LITERARY ANALYSIS OF OSCAR WILDE’S NOVEL THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY FROM THE PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH AND DECONSTRUCTION PARADIGM

ANÁLISIS LITERARIO DE LA NOVEL DE OSCAR WILDE Llamada EL RETRATO DE DORIAN GRAY DESDE EL ENFOQUE PSICOLÓGICO Y EL PARAGIMA DECONSTRUCCIONISTA

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Abstract
This literary analysis of Oscar Wilde’s novel, The Picture of Dorian Gray, attempts to evidence the protagonist’s implication in his
fatal end. For this purpose, Jacques Lacan’s Theory of The Mirror Stage is employed to describe the protagonist’s identification with the picture. Likewise, Joyce Carol’s critical inquiry about the novel is included to analyse the pact that eventually causes Dorian’s death. Moreover, the relation between Dorian and the picture is contrasted with the archetype of The Double described by Otto Rank. Finally, Ferdinand de Saussure’s Structuralism and Jacques Derrida’s Deconstruction paradigm are used to show how the former is the basis of Otto Rank’s theory and how the latter helps to identify different signifiers for Dorian and his portrait.

Keywords: Self-identification, doom, deconstruction, The Double, Faustian bargain.

1. Introduction

*The Picture of Dorian Gray* is the only novel written by Oscar Wilde and it was first published in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine in 1890. This novel tells the story of a young man who is abruptly overwhelmed by the discovery of his beautiful appearance, which opens up a new world of possibilities that were totally unknown for him until then. The story is set in the Victorian era when there was an extremely conservative society and strict moral rules, aspects that can be noticed in the novel but that are broken by some of the characters of this writing. This is the context in which Wilde introduces very interesting topics such as the power of Beauty, self-identification and self-destruction, among other.
In relation to the topic of beauty, it is possible to identify the influence of Aestheticism in Oscar Wilde’s novel, since beauty is presented as having great importance in people’s lives. In detail, the author presents beauty based on the classical conception, considering Greek features such as harmony, balance, and perfect dimensions. This ideal of beauty has direct relation with Aestheticism since this artistic movement, which was originated in England at the end of the XIX century, is based on the doctrine that art exists for the benefit of the exaltation of beauty, which must be raised and prioritized above the moral and social issues. In Great Britain, Wilde is recognized as one of the major representatives of Aestheticism, being his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* the scenery for the construction of aesthetic details, combined with larger social themes, which helped him to refine his ideas about the supremacy of art as well as incorporating themes of decadence, duplicity and beauty. Some of the aspects in which it is possible to note this conception of beauty are the physical description of characters, the relevance of arts in the life of characters and the power of beautiful people on the society of the story, and also through the protagonist’s narcissism.

As it was mentioned before, the Aesthetic movement is a tangible proof of the importance of beauty also along the story. Just like the context at that time, aesthetics has a relevant role in individual’s life of current societies. In the era of social networking websites, appearance has become a means of measurement of a person’s value. As the protagonist of Wilde’s text, people are increasingly willing to do anything to achieve physical perfection, since this seems to be the key to conquer it all. Unfortunately, in their keenness to reach the standards of beauty determined by mass media, people are able to walk all over other ones and even betray their own principles. Although people tend to think that beauty is synonymous of positive things, this is not always the case. Occasionally, a good appearance may hide bad intentions as it is illustrated in Wilde’s novel.

Another important theme present in the book is self-identification. In this respect it is important to emphasize the role of the external world in the perception of the self. More importantly, how the rest can influence the construction of one's personality. In the present study, this topic is addressed from Jacques Lacan’s theory in relation to an individual’s first encounter with the self, which, in opposition to the principles established by Sigmund Freud, proposes an outside-in perspective of the individual's identification process. In relation to the point raised by Lacan and its connection with the story, it is worth noticing that the external influence can affect people to such an extent, that becoming that subject defined by the rest can lead them, not only to
damage themselves, but also, in extreme cases, to cause their own destruction.

In order to elucidate the purpose of the topics discussed above, the psychological approach will be used in order to cover the aspects related to the protagonist’s process of identification. The objective of these themes is to contextualize the analysis. In turn, the Legend of Faust and Joyce Carol’s postulates will be employed in order to analyse the circumstances that influence the protagonist’s changes, and cause his consequent death. In addition, Otto Rank’s postulates about the archetype of the Double will be used in order to carry out a contrast between the archetype and the portrait. Finally, Structuralism and Deconstruction will be included in the study to show how the former is the basis of Otto Rank’s theory and how the latter helps to identify different signifiers for Dorian and his portrait.

In accordance with the aforementioned statements, it is proposed that the portrait is the victim of Dorian’s sinful actions and desires, which emerge as consequence of the lad’s obsession with beauty that eventually doom him to his own destruction. With the purpose of proving the relation between Dorian’s, the supernatural pact and his end, and determine the particular circumstances that give rise to our thesis statement, the following objectives have been set.

Objectives of the Analysis:
● To describe Dorian’s process of self-identification in relation to the portrait.
● To make a comparison between Dorian’s doom with Faustus’s story.
● To analyse Dorian’s requirement to be the portrait, as part of a pact.
● To establish how the pact means the beginning of Dorian’s doom.
● To demonstrate that Dorian’s negative personality changes and the visible changes of the portrait are consequences of the pact.
● To describe Dorian’s conflict against himself and against the environment.
● To evidence that Dorian is the responsible for dooming himself to death.
● To prove that Dorian in the portrait is a victim of Dorian the man with everlasting youth.
● To demonstrate that the portrait does not suit enough characteristics to be classified as the archetype of The Double described by Otto Rank.
To identify different signifiers for Dorian as the individual and for Dorian as the portrait.

Objectives of the Pedagogical Implications:

- To explain how socially-constructed ideas of beauty can influence school relationships negatively.
- To include the concept of physical beauty as a factor that influences discrimination.
- To propose the Deconstruction of the concept of beauty as a way to promote the value of diversity.
- To include CLIL as a means to teach about tolerance and diversity while teaching English.

2. Analysis

- Introduction

The present analysis specifies the methodology employed in this study and the results obtained through the research.

