



“Evil” in Russell Banks’s Short Story “The Fish”: A Lexico-grammatical Stylistic Analysis

"الشر" في القصة القصيرة لراسل بانكس "السمكة": تحليل لفظي تركيبى

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Abstract:

This paper presents a lexico-grammatical stylistic analysis of Russell Banks's short story "The Fish," utilizing the model of Leech and Short to examine how the author's word choices and grammatical structures depict the darker aspects of humanity, particularly greed and selfishness. By applying Leech and Short's stylistic checklist, this study explores how Banks uses language to reveal the destructive nature of human evil and its capacity to harm both individuals and their surroundings. Drawing on an understanding of Banks's background and childhood environment, the analysis highlights how his personal experiences influenced his writing style and thematic focus. Through statistical analysis of the linguistic features identified in the checklist, the study demonstrates how Banks effectively conveys the destructive consequences of human vices. The findings underscore the power of stylistic analysis in uncovering an author's intent, offering readers insight into Banks's portrayal of humanity's darker traits. This paper also provides a methodology for conducting a stylistic analysis of literary works, guiding readers in interpreting the underlying messages in an author's use of language.

Keywords: Evil, Russell Banks, Short stories, Leech and Short

المخلص:

يقدم هذا البحث تحليلاً أسلوبياً لغوياً نحوياً للقصة القصيرة "السمة" للكاتب راسل بانكس، باستخدام نموذج ليتش وشورت لدراسة كيفية استخدام الكاتب لاختيار الكلمات والهيكل النحوية لتصوير الجوانب المظلمة للطبيعة البشرية، خصوصاً الطمع والأنانية. من خلال تطبيق قائمة التحقق الخاصة بنموذج ليتش وشورت، يستكشف البحث كيفية استخدام بانكس للغة للكشف عن الطبيعة المدمرة للشر البشري وقدرته على إيذاء الأفراد وبيئاتهم. استناداً إلى فهم خلفية بانكس وبيئته الطفولية، يبرز التحليل كيف أثرت تجاربه الشخصية على أسلوبه الأدبي وموضوعه. من خلال التحليل الإحصائي للسمات اللغوية التي تم تحديدها في قائمة التحقق، يظهر البحث كيف نجح بانكس في نقل عواقب الأهواء البشرية المدمرة. تؤكد النتائج على أهمية التحليل الأسلوبى في الكشف عن نيات المؤلف، مما يوفر للقارئ فهماً أعمق لكيفية تصوير بانكس للجوانب المظلمة للطبيعة البشرية. كما يقدم هذا البحث منهجية لإجراء تحليل أسلوبى للأعمال الأدبية، مما يساعد القارئ في تفسير الرسائل الكامنة في استخدام المؤلف للغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الشر، راسل بانكس، القصص القصيرة، ليتش وشورت



1. Introduction:

"Secrets and lies, they eat your insides until all you have left is a hard thin skin that covers you like the shell of one of those eggs you poke a little hole in and draw out its egg contents before you dye it for Easter." Russell Banks, *Lost Memory of Skin* (2011)

Human destruction can take many different forms, ranging from the "small" ways we harm each other daily to terrible acts like slavery and murder. This capacity for destruction is commonly referred to as humanity's "dark side." Though a plethora of research has been done on the possible origins of humanity's dark side, most of it has overlooked how psychotherapists understand and treat the dark side of patients. That's why it was important for normal people to see this side only through the gate of literature.

In literature, it is evident that everyone has a unique fault that he or she encounters throughout life and that this flaw may affect not only his or her decisions and way of thinking but also the people around them. In our point of view, the four most dangerous character traits are lying, greed, selfishness, and stubbornness since they hurt not only the person who possesses them but also everyone around them. These defects are like a bomb that can injure or even kill everyone, particularly if the individual who has the defect is not sufficiently conscious of it, which can sometimes cause more harm than good.

As it is widely acknowledged, to simplify the lesson for a significant portion of the public, several of the stories deviate from reality and present their truths through the prism of fairy tales. The short story under examination in this paper comes from Russell Banks's anthology *Success Stories* (1986). Using the Leech and Short framework (1981), a stylistic analysis of



this short story will be conducted at the lexical and syntactic levels. The Checklist of Lexical features, which these two authors released in their 2007 book "Style in Fiction", is seen to be a useful tool for undergraduate and graduate stylistics students to help them understand how to apply these traits.

