mental illness in Conrad, Poe and Scott Fitzgerald’s text are discussed in connection to Feder, Foucault and Freud’s theories. The focal point of this analysis is to show how mental illness is presented through interpreting language, point of view and characters by drawing examples of these and analyzing them. This thesis discusses a didactic presentation of how to teach ‘mental illness’, and ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ as a source to mental illness in literature, in Norwegian upper secondary schools. The didactic chapter presents a teaching plan in accordance to competence aims and general aims. Mental illness has been a taboo-topic but pupils experience mental illness through series, films, blogs and social media. It is important to show that mental diseases are difficult to see and teach them that people with mental illnesses often are discriminated against. The topic teaches how to create tolerance and understanding, how to work with a literary text, analyzing literature and developing vocabulary. The theme is relevant for the pupils’ understanding of mental illness as a concealed form of illness, as well as literature as a form of expression and source of comfort. The didactic work promotes teaching based on the Poe’s short story in accordance with competence aims and regulations stated in the Knowledge Promotion Reform 2013 and the English Subject Curriculum 2013. The didactic teaching plan promotes the use of basic reading and writing skills, reading strategies and development of vocabulary.



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“Believe nothing you hear, and only one-half that you see”.

-Poe<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’, page 5.

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## 1. Introduction

The central theme in ‘The Idiots’ by Joseph Conrad, ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ By Edgar Allen Poe and *Tender is the night* by F. Scott Fitzgerald is mental illness. Mental illness is presented differently through these texts but they all depict a blurry line between sanity and lunacy. In Poe’s story the protagonist has difficulties of seeing and recognizing mental illness and becomes the victim of misconceptions. The main scope of mental illness in Conrad’s story is children born with generic intelligence disability and their parents’ struggle with this misfortune. *Tender is the Night* by F. Scott Fitzgerald show a mentally ill patient intimately involved with her doctor and depicts how their relationship changes as the patient recovers from her schizophrenia. The central focus for the analyses of these texts is to show how mental illness is presented through the interpretation of language, point of view and characters, and although it is not the purpose of this thesis the stories depicts different diagnoses of mental illness. The short stories and the novel are written in different decades and therefore it is possible to trace the development of psychiatry through the texts. They situate different problems attached to mental illness, and theories of treatment and execution also differs between the narratives.

This thesis will analyze how language, point of view and characters are used in the narrative to present mental illness. The literary analyses are narrowed by three focus points according to the purpose of the analyses and their ability to show how mental illness is expressed in the text. Interpretation of language highlights the linguistic choices in the texts and draws attention to implicit revelations concealed in language. These revelations are also made visual from the changing perspectives presented by the narrator. The point of view dictates the extent of mental illness the reader is permitted to see by excluding and including several characters’ perspective. It is through interpretations of characters mental illness

manifests itself and become vivid within the text. Characters gives madness a presence in the text as well as their vocalization can give a narrowed or inclusive perception to mental illness. Insight perspective of characters and shifting point of views alters between the observer of mental illness and the affected of mental illness. Mental illness as seen in these texts is closely connected to relationship, more specifically to family relationship, marital relationship and doctor patient relationship. Addition to its focal point this dissertation also discuss how mental illness can be taught to pupils at upper secondary school level by using ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ the teaching plan focus on how mental illness is presented in literature.

As the main theoretical interpretative frame this thesis uses *Madness in Literature* by Lillian Feder (1980), *Madness and Civilization* by Michel Foucault (2001) and language interpretive theories by Sigmund Freud presented in ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’ (1900), ‘Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious’ (1905) and ‘The Psychopathology of Everyday Life’ (1901). *Madness in Literature* presents a wide in-depth study of madness in literature. Feder raises interesting points of discussion and shows fascinating acumen in her study of literary madness. Her investigation focus on the diagnostic perspective through the ancient prototypes and origins of madness with cultural, social, religious and medical context. Feder’s approach to madness in literature demonstrates the power of judgement consisting in society and religion. This idea is also widely explored by Foucault in his book *Madness and Civilization*. Foucault describes the process of treatment of the insane in a thorough account of the conditions concerning the insane through the classical age and age of confinement towards modern psychiatry. The emphasis on the medical and social aspect of mental illness is an important point for the analyses in this thesis. These aspects Foucault presents provides explanation of how mental illness was seen and treated, which help identify madness through language, point of view and characters in Conrad, Poe and Scott Fitzgerald’s texts. The birth

of the asylum and the gathering of the insane is according to Foucault a trigger factor for the new direction in psychology. The institutions used to house the insane and the different treatments are valid discussion points in the interpretation of mental illness through all three focus points. Freud's theories mainly concern the interpretations of language and are used to analyze linguistic parts such as metaphors, jokes and puns. As a pioneer in the field of psychiatry Freud is highly important to linguistic interpretations to explain the importance of revelations in speech. Language is an essential approach to mental illness and hold great analytical value to literature. In his work of the dream interpretation Freud elevates the interpretive possibilities of words and metaphors. ". . . the conceptual framework and the symbolic language Freud used to describe the psychic struggle for the integration of unconscious and conscious processes" (Feder 205). Vocabulary choices in the conversation of mental illness are pointed out by Suanna H. Davis as an important point of discussion. The idea of developing a consciousness towards the words we use and associate with mental illness is relevant for the teaching aspect of the topic. Feder, Foucault, Freud and Davis's respective theories and studies are used in this thesis to highlight and argue for the statements regarding the presentation of mental illness through point of view, language and characters. Their theories enable a discussion around the literary interpretation and show a clear connection between the content of Poe, Conrad and Scott Fitzgerald's texts and mental illness as a literary topic.

Literature about mental illness has, as Feder points out, existed since the fifth century B.C. (279), but the scope and visibility of the topic has changed towards modern times. Davis states that mental illness is and has a history of being a taboo topic. As a literary theme it now occurs more often and more openly than previously. This thesis focuses on literary analysis consisting of few focus point showing that the literary theme can be excerpted from the interpretation of language, point of view and characters in the texts. This approach to literary

analysis is also vital in teaching, to show the pupils how to construct in-depth studies according to purpose. Three focus points are used to show pupils the equal academic value of an analysis consisting of few focus points as one of greater width.

Ch. 7 in this thesis shows how ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ can be taught in upper secondary school, specifically in the programme subject; English Literature and Culture. The chapter presents a teaching plan constructed mainly after the didactic diamond according to the competence aims in the Knowledge Promotion Reform. Competence aims are national guidelines to educational content dictating what the pupils should have required competence in when the school year ends. The Knowledge Promotion Reform was introduced in Norwegian schools in 2006 and consists of subject curricula, the Core Curriculum, the Quality Framework, the programme structure and the distribution of subject- and teaching hours (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2011 1). The Knowledge Promotion Reform defines basic skills as essential utensils for education and development in ‘Framework for Basic Skills’ (2012 5). The basic skills are divided into five main areas constituting digital competency, oral skills, numeracy and reading- and writing skills. The teaching plan in Ch. 7 makes use of reading and writing skills, and presents a didactic account of how they can be applied in teaching.

The significance of the English subject in Norwegian schools is argued in the English Subject Curriculum by its prevalence as a global language. Norwegian teens are surrounded by the English language in a greater extent today and have greater conditions to develop a language close to native both in speech and writing. They are exposed to English through films, music, literature, video games, etc. thus giving the pupils great possibility to practice the language and it asserts the importance of English language learning. The Education Programme for Specialization in General Studies offers three different programme subjects; International English, Social Studies English and English Literature and Culture. The Subject

Objective in the English Subject Curriculum states that the English subject can increase self-confidence, prompt personal growth, develop critical reflections, give insights and evolve language skills. These points insinuate the connection between the English subject and the pupils' personal life, which valid the purpose to teach mental illness as a topic. 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' is a humoristic short story about a male narrator who visits a private madhouse in the south of France. Although he himself is educated in the field of medicine he cannot distinguish between sanity and lunacy and is very surprised when he finds himself ". . . dining with lunatics. . ." (Poe 5). Mental illness, madness or insanity are topics which long has been taboo. In a modern society where people publicly can express their experience with mental illness through social media or blogs and books which more openly discuss illness the shame to talk about it disappears and the taboo is broken. Mental illness is a form of sickness which can be difficult for others to see because it rarely bears visual traits. Teaching mental illness can help pupils understand different aspects of mental illness, see the comfort in reading and writing and also prepare them for the topic's presence in their social life. 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' can be used as an example of how difficult it can be to tell if someone is ill and to discuss with the pupils the words in which they use and associate with mental diseases.

## 2. Theory

This thesis looks at the way mental illness is presented in two short stories from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, ‘The Idiots’ by Joseph Conrad and ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ by Edgar Allen Poe, and one novel from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *Tender is the night* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The focal point is to analyze how language, point of view and characters depict mental illness in literature. These texts problematize genetically inherited insanity, doctor patient relationship and self-perception of mental illness. The three texts have different approaches to mental illness but their common denominator is that all explore the thin line between sanity and lunacy. Mental illness in literature is closely connected to religion, and although mental illness has always been seen as a form of sickness its cause differs through centuries. Termination of madness in addition to religion relies on contemporary society and its conception of mental illness. This chapter will discuss the connection of literary madness with language, point of view and characters. Mental illness is a topic which has long been taboo and a topic which can be difficult for pupils to understand. Chapter 7 presents a didactic adaption of the reading and interpretation of ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ that demonstrates how it can be used to teach literature and mental illness as a topic in Norwegian upper secondary school.

Mental illness, as literary theme, traces back to ancient texts and has been frequently explored throughout decades. Many variables of diagnoses and types of mental illness have been depicted in literature and can be identified in ancient Greek literature, *The Malleus Maleficarum* and texts by Jonathan Swift and Sylvia Plath. This analysis of madness does not focus on the diagnostic types of mental illness found in literature but how mental illness is presented. This approach to mental illness as a literary theme is widely explored in *Madness in Literature* by Lillian Feder. Feder clarifies in her preface; “I have attempted to write not a



history of madness in literature but a study of representative literary explorations of the deranged mind” (xii). Her study extends from Greek myths to modern literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. Feder raises attention to the Greek pantheon stories as she draws many examples from Dionysiac myths where madness appears as punishment or revenge. *Madness in Literature* accentuates how mental illness was defined through moral codes rooted in religion. As pointed out by Professor Feder traditions from the ancient Greek texts describes madness inflicted upon the infidel man as punishment from the gods. This view on the origin of insanity continued to be dominant for several centuries. “By the fifteenth century the assumption that insanity resulted from sin was so widely accepted. . .” (Feder 112). This connection between insanity and religion can be viewed in the analysis of ‘The Idiots’ in chapter 4. The husband in the story, a republican, is so frustrated by his children’s congenital idiocy that he turns to religion in hope to break the curse.

In the 16- and 1700 distinctions between insanity and normalcy were blurred and diagnostic categories of mental illness yet to developed, as Feder and Foucault demonstrate. In the sixteenth century physicians were engaged with classification of mental illness and separating them by symptoms, classifications according to Feder “. . . derived from ancient sources” (116). “Mad” functioned as a broad concept for several mental illnesses where a larger affiliated vocabulary did not exist. This thesis looks at mental illness in literature and discusses how it is presented through three focus points, one of which is language. In her article ‘Teaching the Taboo’, Suanna H. Davis writes about teaching literature about mental health to students. Davis pins down the importance for discussing with her students definitions of crazy and words associated with madness. Psychological accurate terms have partially replaced colloquial terms and accurate terminology is used in greater extent today. This change in language is expressed in Poe, Conrad and Scott Fitzgerald’s stories and will be analyzed in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Davis emphasizes the need for psychiatric-historic and

historical context through secondary sources when teaching mental illness as a literary theme. Her angle on teaching literature about mental illness will be further explored in Ch. 7 as her article also discusses the topic's relevance to the students' lives. Interesting points regarding the language use about mental illness is presented by Richard Arrandale in his paper 'Madness, Language and Theology'. Although his paper prompts a creation of space to develop and encourage a more positive language about mental illness Arrandale raises valid points about the existing language use about mental illness.

Words such as depression, anxiety, manic and schizophrenia are now part of everyday language, but they are all too often used either incorrectly, to describe everyday feelings, or as terms of abuse. In whatever way they are used, such everyday usage leads to misunderstandings and eventually robs them of any 'real' meaning they may have (195).

He goes on to draw examples of how the use of metaphors makes mental illness in to something hostile which labels and stigmatizes people who suffer from mental illness diagnoses by presenting Susan Sontag's example of military-metaphors applied to illness (Arrandale 196-197). This angle on language connected to mental illness is important to apply to education. It is important to make the pupils aware of the terms in which we associate topics with, and how the terminology we use can affect one's opinion about the topic.

Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* traces madness through various periods of history. Foucault focuses on the social laws that influenced and dictated the classifications of madness and elucidate the conditions the insane lived under. His work accentuates discourse as the main factor in the regulation of society's perspective on insanity. In the chapter "The Birth of the Asylum" he discusses the rise of lunatic asylums and portrays separate institutions for the insane as the beginning of a new direction in psychiatry. This thesis agrees with Foucault on the stated importance of language and elevates the improved terminology of madness to be accentual to interpreting literature. The asylum is a strong figure in 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' which divides the sane from the insane, or

so it would seem. Both the asylum and the clinic are major contributors to the development of treatment and the doctor patient relationship. The presence of these institutions in the narrative affects the interpretation of the characters. *Tender is the Night* depicts a doctor patient relationship that has evolved to a marital relationship. The novel illustrates the liberated patient and the new treatment Foucault describes as a result of the new and concentrated perspectives on mental illness. Both Poe and Scott Fitzgerald's stories deal with confinement versus liberation of the patient. 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' is a comedic representation of the strict boundaries between full liberation and confinement whilst *Tender is the Night* presents a method of treatment that blurs the boundaries between liberation and confinement.