In this section of the project, the particular circumstances which support our hypothesis will be analysed. In specific, the causes and consequences that eventually lead the protagonist into doom. This is a critical analysis, which provides additionally a different perspective to the role of the portrait in the protagonist’s life. Based on Literary theory and on Hermeneutics, Deconstruction is employed at this point to make a reinterpretation of the socially established conception of beauty, and the static signifier of Dorian's portrait as the reflection of the victim, the Dorian who suffers in his inner-self the consequences of his acts. Accordingly, the role of the portrait as the archetype of The Double will be put into question, in pursuance of demonstrating that the picture does not possess enough characteristics to be considered the archetype of the double, nor the culpable of Dorian’s death.

Along the analysis the events are analysed in the following sequence:

First, Dorian’s process of identification is analysed in relation to Lacan’s theory of the Mirror Stage, based on Christopher Craft’s work *Come See About Me: Enchantment of the Double in The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and a lecture pronounced at Universidad de Buenos Aires, *Narcisismo e Identificación en la Fase del Espejo*. In second place, the transformation
of the portrait, the changes on the protagonist’s personality and the protagonist’s end will be analysed as consequences of a pact, which is part of Dorian’s doom. In particular, this segment will be carried out in comparison with Faustian doom. In the last section, Dorian and the picture will be studied under a Deconstructionist perspective, with the purpose to determine different signifiers for Dorian and his picture. In order to complete the work, the analysis of literary and fiction elements are also added along the process.

In accordance with the aforementioned statements, this analysis can be divided into three main parts. In relation to the first point, Dorian’s process of identification will be compared to a babies’ first identification of the self, which is described in Jacques Lacan’s theory. Specifically, this time Dorian will be analysed as taking the role of the baby, and the portrait will be analysed as the reflection. In addition, Henry’s first intervention will be compared to the role that the mother has in the process of identification which babies go through. Concerning the second section, it is worth noting that the pact and Dorian’s doom are explicated by the cause and effect analogy. This way, the pact will be analysed as a consequence of Dorian’s uncontrollable desire to stay young as the portrait and also, as the main cause of Dorian’s doom. At this point, the archetype of the Double, based on Otto Rank studies, particularly in the book entitled The Double and the chapter The Double as Immortal self, from his work Beyond Psychology, will be encompassed in order to conduct a comparison between his theory and the deconstructionist analysis which is developed at the end of this part of the study. Finally, the third point, which focuses on the role of the picture in the protagonist’s life, will be discussed in relation to the deconstructionist paradigm, based on chapter 10 Deconstruction I, Jacques Derrida from Paul Fry’s work Theory of Literature. Consequently, this work is developed in relation to three different perspectives: the psychoanalytic approach; the literary motif, Faustian doom; and Jacques Derrida’s Deconstruction.

2.1. Dorian’s process of identification

In the course of the story, the protagonist experiences an important change in his personality. Such change begins specifically after his first encounter with the portrait, and it can be explained by Lacan’s theory about self-identification. In the case of Dorian Gray, the process of identification occurs when he is already a young man, but it causes the same impact on him that it causes in a baby who first recognises himself in a mirror reflection. This way, Dorian starts to build his character in relation to what he considers to be his best model, his portrait.
One of the reasons why self-recognition is so disturbing for Dorian is because he has never been conscious of his own image, just as babies are not conscious of themselves as a whole entity. Indeed, he is totally ignorant of his physical attributes, especially of his beauty and charming personality until he meets the controversial Lord Henry who, by means of his disturbing discourse, influences Dorian in several opportunities, and makes him aware of the advantages of his glowing beauty and ephemeral youth. Precisely, the first time that they meet, Lord Henry realizes that Dorian is not conscious of his impressive beauty and his ephemeral youth, and feels the need to open Dorian’s eyes to his reality, saying:

{…} ‘You really must not let yourself become sunburnt. It would be very unbecoming to you.’ ‘What does it matter?’ cried Dorian, laughing, as he sat down on the seat at the end of the garden. ‘It should matter everything to you, Mr. Gray.’ ‘Why?’ ‘Because you have now the most marvellous youth, and youth is the one thing worth having.’ ‘I don’t feel that, Lord Henry.’ ‘No, you don’t feel it now. Some day, when you are old and wrinkled and ugly, when thought has seared your forehead with its lines, and passion branded your lips with its hideous fires, you will feel it, you will feel it terribly. Now, wherever you go, you charm the world. Will it always be so?’ (34)

In this sense, Lord Henry has a relevant role in Dorian’s identification process by being responsible for showing him who he really is. More specifically, Henry’s behaviour is comparable to the figure of the mother, who shows the baby that the image in the mirror is actually him. In this particular case, there is no mirror, but the picture and also Lord Henry’s hypnotising words help to create a new image of Dorian that was totally unperceived by him until then. In effect, it is Mr. Wotton who, by pointing the portrait, invites Dorian to recognize his own image in the masterpiece created by his friend Basil Hallward. This intervention affected Dorian in an unimaginable way, generating in him the belief that the young man in the picture was no other than himself. Astonished by the exact representation reached by the artist “Lord Henry came over and examined the picture. It was certainly a wonderful work of art and a wonderful likeness as well. ‘My dear fellow, I congratulate you, more warmly,’ he said. - ‘Mr. Gray, come and look at yourself.’ ” (39) As from this precise moment, the identification process is initiated; Dorian accepts Henry’s invitation and comes to meet his portrait. This situation is described in the following quotation:
Dorian made no answer, but passed listlessly in front of his picture and turned towards it. When he saw it he drew back, and his cheeks flushed for a moment with pleasure. A look of joy came into his eyes, as if he had recognized himself for the first time. He stood there motionless, in wonder, dimly conscious that Hallward was speaking to him, but not catching the meaning of his words. The sense of his own beauty came on him like a revelation. He had never felt before. (40)

As the process occurs, all the words that Henry had said before start making sense to Dorian, and the gorgeous lad that is in the portrait in front of him becomes his reality. Thus, Dorian discovers in the painted image an ideal him, since this picture that came as a revelation to him contains all the charm and virtue of his youth which he deeply desires. This situation can be compared to that of a baby who has a fragmented and incomplete notion of his body. More specifically, the moment in which a baby sees his reflected image and realizes about the rest of his body, is similar to the moment in which Dorian faces the portrait recognizing the aspects of himself that he has ignored all his life. In this sense, the man in the picture is comparable to the coordinated body perceived by the child. As a consequence, the protagonist finds in the painted image a model, which he will pursue at all costs.