1.1 The Author:

To stylistically analyze the literary works and apply the model of Leech and Short to them, the background of the writer of these works should be mentioned because it has a role in figuring out the style of that author and the messages in his works.

Russell Banks, being born in March 28, 1940 into a working-class household in Massachusetts, supported the working class in his writings.

Despite studying at Colgate University and the University of North Carolina, his simple style targeted a large portion of uneducated people. Banks' work often felt out of step with postwar American literature trends, unlike Joseph Heller's black humor and parodic fabulation. His style lacked interest in the urban struggles.

1.2 The Author's Style:

Banks' novels explore moral ambiguities and their impact on everyday lives. Characters grapple with economic realities, racial and social issues, and their environment. Banks uses flamboyant and aggressive characters, illustrating these with concrete instances. His poetry writing skills, utilizing metaphors, provide in-depth accounts of interpersonal struggles and the struggles of common, sometimes underprivileged people. His stories are inspired by childhood memories.



1.3 Methodology:

Leech and Short offer a comprehensive theory of style classification as a tool for analysis, addressing the "bittiness" of previous studies that overemphasized the aesthetic value of stylistic features. They apply their methodology to 85 works by over 51 writers, using various linguistic strategies such as Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik's Grammar of Current English, Halliday's systemic grammar (1960s), Grice's conversational analysis (1975), and Searle's theory of speech acts (1969, 1979). Leech & Short aims for aesthetically illuminating linguistic analysis rather than theoretical correctness and does not limit itself to conventional linguistic theories. They define stylistics as the relationship between a writer's aesthetic achievement and the linguistic features that make them appear. Their study is selective, focusing on lexical features, grammatical features, and sentence structure and type. This means that stylistics is a subfield of applied linguistics that studies literary and non-literary works using scientific methods. It examines how speakers or authors use language to achieve specific goals, focusing on grammar, pronunciation, accent, and word choice. It connects linguistics and literary criticism and can be studied from various sources, including canonical works and popular culture.

1.4 Aim and Significance of the Study:

This paper aims to apply the model of Leech and Short (1981) to one of the short stories "The Fish" written by Russell Banks. In this short story, Banks was trying to show the readers how the evil side of humanity could be portrayed and how this side can affect and harm people in different ways. This will be pointed out in the paper through a lexical and grammatical



stylistic analysis of this short story which will be chosen from one of his collections.

2- Research questions:

According to what is mentioned above, some questions about Banks and his style need to be answered:

- 1- How is the model of Leech and Short applied to "The Fish" by Russell Banks?
- 2- How is the evil side of humanity clarified through the lexical and grammatical levels?
- 3- How do Leech and Short analysis add to the clarification of the writer's style?

3- Literature Review:

A lot of researchers and professors like Saxon and McBride (2023) wrote about the works of Banks and how he was known for his unique and creative way of writing. But only a few wrote about his passion for writing about morality and the problems that face the working class and only a few talked about his way of shedding light on the evil and dark side of humanity. In this paper, the writings of the latter will be supported by applying the model of Leech and Short to prove their point of view and how he managed to portray the people when morality is absent and when they lose control of their evil traits.

"His earliest novels are rooted in legacies of New England regionalism. His more recent novels, though built from the very vernacular voices that Banks develops in his early-career grapplings with his working-class identity, express a cosmopolitan scope and sensibility." Patrick O'Donnell et.al (2023) claimed that how Banks was raised and the environment



around him affected his way of writing his novels and even after growing up and being an international writer whose works had been translated into over 20 languages his style of writing is still affected by what he lived in his early life.

Jamie Saxon (2023) wrote an article about the style of Banks and because of his birthplace, working-class Americans frequently appeared in his books. He mentioned specifically the work "Cloudsplitter," which has made a significant contribution to our understanding of racism and our appreciation of the great diversity of human cultures.