Poor people, mentally ill and criminals were all seen as moral deviants and therefore a society problem, Foucault calls them undesirables. Houses of confinement, correction houses and workhouses were established to clear the streets from social outcasts and providing a solution for a society problem. The age of confinement is so named for its first purpose, to lock up and hide those who were declared abnormal. This assemblage of mentally ill people is according to Foucault significant for the development of psychiatry. Treatment initially was not a goal, but confinement was promoted by a desire to deal with a social problem by removing the problem from the public gaze. Organization of separate institutions for the mentally ill constituted the confinements second purpose, to cure the ill. Parallel to the development of psychiatry theories, treatment of mentally ill has gone through radical changes. 'The Idiots', 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' and *Tender is the Night* deal with the matter of confinement of the mentally ill and treatment theories. The development of psychoanalysis, with Freud amongst its pioneers, elevated language as means of treatment. The difference between treatment and cure can be seen by comparing 'The Idiots' and *Tender is the Night*. 'The Idiots' does not situate any form of cure but narrates a way of treatment of

the mentally ill children. Cure and treatment in *Tender is the Night* is strongly influenced by Freud and closely depicts a change in treatment theory. The emphasis on the potentials in analysis of language is discussed in the light of interpreting Nicole's focalization in the novel as well as the conversations about Nicole.

Poe's story illustrates the change of confinement regulations in a private mad house in France. The narrator visits *Maison de Santé* to observe the liberal treatment of patients, but upon arrival he is informed that the treatment is no longer in affect. The keepers have decided that due to enormous danger the patients must be under strict confinement. According to Foucault the shift during the 19<sup>th</sup> century condemned confinement and separated the mentally ill from the poor, beggars, criminals and other undesirables. The mentally ill was removed to their own institutions which lead to the growth of lunatic asylums. Gathering mad people in one place caused a new approach to the treatment of them. Foucault attends to Tuke and Pinel's approaches to the establishment of the asylum. Both Pinel and Tuke valued reason when treating the mad but they differ in their emphases on religion. Tuke based treatment on the Christian morality and valued religious principles to face the madman with his own conscience. The intention was to observe and correct behavior, and through conversations the wardens would appeal to the patient's conscience thus able him to reason. Pinel envisioned morality free from religion in order to obtain reason. His treatment consisted of the patient's own recognition of his madness and through accepted and adapted discourse the patient would talk about his own madness.

Retaining a person from madness through language is expressed by Freud, Foucault states that; “Freud went back to madness at the level of its *language* . . . he restored, in medical thought, the possibility of a dialogue with unreason” (Foucault 188). It is by this Foucault claims that psychology was born.

Foucault is particularly interested in how discourse creates relations of power/knowledge concerning human bodies. . . He particularly focuses on questions of health and illness, sanity and madness, law-abiding and criminal actions/bodies, and normal and deviant sexualities (Klages 144).

In her capsulation of Foucault’s theories Mary Klages accentuates Foucault’s interest in social mechanisms concerning behavior and discourse. Her statement depicts the level of attention Foucault directs to language in *Madness and Civilization*. Interpreting mental illness through language will according to Foucault also demonstrate the relationship between power and knowledge which in this thesis connects to doctor/warden figures in *Tender is the Night* and ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’.

The correlation between language and treatment is apparent in ‘The Idiots’, ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ and *Tender is the Night*, but viewed differently. Ch. 4 will discuss the use of contemptuous and colloquial language about mental illness in ‘The Idiots’ and its contributions to the presentation of mental illness in a historical perspective, however the clear distinction between contemptuous language, colloquial terms and accurate terminology is addressed in the light of the analyses of ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ and *Tender is the Night*. The literary interest in language through interpretative frame of Freud constitutes from perspectives of mad behavior and discourse of madness to orient from an unconscious state. This view, presented by Feder, pins the importance of analyzing language when discussing the presentation of mental illness in the text. In *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* chapter 4 titled; ‘Childhood Memories and Screen Memories’ Freud explain how memories of childhood can be forgotten and reappear in

adulthood. The adult explanation of the repressed or forgotten memory can be quite different than the actual source of the memory. This can be viewed by analyzing Nicole's breakdowns in *Tender is the Night*. Nicole is not aware why she is behaving crazy and has to be told by the staff at Dohmler's clinic that her disruptive behavior is caused by incestuous rape. Nicole seeks the comfort of her father during her time at the clinic but Mr. Warren is banned from seeing Nicole for as long as she is under treatment.

The asylum's medical aspects on mental illness developed and opened up for the physician's role in the institution. The patients were controlled through observation and judgment by the wardens and doctors at the asylum. Observing the patient was the only way to see if he acted according to reason, and only through punishment of misbehavior could the patient be lead straight. Foucault describes the animalistic behavioristic perspective of mental illness in the classical period, which is an interesting view in the interpretation of the characters in Conrad's story. Madness was not a human disorder, not illness, but redundancy of humanity in the body.

The animality that rages in madness dispossesses man of what is specifically human in him; not in order to deliver him over to other powers, but simply to establish him at the zero degree of his own nature. For classicism, madness in its ultimate form is man in immediate relation to his animality, without other reference, without any recourse (Foucault 69).

This idea is traced in the depiction of the children in 'The Idiots' and show the perception of their connection to animalistic behavior. 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' make references to this treatment, but with a humoristic angle on the elimination of man and elevation of beast as a cure for mental illness.

The physicians' new role in the asylum became the beginning of the doctor patient relationship. The doctor becomes the figure of authority as well as resolution. The role of the doctor was conflicting because the boundaries were unestablished, due to the same reason the relationship with the patient would be inconsistent and irregular. This is depicted through the



characters of Dick and Nicole Diver in *Tender is the Night*. The text's setting in time plays a valid part considering the field of psychiatry. Language in *Tender is the Night* shows a transition from colloquial terms, but the story also retracts the language and withholds mental illness terminology from the conversations. Ch. 6 demonstrates how the presentation of mental illness is affected by language.

Madness was seen as moral evil and the cure was to reason with the patient through conversation to reach their consciousness. This marks the initial steps to theories of retrieving the mad from insanity through language. In her definition of mental illness Feder talks about the conscious and unconscious processes developed by Freud;

. . . I define madness as a state in which unconscious process predominate over conscious ones to the extent that they control them and determine perceptions of and responses to experience that, judged by prevailing standards of logical thought and relevant emotion, are confused and inappropriate (5).

Freud's theory of dream interpretation, the conscious and the unconscious relates to the discourse of madness. Freud states that all humans are pleasure seeking beings. We are controlled by the pleasure principle and the reason principle, the reason principle is what guides us to be the intellectual being and not only sexual beings. He states that our libido is what designates us as humans and assigns it as a part of our basic needs. In order to obtain a functioning civilization our sexual drive must be channeled into other occupations by the reason principle, the repression of the sexual desires transfers the energy into other activities. These repressed desires are hidden in what Freud calls the unconscious, inaccessible from the conscious mind, and can only be accessed through an unconscious state such as through dreams. Freud further explains that the unconscious can surface the consciousness through what he has entitled slips of the tongue, mistakes in reading and writing, also known as Freudian slips. In a section in 'The Interpretation of Dreams' named "The work of displacement" Freud draws attention to the linguistic features of dreams. He claims that the

forbidden desires goes through some censorship, separating the content into dream and dream-thoughts.

In my patient's *Sappho* dream the central position was occupied by climbing up and down and being up above and down below; the dream-thoughts, however, dealt with the dangers of sexual relations with people of an inferior social class. So that only a single element of the dream-thoughts seems to have found its way into the dream-content, though that element was expanded to a disproportionate extent ("The Interpretation of Dreams" 410).

Displacement corresponds with metonymy in language and displays an image which can be closely associated with the original image. Elements of the dream-thought will be replaced and reinforced through the dream content connected by similar attributes. Another linguistic feature in which the unconscious can be interpreted through dreams is that of condensation. Freud explains dream condensation as a complex content condensed into a simplified imagery and shows how condensation corresponds to the metaphor's function in language. He opens up the possibilities for a dream-content to be the metaphor for several dream-thoughts simultaneously and that these can be interpreted as layers of the dream. The interest for Freudian interpretation in these literary analyses explored by this paper is based on the Freud's role in the field of psychology seen in coherence with the periods and publications of the three texts. Literature much like the dream is presented through imagery, metaphors and symbols. For this thesis an investigation of puns, jokes, metaphors and mistakes in speech and writing, are of high interest when exemplifying the presentation of mental illness through language. The unconscious thought process is, according to Feder, an accepted characteristic of the insane. She goes on to state that the psychoanalytic methods of analyzing symbolic structures of Freudian interpretations in current time are used as models for literary analysis (12). The literary analysis of language and character makes use of this approach to demonstrate the presentation of mental illness.

The characters and the variable of the characters make a very interesting part of any narrative. As stated above Feder exemplifies how unconscious drives and thought process are accepted as characteristics of mad characters, and that the mad character has been present in literature since pantheon stories. Through her review of madness in literature Feder discloses that madness often appears as punishment by or of gods. Foucault draws attention to the moral codes and approaches introduced by Pinel and Tuke, which dictate madness from a religious and social perspective. Feder states that “the whole theoretical structure of Freudian psychoanalysis is in opposition to such religious or moralistic standards” (32). The transgression to modern treatments, such as those who are not of religious manner, is an important element in Poe, Conrad and Scott Fitzgerald’s stories and can be retracted through the analysis of characters, point of view and language. Point of view, as discussed previously in this chapter, is very important for the literary analysis because it requires attention the perspective through which the story is presented. The point of view or angle used in the narrative is crucial to the amount and quality of information the reader is permitted. Included in the evaluation of the narrator’s reliability, the reader must question if the narrator is keeping something from the reader or from the characters. Ch. 4, 5 and 6 will discuss the effect of perspectives, changing point of views and abruption in the chronological order as techniques for presenting mental illness. Language, point of view and characters have been selected as focus points for the analysis of mental illness in ‘The Idiots’, ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ and *Tender is the Night* for their ability to show how mental illness can be interpreted from the text. A selection of analytical features is also required due to the length of this thesis and the purpose of the didactic chapter. According to the intention of this dissertation the three focus points suffices to their purpose of displaying the literary theme.

### 3. Method

The purpose of this thesis is to show how mental illness is presented in literature. To do this I've constructed a literary analysis consisting of three focus points; point of view, language and characters. To show the connection between point of view and mental illness the literary analysis uses examples from the primary text and discusses interpretations of point of view which depicts mental illness. This is to show mainly how mental illness is seen, who perceives it and whether the perspective in which it is told gives a narrow or wide narration of illness, and to demonstrate the effects of these. The literary theme can be traced through phrases and words to show how language presents mental illness. Several linguistic features such as title, words associated with madness and puns are amongst the examples of language interpretations argued to take part in the presentation of mental illness. In order to show how characters strengthen mental illness as a literary theme the analyses highlights examples of characters like doctors, patients, medically trained personnel, as well as their situated areas. Examples from the texts will be discussed in light of the works of Feder, Foucault, Freud and Davis in order to show how mental illness is presented through excerpts from the texts which depict point of view, language and characters.

The didactic chapter in this thesis uses 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' to show how mental illness as a topic of discussion and literary theme can be taught in upper secondary school. In order to show how it can be used, a teaching plan has been constructed through the guiding principles of the revised didactic diamond by Lyngsnes and Rismark. The teaching plan validates and justifies the choice of topic and text up against the didactic aspects of teaching, and provides specific examples of how the preliminary work to such a teaching session can be done.

## 4. 'The Idiots'

Mental illness is one of the main themes in Joseph Conrad's 'The Idiots'. Conrad's story provides a narrow view on generic intelligent disabilities and through a social historical perspective the challenges around 'idiot' children are problematized. 'The Idiots' can be read as a depiction of the rural culture and the importance of male heirs to secure the family continuance. The story shows a family where the aging grandfather becomes a burden for his son, annoyance for his daughter-in-law and useless for his needing grandchildren. This view can be discussed as a source of the development of elderly care and the understanding of elderly induced dementia like Alzheimer. Child care expressed in the text presents an interesting angle on disease understanding and social development and could encourage a social historical angle on the literary analysis. The story also presents an intriguing depiction of mental illness through a play of light and darkness. This approach to the text demonstrate the characters struggle, the tension and the madness through light, shadows, night and day as figurative language for mental illness. This chapter will look at how mental illness is presented in 'The Idiots' through point of view, language and characters in accordance with Ch. 2 of this thesis.

### 4.1 Point of view

The first perspective presented in 'The Idiots' begins with an unnamed male narrator who is traveling through the French country. The narrator and his companion drive by some children, referred to as 'idiots' by the companion, standing in the road. The narrator discovers that these children have mental disabilities and he becomes interested in their story. Intrigued to find out more about them he asks around, and through third and fourth hand information he reconstructs their story to himself. The initial point of view does not remain the same throughout the narrative, the shift is marked by a clear brake in the story. The narrator change

focus from his perception of the children and presents his constructed story through the obtained perspective of Jean-Pierre Bacadou. At this point the narrator's role changes to third person omniscient narrator and gains insights to the characters thoughts and emotions. The narrator announces that; "In time the story of their parents shaped itself before me out of the listless answers to my questions. . ." (Conrad 8), this indicates that his credibility also declines. The narrator site thoughts and words from characters that are dead at the point of his meeting with the Bacadou children, and from this point there should be raised doubt to narrated conversations and surroundings.