2.2. The Pact as The beginning of Dorian’s doom
Although the picture brings about amazement and joy, it also reveals a stir of anguish and desperation. Unquestionably, the beauty and youth that he possesses make Dorian a powerful man, but this will not last forever and all of his charm will fade in time. What Lord Henry had mentioned to Dorian had opened his eyes about the advantages that his unspoiled image confers to him. But his friend had also warned him about the ephemeral of this situation, with the following words:

Yes, Mr. Gray, the gods have been good to you. But what gods give they quickly take away. You have only a few years in which really to live. When your youth goes, your beauty will go with it, and then you will suddenly discover that there are no triumphs left for you, or have to content yourself with those mean triumphs that the memory of your past will make more bitter than defeats. Every month as it wanes brings you
nearer to something dreadful. Time is jealous of you, and wars against your lilies and your roses. You will become sallow, and hollow-cheeked, and dull-eyed. You will suffer horribly. (36)

These words and the identification with his new image become the origin of an intense fear, which, in turns, stimulates his obsession with the immutable beauty of the picture. Suddenly, he can see and feel how everything he possesses vanishes in front of his eyes without being able to do anything about it. Then, his soul is pervaded by a sense of hopelessness, which is described by the narrator in the following lines:

{…} as he stood gazing at the shadow of his loveliness, the full reality of the description flashed across him. Yes, there would be a day when his face would be wrinkle and wizen, his eyes dim and colorless, the grace of his figure broken and deformed. The scarlet would pass away from his lips, and the gold steal from his hair. The life that was to make his soul would mar his body. He would become ignoble, hideous, and uncouth. (41)

This reflection makes Dorian feel really miserable, since he cannot find a solution for his misfortune. The feeling that invades him is so strong that it turns into a physical pain from which he cannot escape. Soon, the senses of sadness and anguish turn into feelings of impotence and fury, which he manifests in front of his fellows, losing all composure. Overwhelmed by the fact of not being able to solve the situation in his favour, the young man cries out loud his desperation and desires, hoping somehow that verbalising those feelings could make his wish come true. As follows, the protagonist takes his fixation to higher level, leaving behind the bounds of possibility, as he claims

‘How sad it is! I shall grow old, and horrid, and dreadful. But this picture will remain always young. It will never be older than this particular day of June…. If it was only the other way! If it was I who were to be always young, and the picture that were to grow old! for this- for this- I would give everything! yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give!’(42)

At this point, the story of Dorian Gray can be compared to The Legend of Faust, since in this case there is also a pact, which dooms the protagonist's destiny. Although the pact is not clearly manifested, due to
the lack of a demonic entity who grants a wish in return for something, it is possible to consider it as such because Dorian’s wish has come true, yet bringing upon grave consequences to his life. Another important connection with the Legend is the fact that Dorian, just as Faustus, has a limitless ambition that makes him willing to do anything in order to achieve his longing. In addition, Dorian’s wish, as Faustus’s, are taken to reality by means of a supernatural enchantment, which in the case of the former is not evident until he starts to notice some changes in the expression of the picture, right after he breaks up with Sybil. In specific, the night he leaves Sybil, he comes back home and as he passes through the library, he notices something different in the painting. A detail in the picture catches his attention, as it is described in the next scene:

He started back in surprise, and then went over to it and examined it. In the dim arrested light that struggled through the cream-colored silk blinds, the face seemed to him to be a little changed. The expression looked different. One would have said that there was a touch of cruelty in the mouth. It was certainly curious. (98)

Evidently, it is very difficult for the protagonist to admit such incredible situation, but he thinks again and sees in his last actions an answer for the change in the face on the canvas. Definitely, he had been cruel with Sybil, he had humiliated her, and all that cruelty seemed to be reflected in the modified smile of his picture. Then, he remembers the day he saw the picture for the first time. In fact, that day

He had uttered a mad wish that he himself might remain young, and the portrait grow old; that his own beauty might be un tarnished, and the face on the canvas bear the burden of his passions and his sins; that the painted image might be scared with the lines of suffering and thought, and that he might keep all the delicate bloom and loveliness of his then just conscious boyhood. Surely his prayer had not been answered? Such things were impossible. It seems monstrous even to think of them. And, yet, there was the picture before him, with the touch of cruelty in the mouth (100).

Suddenly, a crazy idea crosses his mind. It is possible that the petition had become a tangible reality just as he had asked for. Undoubtedly, the portrait is connected to him, and this connection is closely related to his actions. Particularly, Dorian discovers that “For every sin that he committed, a stain would fleck and wreck its fairness”
In this respect, he concludes that the picture works as a mirror that reflects another Dorian, perhaps the real one. Moreover, it shows him the nature of his acts, which, although very disconcerting for him, warns him about his mistakes. Therefore, as the narrator expresses through Dorian’s thinking, “The portrait that Basil Hallward had painted of him would be a guide to him through life, would be to him what holiness was to some, and conscience to others, and fear of God to us all.” (107) In the end, the portrait is taken as a guide by Dorian as it gives him the possibility to mend his mistakes and change his future conduct.

As the time goes by, it seems indisputable that Dorian’s words have taken effect. The worse his acts turn, the uglier and more wrinkled the face on the canvas becomes. Apparently, the picture reflects his soul, and works as a visible consciousness that disturbs his life. In this respect, the picture can be assumed as portraying the archetype of the Double, since it represents the protagonist’s counterpart, which puts the protagonist’s concerns under threat. After all, the changes shown by the portrait constitute a supernatural phenomenon, which is out of reach of the understanding of men, and therefore, if it was discovered by anyone else, it would mean the destruction of his reputation.

Despite the difficulties, Dorian takes full advantage of his granted wish. Just as Faustus after the pact, he becomes a successful version of himself. Although he has never gone unnoticed before, now he has become mandatory topic of conversations among the socialite. As a result, all kinds of rumours emerge around Dorian’s figure, specially, around his apparent everlasting youth. Certainly,

“The boyish beauty that had so fascinated Basil Hallward, and many others besides him, seemed never to leave him. Even those who had heard the most evil things against him {...} could not believe anything to his dishonour when they saw him. He had always the look of one who had kept himself unspotted from the world.” (159)

What is more, he becomes a model of reference for many young men of the time. Even though, he is considered a very unusual person, “His mode of dressing, and the particular styles that he effected from time to time, had their marked influence on the young exquisites of the Mayfair balls and Pall Mall club windows, who copied him in everything that he did, and tried to reproduce the accidental charm of his graceful” (162). In such a way, the young man raised mixed feelings among people, who despite of his controversial conduct still admired him.
Undoubtedly, Dorian never imagined all the benefits that the picture would bring to his life, neither imagined the series of consequences that his desire would unchain. Similarly to the Faust’s Legend, the protagonist’s wish is not granted for free, but in exchange for something else. However, in the case of Dorian, he is not conscious of the cost of this “pact.” Indeed, he does not even know that he is a part of it, or that his desire would come true. In any case, this urgent requirement results in a series of terrible repercussions that will eventually doom him.