Martyn Bone (2018) focused on a different zone in Banks's writing away from the working-class people but still attached to the place where he grew up. "I consider Banks's narrative cartographies of the economic, demographic, and cultural connections across the" north-south axis" ... Bank's own youthful experiences in Florida and Chapel Hill shaped his conviction that the traumatic encounter of European and African-descended peoples in the New World generated the dominant narrative of U.S.... " page XIV from "Where the New World Is"

Moreover, Carrie McBride (2023) published in an article about Banks how he was thinking of his job while writing his stories "I don't think of it as a job. I think of it as a relationship that one bears with other human beings—strangers, but to the species almost. And the main job, the main task, let's put it that way, for the writer in the tribe is to clarify for the rest of the tribe what it is to be human for better or worse: our angelic side and our evil side. All aspects of what it is to be human...we don't know what it means to be human until our artists tell us and show us." (p. 2)



In addition, Joseph Entin (2023) clarified why Banks was supporting the working-class problems and against racism and capitalism, believing that they are the main reason why the evil side of humanity appeared that much and that was clear in Banks' book "Continental Drift" which was as a conflict of "innocence and evil". Banks mentioned that he has been expressing the same things all along in an interview from May 2016. His allegiances are, in fact, to the American working class and the average man and woman, and the plutocracy has always been his target since, in his opinion, it dominates and manipulates the American economy and, by extension, American society.

Anne-Laure Tissut (2023) focused on the "voice of the text" in Banks's short story collection *A Permanent Member of the Family*. She claimed that using the book's potential as well as the reader's personal history and sensibility as inspiration, helps in examining a few ways in which readers can follow unique and evolving paths through the text. It is hoped that this study will examine the complexity of the mental image that arises when the title of a literary work is mentioned, by investigating the development of the text, challenging its fixed status as a static object.

Lilijana Burcar (2018) mentioned that "Russell Banks's *Rule of the Bone* (1995) is a rare instance of a contemporary socially engaged American novel of development and maturation that rests on a systemic analysis of postindustrial Western reality and contemporary forms of Western-led imperialism." She added that it is America's post-industrial working-class book of maturation, and it is best understood in the nexus of postcolonial and Marxist philosophy. Burcar claimed that the book tackles these complicated societal concerns at a level that is both more



sophisticated and easily understandable for readers who are older and more knowledgeable, while yet remaining accessible to teenagers on a more basic level. In her opinion Rule of the Bone represents what is known as a crossover fiction in this sense and though it is primarily written for adults, teenagers who want to escape the formulaic boundaries of today's popular adolescent literature may find it to be extremely helpful.

Besides, Sandy English (2023) argued: "Most of his 21 fiction works concern working class people, often in upstate New York and northern New Hampshire... Banks followed an urge that was common in an earlier period of American literature: to show how ordinary people really lived." She focused in her article on the death of Banks on his life and how it affected his way of writing she tackled how he was interested in the life of the working-class people and how he wanted to show the world the hidden side of their lives. "Banks, nevertheless, distinguished himself from the literature of his times because not only did he write about the working class, but he also took its side. He believed, moreover, that fiction could help people understand the world and, in that way, change it."

Joshua Parker (2010) explores how narrative form and thematic content in Russell Banks's fiction encourage reader support for specific political, cultural, and social views. Banks's writing explores the permeability of divisions between African American and European American, Caribbean and continental North America, male and female, and parent and child. The article uses metalepsis, a technique for shifting focalization in contemporary fiction, to examine these boundaries and their porosity, promoting intercultural understanding.

Casey Jordan Milliken (2017) through his stylistic analysis to the "Rule of the Bone" by Russell Banks said that Mohawk, a



critical production, focuses on the first half of Banks' novel, ignoring the Jamaican half. This approach serves as an outsider to current critical discussions, promoting Banks' punk ethos. The production maintains distance from normal or popular readings, aiming to blaze a new trail with literal and metaphorical fire, avoiding the "3 masses" agenda.

3.1 Data collection and Methodology:

Lexical and Syntactic Tools for Analysis

In this study, I will employ a range of lexical and syntactic tools to analyse the text.

The analysis will focus on the following:

1. Lexical Tools:

- **Collocational Analysis:** Examining the co-occurrence of words within the text to uncover underlying patterns and relationships.
- **Semantic Field Analysis:** Identifying the set of words associated with particular themes, such as emotions, actions, or social contexts, and how these fields contribute to the text's meaning.
- **Concordance Analysis:** Using frequency lists and concordance tools to track how specific words or phrases are used throughout the text.

2. Syntactic Tools:

- **Sentence Structure Analysis:** Investigating the syntactic structures, such as subject-verb-object order, and their role in conveying meaning and emphasis.