The protagonist through the main part of the story is the husband, Jean-Pierre Bacadou, but the role of protagonist shifts to his wife Susan Bacadou after she has killed Jean-Pierre. The narrator gives the impression to have knowledge about Jean-Pierre and Susan's thoughts but this is clearly something constructed around retold knowledge. The insight perspective of Susan and Jean-Pierre's thoughts affects the perception of mental illness in the story. The children are mostly described through Jean-Pierre's eyes, and his thoughts of how his children came to be idiots are characterized through his perception. The relationship between the parents and the children through the parental view depicts a distance. The reason for this distance can be tribute to the narrator's relationship to the children and made possible because the story is reconstructed through secondary sources, but it can also be interpreted as the parents' lack of understanding. Jean-Pierre often exclaims that he desired children who will be of use to the farm and sons who can bring forth the family. The children's mental disability becomes an obstacle for a fatherly relationship because their condition is not understood and the children are seen as useless. From the time the children outgrow the infant stage and their 'idiocy' becomes visual they are mostly kept inside the house and out of the way. The aspect of treatment becomes relevant when discussing mental illness. In his discussion of the purpose of confinement, Foucault explains the shame afflicted upon the



family and relatives of the mentally ill as a justified reason for confinement. This view is recognized in the treatment of the Bacadou children. “. . .the honor of families and that of religion sufficed to recommend a subject for a house of confinement” (Foucault 63). The family recognizes that the children are mentally disabled but they don't seek any medical help instead they confine and hide their children from society. Jean-Pierre clearly expresses his disappointment in his children and the talk of them around the market torments him. The solution then seems to be to hide the children away from the public gaze. Fertility seen as the female responsibility becomes clear in Jean's reasoning of his children's condition. Through Jean-Pierre's perspective Susan is the reason for the useless children and is called a no-good wife who cannot carry children who are like any other children. Mental illness through the point of views in Conrad's story shows a social view of insanity that correlates to the time of the text. The perspectives in the story opinionates the origin of their family's insanity and argues for their view. As a Christian, Susan is sure that it is her husband's beliefs and values that caused their misery. After she has killed Jean-Pierre Susan tries to validate her actions by stating that she has freed him of the burden of having four idiot children, and that her husband being a blasphemer caused her prayer's for healthy normal children to go unanswered.

The omniscient narrator permits insight to the characters thoughts and feelings although the content of his retold version must be questioned. The shift between characters' perspective and the insight view to their feelings regarding the children, show how the parents deal with mental illness and clearly depicts their lack of knowledge about it. The shifting perspective allows the reader to see how the spouses blame each other silently, the topic is attempted to be addressed a few times but it is clear that in the eyes of Susan, Jean and the grandfather mental illness is still taboo. The point of view of both Jean-Pierre and Susan reveal the infliction of religion as both turn to Christianity in hope to have a healthy, normal child.

## 4.2 Language

The title 'The Idiots' reflects the statement of colloquial terms replaced by accurate terminology in modern time, but it can also be interpreted as an ambiguous title. The children in the story are from the beginning referred to as 'idiots' and the retelling of Jean's story continue to use the term frequently. The story does not elaborate much about the children's diagnoses but rather focus on the parents' struggle to handle the situation. The parents have difficulties understanding the cause of their children's condition and alternates between blaming each other and God. This interpretation of the title seen in correlation to the actions of Jean-Pierre and Susan suggest that they in fact are the 'idiots'. Their oblivions towards the children's condition and need of proper care seems to be absent from their mind and they seem to be more concerned with the perception of their family outwards.

The author's choice of title is also interesting by looking into the origin of the word 'idiot'. From definitions of the old French, Latin and 14<sup>th</sup> century English an idiot was a person who was uneducated, ignorant, simple and incapable of normal reasoning. The old Greek definition is especially interesting as the word 'idiot' derives from the Greek word 'idios'(Merriam-Webster) meaning 'one's own', and ". . .literally 'private person (as opposed to one taking part in public affairs). . ." (Harper). This definition recalls attention to Jean-Pierre's political engagement. Jean is a republican and very concerned about his legacy, thus having a boy child who can inherit his values and earthly possessions. The term he applies to his children, 'idiots' shows that he knows that the children will never be able to concern themselves with something outside their own person. 'One's own', 'private' situates that the children are not involved in public affairs, their incapability to reason unable them to inherit the farm and to take care of it. The story ends with the grandmother, Madame Leveille, being named as the children's guardians as The Marquis of Chavanes exclaims ". . .would be much better than having here one of those other Bacadous, probably a red republican, corrupting my

commune” (Conrad 33). Madam Leveille and her daughter are expressed firm Christians through the story. The last remark from the Marquis can be interpreted in such that it seems better for him to have a Christian woman and four idiots running the farm because they will not interfere with political matters than a relative of Jean-Pierre, probably a republican, who might.

From Susan’s point of view the grandfather is described as ‘childish’, “. . .between her three idiot children and the childish grandfather . . .” (Conrad 13). Colloquial terms are dominant in Conrad’s story and reveal the family’s limited knowledge about dementia<sup>2</sup>. By the descriptions of his condition the grandfather seems to be suffering from Alzheimer’s disease and the narrator use words that reflect both the physical condition; ‘weak, immovable, old’ and his decaying mental abilities; ‘childish and senile’. The use of language shows a setting where colloquial terms are dominant and the rural conditions in the story supports this.

His old parents’ transition into retirement is portrayed as a step into darkness. Jean-Pierre takes over the responsibility of the farm under the exclamation that; “The world is to the young” (Conrad 10). This statement function as an inside joke for the outcome of the story. Jean-Pierre’s ambitious take-over and desires to rebuild the farm from its neglect turns out to be a flop. While he works the soil, and strive for it to be fertile, his express his desperate need for an heir who can work the land with him. The humoristic punch line the statement presents is revealed in the ironic twist. Jean-Pierre and Susan dies, leaving Susan’s mother with a worn down farm, four idiot children and senile old man. This form of a joke between the author and the reader, where the characters in the story are the object of the joke can be seen in his description of a joke’s need of three people. One who makes the joke, one

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<sup>2</sup> Dementia is here used as a unifying concept for brain diseases. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines ‘Dementia’ thusly; “medical: a mental illness that causes someone to be unable to think clearly or to understand what is real and what is not real.”

who is the subject of the joke, and a third to understand the joke, “. . . gives the first person enjoyment and makes the third person laugh” (Freud 1905 100)

Mental illness discourse in ‘The Idiots’ firstly centers on religion. Jean-Pierre and Susan do not address the possibility of there being a genetic failure but rather blame their unfortunate destiny as a result of God’s disgrace. The possibility of generic disabilities surfaces when Susan storms her mother’s bar and Madame Leveille suspects that Susan has inherited it from her father recalling his last years as deranged in his mind. Through Susan’s perspective the children’s condition is curse from God. Lillian Feder explores the ancient tradition of viewing mental illness as punishment from the gods. Feder argues that the view of the vindictive God who inflicts madness upon humans is a perspective of mental illness that is preserved and continued as discussed in Ch. 2. Susan strongly believes that Jean-Pierre’s blasphemy is the cause for their curse and the reason why her prayers has not been heard.

Madame Leveille asks Susan where Jean is and if he knows where she is, Susan answers her mother; “he knows . . . he is dead” (Conrad 22). Susan’s answer seems as a reply to Madame’s first question; if Jean knows where Susan is. Susan admits to killing Jean-Pierre and says she immediately ran to her mother. If she has killed her husband he cannot know where she is and the utterance reflects something else. The sentence can be interpreted to mean that Jean now knows that Susan is mad and that she is the reason for their children’s disabilities. Because Jean-Pierre knows that Susan is the reason why he does not have any healthy children she needs to kill him. If she kills him he cannot tell anyone, and when he is dead than the only person who knew that her children’s retardation is not an act of God but a generic gene is gone. Susan is too concerned about what people whisper about her and her four idiot children and she cannot see that she like them. Her mother makes that resemblance clear to her and states that she wishes Susan had been born simple to her – like her own.

In the ending Susan is running out in the dark night and on to the cliff. A man, Millot chases after her and when he calls out to her Susan believes she is hearing Jean. Millot uses the word 'lunatic' about Susan and her behavior. This is the first time in the story that such accurate terminology is applied. Previously simple, idiot, imbecile has sufficed to describe the conditions of the mentally ill children, but because Susan's behavior is more violent and wild in nature the discourse must change. Believing it is her dead husband chasing her, declaring that he is 'perfectly alive' Susan deliberately falls of the islet in shock and kills herself. Madame Lavaille weeps over her daughter fears that Susan won't be buried in consecrated grounds because she murdered her husband and killed herself. The final confirmation of Susan's mental illness is uttered by Monseieur le Marquis on the testimony of Millot. Millot claims that Susan's fall was an accident and that she was without doubt insane. The ending of the story more clearly show mental illness in a more violent nature and thusly the language is intensified with accurate terminology.

The analysis of language in 'The Idiots' presents differences between colloquial terms and accurate terminology in the text. The title offers an interpretation of both the origin of the word 'idiot' and an ambiguous interpretation which both seclude the joke. The joke is also present in the ironic expression 'the world is to the young' as demonstrated according to Freud. By investigating the term 'idiot' it is possible to see the relationship between religion and politics depicted in the texts as an expression of social-historical context. Madness is dictated by moral codes rooted in religion and becomes visual when entering Susan's perspective.

### 4.3 Characters

The children are objectified and distant through both parents' perspective. Susan calls her children 'things', things that is even worse than animals because they show no trace of humanity, no feelings and no recognition. The narrator role in the story enforces the distance towards the children through the words in which they are described. The children are referred to as imbeciles, things and creatures of monstrous darkness. Through the description of them the children are assigned animalistic features. The resemblance to cattle is present through the narrator's point of view, when he is first introduced to the children. The first encounter with one of the idiot children depicts him standing motionless in the road, empty gazes into nothingness only moves when the carriage comes real close. "In the daytime they knock about on this road, and they come home at dusk along with the cattle. . ." (Conrad 7). The narrator focuses on the animality in the depiction of the children as cattle, this connection between madness and animality is addressed in *Madness and Civilization*. Foucault states that during the classical period acts of madness was seen as the actions of a beast. "Animality, in fact, protected the lunatic from whatever might be fragile, precarious, or sickly in man. The animal solidity of madness, and that density it borrows from the blind world of beast, inured the madman to hunger, heat, cold, pain" (Foucault 69). The methods of treatment Foucault addresses can be seen in 'The Idiots'. This chapter previously discussed the confinement of the Bacadou children, but the resemblance between the children and cattle depicts a liberated animalistic treatment. The children's uselessness is strongly emphasized in the dialogs of the characters. The image of children standing about in the road, doing nothing, bare traces of the behavior of cows. The absent of professional treatment indicates little knowledge about the treatment of 'idiot' children. By treating them like cows they have been reduced to beasts, and as Foucault states, therefor relieved from the burden of man.

Another interesting view on the connection between mental illness and religion is structured through Susan's perspective. Current society dictates the dimensions of mental illness, and as Feder explains; religion has strong roots in the perspective of madness. Susan fears that her children's condition makes it impossible for them to recognize God. The youngest lies on the floor ; “. . .only stare fixedly at any glitter, but failed hopelessly to follow the brilliance of a sun-ray slipping slowly along the floor” (Conrad 13). Here the ‘brilliance’ of sun-ray is a symbol of God, and the child's failure to recognize God depicts the limitations of their mental abilities which Susan believes is the reason the curse won't lift. The religious influence, as Foucault points out, dictates the morality. Morality and reason is what defines madness, as madness is seen as an act of unreason. Because of their mental disabilities the children will never know morality, never be able to understand reason and never be able to recognize the ‘brilliance’ of God.

Susan sees her children as her shame and burden, a punishment from God for the rest of the life. Susan's insanity is well hidden in the story, and only surfaces after she has killed her husband. It is only when she has committed murder, an act against Christian beliefs, that her insanity becomes visual and is addressed. Her mother suspects that Susan is mad, and because Susan's father too was mad she fears it is generic. When her mother points out to her that she is like her children Susan cannot take it and runs away. In her delirium Susan believes that her dead husband is following her and morality catches up to her. Feder states that love and aggression are dominant subjects in literature; “. . .in the literature of madness the symbolic expressions of such feelings in hundreds of intricate ways are the surest clues to the mind in confusion or conflict” (19). Susan's movements and her discursive thoughts show that her mind is confused, and indicate the hallucinations of her dead husband is caused by the questioning of her religious beliefs.

The father, Jean-Pierre, desires a son who can work the fields with him and train so that he can take over the farm after Jean-Pierre. All his sons turn out to be mentally disabled and Jean-Pierre wants to know the reason. Jean-Pierre is a republican and his characteristics early in the story, from he returns home, depicts a working man eager to get married and start a family. After the children are born and their condition becomes visual Jean asks his wife what is wrong with the children. His actions show that he is patient and understanding in the beginning. The whisper behind his back and the talk of the town affects Jean. The third child is born, an idiot too, and Jean's temper changes. As discussed above moral and reason dictated the understanding of mental illness, and Jean cannot see why his sons *aren't right* because he feels that he is being a moral man. In her thoughts Susan reveals that Jean, in addition to being a republican, hates the ministers of religion. But before the fourth child is born, Jean turns to Christianity in hope that if it is his believes they are being punished over than his conversion will lift the curse and the next child will be well. When all four children turn out to be 'idiots' and Jean has forsaken his believes it seems to be too much for him, and he begins to drink heavily and physically abuses his wife. The climax of the story is tucked away and revisited during the resolution of the problem. The tension escalades when the third and fourth child are born idiots. He has converted to Christianity and abandoned his believes in desperate hope that God will help him and his wife to have normal children, but his new found Christianity and his wife lifelong faith fails them.