2.3. Dorian’s doom
The day in which Dorian becomes aware of the power of his beauty, the same day that the “pact” is settled, something changes inside him. After this episode, he leaves behind his innocence, and the aspects of himself that he used to ignore, seem now to be the centre of the universe. As he discovers that he will remain young and splendid in spite of his acts, he forgets about values and remains indifferent to people’s comments, letting himself being carried away by the pleasure that reaching perfection in the portrait makes him feel, a perfection that he has deeply desired. As a consequence of this change in his mind, he becomes a shallow and narcissistic person unable to love anyone but himself. This fact becomes more evident when, after a disappointing performance, Dorian rejects Sybil for her acting has not satisfied his standards of beauty, which he manifests by crying

{...} you have killed my love. You used to stir my imagination. Now you don’t even stir my curiosity. You simply produce no effect. I loved you because you were wonderful, because you had genius and intellect, because you realize the dreams of great poets and gave shape and substance to the shadows of art. You have thrown it all away. You are shallow and stupid. My God! how mad I was to love you! what a fool I have been! you are nothing to me now. (95)

More specifically, what makes him angrier about this situation is the fact that she fails to keep her talent, which neither Dorian’s fellows nor the rest of the world could admire as he wishes. Because of her awful performance, the young lady would not become an object of admiration and he would not be envied of possessing her. Indeed, the fact of being envied seems to be the origin of such a passionate love. Thus, overwhelmed by the disgrace that Sybil’s terrible performance has caused
him, he reproaches her severely: “I would have made you famous, splendid, magnificent. The world would have worshipped you, and you would have belonged to me.” (95) Through this reaction, it becomes evident that Sybil constitutes a mere instrument used by Dorian in order to obtain the jealous admiration from his peers. In this manner, his selfish way of thinking is unveiled, ratifying the idea of his growing narcissistic behaviour.

Unquestionably, Dorian’s infatuation has brought out his worst side, and it has also turned him totally indifferent to the suffering of others, including his loved ones. In the case of Sibyl Vane, he shows specially unmoved by her affliction. Even worse, in the face of her suicide, Dorian reveals a very cruel facet when he decides to blame the young lady for ending her own life, pointing himself as the victim of the story. Actually, he openly manifests this idea to Henry with the following words:

‘She was everything to me. Then came the dreadful night - was it really only last night? - When she played so badly, and my heart almost broke. She explained it all to me. It was terribly pathetic. But I was not moved a bit. I thought her shallow {…} She had no right to kill herself. It was selfish of herself.’ (112).

Indeed, for Dorian, Sibyl has become a superficial person that has only thought of her when she finishes with her life, hence, she is the only one responsible for all the unfortunate events occurred the previous night.

This arrogant attitude increases in time, just as his self-love does. This occurs to such an extent that Dorian comes to compare himself with literature characters, whose features are recognized by him as very similar to his own, thus, identifying them as his ancestors. Indeed, “There were times when it seemed to Dorian Gray that the whole of history was merely the record of his own life, not as he had lived it in act and circumstance, but as his imagination had created it for him, as it had been in his brain and his passions.” (185) In other occasions, Dorian would clearly manifest feeling like being in the limelight, constantly. Specially, once when talking to Basil, he cries ‘‘What is it all about?’{…} in his petulant way, flinging himself down on the sofa. ‘I hope it is not about myself. I am tired of myself to-night. I should like to be somebody else.’”(193) Unquestionably, this kind of attitudes shown by Dorian makes evident his selfish and shallow way of thinking, both characteristics which he has gradually acquired as part of the consequences of the supernatural pact.

In the same way, Paranoia arises in Dorian’s life for fear that someone could discover his secret. The fact that somebody could find the
picture and see the horrible figure that lays in it, frightens Dorian. This situation makes the young man feel seriously vulnerable, triggering extreme reactions on his part, in relation to the protection of the piece of art. Certainly,

He hated to be separated from the picture that was such a part of him... Yet he was afraid. Sometimes when he was down at his great house in Nottinghamshire, entertaining the fashionable young men... he would suddenly leave his guests and rush back to town to see that the door had not been tampered with and that the picture was still there. (180).

Even though the portrait has given him so many good times, it has also made him a slave for it, interfering with his social life. In spite of his fame, Dorian has made no real friends, since he must keep safe distance from anybody in order to prevent people knowing about the supernatural facts that have taken place in his life. As the time goes by, people become more aware about his strange behaviour and also his appearance. Consequently,

Curious stories became current about him after he passed his twenty fifth year... His extraordinary absences became notorious, and, when he used to reappear again in society, men would whisper to each other in corners, or pass him with a sneer, or look at him with cold searching eyes, as if they were determined to discover his secrets.(181)

Notwithstanding, Dorian strives to keep his secret safe; his immutable image raises concerns about the nature of his everlasting youth, which as a result, intensifies Dorian’s paranoid behaviour, reaching other important consequences.

While the protagonist lets himself be seized by the advantages that the pact brings to him and all the negative effects that this entails, there are moments in which he tries to fight against his selfishness and shallowness to be a man of good will. From the beginning, Dorian is always conscious of the changes he experiences and how this transformation affects the people he loves, which at times encourages him to take actions in this matter. Unfortunately, all his attempts are stopped over and over again, either by others or by himself, a fact that disturbs the young man until the end of the story.
2.3.1. Conflict between Dorian’s consciousness and his desires: Person against himself

The fact that the picture reveals Dorian’s misbehaviour, specially his cruel attitude towards Sybil Vane makes him feel vulnerable. From this situation, he begins to question the quality of his acts and thoughts. In effect, he has been very discourteous to the young lady, and he needs to do something to compensate his terrible behaviour, so he decides to write a letter to Sybil in order to obtain her forgiveness. In addition, he is conscious of the good intentions of Basil Hallward, who has tried to prevent him from taking the wrong way. Without doubt, Basil has been a good friend, but he has scorned him. Afflicted by his senseless action, he looks at the sinister face on the canvas,

{…} and for a moment he regretted that he had not told Basil the true reason why he had wished to hide the picture away. Basil would have helped him to resist Lord Henry’s influence, and still more poisonous influences that came from his own temperament. The love that bore him -- for it was really love -- had something noble and intellectual in it. (145)

Evidently, there is something wrong with him; the picture shows a truth that cannot be hidden, a truth that torments him even more than Basil’s complaint about his misbehaviour and Henry’s friendship. Actually

Compared to what he saw in it of censure or rebuke, how shallow Basil’s reproaches about Sibyl Vane had been! -- How shallow, and of what little account! His own soul was looking out at him from the canvas and calling him to judgment. A look of pain came across him, and he flung the rich pall over the picture. (146)

Nevertheless, neither his friend’s good intentions to take him on the right track, nor the shocking surprise of seeing his sins expressed on the picture, are enough for the young man to change his way of behaving. Unfortunately, he continues with the same arrogant and aberrant attitude for a long time.