- **Parsing and Dependency Grammar:** Analyzing the syntactic relationships between words in sentences to better understand the text's grammatical complexity and how meaning is constructed.
- **Discourse Analysis:** Exploring how syntax contributes to larger discourse structures, including the use of conjunctions, adverbials, and pronouns, which guide the flow and coherence of the text. Also, the focus on the formality level in the discourse helped to show more about the how evil controls everything when it exists in the hands of the powerful people.

These tools will allow for a thorough examination of both the lexical choices and syntactic arrangements in the text, revealing how they contribute to its overall meaning, tone, and structure.

This paper shows how all of these are applied to literary works to know the real intentions of the author and the hidden message in the work. The drafting of the leading question, the creation of keywords and eligibility standards, the choice of the short stories, the selection of papers, and the critical assessment of those stories were all processes in this integrative review.

The data for this study was gathered through a detailed reading of the short story *The Fish* by Russell Banks. To analyze the text, I applied the checklist of lexical and syntactic features outlined by Leech and Short in their work on stylistic analysis. This checklist provided a systematic approach for identifying and categorizing various linguistic elements within the story.

The specific steps followed in the analysis were as follows:



1. **Text Selection:** The primary data source for this study was the short story *The Fish*, chosen for its rich use of descriptive language and its potential for stylistic analysis.
2. **Application of Leech and Short's Checklist:** Using Leech and Short's framework, I systematically analyzed the text for various lexical and syntactic features, including:
 - **Lexical categories:** Identification of word choices, such as nouns, adjectives, and verbs, and their semantic roles.
 - **Sentence structures:** Examination of sentence types, clause complexity, and syntactic patterns.
3. **Statistical Analysis:** After applying the checklist to the text, I conducted a statistical analysis of the identified features. This involved calculating frequencies of specific linguistic elements, such as the occurrence of certain word classes or syntactic structures and evaluating their distribution throughout the story. These statistics helped identify patterns in the text that could provide insight into the author's intentions.
4. **Interpretation of Results:** Based on the statistical findings, I assessed the stylistic choices made by the author, interpreting how these choices contribute to the overall themes and intentions of the story. This approach allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of how the author uses language to create meaning, evoke emotion, and shape the reader's experience.

Through this detailed analysis, I aim to uncover the linguistic strategies employed by Bishop to convey the central themes of the story, particularly her portrayal of human resilience, suffering, and the connection between the self and nature.

A few topics were discussed during that stylistic study, including the usage of Leech and Short model, how the author's

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background affects his writing, and the portrayal of the evil side of humanity. This stylistic analysis will hinge primarily on the lexical and syntactic aspects of the short story and their role in illustrating humanity's darker side.

4- Data Analysis:

In this section, the 1986 short tale "The Fish," is analyzed using the procedures of Leech and Short model as mentioned before. So, this analysis begins by analyzing the lexical categories before moving on to the grammatical categories. It aims to show how the evil side of humanity is portrayed by Banks in his writings.

Example 1:

“...where they stepped with care over spongy ground to the very edge of the pond, which was then the size of a soccer field. Aiming automatic weapons into the water, the troopers waited for the fish to arrive. A large crowd from the village gathered behind them...” Page 40.

In this extract, Banks used examples for simple words like “fish” to tell the reader how simple this creature was and how the “troopers” used their complex “automatic weapons” to fight this simple creature and that’s why he used complex words to describe the attackers. Also, the simple noun “crowd” was used to tell how there was a lot of people watching what was happening and that was clear by using the adjective “large”. This quote was telling how the habitants of the village were standing with a negative reaction watching the evil side of humanity killing an innocent creature with greediness and that explains why Banks used the adverb of place “behind” to show how those people were standing in the shadow.



Example 2:

“Shortly after the soldiers lined up at the shore, the fish broke the surface of the water halfway across the pond. It was a silver swirl in the morning sun, a clean swash of movement, like a single brushstroke” Page 41.

This quotation explains how the “soldiers” were moved like puppets with no will to follow the orders. Then Banks used the verb “broke” to tell how the surface of the water was like a shield for the protection of the fish and when that surface was broken by the fish its magical beauty “silver swirl” appeared for the greedy people and led to her death at the end.