The characters in 'The Idiots' present different visual levels of mental illness. The children's mental disability is addressed from the very beginning whilst the parents' connection to mental illness increases near the ending. The narration of the children also addresses the question of treatment and social perspective to their condition. The Bacadou resonates between religion, reason and morality in order to locate the reason for their



misfortune but fails. The lines between sanity and lunacy are blurred in the way that neither Jean or Susan recognized the insanity in themselves or the other until the end.

## Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has discussed presentation of mental illness in language, point of view and characters in 'The Idiots' by Joseph Conrad through selections of examples. Presentation of mental illness through point of view shows that the transition to an omniscient narrator creates distrust towards the content of the story as well as the shifting insights to the characters' thoughts and feelings increases the perceived perspective of madness. The children's relation to mental illness, whose perspective is never obtained, is interpreted from the narration of them and the treatment of them. The way the other characters treat the children is recognized to contain traces of treating methods, as seen in light of Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*. The way the children are handled display lacking understanding and knowledge of mental illness. The use of language in 'The Idiots' show a historical-perspective to the situation of having disabled children in the rural country because the colloquial terms dominate the discourse. The embedded joke becomes visual when examples from the language are interpreted through language theories by Freud, such as jokes between the author and the reader and puns. The element of religious intervention are supported by the study of Feder and Foucault as they both emphasis mental illness as something determined and inherited from society. Especially visual is Feder's statement of madness as a sin which manifests itself in the perspective of Susan in her characterization of her children. Additionally, the analysis shows that through the interpretation of three focus points the literary theme, mental illness, is clearly presented. A closer investigation which explores in greater depth the three focus points' presentation of mental illness, or even a closer inspection of one of the focus points, would be interesting to conduct to develop the thesis further.

## 5. 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether'

'The system of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' by Edgar Allen Poe presents the difficulty of seeing and recognizing insanity. The story is a humoristic approach to mental illness and Poe's choice of theme expresses the fascination with insanity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Poe's story can be used as a source for a historical investigation of the rise of insane asylums in Europe as well as a response to the insane defense in the middle of the 1800. The *Stonehearst Asylum* from 2014 is a recent film adaptation based on Poe's original story. A comparison between an analysis of the film and the story would make an interesting discussion about the similarities and differences in presentation of mental illness. The blurry line between madness and sanity would be interesting to look at in the film version and comparing it to the original written form. The story offers many interesting content approaches to study, this chapter focus on conducting a literary analysis by interpreting language, point of view and characters to show how mental illness as a literary theme is presented in the text. Interpretation of language will draw attention to puns, jokes in the interpretive frame of Freud, as well as other interesting linguistic choices. An analysis of point of view and characters in the light of the works of Foucault and Feder will show the traditional and social view on mental illness.

### 5.1 Point of view

The story is presented through the point of view of an unnamed male protagonist traveling through France. During his tour through what the narrator describes as the 'extreme' south of France, he and his companion comes upon a private madhouse, *Maison de Santé*, to which the narrator is acquainted with. The visitor<sup>3</sup> is recognized as a man of the profession due to his interest in the private madhouse and his reference to his medical friends. During conversation were the superintendent Maillard refers to his phony doctors, Maillard assumes that the

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<sup>3</sup> Narrator and visitor are used interchangeably to refer to the unnamed male protagonist.

narrator has heard of these alleged famous doctors and professors. The narrator's connection to the field of medicine or psychology is confirmed when he admits that he has no knowledge of them but assures Maillard that he will seek out their writings as soon as possible. The narrator's perspective would seem to be tainted by his close connection to the medical field and presumably his experience would advance the possibilities of recognizing insanity. Instead the narrator presents a blurry line between sanity and lunacy which is only existent and enforced through his point of view. The only aspect of the circumstances and of the dinner guests is limited through the narrator's perspective. The narrative appears to be following a chronological order, but the dialogue between the narrator and monsieur Maillard presents a representation of previous events creates a flashback in the narrative. Maillard explains the events that lead to the change of the treating method but the conversation is erupted by events at the chateau. Foucault elevates Pinel and Tuke when he addresses the liberation of the insane and the renewed focus on reason when treating the mad. Poe's story does not discuss any form of treatment with the intention to cure, but rather methods of keeping order at the *Maison*. The institution, built for insane patients only, is recognized by Foucault as one of the driving forces for a new development in psychiatry.

Maillard describes the new treatment at the same time as he talks about the old one, and its flaws. Alteration of time back and forth between the previous and the current system creates confusion to the extents of them, not only to the reader but the narrator seems confused as well. While he talks during the dinner party Maillard is interrupted and disturbed in his speech causing the conversation to shift between present and past. The constant abruption of the narrator's and Maillard's conversation and the return to the past causes insecurity and confusion of the state of affairs at the *Maison*. The narrator cannot recognize the state of affairs and his uncertainty affects the reader. During what the narrator refers to as the 'climax' of the story, he describes the situation of the keepers breaking in and regaining

control as actions of madmen. The reader is, through this narration, lured into the same insecurity. The visitor feels that something is off, that many things seem bizarre and odd, but he is reassured by the superintendent that all is as it should. The narrator fails to recognize insanity which might suggest that he does not have well established frameworks for what insanity and sanity is and how they are told apart. His own perception of madness is the reason for the reader's hesitation.

The beginning and the end bear resemblances to each other. The story begins with an unnamed narrator who visits an insane asylum unaware of its current state, and a close inspection in the ending seems to indicate that the narrator leaves the madhouse none the wiser. Superintendent Maillard has throughout the story given hints and loose descriptions that could have lead the narrator to see earlier on the real state of things, but he seems to have blind faith in the reassuring words of Monsieur Maillard. The perspective provided through the narrator's point of view is tainted by his connection to medicine and alludes the reader to believe that because of the narrator's competence in the field he will have no problem defining who is insane and not. His trustworthy figure solubilizes when the truth is revealed and he still fails to recognize that 'Tarr' and 'Fether' aren't respectable figures in the field of medicine.

## **5.2 Language**

The narrator of the story visits a private mad house in the south of France, presumably because mental illness is in his field of interest. Mental illness is perceived through the eyes of the narrator and his perception of insanity dictates who the insane are. The title 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' points to a very interesting interpretation of language and its relation to mental illness. Monsieur Maillard informs the narrator about the new treatment enforced in the establishment and credits the treatment to one Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether. The

suspicious names seem to go unnoticed by the narrator but recognized as puns in this analysis. Tar and feather was an unofficial punishment intended to inflict pain and humiliation to a person by the public. Not only are these 'misspellings' clever, but the decision to name the doctor 'Tarr' and the professor 'Fether' is intended. Doctors and professors often shorten their titles; Dr. and Prof., as the printed version used by this thesis has presented in the title. 'Dr. Tarr' becomes "Doctarr" and 'Prof. Fether' becomes "Profether", silly names which are intended mispronunciations. These 'misspellings' may indicate that they are not real doctors and professors, but rather 'doctarrs' and 'profethers'. A pun is considered a joke, which in this case is shared humor between the author and the reader, but unnoticed by the narrator. A pun is defined as a humoristic play upon words to indicate a double meaning or a meaning of a word similar to it. While some state that puns are clever Freud calls the pun ". . .the lowest form of verbal joke. . ." ("The Purpose of Jokes" 45). He then goes on to state that one must pay attention to the joke because of its play upon other words and the purpose of the joke may be important. A further explanation to the misconception can be traced to the words the narrator uses to describe Maillard. The first meeting with monsieur Maillard the narrator specifically assign the superintendent as a gentleman, fine-looking and polite and accredits Maillard by describing him as a man of dignity and authority. The superintendent thus becomes a measurement for the other characters' sanity. When the narrator questions a female dinner guest's sanity Maillard assures him that; "she is as sane as myself" the reader does not doubt this statement due to the established trustworthy figure of Maillard. The type of misspelling found in the title is also connected to the superintendent and his status in the narrative. A rapid pronunciation of 'Maillard', in the same principles as shown in the example of 'Dr. Tarr' and 'Prof. Fether', sounds like; 'my lord'.

The climax of the story is dictated by the narrator and is therefore not necessary according to the plot of the story. The narrator says; “And now came the climax – the catastrophe of the drama” (Poe 14). This statement indicates to respond to the storming of the dining room and the keepers’ regained control. The real climax of the story should be recognized at the dinner table where the guest talks about themselves as lunatics and their behavior and the odd behaviors intensifies right before the freed keepers storm the dining room. This is the true point of no return where all is revealed, but like with ‘Dr. Tarr’ and ‘Prof. Fether’ the visitor does not see it. The narrator decides where the climax is for the reader, and because he does so his exclamation is interpreted as something unconscious surfacing through speech. “The catastrophe of the drama” is read as a statement expressing the narrator’s thoughts, that the keepers taking back control is the real horror and not the fact that he has been spending time with lunatic the entire time. The connection of statement and events indicate that the narrator set the climax, now that the keepers are free and regaining control the point of return is passed and the lunatics cannot remain in control. Feder acknowledges symbolic language and frenzied behavior as characteristic of the mad. In congruence with Feder this analysis also intends to show that; “. . . literary interpretations of madness both reflect and question medical, cultural, political, religious and psychological assumptions of their time. . .” (Feder 4). The analysis of language reflects the cultural perception of mental illness as well as the medical. The visitor’s final comment about his unfortunate incident shows that he does not seem to get the joke. He assigns Maillard’s method great efficiency and supports the superintendent’s suggestion of a system he cannot see the fault of; “. . . a better system of government than any ever heard of before – a lunatic government. . .” (Poe 12).

In the final part of the short story the guards manage to break free from the dungeon and storm the ballroom where the real lunatics and the visitor are having a dinner party. The narrator describes the keepers upon their entrance into the room as “. . . a perfect army of what I took to be chimpanzees, Ourang-Outangs, or big black baboons of the Cape of Good Hope” (Poe 14). The narrator then goes on to describe that he has learned that the real keepers were overpowered, tarred and feathered before they were locked up. The intention of tarring and feathering is, as stated above, done to inflict public humiliation. ‘The treatment of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ thus becomes a metaphor for the real treatment in function at the Maison, and a metonymy for the humiliation inflicted on the keepers by being overpowered and locked up for over a month by lunatics. In Freud’s ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’ he elaborates how suppressed desires can enter the consciousness by escaping the unconscious through speech and dreams. In this interpretive frame the narrator’s statement shows the unconscious surfacing through speech.

Interestingly, the act of confining the keepers combined with the narrator’s description of their wild looks and behavior display the treatment of mentally ill in the classical period as discussed by Foucault. Foucault addresses the conditions under which the madman was reduced to animality to return him to kindness. This connection is supported in the narration of the conditions Maillard forced the keepers to endure, in cold dungeons “. . . reserved for the most dangerous and most violent of the insane” (Foucault 67). The narrator’s last lines declare that he has searched through the libraries of Europe and he is disappointed not to retrieve a copy of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’s system anywhere, thus affirming that he does not get the joke of ‘tar and feather’. The story ends on same grounds that it begun, with a ‘stupid-looking’ gentleman.

There are many linguistic points that illustrate the connection of mental illness with language. Colloquial terms are dominant in Poe’s story, and the absence of accurate



terminology can be contributed to the time of the story and reflect as Feder pointed out; the medical aspect. The Maison is clearly an institution where the insane are kept and treated but with no intention to cure. Metaphor and metonymy in Poe's story disclose madness at the same time that terminology assures the narrator that the superintendent is a sane man. The blurred line between sanity and lunacy is enforced by the ambiguous language.

### 5.3 Characters

There is no doctor that has been assigned the responsibility of the patients at the Maison. Monsieur Maillard states that he has assembled a method of treatment influenced by two famous physicians. The treating method of which the visitor is there to observe is based on a 'soothing' principle, described by superintendent Maillard as a method consisting of humoring the patients and allowing them total liberty. The old system based on the 'soothing' principle is identified with Foucault's description of *techniques* which represent ways of treating madness in the classical period. Theatrical representation is a treating method based on continuing the delirium in order to confront madness with madness. By entering the delirious discourse at the level of its grammar to the extent that "...it is confronted by itself and forced to argue against the demands of its own truth" (179). This treating method was executed at the *Maison de Santé*. Monsieur Maillard tells the narrator that they used to have men there imagined themselves chickens. "The cure was, to insist upon the thing in fact—to accuse the patient of stupidity in not sufficiently perceiving it to be a fact—and thus to refuse him any other diet for a week than that which properly appertains to a chicken"(Poe 4). Poe's story depicts the treating theory of continuing the delirium to cure the patient of delusions. The visitor assumes this method has replaced all strict confinement methods in lunatic asylums throughout the country. According to Foucault's dissertation of the rise of insane asylums, the division between the insane and other undesirables was a driving force for a new

direction in psychiatry and increased attention on the treatment of the insane; “. . .it is from confinement that we must seek an account of this new awareness of madness” (Foucault 213). Inside the asylum the narrator comes by several characters he cannot judge whether are mad or sane. The dinner guests are presented as family or dear friends of the superintendent. Based on the argument made of the words affirming Maillard as a trustworthy figure he becomes a measurement for the other dinner guests’ sanity. The story is set in the south of France, by the narrator’s opinion the ‘extreme’ south, and several of the dinner guests’ bizarre behavior is rationalized as natural for the eccentric people in that providence.