In spite of the pity that the reflection of his suffering inner self causes in the lad, he does not feel able to challenge his destiny. For Dorian, it is certainly a matter of nature; he knows that his acts are turning him into a selfish person, and that this situation will mar the picture that once had captured the magnificence of his beauty, “But the
future was inevitable. There were passions in him that would find their terrible outlet, dreams that would make the shadow of their devil real” (145). This way, the protagonist decides to be carried along by his impulses, knowing with certainty that his sins would never affect his image as long as the portrait exists to endure the visible effects of his actions. In spite of his attempts for overcoming this situation, Dorian cannot deny the threat that the portrait means in his life. Besides, the guilt always comes back to his life generating inner conflicts, which turn more intense as it is more difficult for him to hide the presence of the picture.

2.3.2. Conflict between Dorian’s will and his fate: Person against the environment

In addition to his inner conflicts, Dorian must face another dilemma. Even though, Lord Henry is considered as his closest confident, the lad is conscious of his bad influence. In fact, every time that the protagonist feels able to change, Lord Henry appears to fill his head with ideas that make him doubt about what is really correct and what is not. In some opportunity, Henry’s arguments about his sinful nature manage to convince the young man to such an extent that

He felt that the time had really come for making his choice. Or had his choice already been made? Yes, life had decided that for him, -- life, and his own infinite curiosity about life. Eternal youth, infinite passion, pleasures subtle and secret, wild joys and wilder sins, -- he was to have all these things. The portrait was to bear the burden of his shame: that was all. Giving up all efforts to leave behind his past (122).

At this point, it is possible to establish a relation between Henry and the protagonist’s future, since the discourse of the former forms an important external influence on the lad’s conception of beauty. In this respect, Henry’s influence on Dorian’s perception of the self that is previously compared to the role of the mother in the process of identification can be also compared to the role that society has on an individual’s conception of beauty. In spite of his efforts, the young man cannot get rid of his friend’s ideas, which have already affected his mind, for it seems that they are part of his misfortune.

As a matter of fact, in one occasion near the end of the story, Dorian shows once again a hint of remorse for the terrible actions he has deliberately committed against innocent people. He realizes that the ugliness of his picture is not only due to time and aging, but also, due to the corruption of his soul and his horrible sins; therefore, he decides to
leave the influence of Henry aside and tries to become a good person. Hence, he decides to leave the girl he is seeing, Hetty, even though he is in love with her, in order to prevent her from his dangerous influence. Nevertheless, he decides to tell Lord Henry about it, who, with his common peculiar perspective, replies to the lad:

My dear Dorian, you have the most curious boyish moods. Do you think this girl will ever be really contented now with any one of her own rank? I suppose she will be married some day to a rough carter or a grinning ploughman. Well, having met you, and loved you, will teach her to despise her husband, and she will be wretched. From a moral point of view I really don’t think much of your great renunciation. Even as a beginning, it is poor. Besides, how do you know that Hetty isn’t floating at the present moment in some mill-pond, with waterlilies round her, like Ophelia?’ (235)

Once again, Lord Henry tries to eradicate Dorian’s intentions to change his own way of behaviour, by persuading him into accepting his sinful nature. This time, however, Dorian is not willing to give in to his friend’s arguments. Despite all the atrocities committed in the past, he feels that he still has a chance to change his way of living. He has caused enough damage, and he refuses to continue doing the same. Notwithstanding, when he is determined to remain firm in his convictions, Henry’s words make him doubt, one more time.

2.3.3. The end of Dorian’s doom

Even though Dorian is aware that the changes he has experienced are negative, it seems that he cannot help transforming into this shallow and sinful man. Furthermore, the threatening existence of the portrait intensifies his fear, leading him to take extreme measures in the face of any situation that may put in evidence his secret. Particularly, the last time Dorian is visited by his friend Basil, he is seized by an unexpected violence that he has never experienced before. In that opportunity, Basil tells Dorian about the horrible rumours that have arisen around his figure, and tries to convince the lad there is still time for him to set a new course in his life. Nevertheless, far from bringing him to his senses, Basil’s petition to change only manages to alter the protagonist. Hence, in order to show his friend that his corruption has no way back, Dorian decides to show the picture to Basil. Though, just after revealing his secret, and in spite of Basil’s decision to help him to overcome his situation,
Dorian Gray glanced at the picture, and suddenly an uncontrollable feeling of hatred for Basil Hallward came over him. The mad passions of a hunted animal stirred within him, and he loathed the man who was seated at the table, more than he had ever loathed anything in his whole life. Hallward moved in his chair as if he was going to rise. He rushed at him, and dug the knife into the great vein that is behind the ear, crushing the man’s head down on the table, and stabbing again and again. (207)

Definitely, Basil has always shown his appreciation for Dorian, and this time would not be an exception. Even after knowing the most terrible secret of his friend, Basil leaves his stupefaction aside and tries to make the lad feel his support. Nonetheless, as Basil possesses important information now, he means a serious threat for the young man. Consequently, Dorian could not let him go out of his house and, even though he knows this is a sordid decision, the lad has no option except solving the problem by his hands, in order to keep his secret safe.