Example 3:

“It was as if the fish were spitting the grenades out just as they were about to explode, creating the effect of a fireworks display above the pond, which must have been what caused the people gathered at the shore to break into sustained, awestruck applause and then, long into the day and the following night, song.” Page 45

In this extract, Russell Banks used words like “grenades” and “fireworks” to tell how the evil side of humanity can kill everything and this evil is the controlling factor that lead these people to use such weapons to catch the innocent “fish” and to show how these people panicked when they saw the effect of these weapons and they didn’t bear it then how would a weak creature like that fish would bear. When that fish decided to attack the people with the same weapon they used, they couldn’t manage to deal with it.

These passages are examples on how Banks used the descriptive words, noun complements, prepositions and adjectives in his



story to describe the scene in a detailed way to involve the reader's imagination in it.

4.2 Lexical Categories:

- General:

Banks wrote the short story "The Fish" that consisted of 2876 words to deliver a certain lesson. Banks's choice of some simple words makes his mission to make that story suitable for everyone of different ages easier as he was targeting by this story all the audience even those who are learners of English.

Example 4:

"The soldiers readied their weapons. Lieutenant Han repeated his order: "," he said, and there was a second swirl, a lovely arc of silver bubbles, closer to shore this time." page 41 In this extract, Banks used words like "his order" and "Wait until I say to fire" to show the effect of the power and the formality level and how they could be used in the evil way if the person loses control on his evil side.

The language in the story is more formal than colloquial, which can be attributed to the fact that many of the dialogues occur between Colonel Tung and his soldiers, or as commands directed to the young lieutenant Han. For example, on page 42, the Colonel says, "Let us assume that an enemy submarine is surfacing in that pond at night to send spies and saboteurs into our midst. Do you have the means to destroy it?" This formal tone reflects the authoritative context of the conversation.

The use of both formal and colloquial language in the short story plays a crucial role in conveying the message to the reader. According to the checklist of Leech and Short, this mix of language helps highlight how power can influence the way people use language. By combining formal and informal styles,



the author emphasizes the nature of evil, especially when it falls into the hands of those with authority. This approach helps the reader better understand the dynamics of power and its potential for corruption.

This formal language is known to be used between people who have differences between their social levels or differences in the power level and that was clear in the relationship between Colonel Tung and Han or Han and the soldiers. On the other hand, colloquial language might only be used between people who were surrounding the pond because they use this form of language in everyday life. An example of that "A large crowd from the village gathered behind them and, since most of the people were Buddhists, fretted and scowled at the soldiers, saying, "Shame! Shame!" (p. 40)".

Besides this, Banks used 38 descriptive words like "awestruck applause, dusty road, white scarf, small percentage" to describe the value or the features of some words but didn't use any evaluative words because he meant no humiliation to any person or anything in the story. As was mentioned in the background of the author he was enjoying a good talent in writing poetry and that's the reason why he used very descriptive words to help the reader imagine the scene he is talking about in his story.

In addition to these descriptive words, there were some adjectives or noun complements that added a lot of description to some things mentioned in the story. Examples of this is "Local homes, spongy ground, automatic weapons, silver bubbles, and translucent leaves".

These adjectives were used to add more details for the reader so for example spongy ground showed how the environment where



that fish used to live was different from that of the people and how they were walking on it carefully because it doesn't suit them. Also, silver bubbles showed how that fish was a beautiful creature that those greedy people tend to kill by their automatic weapons.

• Nouns:

In the story, Banks primarily used nouns, with approximately 175 nouns in total. Of these, only around 26 were abstract nouns, such as 'attention,' 'success,' 'love,' 'revenge,' and 'care.' These abstract nouns represent contrasting emotions: positive feelings like love and care that many characters in the story lack, and negative feelings like revenge that lead others to destroy the fish without considering the consequences.

This contrast in emotions can be analyzed through the frequency of abstract nouns, which constitute about 15% of all nouns used in the text." So, Banks is somehow making a comparison between what the people should feel for a better version of the world and what they were feeling till they reached that miserable end of the story.

The rest of the nouns were concrete nouns like "fish, soldiers, grenades, weapons, water, village, buckets, fruit, tins, jars, cups, homes, country". That is quite normal because most of the time Banks was not paying attention to what was going on inside the personality of the people and what they felt he was caring more about describing the scene and what they were thinking of and doing on real land. Banks gave more attention to the materialistic world concepts because that's what he was targeting, the greediness of the people that neglected their feelings and went after the things they could possess and get



money from, and that somehow goes with the idea of capitalism which was famous at that time.