According to Foucault the eighteenth century asylum was controlled by a faceless power and states that “. . . the guards were often recruited among the inmates themselves” (Foucault 238), an example of this is depicted in the character of the superintendent Maillard. Maillard expresses this practice of observation and judgement by the faceless power; “A great point was to set each lunatic to guard the actions of all the others. . .” (Poe 4). This interpretation shows that Poe’s story is strongly influenced by the current social debate about madness. The ‘soothing’ system also depicts the conventional changes in treating methods during the 1800. The guests talk about the different patients, really themselves, they have had at the asylum and imitate their physical behavior. Pinel enforced a treatment which through language and reason would lead the insane to see and realize their own situation. An example of facing madness with madness in the discipline of Pinel is provided by Foucault. The procedure consists of making the patient recognize the insanity of his fellow inmates and thus be able to recognize the insanity within the self. The narrator is told that the inmates during the soothing system was faced with their own lunacy and humored in their illusions. This approach had, according to Maillard, great results.

## **Chapter conclusion**

The point of view in which the story is presented prays on the narrator's assumed proficiency in the medical field and his views on the insane inmates at the Maison. His perspective taints the reader's opinion of the patients' sanity. Several linguistic investigations show that the narrator is not as confident in his profession as he initially seems and his opinion of the treatment system suggests that he prefers the lunatic government. Interesting findings in the analysis of the title show the use of puns, wordplay. In light of the interpretive frame by Freud they can be viewed as the unconscious opinion surfacing through speech. The works of Feder and Foucault show the social and medical aspects on insanity identified in the text which lead to further understanding of the asylum and the treating methods in Poe's text. The characters sanity is not secluded until a later state of the story, but their madness and their treatment can clearly be drawn to the descriptions by Foucault and is thusly stated as characterizations of the mad.

## 6. *Tender is the Night*

The main theme of *Tender is the night* by F. Scott Fitzgerald is mental illness. The story presents mental illness through a doctor patient relationship that is also a marital relationship. Dick Diver is a promising young psychologist traveling to Zurich to visit his friend Franz Gregorovius who works at the famous Dohmler's clinic. Dick has had contact with one of the patients at the clinic, Nicole, through letters. Dick is not aware of the reason for Nicole's condition until he revisits the clinic and talks with Franz about her treatment. It is clear that Dick has had a positive influence on Nicole's condition and her recovery. Doctor Franz suggests that Nicole can leave the clinic but that she will need close supervision for at least five years. Her older sister Baby Warren finds it hard to watch over Nicole and to judge whether she needs to interfere or if Nicole is just being her eccentric self. Baby wants to buy Nicole a doctor who can treat her back in Chicago but Nicole wind up getting married to Dick and they live rather luxurious lives in Europe.

In her thesis 'A Woman's Touch in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night: Pulling the Women Out of the Background*', Luong presents an image of Scott Fitzgerald's life. She draws comparisons between the narration of *Tender* to the events of Fitzgerald's life, including the relation between his wife's struggle with mental illness and Nicole's condition. The inspiration for the novel and the economic pressure for success is an interesting approach for an analysis of the book. Scott Fitzgerald devoted a lot of time to write *Tender* into his masterpiece, but the book did not amount the level of success he imagined. After this Fitzgerald revised the novel in hope of a second publishing that would allow the novel to be recognized for its genius. The novel's original timeline was not chronological but one of the changes Scott Fitzgerald had noted was to structure the novel to a chronological order and thus adding context which the timeline changes required. The edition this thesis uses for

interpretation is revised according to the author's instructions. The original order and the changed order will both be discussed as a part of point of view, but the version this thesis uses will be the main source for interpretation.

## **6.1 Point of view**

Point of view in *Tender* is narrated from a 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view and it alters between being omniscient and having a limited view. The shifts of perspective cause confusion because the focalization shifts do not always clarify whose perspective is obtained. "What makes *Tender* a frustrating reading experience is that there seems no logic behind the constant perspectival switches" (Curnutt 122). Due to its presentation as an unconscious process, acknowledged by Feder as traits of madness, these shifts of perspective also enforces the perception of mental illness. Shifts between characters' point of view allows the reader to see mental illness from different perspectives and at different depth. Curnutt points out to the criticism regarding the use of shifting point of views, stating that the revised edition by the author's directions does not solve the problem but rather insists on the spirit of the 1930's writing ambition of 'making it new'.

Nicole's illness is constructed as a puzzle only accessible through assembling the different character's perspectives. The cause and the consequences of her condition is viewed from Dick's perspective still at the clinic, but Nicole's first breakdown is narrated in the part named 'Rosemary's angle' and viewed from Rosemary Hoyt's perspective. Both of Nicole's breakdowns are situated in Rosemary's point of view thus constructing a distance between the patient and mental illness. Nicole perspective is presented in the chapters before, and a small section in 'Rosemary's angel' where her illness is voiced by herself through the letters she writes to Dick. The inside perspective to Nicole's condition presents mental illness directly and through terms she as a patient chooses. Shortly after the entrance to Rosemary's angle,

the inside view to Nicole's illness is eliminated and replaced by other characters perception. In the first part of the book Nicole is viewed from Dick's perspective. In Dick's eyes Nicole is a young, fragile and impulsive girl, careless to her surroundings. Nicole is open about her problems and often vocalizes her difficult situation. The perspective shifts and Nicole is now seen through Rosemary's eyes, this shift alienates Nicole and her illness from the conversation. Nicole's character transits from the shy, innocent and troublesome girl to a rich arrogant woman.

Dick's characteristic as a doctor is clearly visual in the first chapters as the narration focuses on his education and training. Dick is described as a man with a promising carrier, passionate about his profession and eager to leave an imprint in psychiatry. The aspiring Dick Diver doesn't climb to the height he was predicted instead his commitment to Nicole becomes a slow downward spiral. Dick is not viewed as a doctor through most parts of the story, and his person is depicted as the wealthy husband living a luxurious carefree life. Rosemary, who reveals that her father was a doctor, does not seem to acknowledge Dick for his profession and her angle on the story enforces the image of Dick as a husband, lover, friend, but not the doctor.

The medical context to their situation is clear in the first chapters of the book. Dick's education, his books and his high ambitions sets the tone of his and Nicole's relationship. Rosemary's perspective on contrast rather describes the Divers as a loving rich couple without the aspect of mental illness in their depiction. These oppositional views of the Divers point out the difficulty of seeing mental illness in the text.

## 6.2 Language

The illness presented in this novel is caused by the trauma of incestual rape. Nicole's trauma is the aftermath of the abuse she has endured as a young girl, and her condition intensifies and develops in line with her puberty. Deveraux Warren states that he has tried to get Nicole help in the US but the problem has increased to a dimension he no longer can sustain. Nicole is brought to the clinic in Zurich as a sixteen year old girl. After meeting Dick, Nicole writes him many letters while he is abroad. Nicole's letters provide an insight and focalization of her character, unique to the story. Her self-description and the terms in which she orations herself with depicts a girl in contact with her situation. It is initially Franz who is her assigned doctor, and in charge of her treatment. Dick's involvement through the exchange of letters and his participation in Nicole's treatment is acknowledged by Franz; "Really it had become your case" (Scott Fitzgerald 8). Through screening of the letters Franz has noticed a remarkable change in Nicole, he points out to Dick that Nicole's development is caused by; ". . . a transference of the most fortuitous kind" (9). Merriam Webster's medical dictionary defines the word 'transference' thusly; "The redirection of feelings and desires and especially of those unconsciously retained from childhood toward a new object (as a psychoanalyst conducting therapy)" (Merriam-Webster). Nicole's transference makes it possible for her to establish a relationship with a man and rebuilt trust towards the male gender. Dick declares that he has received about fifty letters from Nicole. Nicole's letters depicts how her condition approves over time, as Dick points out, her first letters were apologetic. Interpretations of Nicole's letters indicate that her mind is distracted, nervous and portrays her insecurity. Nicole vocalizes her illness, and describes incidents where her distrust in men increased without her understanding of it. In his effort to explain Nicole's behavior, Deveraux Warren states that she begun to act 'crazy', doing crazy things. He also explains that during consultations with

other doctors they never managed to pin down exactly what Nicole accused all those men of doing and that she herself have trouble expressing it.

Freud explains how forgotten childhood memories can reappear in adulthood, and how our behavior can be interpreted as results of these memories;

. . .especially we have every reason to suppose that these same forgotten childhood achievements have not, as might be thought, slipped away without leaving their mark on the subject's development, but have exercised a determining influence for the whole of his later life. . . . It may very well be that the forgetting of childhood can supply us with the key to the understanding of these amnesias which lie, according to our more recent discoveries, at the basis of the formation of all neurotic symptoms ("Childhood Memories and Screen Memories" 46).

In light of this example it becomes clear that Nicole has repressed the memory of her father's abuse and her behavior is the result of the childhood trauma resurfacing and manifesting itself in her disruptive behavior. Nicole has to be told by her doctors at the clinic why she is sick and from that point her recovery begins. Her progress in treatment correlates to her latest letters to Dick, which in his opinion shows maturing.

The medical language and the colloquial terms in *Tender* show different attitudes towards mental illness and a clear division between characters. The division of discourse depicts the characters' relation to and understanding of Nicole's condition. Medical terminology is mainly seen in conversation between the doctor-characters and the language adapts quickly to colloquial terms when the conversation is no longer between physicians. Baby Warren is concerned for her sister's unpredictable behavior and expresses to Dick that she is having problems recognizing when to interfere or not.

"But how can *I* tell? Before I knew it, almost in front of my eyes, she had cut her hair off, in Zurich, because of a picture in *Vanity Fair*." "That's all right. She's a schizoid—a permanent eccentric. You can't change that." "What is it?" "Just what I said—an eccentric." "Well, how can any one tell what's eccentric and what's crazy?" (Scott Fitzgerald 44)



Dick replaces the medical term with 'eccentric' in speech to adapt the language to Baby's level of comprehension, assuming that the accurate name for Nicole's diagnosis is too complicated for Baby. 'Eccentric' does not seem to have a functioning explanation for Baby so she incorporates 'crazy' as a simplifying term she evidently seem comfortable to use.

The title of the movie; 'Daddy's Girl' presents an ironic play of language in *Tender*. Rosemary Hoyt is a sixteen year old American actress, newly famous from her first and majorly successful film; 'Daddy's Girl'. The film is a hot topic amongst the guests and friends of the Divers, but it is evident that neither Dick nor Nicole have seen it. The irony of the movie's title is that Rosemary's father died while she was young and Nicole's father abused her young, so neither of them actually is *daddy's girl*. The movie is a giant success in the US but when she comes to France, not all recognize her. The similar dynamic of father-daughter relationship left behind in USA is seen in the description of Mr. Warren and Nicole's relationship. Dr. Dohlmer has forbidden Mr. Warren to visit Nicole, so he remains in America whilst Nicole lives in Europe. Rosemary is also sixteen, same as Nicole, when she arrives in Europe after filming 'Daddy's Girl'. The parental relationship both depicted by the movie's success in US and Mr. Warrens restrictions to see his daughter in Europe presents that the issue of *daddy's girl* is left behind in America.

Nicole's illness is not only readable through direct and medical language but it also described using a metonymy, as seen in

Theory disclosing Freud's theory about the connection between language and the unconscious. Nicole's garden interestingly resembles her attempts to heal her problems by tending it curiously. The garden is created inside the remaining exterior walls of four houses, making it impossible to see from the outside. One of the dinner guests notice the Diver's beautiful garden; "Nicole's garden", said Dick. 'She won't let it alone—she nags it all the time, worries about its diseases. . .'" (Scott Fitzgerald 85).

Nicole's garden functions as a metonymy for her mental illness, a physical embodiment of her illness and the struggle to stay well. The walls surrounding the garden represent the facade Nicole displays in public, her public figure, whilst the secluded garden represents her illness, only accessible through a private admittance. Nicole's condition is not addressed later in the book as openly as in the first part, but maneuvers through the text as metonymies.

Interpretation of language in *Tender is the Night* shows that medical and accurate terminology dominates the first part of the book with direct references to mental illness. Dr. Franz accentuates the importance of language when he reveals the interpretative value of reading Nicole's letters, and through her words he is able to assess great progress in recovery. Beside accurate terminology laymen terms in the text shows the presence of mental illness but also how difficult it is to address even at the linguistic level. The example above shows how a metonymy replaces the direct dialogue regarding Nicole's illness and creates an image of how the Divers deal with her condition.

### **6.3 Characters**

The connection between the literary theme and the characters is strengthened by Dick's profession and Nicole's psychiatric history. Mental illness as a theme is founded on Dick and Nicole's unity, but the development of their relationship depicts the treatment in its effect and its termination. Fitzgerald's narration of psychology highlights some of the flaws in the

relatively new field, such as the conflicting element of the doctor patient relationship in *Tender*. The relationship does not initiate from a formal doctor patient relationship, but Dick is credited part in Nicole's progress and their intimate relationship develops fast. Due to Dick's recently finished education and his entrance to a marital relationship with a patient it is clear that the role of the doctor is not well established in *Tender*. Foucault elevates Freud as an important figure to the construction of the physician and points out that Freud's doctor is drawn on the properties of Tuke and Pinel's institutions; ". . . he regrouped its powers, extended them to the maximum by uniting them in the doctor's hands. . ." (Foucault 264). Curnutt states that Dick Diver can be seen as an example of the European medical influences the American doctors were exposed to and the promising development of psychiatry; "The essential hopefulness of his early career is a feature matched by the optimistic foundations of psychiatry. . ." (68). As a doctor, Dick is predicted a successful future and his diligent work support his aspiring ambitions but the marital unity does not prompt Dick's carrier but rather causes its downfall. The relationship between Dick and Nicole can be read as transference between the characters, a shift in position that affects both, and where one elevates the other falls.

. . . the sheer illogic of Dick marrying Nicole shows that science is not as purely rational as it purports to be – unless one interprets his marriage as a heroic means to conduct the most in-depth psychoanalytic study yet attempted. . . (Blazek 72).