Even though he has no remorse at the moment of killing his friend, Dorian experiences intense anguish after committing such a horrible crime. After all, Basil has been a very good friend of him, perhaps the only real one. Indeed, Dorian feels so moved for ending with the life of the only person that has really cared about him, that he makes the decision to change, this time for good. Nevertheless, there is still the portrait, whose presence constitutes a big obstacle, that added to the confusion that Henry’s discourse causes on Dorian’s mind, will make the objective very difficult to reach. He can escape Henry, but he cannot escape the portrait, and far less to confront the world when they see the atrocity of his sins reflected on the picture. For this reason, the lad decides that

He would destroy it. Why had he kept it so long? It had given him pleasure once to watch it changing and growing old. Of late he had felt no such pleasure. It had kept him awake at night. When he had been away, he had been filled with terror lest other eyes should look upon it. It had brought melancholy across his passions. Its mere memory had marred many moments of joy. It had been like conscience to him. Yes, it had been conscience. He would destroy it. (247)
Yet, there is something that Dorian does not take into account at the moment that he decides to destroy his portrait, and that is that the picture is the other side of him. In other words, what he thinks is just a portrait, is nothing less than his soul, which claims desperately for his change. Therefore, the decision he has made affects him mortally, which is verified when his servants enter to the room of the picture and “Lying on the floor was a dead man, in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage. It was not till they had examined the rings that they recognized who it was.” (250) This way, the young man suddenly ends with his life accidentally, leaving nothing but bad memories among his ex-friends.

In this end, it is possible to notice how Dorian is overcome by his own decisions. Even when he is determined to change, he is not able to exhibit the painting to the world and recognise his sins. On the contrary, he would rather destroy the picture in order to hide all his past. This attitude is a clear proof that his change would never be real. In addition, from this decision it can be concluded that the end of Dorian’s life is only and exclusively his own responsibility. Although, Henry’s discourse and the presence of the portrait have influenced in this dreadful end, his death is just the ultimate consequence of the pact that he has voluntarily settle. In this sense, Dorian’s life represents the cost he must pay for preserving his youth and beauty. Therefore, all the events that take part in Dorian’s life are part of a destiny he cannot avoid, for he has been condemned by his own free will.

2.4. Deconstruction of Dorian’s portrait as Dorian’s doom

Even though the protagonist and its portrait share some characteristics of the archetype of the Double described by Otto Rank, the classification of Dorian as the original and the portrait as his double is not completely appropriate. Whereas it is true that the portrait can be considered as a “detachment from the lad’s ego” (The Double 20), as it is mentioned in Rank’s theory, the characteristics of the Double as representing the antagonistic role in the story are not suitable for the case of Dorian’s picture. In the first place, the portrait does not share the same goals as the protagonist, given that, Dorian is exclusively interested in staying young and beautiful and living his life without reservations. On the other hand, the picture’s purpose is to show the truth behind the Dorian’s acts, which does not impede him doing them. In the second place, the picture does not possess free will to interfere in the protagonist's life, as an independent being. On the contrary, this is a subordinated entity, whose very existence and its effects are always subjected to Dorian’s will. Therefore, there is not such a deliberate fight
between the portrait and the protagonist, as it occurs in most Double cases. In this particular case, Dorian’s struggle is between his desires and his consciousness, and not directly with the picture, since this is just a reflection of what occurs internally.

According to another characteristic described by Rank it is noteworthy that there is no such a conflict between the picture and the lad caused by being in love with the same woman, which occurs in most Double cases. As it has been mentioned before, Dorian has inner conflicts that affect the picture, but these conflicts are not based on a woman. In addition, even though the protagonist’s death is caused by the destruction of the picture, it is not the presence of the latter which obliges the lad to end with his own life. Contrastingly to other Double cases, it is not the Double bedevilment which forces the protagonist to attack his portrait and kill himself. In truth, it is Dorian’s egocentrism and desire to live without remorse what lead him to cause his own death by eliminating the picture. This way, it can be established that, although the picture represents another Dorian, it does not possess all the characteristics to be considered a Double. Moreover, the protagonist does not behave as most of the Originals, as described by Otto Rank, since it is Dorian who alters the portrait and not the other way around.

Even though the protagonist feels as the victim of his own portrait, since this seems to be the reflection of his conscience, the young man is far from being the real victim of the story. When Dorian, the handsome man with an everlasting young appearance, discovers the connection that he has with the image in the canvas, he begins to think about the consequences of his acts, and he reflects that “for every sin that he committed, a stain would fleck and wreck his fairness. But he would not sin. The picture, changed or unchanged, would be to him the visible emblem of conscience,” (102) In this way, the picture is considered by the lad as the actual reflection of his conscience, or a real impression of his own soul, which he takes as an opportunity to keep him on the right track. Indeed, from this discovery he makes the decision that “{…} the portrait that Basil Hallward had painted of him would be a guide to him through life, would be to him what holiness was to some, and conscience to others, and the fear of God to us all.” (107) Nevertheless, Dorian realises that what he has done to Sibyl Vane will be always present on the portrait, as “here was a visible symbol of degradation of sin. Here was an ever-present sign of the ruin men brought upon their soul” (107) Therefore, the young man understands that nothing can be done to erase the marks from the picture, no matter what he tries to do to mend his bad actions.

As a consequence of recognizing that the changes on the canvas are permanent, the lad changes his way of thinking and this supernatural
connection begins to be considered as an advantage, since his physical appearance would not suffer any change. Dorian feels as he is untouchable by the physical effects that his sins produce on the image. Indeed, he is convinced that “Like the gods of Greeks, he would be strong, and fleet, and joyous. What did it matter what happened to the colored image on the canvas? He would be safe. That was everything.” (124) This way, he decides to hide the portrait, in a way so that no one else could see the changes on it, while he spends his time unleashing his most impulsive desires.

Nevertheless, this kind of behaviour, far from dampening Dorian’s impulses, just helps to increase the disposition of the lad for liberating himself. Actually, as time went by “the curiosity about life that, many years before, Lord Henry had first stirred in him, as they sat together in the garden of their friend, seemed to increase with gratification. The more he knew, the more he desired to know. He had mad hungers that grew more ravenous as he fed them.” (161) In this respect, it is noteworthy the fact that Dorian’s life of debauchery does not bring any feeling of regret in him. Indeed, the situation produces a sense of enjoyment in him, which motivates the young man to compare his own image to the terrible image on the portrait. Hence, every time that he had the opportunity, he would

{...} stand, with a mirror, in front of the portrait that Basil Hallward had painted of him, looking now at the evil and aging face on the canvas, and now at the fair young face that laughed back at him from the polished glass. The very sharpness of the contrast used to quicken his sense of pleasure. He grew more and more enamoured of his own beauty, more and more interested in the corruption of his own soul.(160)

Clearly, the more different and uglier the picture becomes, the more fascination Dorian feels.