In contrast, the proper nouns portion in this story was only four or five proper names mentioned in the whole story "Colonel Tung, Lieutenant, Han, Rad, Buddhists, Catholics" and that was for a reason in the author's mind. He was giving more attention to the fish, that magical and peaceful creature which although it was in a bigger body and more powerful, did not try to harm anybody, and he did not give much attention to naming the people because all of them in his point of view were like each other.

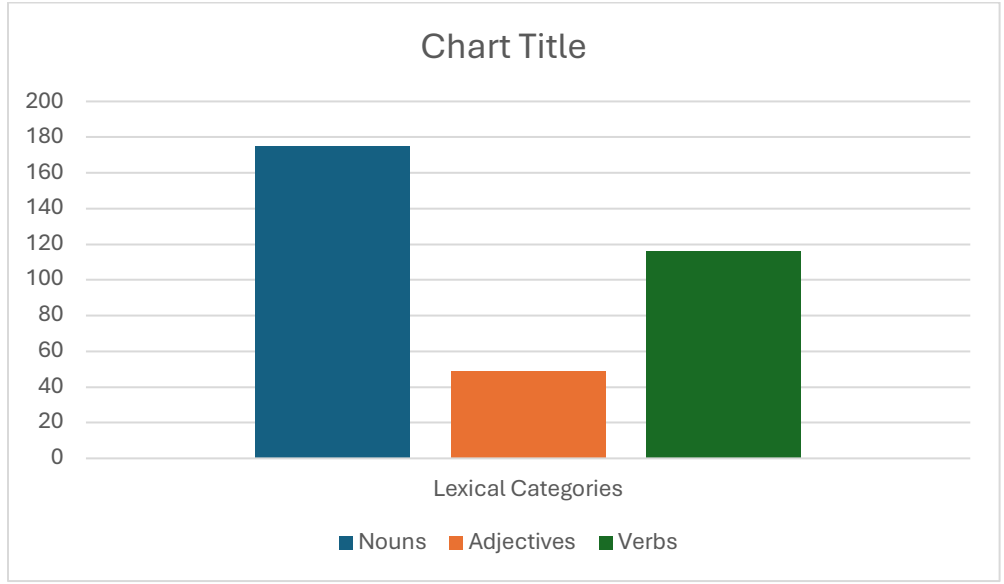
Whatever their names or their positions are, in the end, all of them shared in killing that innocent fish in a bad way to get what they wanted. That's why he mentioned people from different categories: army, political, and religious people to say that it doesn't matter who they are, what matters, in the end, is that all of them have the same level of greediness but with different ways to express it.

There is also a usage of the collective nouns in the story in the word soldiers. A collective noun means a countable noun that denotes a group of individuals and that was clear in the words "Buddhists and Catholics". Banks used these collective nouns to refer to the different beliefs and backgrounds of the people who in the end all of them did the same cruel and selfish thing by killing the poor fish.

• Adjectives:

In "The Fish" Banks used 49 adjectives to describe what the scene is like around the pond. Although the number of adjectives seems somehow small and not frequent in

comparison with the number of nouns or verbs, Banks applied the adjectives perfectly.



His choice of adjectives and the places at which he put these adjectives give meaning to the reader and help him imagine what was happening as he was seeing a movie like the scene in which he was describing the fish at the pond. "It was a silver swirl in the morning sun, a clean swash of movement, like a single brushstroke, for the fish was thought to be a reincarnation of Rad, the painter, an early disciple of Buddha." Page 40.

Not all the adjectives refer to a physical appearance, some are Psychological like "able to sell, unable to make", some are Visual like "dusty, magical", and some are color like "Translucent, white, golden". In addition to that, Banks also used gradable adjectives like "small, high, long, large". Also, some of the adjectives are attributives which come before the



modified noun "magical water" while others are predicative which comes after it "he was able".

Additionally, some nouns are used as modifiers for other nouns like on page 47 "silver side, still fish". Other nouns are used as modifiers by adding the suffix -ed to them and they do the same function which describes everything he is saying in detail "opened and closed".