The relationship between Dick and Nicole depicts the confusing role of the physician and portrait the difficulties of establishing boundaries around the treatment of mental illness. Dick becomes a canvas, a figure of what Nicole needs him to be. In the beginning of their relationship Nicole needs a brilliant physician who can help her to rebuilt trust towards the male gender. At the clinic Nicole improves well but after her discharge she still needs close monitoring and thus she needs the doctor figure of Dick. He devotes half his life to one case, but his focus on writing and publishing his own work fades out and his character seem to be

less in touch with his occupation and more focused on the luxurious life in the French Riviera. Dick's downfall also represents Nicole's uprising, he becomes less of a doctor and she becomes less of a patient and more of an independent woman.

It is stated that Nicole is well for a period of 5-6 years, but has two breakdowns after Rosemary enters. Mrs. McKisco comes upon a scene when she goes to the bathroom alone, and is dying to tell the other guests what she saw when she returns. Nicole's second breakdown is narrated closer because this time Rosemary is present at the moment. A dead man has been found on Rosemary's bed, in order to avoid a scandal Dick removes the body and asks Nicole to wash the bedspread the body has bleed on. Nicole has a breakdown in the bathroom when she is washing the spread. "I never expected you to love me—it was too late—only don't come in the bathroom, the only place I can go for privacy, dragging spreads with red blood on them and asking me to fix them" (Scott Fitzgerald 174). The bloody spread functions as a metaphor representing the mess to clean up after the abuse Nicole sustained. Washing blood stained spread brings back memories for her childhood trauma. Nicole exclaims that Dick should not ask her to fix the spread indicating that she is also saying that it is hard for her to *just* fix her problems. Both the bathroom and the garden become physical spaces that illustrate Nicole's mind and her work to be cured. Through Nicole's breakdowns Dick has given her the tools to become well; "He felt it necessary that this time Nicole cure herself. . ." (Scott Fitzgerald 208), and her independence grows in correlation with her recovery from schizophrenic outbreaks alone. The positions have changed and Nicole no longer needs Dick to watch over her, but craves a loving husband, like Tommy.

The depiction of the doctors and the patient establishes mental illness early on in the story, but the change in the relationship also shows that the position between them changes.

The role of the doctor in psychiatry is as *Tender* shows, not within well-established boundaries and the reason can be assigned the new development in treating mental illness.

## **Chapter conclusion**

Scott Fitzgerald's text is a very interesting text to analyze when investigating how mental illness is presented in literature. This chapter has shown through excerpts from the text how mental illness is expressed through language, point of view and characters. The use of point of view clearly dictates what and how we see Nicole as the patient and how her breakdowns are narrated. The beginning of the book shows both Dick's connection to the medical education and Nicole vocalizations about her illness as the patient almost in first hand perspective. But because the narrator shifts the point of view the perspective of madness becomes blurry. The findings in the interpretations of language show a clear distinction between discourses and the use of metonymy to present mental illness. Nicole's garden becomes an embodiment of her illness illustrating mental illness interpreted from language. By looking at characters, their asserted roles as doctors and patients are visible in the beginning of the book but more concealed in 'Rosemary's Angel'. The nature of psychiatry in *Tender* shows the early theories and methods of treatment pioneers such as Freud introduced, and the asylum's effect on the new direction of psychiatry as Foucault tributes.

## 7. Didactic

The natural focus in this chapter is to show how ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ can be used to teach pupils about mental illness, literary analysis, develop accurate terminology and train reading skills in accordance with the Knowledge Promotion Reform 2013<sup>4</sup> and English Subject Curriculum 2013<sup>5</sup>. The focal point of this thesis has been to look at how mental illness is presented in ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’, ‘The Idiots’ and *Tender is the Night*. The literary analyses use an interpretive frame consisting of three focus points; point of view, characters and language. The amount of focus points in the analysis is narrowed by their ability to reveal the literary theme from the text, their importance to literary analysis and also to illustrate that an analysis consisting of few focus points is of equally academic value as one of greater width. This is a valid point in education and highly relevant for the purpose of this chapter. Poe’s story has been chosen for the didactic adaptation because of its topic, it is a short text to read, the language is not too difficult for the pupils and the text’s humoristic approach to mental illness can be a motivating reading experience for pupils. This chapter presents a teaching plan structured after the didactic diamond (Lyngsnes and Rismark 80) demonstrating how mental illness can be taught as a topic of discussion in class and how ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ can be used in education to illustrate mental illness in literature according to competence aims in upper secondary school.

English is taught as an obligatory subject throughout children’s schooling, but in-depth studies are optional and offered from a lower secondary level stated by the paragraph 2.1.4 in the Regulation of Education (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2014) . English is the most globalized languages and its prevalence as an international language identifies the need for deeper proficiency in high education levels (ESC 2) . Norwegian upper secondary school offers

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<sup>4</sup> Knowledge Promotion Reform hereby referred to as KPR2013.

<sup>5</sup> English Subject Curriculum hereby referred to as ESC.

English Literature and Culture as an optional subject at either VG2 or VG3 level for pupils in the Programme for Specialization in General Studies. The objective of English Literature and Culture is divided into three main areas briefly concerning development of language and vocabulary, ability to convey orally and in writing about literature, culture and society, and central issues related to literature and culture in the English-speaking parts of the world (ESC 4) . Programme for Specialization in General Studies states that literature can be a source for pleasure additional to education, and reading literature can lead to self-development;

For the individual, having a good command of a language can bolster one's self-confidence and sense of security and help one's development in a variety of situations. English literature and other cultural expressions can be a wellspring of experience, satisfaction and personal growth. The programme subject's broad approach to culture and society in the English-speaking world shall develop one's skills in critical analysis and reflection (ESC 1).

Poe's story challenges the social dictation of normality, perception of personalities and discusses the treatment of mental illness in the society. These approaches to the text can, on the pupil's personal development level, lead to independent thinking, understanding of social discrimination and the importance of individuality. In her article Suanna H. Davis states how she, through the construction of theme and literary works, arranges the works in the course reading list to create relevance between literature and the students' own life. The purpose of this is to show that literature can be a source of knowledge and comfort in a difficult time. Davis also incorporates literary critics in order to presents different approaches to analyses of literature “. . .talk about the stories and show the students that a single story can be interpreted in various ways and still have all those interpretations make sense. . . (6). Poe's story offers other discussion topics and possibilities of in-depth investigation of the author's pathos. The story facilitates a discussion about individuality, variety of personalities, different concealed illnesses and the ability to show tolerance towards what they find strange. The literary theme,

mental illness, must also be addressed for the historical perspective as well as a depiction of the text's contemporary society in educational purposes.

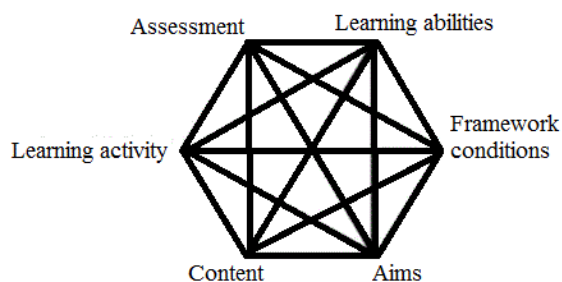
Competence aims are national guidelines for structuring educational content and divided into three categories; Language and language learning, communication and culture, society and literature. The competence aims express a clear emphasis on understanding and interpreting literature, with cultural and historical aspects, and development of vocabulary, correct usage and accurate terminology. The competence aims in the subject curriculum regarding literature are fairly open for interpretation so the teacher has the liberty to select what fiction to use when teaching literature. Suanna H. Davis points out that as teachers we are gatekeepers for the topics addressed in class. Mental illness can be a difficult topic for pupils for several reasons, the pupils could have a close or personal connection to mental illness or it can be equally difficult for the pupils to talk about mental illness if they have little knowledge about it. Literature can talk about things which are hard to put into words, perspective that seems impossible to understand and aspects one did not consider initially. The selection of fiction should aim at the pupils' interest and motivation, simultaneous to its educational relevance, to encourage reading. The choice of literary theme is firstly based on personal interest but also with the intention to encourage reading literature and create better understanding of mental illness.

Using short stories in education gives the pupils the opportunity to work with the text in class with guidance from the teacher. Analyzing short stories can also train the pupil's analytical skills before he or she embarks on longer literary analyses. Short stories can give pupils self-esteem to complete the reading, and give motivation for reading when the task seems more manageable. Edgar Allen Poe wrote several short stories and stories within the same topic which could be integrated to the teaching plan according to the pupils' interest in order to demonstrate different aspects of literary mental illness. The tutorial opportunities



provided by this theme are wide and can be used for interdisciplinary education. Although the competence aims permits the teacher to decide which texts to use in class the choice of text must be argued by its didactic aspects. Poe's text can be used to talk about mental illness in literature, blogs and social media discussing a growing openness regarding illness and the removal of the taboo. The story gives ground for exploring the literary genre, how to commit an analysis, reading exercise, and look at the literary and historical period to which it is attributed. It is not necessary to utilities all aspects of the text, rather that can be counterproductive. It is more useful to select aspects which are relevant for the teaching plan aims and focus on them. Davis points out that it is important to include historical context to show the pupils how these literary themes surfaces in literature by discussing the society of the time the text was written or include texts that “. . . relate to the historical explanations for insanity” (6). Poe's story expresses the 19<sup>th</sup> century's fascination with mental illness and insane asylums, and provides a good insight to current terminology connected to madness.

The didactic diamond by Bjørndal and Lieberg is a model that includes aspects which must be considered during planning of teaching to secure the quality. Lyngsnes and Rismark have modified Bjørndal and Lieberg's original didactic diamond and it is the modified model that will be used in the section below. The model consists of six categories that should help plan goal-oriented classes and to help the teacher develop their practice further. The six categories show how aims, content, learning abilities, learning activity, framework conditions and assessment navigate the activity of a class to promote learning.



**Model 7.1** Didactic Diamond

Short stories can be resourceful in a teaching aspect for several reasons. It can be rewarding for the pupil to experience the feeling of mastery before a larger assignment of similar work begins. Although English subjects at upper secondary school level are optional the pupil's dedication is not guaranteed. For an unmotivated pupil reading a novel can be difficult to conduct during the time period scheduled by the teacher. Short stories can be read during classes, and at VG2 or VG3 level it is reasonable to expect that the reading of a short story or two can be done. Considering time, short stories gives the pupils the possibility to read the story several times, and the teacher can devote more time to work with the content of the text that with a longer text. Reading in class also allows the teacher better control of the pupils progress in reading, and help them to use their reading strategies.

It is stated in KPR2013 that all education should include basic skills. The basic skills are divided into reading skills, numeracy skills, digital competence and expressing oneself orally and in writing. "Basic skills are integrated in the competence aims where they contribute to the development of and are an integral part of the subject competence" (ESC 4) . The teacher must integrate the basic skills in the learning activity by selecting those basic skills which are relevant for the competence aim and structure the learning activity to include it. The emphasis on basic skills can be contributed to its relevance not only in school associations but also in the pupil's personal life and higher education. Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has developed guidance document for teachers called 'Framework

for Basic Skills'. The Ministry of Education and Research has determined that 'Frameworks for Basic Skills' shall assist in the effort to develop and revise curricula. The document consists of definitions of the basic skills, how to promote development and completed forms that dictate levels of mastery (FBS) . This chapter will make use of reading and writing skills in the teaching plan below.

The basic skills express the importance of good reading skills. Melby states in her article 'Reading Strategies and Reading Comprehension' (2009) that reading strategies is an important tool for pupils, both in current and future education. Teachers must inform the pupils about different reading techniques and show them how to use them. Different reading tasks require different reading strategies; Melby separates between skimming, scanning and close reading. In order to become effective readers' pupils must learn which strategy to use according to its purpose. Good reading skills are important in higher education where the reading amount is strongly increased in contrast to upper secondary levels. These reading skills will be useful conducting a literary analysis.

The selection of competence aims can be done in collaboration with the pupils as Lyngsnes and Rismark state; "However, what is important is that the student is aware of and owns the goal, optionally the pupil has been involved in designing their own learning aims" (89)<sup>6</sup>. This can be done continuously out the year by asking the pupils which competence aims to work with next, and suggestions to the learning activity and basic skills. To enforce the responsibility the pupils hold to their own education they can take part in the structure of evaluation criteria. Evaluation is closely connected to learning, Lyngsnes and Rismark say that the pupil's relation to his/her own education can be enforced through self-evaluation. §3-12 of the Education Act states that the pupil is required to take active part in the evaluation of

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<sup>6</sup> Original quote in Norwegian; «Det som i midlertid blir viktig, er at eleven i det minste er klar over og, «eier» målet, eventuelt at eleven har vært med på å utforme sine egne læringsmål».

their own work, competence and academic development. To apply this in the classroom the teacher can ask the pupils to participate in the election of competence aims they structure the teaching plan around and work out assessment criteria together with the pupils. For the pupils to better understand what is required of them they need to have a working understanding of the meaning of the competence aims and levels of objective attainment. By constructing these together with the pupils their ownership of their education is strengthened and their understanding of assessment criteria is better. Local curriculums are formed by each school in order to make the competence aims understandable for pupils. We form local curriculum because the national curriculum contains vague and lofty expressions which make it necessary to specify the curriculum, anchoring it in local values and resources, and formulate a language students understand, this is often done locally by the school's English section. It is necessary to transform these aims to more specific understandable learning objectives and assessment criteria in order for the pupils to understand what specifically is required of them.

## **7.1 The didactic diamond**

The didactic diamond is by personal experience a useful tool for constructing a teaching plan, and has been frequently used during practice periods. In the following section this thesis will present a teaching plan based on the didactic diamond that shows how mental illness can be taught in upper secondary school and through the readings and interpretations of 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' the teaching plan illustrates mental illness in literature. Through the six categories the didactic diamond raises attention to the controlling factors the teacher must consider during planning.