From the opposite position, the portrait must carry the burden of absorbing the negative effects of Dorian’s behaviour. Particularly, the once unspoiled picture undergoes the visible changes caused by Dorian’s transformation into a sinful person. A transformation the protagonist has deliberately consented, as part of a future he cannot escape. In other words, for Dorian “[...] life had decided that for him, -- life, and his own infinite curiosity about life. Eternal youth, infinite passion, pleasure subtle and secret, wild joys and wilder sins, -- he was to have all these things. The portrait was to bear the burden of his shame: that was all.” (122) This
way, Dorian decides to give himself into the pleasures of life, no matter how this could affect the vulnerable figure lying in the picture.

Without doubts, to witness the horrible transformation in the portrait makes the lad worry about his acts. In some occasion “A feeling of pain came over him as he thought of the desecration that was in store for the fair face on the canvas. Once, in boyish mockery of Narcissus, he had kissed, or feigned to kiss, those painted lips that now smiled so cruelly at him.” (123) After all, the cruel expression, acquired by the face in the picture, reflects the corruption he has submitted his own soul, and that makes him feel so guilty about the sins he has committed. Moreover, he feels so vulnerable to people’s reaction when they discover the supernatural connection with the portrait. However, neither his guilt, nor his fear are reason enough to make him go in another direction. Instead, he wonders “Why should he watch the hideous corruption of his soul? He kept his youth, --that was enough. And, besides, might not his nature grow finer, after all? There was no reason that the future should be so full of shame.” (150) Accordingly, instead of facing his faults, he prefers to hide the picture and with it, his feelings of regret.

Even though the lad is conscious that hiding the picture would not make his faults disappear, keeping it away from men’s eyes gives him a sense of release. Certainly, “He felt safe now. No one would ever look on the horrible thing. No eye but his would ever seen his shame.” (152) In such manner, the picture, which Dorian recognises as his own soul, is condemned not only to remain hidden, but also to wither in time with every sin he commits. As a consequence, the man in the picture would grow old and ugly, but the lad would stay young and beautiful, which is his main concern. Once again, Dorian prefers his appearance to the peace of his soul. Sometimes he would feel remorse for his acts, specially for the miserable state of his soul. In fact, at some point, “He would examine with minute care, and often with a monstrous and terrible delight, the hideous lines that seared the wrinkling forehead or crawled around the heavy sensual mouth, wondering sometimes which were the more horrible, the signs of sin or the signs of age” (160). Nonetheless, Dorian is unable to do something to change his fate, for he cannot leave his selfishness aside to come to the aid of his wretched soul.

In spite of the anguish that produces to see in the picture the damages caused by his sins, Dorian is not brave enough to reveal the truth to the world. Instead, he would rather eliminate any proof of his mean actions that could interfere with his plans of changing. To such a degree, the picture, which has acted as his consciousness preventing him from evil, is unfairly condemned to its end. After all, “There was only one bit of evidence left against him. The picture itself, --that was evidence. He would destroy it” (247). Hence, his desperate soul ends up being the
victim of Dorian’s ambition for beauty. As the lad decides to avoid his consciousness in order to surrender to the banal pleasures of life, he becomes the main one responsible for dooming his own soul to such a tragic end. At the end, Dorian selfishness and shallowness doomed him to death.

- **Results**

As a result of the events occurred along the story, it is possible to conclude that both representations of Dorian, the handsome man and the portrait, can be conceived as two different signifiers. On the one hand, it is the lad with an unspoiled beauty and everlasting youth, who, at first sight, can be associated to pureness and kindness. Notwithstanding, after his image the lad hides a shallow way of thinking and a selfish way of acting, which are clearly proof of meanness. This way, the young man, beautiful on the outside, transforms into a signifier for ugliness. On the other hand, the old and ugly image on the portrait is first considered the protagonist’s enemy. Nonetheless, the picture represents the reflection of the miserable inner-self of Dorian, another version of himself that is deep inside suffering for Dorian’s bad choices. Additionally, the portrait can be considered as the visible expression of Dorian’s consciousness or soul, which seeks to persuade the protagonist of the damage he is causing to himself. In this sense, the sinister image on the canvas, which at first impression could be associated to ugliness and evil, has actually two signifiers: on the one hand, it can be understood as pureness and kindness, and on the other, it represents suffering, as opposed to happiness associated with beauty. Thus, Dorian, who seems to play the victim of such an evil portrait, is the one to blame for his misfortune. Correspondingly, the picture, which seems to be the one responsible for condemning Dorian to death, is the actual victim of the protagonist’s selfishness.

3. **Pedagogical Implications**

In our current society, appearance seems to be increasingly important. Even though we intend to be a more tolerant and inclusive society, we cannot deny that what people can think or say about us has a great effect on us, especially what it is said concerning our physical appearance. Since we are children, we are constantly influenced by ideas of what should be considered beautiful, and these ideas usually come from models imposed by Mass Media. With the advent of Social Networks, these standards of beauty have only become more powerful since web sites such as Facebook, Twitter or Youtube constitute an important springboard to make those ideas be accessible to all. However,
this conception of beauty, which comes from the outside and is built upon a few people, makes a sense of frustration arise in us as we fail to achieve the prototype of a good-looking person, and also, it makes negative feelings against our own physical appearance arise as we are wrong for not being equal to the models. Moreover, this belief, that is only what is within the established patterns which can be considered beautiful, makes us dislike all those ones who are different, raising prejudice and discrimination.

In this regard, kids and teenagers are the most affected by this conception. Due to their little conscience, children could take this definition of beauty as an absolute truth. What is more, they could take these references to judge their peers, classifying the rest into good and wrong, depending on their appearance. In consequence, people who seem to accomplish the characteristics associated to beauty are more accepted than those who break away from the established canons. Certainly, children and teenagers can be especially cruel with those who appear to be different from the models they are used to accepting, because among them, difference is usually considered as a negative thing. Unfortunately, the negative connotation conferred to the fact of being different has contributed to the emergence of phenomena as Bullying and Cyber-bullying, which affect Chilean students and constitute a dramatic problem. In fact, according to an article written by the journalist Eduardo Cabrera and published in the national newspaper La Tercera, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (Timss) conducted in 2012, revealed that Chile reached the fifth position among the countries with more bullying. From the results of this study, it is possible to make the assumption that a low capacity of tolerating and respecting the particular characteristics on other people among Chilean children could be the one of the main causes of these results.

Among the measurements adopted by the Chilean Government in order to fight against Bullying and other types of aggressions at schools. In 2011 the school violence law that penalises violent conducts in educational institutions was enacted. In addition, the Ministry of Education, by means of its web site, has published support materials to assist the educational community in order to approach school violence and school relationships but these actions have not been enough to solve the problem of bullying in schools. With the purpose of complementing the measurements already taken, we propose to present the promotion of tolerance and diversity from the concept of beauty. In this sense, we think that through Deconstruction teachers can encourage students to question socially constructed ideas of beauty and help them to get rid of them to explore and create new meanings for the concept. This analysis of beauty, not only aims to promote critical thinking among students, but also to
instil in them that there can be beauty in anything, even in something different. Thus, teachers can guide their students, not only to respect diversity, but also to value it as a beautiful thing.

In relation to the teaching of English, we think that a good way of applying this content to language matters is through the teaching approach CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). This methodology, allows teachers to teach content and language simultaneously, and that is the reason why it has gained renown among European educational systems. Furthermore, “CLIL encourages the use of curricula which promote the right interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity and communication and language abilities which are in demand by today’s employers.” (British Council | “Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)”) In this respect, children could learn the diverse conceptions of beauty that are adopted by different cultures all over the world, and thus understand that beauty is a socially constructed concept that can be modified.

Eventually, the reinterpretation of beauty is fundamental to respect and appreciate diversity, since human beings are all different, and accepting those differences will also help us to accept and love ourselves. Therefore, we need to educate our students in a wider conception of beauty so that they can leave prejudices aside in order to learn from one another and understand the differences with others as a possibility to enrich the perception of everybody.

4. Conclusion

By means of this analysis we aimed to demonstrate that the protagonist’s desire to acquire the qualities of the painting that he identifies as himself leads him to make decisions that doom his life. As to support our thesis statement, we first analysed Dorian’s identification process in relation to the portrait. Secondly, we established that this desire drove him to offer his life in exchange of immutable beauty and youth of the portrait. Subsequently, we have described the consequences of this pact, which includes the protagonist’s damnation. Finally, we made a deconstruction of Dorian, by identifying different signifiers for the lad and his portrait, with the purpose of clarifying the responsibility of the former in events that lead him to death and the innocence of the latter.

After carrying out our analysis, we are able to conclude that Dorian is the only culpable for dooming his life, considering that his obsession for becoming the ideal Dorian, illustrated in the portrait, is the principal cause of his fatal end. In this respect, we identified a series of causes and effects that determined his death. In detail, we could determine that Dorian’s profound desire made him take part in a
supernatural bargain. As a consequence of the deal, Dorian became a selfish and frivolous person, and his sinful actions began to be reflected in the image on the canvas. In turn, these changes on the picture altered Dorian to such an extent that he made him want to hide the portrait from the world. As he attempted to keep the picture safe, he began to have paranoid thoughts, which led him to kill his friend Basil. Finally, as he realised that he could not live peacefully while the painting continued existing, he decided to destroy it causing his death.

In relation to the portrait, we conclude that this is not an entity that has affected the protagonist on purpose, but a defenceless object. On the one hand, the portrait can be considered as the reflection of the unhappy Dorian who suffers deeply in his inner-self for his bad actions. On the other hand, it can be seen as his consciousness, which reflects Dorian’s sins in order to make him reflect about the course of his life. In this respect, the last conception can be understood as Dorian’s kind side, that emerges through the physical changes as an opportunity for the lad to come to his senses and stop his sinful conduct. However, these changes do not have the expected effects on Dorian because he prefers to hide the proof of his meanness and ignores the deterioration of his soul. Consequently, we can attribute to the portrait the role of the actual victim of the pact.

Through this study, the relevance of beauty in society has been emphasized. More precisely, it has been exposed how beauty has become an obsession for some people, bringing negative consequences to their lives. In this respect, it is noteworthy the relevance that society has on the construction of models of beauty. In the book, Lord Henry acting as the external force that influences Dorian’s idea of beauty can be compared to the role that society has on people’s conception of beauty. Nowadays, it is common to see girls and boys on TV, who are considered as references and models to be followed for having perfect bodies and beautiful faces. Apparently, looking beautiful and young seems to give you a special status and even power over the rest. On the contrary, people who do not meet these parameters of beauty are not as equally accepted by society as those who do. The fear of being rejected, or not being sufficiently appreciated by others, can drive some people to act in extreme ways. Indeed, Wilde’s novel is a clear example of this situation.

Additionally, Dorian Gray’s story shows us that beauty can also be a synonym for ugliness. In particular, Deconstruction helped us to make a reinterpretation of the static conception of beauty and come to the conclusion that sometimes what can seems beautiful in appearance is not necessarily beautiful inside, and the other way around. In the case of the protagonist of this book, his beautiful features and everlasting youth were just a facade, since his real feelings lacked any bit of beauty. This way, it
becomes evident that there is no interrelationship between the concepts of beauty and kindness and good feelings. Similarly, the damaged face of the portrait also reveals us that ugliness is not inherently related to maliciousness and bad intentions, as inserted in our collective unconscious through different classic tales, in which the protagonist are commonly represented by a gorgeous princess, and the antagonist by an ugly witch.

In order to make a contribution in relation to this topic, we intend to make our peers reflect about beauty connotations. In particular, we seek to raise awareness about the detrimental effects that trying to reach ideal stereotypes, imposed by society or mass media, can cause on our psychological and physical health. While it is true that having models is part of human development, it is important to take them as such, a reference. We should not aim to become someone we are not. Instead, we should take only the aspects that may contribute to construction of our own identity. Furthermore, we want to encourage people to stop judging an individual by his appearance, since this could lead them to establish superficial relationships, or to lose the possibility of developing a real relationship based on lofty feelings. Moreover, this socially-constructed conception of beauty has certain degree of influence in discrimination, giving way to bullying inside schools. As teachers, we should take action in this matter by encouraging our students to reflect about the concepts of beauty and diversity. Moreover, It is important that we foster them create their own meanings for beauty and invite them to find beauty in other aspects of human life. In the end, beauty as they know it is an ephemeral thing that can only bring ephemeral benefits but it does not guarantee happiness. In the worst-case scenario, placing it as the ultimate goal can destroy our life, just as in the case of Dorian.

Works Cited


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