1. Aims
2. Content
3. Framework Conditions
4. Learning Abilities
5. Learning Activities
6. Assessment

### **7.1.1 Aims**

The teaching plan must be structured according to the competence aim, local teaching plans and basic skills. The teacher selects which competence aims to work with, which basic skills can be incorporated to these aims and the local curriculum. It is necessary to transform these aims to more specific understandable learning objectives and assessment criteria in order for the pupils to understand what specifically is required of them. The assessment criteria help the pupils to better understand the level of competence needed and achievement forms show the pupil what separates low, medium and high attainment of objectives and gives a visual aid to mastery of the competence aims. Appendix 1 and 2 show how competence aims can be rephrased into learning objectives and assessment criteria for teaching mental illness and Poe's story. The learning objective; "Use words such as; mental illness, insanity, lunatic, asylum, patient, treatment and confinement" (Appendix 1) is rephrased from the competence aim; "Use a nuanced, well-developed and precise vocabulary to communicate on literature and culture" (Appendix 1) which focuses on the pupil's ability to incorporate accurate terminology when they discuss Poe's story. By formulating the competence aims the pupils are able to understand exactly what is required of them and how to achieve it.

There are several competence aims which are relevant for the reading of ‘The System of Dr.Tarr and Prof. Fether’. The competence aims selected for the teaching of Poe’s story focus on teaching mental illness as a topic, interpretation of literature, analyze the text in context with genre, historical and social perspectives, and develop and use accurate terminology in written and oral form. The four competence aims from the programme subject English Literature and Culture, which the pupils in this example are going to work with are as follows<sup>7</sup>:

- have a command of the terminology needed for analysing works of fiction, films and other aesthetic forms of expression
- elaborate on and discuss distinctive linguistic features of texts from different genres, from different periods and regions
- use a nuanced, well-developed and precise vocabulary to communicate on literature and culture
- interpret literary texts and other cultural expressions from a cultural-historical and social perspective

(ESC 5)

There are five basic skills the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training states should be incorporated in all levels of education. Digital competence, reading skills, numeracy and written and oral skills are important to emphasize in all teaching plans. This teaching plan focuses on reading and writing skills. Numeracy and oral competence and digital skills are not as relevant for this teaching plan. Ways to include them can be by looking at statistics for insane asylums, patients, gender differences between the inmates, having oral presentation of the subject, preferably of in-depth study of the theme or creating digital timelines or webpages about the theme. Because this teaching plan focus on literature it is natural to work on reading strategies and guide the pupils to apply them and in the right purpose. The pupils should be trained how to find the information they need from the text, interpret the meaning of the text and reflect over the content of the text(FBS). Effective readers are able to decode, understand

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<sup>7</sup> The competence aims of the three programme subjects in English can be view in their completeness in appendix 3.

and use the content in the text in appropriate context. Good reading skills can motivate for further literary interest, critical approach to text content and continuous education. Writing an analysis of the short story requires good writing skills and the ability to use a nuanced vocabulary. Their analysis will show their level of knowledge about the English language, they must make use of their vocabulary and use it correct and structure their writing into a well formatted text. For example it will be required that the pupil can use; Asylum, confinement and patient in their written analysis to show that they understand the meaning of these words and manage to apply them correctly. The basic skills chosen for this teaching plan express how reading and writing can be a source of comfort and self-development when dealing with difficult things. The combination of these aims structures activity that promote learning and activity that is goal-oriented. By considering competence aims and basic skills combined the teacher can present topics and skills that will prepare the pupil for the learning content and life experience.

### **7.1.2 Content**

The content of the learning activity should be developed through an interaction between all categories of the didactic diamond. Mental illness is a difficult topic which is important to discuss with pupils in upper secondary school because it is a hidden type of illness which can be difficult to understand and explain and some pupils may have close connections with some form of mental illness and need to establish some tolerance around it. The teacher will introduce the topic, discuss with the pupils in class what it is, if anyone has any experience with it and talk about mental illness expressed in literature, social media and blogs.

The pupils are going to read ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ and answer study questions which are designed to make the pupil critically aware of parts of the text, the study questions can be viewed in appendix 4. The pupils are going to write an analysis of the

text where they focus on how the literary theme is expressed in the text through language, point of view and characters. The analysis should contain language adapted for its purpose, correct applied terminology which shows good understanding of meaning. One of the competence aims is to analyze two lengthy texts and this exercise can be used to train the pupils' analytical skills for longer works. The teaching plan estimates six teaching hours to be sufficient amount of time for the planned content. In this example the teaching hours may advantageously be grouped into two hour sessions, two times a week. The working schedule below exemplifies how the content is divided through the three English sessions.

Teaching session 1: The class begins with introduction to mental illness where the teacher together with the pupils talk about what they know about mental illness, either from reading, movies, music etc or if anyone wishes to share a personal experience. The teacher goes through the teaching plan, presents the learning objectives and the assessment criteria. The teacher introduces the text the pupils are going to read, and the analysis they are going to write. The pupils are informed about the timeframe for the plan and the submission date for the written analysis. The framework of the analysis, learning objectives and assessment criteria is explained thoroughly in conversation with the class and made available in written form in the digital classroom<sup>8</sup>.

Teaching session 2: The pupils continue to read the story, answer the study questions and can research to topic further. The pupils work on their analysis with their answers to the study questions as foundation. In their analysis of characters in Poe's story the pupils can discuss behavior of normal and abnormal nature and use examples from the text where they first suspected a character to be mad and why. When the pupils look at language that refers to mental illness in Poe's text they can make use of the discussion in the topic introduction about

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<sup>8</sup> Digital classroom refers to web based communities the school uses to communicate internally and with pupils. Examples of this is Fronter, which is used in many upper secondary schools in Norway.



words associated with mental illness. To show high competence they can discuss how accurate terminology of psychiatry is used in daily conversations to describe moods, as the excerpt from Richard Arrendale in Ch. 2 of this thesis points out. During this session the teacher walks around the classroom and assist the pupils when needed.

Teaching session 3: The teacher provides final guidance as the pupils finish their writing and prepares to turn in their paper in a folder in the digital classroom that closes at a set time. The analytical frame contains three focus points the analysis should be structured after. These points have been selected for their ability to highlight the presentation of mental illness in the story. In their analysis the pupils demonstrate how language, character and point of view presents mental illness by using examples from the text and argue for their statements. Ex: an analysis of the title will reveal a play upon words and the pupils can discover through research that ‘tar and feather’ is a public way of humiliating others, thus argue the meaning of the title.

### **7.1.3 Learning ability**

Planning education for a class of different individuals can be challenging. The teacher must consider the pupils different learning conditions and competence background in order to structure the teaching sessions to the pupils’ advantages. Aspects like ethnicity, gender, cultural background, educational background, cognitive abilities and learning strategies may constitute a major difference in the pupils’ learning abilities and approach to the educational content. The Law of Education states: “The education shall be adapted to the abilities and aptitudes of the individual pupil, apprentice and trainee” (§1-3). Valdermo and Eilertsen discuss the pupils’ learning habits, the different types of pupils one typically finds in a classroom and their levels of learning awareness. A part of the teacher’s job is to identify the pupil’s subject competence level, learning conditions and motivation to be able to plan education adapted to that level. One of the most usual forms of adaptive education, and one

that is time saving, is to vary the teaching activity between auditory, visual and kinaesthetic stimulation. The teacher should renounce words and expressions that confuse the pupils and rather narrow down to few but suffice concepts and enforce the use of these. Knowledge about one's learning habits is important to work on at every level in education, and the teacher must vary the teaching sessions to best meet the pupils learning conditions. Imsen identifies the practical problem of adapted education and difficulty to implement it at all times and has limited the aspects of adaptive education to main factors which must be considered (356). Her approach to adaptive education show that the teacher can construct education according to adaptive education but that it is not possible to incorporate all of the school's, the pupil's and the material aspects. Instead the teacher make adjustments that considers the different learning process stimulations according to the content.

This teaching plan focuses on teaching using visual and auditory stimulation. Kinaesthetic stimulation could be incorporated by allowing the pupils to act out their interpretation of the analysis or visit relevant museum or institutions as a part of the introduction to the theme. Visual stimulation can be done by showing an animation of how an analysis can be done or the film *Stonehearst Asylum* (Anderson), based on 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' from 2014 can be viewed in class in addition to reading the text. Pupils who prefer auditory stimulation can use a recorded reading of the short story or audiobook reading. These adaptations of Poe's story can be done and stored in the archives in the digital classroom before class so the pupils have the option to look at them before class starts.

#### **7.1.4 Framework conditions**

Framework conditions are the possibilities and limitations that affect the teaching, examples of framework conditions are; time, school management, material, money, room, colleagues, equipment, local community and the teacher. The programme subject 'English literature and culture' consists of 140 teaching hours a year divided into 60 min units, approximately 4 teaching hours a week (2). The teaching plan must balance enough time to finish the project and set a limit to avoid it interfering with other teaching aims. The short story is a 13 pages long text and is not composed of too complex language for pupils at upper secondary level. The text's length makes it possible to read it in class, several times if needed, and is a humoristic short story which the pupils might find enjoyable to read. This teaching plan is based on a 6 teaching hour length with the presumption that the subject is structured in 2 hour teaching sessions twice a week, the plan then extend over one and a half week. If needed the pupils can work with their analysis at home and come for the third teaching sessions for final guidance before submission. Documents the pupils need, such as; analytical guidance form, audio reading of the text, animated analysis example, achievement form with assessment criteria, the short story, competence aims and learning objectives are made accessible through the digital classroom.

In Norwegian upper secondary school the pupils have their own school computers for educational purposes. The pupils can, and should, make use of online dictionaries to develop their vocabulary. Both the text and the topic introduces several challenging words such as; asylum, lunatic, schizophrenia, tar and feather, dementia etc. The pupils should use online dictionaries to look up words, synonyms and antonyms to develop their vocabulary and secure the accurate use of the terminology for their analysis. The analysis of the short story is to be written in word-documents and submitted through the digital classroom in a time limited folder. Many Norwegian schools purchase and use English subject textbooks, which provide

examples and suggestions to the structuring of teaching. Although this teaching plan does not make use of a textbook of this sort it could be included by supplementing with literary texts, analysis forms or suggested topics addressed in the textbook. The school's or the subject's semester plans can be useful tools for interdisciplinary connections. The teacher can also make use of the local community such as museums, buildings, nature or a subject expert if it is possible to visit an old insane asylum, hospitals or houses of confinement where the pupils can look around in actual buildings connected to mental illness. To use one example from my local community the pupils could travel to Steilneset Memorial in Vardø where they can follow a tourist guide who could tell them about the witch-hunts in 17<sup>th</sup> century Finnmark in English (Varanger Museum). Narrations about witch-behavior as well as several reasons for being accused for witchcraft can be related to descriptions of the mentally ill. In her study Feder looks madness in *Malleus Maleficarum*. Books about witchcraft are closely connected to madness in literature and can be used to demonstrate different views on madness and social-historical context.

### **7.1.5 Learning activity**

The learning activity is based on a combination of the competence aims, basic skills and adapted education. Learning activity can be explained as the method the teacher decides to use in order to attain the teaching goal. Teaching can be structured very differently depending on the purpose of the teaching but there needs to be a clear connection between the activity and what the pupils should have learned to attain the competence aim. The competence aims that are selected for this teaching plan focus on literature, language and social-historical context. Reading and writing are natural learning methods considering the content.

The pupils read the short story and the tasks that follows the reading activity make use of the three ways of reading addressed by Melby (2009). An alternative for the pupils who

benefit from other stimulations is an audio recording or audio book of ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’, or if the pupil prefer visual stimulation the teacher can make use of an animated film of how to conduct literary analysis or the film *Stonehearst Asylum*, which is based on Poe’s short story. The teacher can present statistics of mentally ill patients, the amount of insane asylums etc. Visits to local places connected to the mental illness can also be a good way to promote learning outside the classroom. Taking notes while reading are encouraged and the teacher is available to assist if the pupils meet any obstacle during reading. When the pupils work on their analysis they use their writing skills. They practice structuring what they write according to the target genre, practice to use their vocabulary correctly and they make use of critical reflection. The process of formulating words and thoughts into writing demands attention to their own opinions and reflection of values. The writing-process of this topic required new words and expressions unfamiliar to the pupils. The pupils make use of internet by committing research about the meaning of words and phrases and what situations we use them by looking up words, antonyms and synonyms connected to mental illness in online dictionaries to apply them correctly.

#### **7.1.6 Evaluation**

The Education Act section 3 vindicates the pupil’s right to assessment in terms of formative assessment, guidance and final assessment. The law also states the pupil’s own responsibility to create a base for assessment. The purpose of assessment is to promote learning, motivate, guide and document the pupil’s subject competence. Participating in one’s own development and contributing to assessing one’s own competency can be experienced as both rewarding and motivating for pupils. This teaching plan aim for the pupils to write and submit an analysis of ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ where they show wide and accurate terminology. Appendix 2 demonstrates how competence aims and assessment criteria can be formulated and presented in achievement forms what separates low, medium and high

attainment of objectives. By example the learning objective; “Compose a coherent text with grammatical and varied language” is divided into high, medium and low competency achievement to show the pupils what the objective means but also how they can attain it. The pupils’ language learning can be emphasized by presenting the attainment criteria in English. This also requires more attention to the understanding of the English language at the level of its words and terms.

<u>Low attainment</u>	<u>Medium attainment</u>	<u>High attainment</u>
Your language has several grammatical errors and little to no variation.	You are able to compose a coherent text with a medium variation in language and some grammatical errors.	You are able to compose a coherent text with varied language and grammatical correct language.

Evaluation is often separated between formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation is understood as guidance during the school year with the intention to improve their competence. The formative assessment gives the pupil constant feedback about their current level of competency and guidance for improvement. This teaching plan uses formative evaluation in two ways. During the writing of their analysis assignment the teacher is present during classes and provides the pupils with constructive comments on improvement possibilities. Their written literary analysis will be submitted, evaluated and graded by the teacher. The grade of the paper indicated to the pupils according to the achievement form what they have mastered and what they haven’t. The commentary evaluation will point out what makes the text strong, suggestions of improvement and guidance forward. By analyzing ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ the pupils learn new words, their correct usage, synonyms and antonyms connected to mental illness. The analysis of the short story trains the

pupils for larger analytical assignments and the assessment will help them to see if they are able to use a varied vocabulary, if they use examples of characters they identify as mad with supporting arguments and if they can discuss the text in terms of narrative terminology.

Summative assessment is a final assessment, often presented as grades which indicate the pupil's competence level. Summative assessment is usually given at the end of the school year and gives information about the pupil's knowledge for next school year or after ended education.

## **7.2 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has presented a teaching plan that structured by the didactic diamond according to the competence aims and other regulations by the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. The significance of the six categories has been disclosed as well as their relevance to this teaching plan. This chapter has advocated for the didactic aspects presented in the didactic diamond as basic foundation for any educational planning. The primary goal for this teaching plan has been to show how 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' can be used to teach mental illness as a topic in upper secondary school level as well as showing how a literary text can improve the pupils reading skills, improve English language skills and train their analytical skills. Secondly the choice of literature and focus on reading strategies is argued for their ability to motivate and encourage reading. The theme of the story can in several ways be a difficult topic, but the story is presented in humoristic narration and therefore suitable for topic introduction. Literature about illness and other taboo topics are increasing as society opens up and people display their personal relation to these issues publicly and by focusing on reading and writing the teaching plan show the pupils that literature can be a source of comfort and self-development. Poe's story can be used to illustrate that mental illness is hard to see, to discuss how one can tolerate different types of personality and avoid

labeling words. The teacher can talk about the discrimination of mental illness through time and in current society and connect it to the pupils experience with mental illness. This text can be used in bigger projects concerning literature about taboo topics or illness as literature.



## 8. Conclusion

This thesis has demonstrated how mental illness is presented through language, character and point of view in ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’, ‘The Idiots’ and *Tender is the Night*. In the light of Freud’s theories this thesis show how interpreting language reveal the clever use of puns, metaphors and metonymies to present mental illness. By analyzing words and phrases it has been possible to depict the connection between language and mental illness and show through selections of examples how mental illness is expressed. Point of view is an important focus point because perspective dictates the extent of mental illness the reader is permitted to see. The use of shifting perspectives gives insights to the characters feelings and makes a reading of the characters connection to mental illness possible. The excerpts of point of view and characters are discussed using the theories and studies by Feder and Foucault to support the recognition of mental illness in *Tender*, ‘The Idiots’ and ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’. These show how the characters can be identified as mad through perspectives, behavior, buildings and language.

Chapter 7 of this thesis shows a didactic presentation of how to teach ‘The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether’ as a source for a discussion about mental illness and to teach literary analysis. Mental illness is a difficult topic to talk about, the story illustrates the problem of seeing and recognizing mental illness, and addresses the issue of which words we use to talk about mental illness. The teaching plan shows how literature through reading and writing can be a source of comfort, knowledge and self-development. The teaching plan is structured after the didactic diamond and through the six categories the diamond consist of the chapter justify the importance of the six didactic aspects when planning teaching. The chapter highlights the value of good rvaeading skills in personal life, in school and higher education.

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# Appendix 1

## Competence aims

Competence aims	Learning objectives
Have a command of the terminology needed for analyzing works of fiction, films, and other aesthetic forms of expression.	<p>The pupil is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use these narrative terms correctly when discussing and analyzing literature; narrator, plot, character, point of view, theme and climax</li> <li>- Be able to identify the genre and explain the genre traits.</li> </ul>
Use a nuanced, well-developed and precise vocabulary to communicate on literature and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use words such as; mental illness, insanity, lunatic, asylum, patient, treatment and confinement in coherence with their meaning.</li> <li>- Compose a coherent text with grammatical and varied language.</li> </ul>
Use suitable language, appropriate to the situation, in oral and written genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use a varied adapted vocabulary when discussing the literary theme and the text.</li> <li>- Identify the literary period.</li> </ul>
Interpret literary texts and other cultural expressions from a cultural-historical and social perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the literary theme and how it is presented in the text.</li> <li>- Discuss the text's literary period with historical and social perspective.</li> <li>- Write an analysis of the short story 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' according to the analytical guidelines with a discussion of the story in context to historical and cultural view.</li> <li>- Know and understand the word; mental illness.</li> <li>- Be able to discuss aspects and development of social understanding of mental illness.</li> <li>- Be able to connect mental illness to discrimination and current society.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

### Learning objectives and assessment criteria

Learning objectives	Low attainment of objectives	Medium attainment of objectives	High attainment of objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use these narrative terms correctly when discussing and analyzing literature; narrator, plot, character, point of view, theme and climax</li> <li>- Be able to identify the genre and explain the genre traits.</li> </ul>	<p>Recognize the terms but not able to explain them. You use one or two of terms correct. You manage to identify the genre but not the genre traits.</p>	<p>Recognize three or more terms and explain some of them correctly. Use three or more terms correct. You manage to identify the genre and some of the genre traits.</p>	<p>Recognize all terms with accurate definition and use all correctly. You identify the genre and the genre traits.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use words such as; Mental illness, insanity, lunatic, asylum, patient, treatment and confinement.</li> <li>- Compose a coherent text with grammatical and varied language.</li> </ul>	<p>You use a few of the words correctly. You manage to use the words but not coherently. Your language has several grammatical errors and little to no variation.</p>	<p>You manage to use a majority of the words successfully with a working understanding of their meaning. You are able to compose a coherent text with a medium variation in language and some grammatical errors.</p>	<p>You manage to use all the words accurately with good understanding of their meaning. You are able to compose a coherent text with varied language and grammatical correct language.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use a varied adapted vocabulary when discussing the literary theme and the text.</li> <li>- Identify the literary period with traits and central figures.</li> </ul>	<p>You use no to little terminology correct and show little variation in vocabulary. You identify the literary period.</p>	<p>You use some terms correctly and some variation in vocabulary. You identify the literary period and can name some traits that reflect the period.</p>	<p>You use accurate terminology adapted to the situation with a broad vocabulary. You identify the literary period and can name many traits and central figures that reflect the period.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the literary theme and how it is presented in the text.</li> </ul>	<p>You manage to identify the literary theme.</p>	<p>You manage to identify the literary theme and</p>	<p>You identify the literary theme and how it is presented</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discuss the text's literary period with historical and social perspective.</li> <li>- Write an analysis of the short story 'The System of Dr. Tarr and Prof. Fether' according to the analytical guidelines with a discussion of the story in context to historical and cultural view.</li> <li>- Know and understand the word; mental illness.</li> <li>- Be able to discuss aspects and development of social understanding of mental illness.</li> <li>- Be able to connect mental illness to discrimination and current society.</li> </ul>	<p>You cannot discuss the literary period's historical or social perspective.</p> <p>You manage to write an analysis of the short story according to few of the analytical guidelines.</p> <p>You can use 'mental illness' correct with basic description. You can't show how mental illness is connected to society nor how it can be linked to discrimination.</p>	<p>make few connections to its presentation in the text.</p> <p>You can discuss the text's historical perspective.</p> <p>You manage to write an analysis of the short story with a brief discussion of historical context.</p> <p>You can use 'mental illness' correct with good descriptions. You manage to express how mental illness is seen in society but not how it has changed. You can discuss mental illness as a source of discrimination but fail to adjust specifically to past and current societies.</p>	<p>in the text through analytical points.</p> <p>You can discuss the literary period with reflection of the historical and cultural aspects.</p> <p>Your analysis show that you master analytical work and you are able to discuss the text against the historical and cultural aspects.</p> <p>You can use and describe 'mental illness' very well, with a thorough elaboration of social dictations of mental illness, how mental illness in society has changes and you can discuss how mental illness is connected to discrimination in present and current societies.</p>
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## Appendix 3

Competence aims English programme subject in the Education Programme for Specialization in General Studies.

### **International English**

#### Language and language learning

- give an account of fundamental features of English usage and linguistic structure
- give an account of fundamental principles for constructing texts in a variety of genres
- analyse linguistic tools in different kinds of texts
- give examples of other varieties of English than those that are used in the Anglo-American core area, and reflect on their distinctive character.

#### Communication

- employ a nuanced, well-developed vocabulary – for both general and specialized use
- understand, elaborate on and discuss lengthy discourses on general and specialized subjects
- use language appropriate to the situation in social, professional and intercultural contexts
- write coherent, well-structured texts on general, specialized and literary subjects
- present technical material orally, in writing, or in the form of composite texts
- use and communicate information based on figures and statistics
- use digital tools in an independent, critical and creative manner in the gathering of information, and in the communication and presentation of his or her own material
- give an account of and evaluate the use of sources

#### Culture, society and literature

- locate, elaborate on and discuss international educational options and employment options
- analyse and assess the role of some English-language media in international society
- elaborate on and discuss various aspects of multicultural societies in the English-speaking world
- reflect on how cultural differences and dissimilar value systems can affect communication
- elaborate on and discuss a number of international and global challenges
- elaborate on and discuss a selection of literature and factual prose from the period 1950 up to the present
- analyse, elaborate on and discuss at least one lengthy literary work and one film

- present a major in-depth project on a topic from International English or another subject from his or her own programme area and assess the process.

## **Social Studies English**

### Language and language learning

- elaborate on and discuss the relationship between form, content and stylistic register in sentences in social texts
- analyse linguistic tools in texts in dissimilar genres and assess their impact
- assess his or her own language learning in terms of established language learning goals

### Communication

- use a nuanced, well-developed vocabulary to communicate on social and political issues
- use suitable language appropriate to the situation in a variety of oral and written genres
- have a command of formal and informal language in a variety of contexts
- elaborate on and discuss linguistically demanding texts with a social or political perspective
- summarize, comment on and discuss differing viewpoints on social and political issues
- produce texts in a variety of genres with clear content, appropriate style, good structure, and usage that is precise and accurate
- use information based on figures and statistics as a basis for communicating on social and political issues

### Culture, society and literature

- elaborate on and discuss how key historical events and processes have affected the development of American society and British society
- elaborate on and discuss political issues and systems in the English-speaking world, with a special focus on Great Britain and the United States
- elaborate on and discuss questions related to social and economic conditions in some English-speaking countries
- analyse a regional or international conflict in which at least one English-speaking country is involved
- elaborate on and discuss current debates in the English-speaking world
- interpret at least one major work of fiction, one film and a selection from other English-language literature from the 1900s up to the present
- present a major in-depth project with a topic from Social Studies English and assess the process



## **English literature and culture**

### Language and language learning

- elaborate on and discuss the relationship between form, content and stylistic register in sentences and texts
- have a command of the terminology needed for analysing works of fiction, films and other aesthetic forms of expression
- elaborate on and discuss distinctive linguistic features of texts from different genres, from different periods and regions
- assess his or her own language learning in terms of established language learning goals

### Communication

- use a nuanced, well-developed and precise vocabulary to communicate on literature and culture
- elaborate on and discuss lengthy and linguistically demanding discourses with general, specialized and literary content
- use suitable language, appropriate to the situation, in oral and written genres
- summarize, comment on and discuss differing viewpoints in fictional texts
- produce texts in a variety of genres with clear content, appropriate style, good structure, and usage that is precise and accurate

### Culture, society and literature

- interpret a representative selection of texts from literary-historical periods in English literature, from the Renaissance up to the present time
- analyse at least two lengthy works of fiction
- analyse and assess a film and a selection of other artistic forms of expression within English-language culture
- interpret literary texts and other cultural expressions from a cultural-historical and social perspective
- elaborate on and discuss a selection of factual prose texts from English-language culture and social life
- elaborate on and discuss the cultural position of the United States and Great Britain in the world today, and the background for the same
- elaborate on and discuss current issues in international culture and the news media
- present a major in-depth project with a topic from English literature and culture and assess the process.



## Appendix 4

### Study questions

Read the short story 'The System of Dr.Tarr and Prof.Fether' and answer the questions below.

1. What is mental illness? Write your own definition, as you see it, and the words you associate with mental illness.
2. At what point in the story did you first begin to suspect that something was wrong? Give some examples.
3. What specific behavior first raised your suspicions?
4. Does any of the characters present mental illness, if so, who and why?
5. What part does Monsieur Maillard play in the story?
6. Is it possible that the same exact behavior can be considered both normal and abnormal? Give examples.
7. Which words are used in the text to describe mental illness?
8. The story often refers to methods of treatment, briefly explain what kinds of treatment is mentioned and how it works, according to the story.
9. If you find so, what does this story say about society?
10. What historical aspects can be drawn from the story?
11. How does the story end? Provide an interpretation of the ending.
12. By looking at the timeline in the story, how would you define it and say something about its connection to the theme.
13. If you can, are there any parts/sections which you find suitable to express the plot of the story?
14. What do you make of the title of the story?

### Research questions

1. What is a lunatic asylum? Can you find any information about the development of insane asylums? Are there any famous ones that can be of interest?
2. Can you say something about time period the story is written in?
3. Find out more about the author.
4. Researching mental illness, which words are used as accurate terminology?