• Verbs:

Verbs is an essential part of every phrase. Topics are moved by verbs, while other verbs help to clarify the subjects in meaningful ways. The most crucial thing to remember is that every sentence must have a verb for each topic. Otherwise, you as a reader will end up with a fragment, which is a severe writing fault. Verbs indicate physical or mechanical action, occurrence, or state of being. All verbs in this short narrative have a significant meaning.

Verbs are frequent in this story as they form about 116 words and all of them carry important meanings and help the reader to see how the people in the story were acting in every situation. Most of these verbs were put in the past simple tense which adds a sense of logic to the story because the author is telling us about a tale that most probably happened a long time ago. "Jumped, ran, filled, returned, took, proposed". On the other hand, 71 of these used verbs is verb "to be". That makes sense because most of the time the author describes what other people are doing to catch that big fish or what they feel during each attempt and how they react. This also explains why 7% of the speech is in the first-person style while 91% of the speech is in the third person style.



Due to the core of the story, which is about attempts to catch a huge fish, most of the verbs are dynamic verbs that describe motion and actions like "passed, marched, came, destroy, filled, landed, prayed, gathered, jumped, ran, filled, returned arrived". In addition, 94% of the verbs are transitive verbs and that is because the author cares a lot about the object of each verb as he cares about the doer of the verb if not more. In this story, the author cares a lot about telling us about the object of each verb to help us understand the events and imagine the full picture with all the details." creating the effect, caused the people, made their way, find a spot".

Besides, 98% of the verbs are factive verbs which means that they talk about real things happening and the certainty of their desire to catch the fish and only 2% of the verbs are nonfactive "think, hoped, assume, believed".

- Adverbs:

The author in this section used a small number of adverbs, they count only 41 adverbs to describe or modify the verbs used in the text. 9 of these adverbs are adverbs of time to specify when exactly the events are happening because the story is full of events that come continuously. "Just, then, now" while 13 of these adverbs are adverbs of place "far, down, away".

b- Grammatical Categories:

According to Leech and Short's checklist in *Style in Fiction*, **grammatical features** refer to specific elements of grammar that contribute to the style and tone of a text. These features are crucial for analyzing how language functions in a narrative and how it influences the reader's interpretation. Leech and



Short identify several grammatical features that are important for stylistic analysis, for example:

1. Sentence Structure:

- **Simple vs. Complex Sentences:** The complexity of sentence structures can convey different nuances in the narrative. Simple sentences are direct and clear, while complex sentences may provide more detailed, sophisticated expressions or convey more formal tones.
- **Sentence Length:** Short sentences can create a sense of urgency or tension, while longer sentences may offer more detail, reflection, or description.
- **Coordination and Subordination:** The use of coordinating conjunctions (e.g., and, but) or subordinating conjunctions (e.g., because, although) shapes how ideas are connected and can impact the flow and emphasis in the text.

“In great numbers, the Buddhists from other districts were visiting the Buddhists in his district, sleeping in local homes, buying food from local vendors, and trading goods of various kinds, until it had begun to seem to Colonel Tung that there were many more Buddhists in his district than Catholics, and this frightened him.” (p.40-1)

• Sentence structure:

The grammar that is used in the text affects the meaning and the message that the author wants to deliver to the reader. That's why while analyzing a text stylistically we should pay attention to the sentence type whether it's an imperative, interrogative, or exclamation, and the reason why the author used this type of sentence.



In this short story, Banks used the declarative form in 99% of the sentences because most if not all the story is just telling the events in an order even in the dialogues between Colonel Tung and Lieutenant Han the conversation revolves around the discussion of their thoughts and plans about how they will manage to get that huge fish in the pond. "He would mine the pond, he said, and detonate the mines from shore.". Another sentence was a description of the scene around them and how it was looking like." Then there it was, a few feet out and hovering in the water like a cloud in the sky, one large dark eye watching the soldiers as if with curiosity, delicate fins fluttering gently in the dark water like translucent leaves."

There is only 1% of the sentences that are imperative, or interrogative. "Lieutenant Han repeated his order: "Wait until I say to fire," he said," page 40. The only interrogative sentence in the whole text lies at page 41. "Finally, replacing his glasses, he said, "Let us assume that in that pond an enemy submarine is surfacing at night to send spies and saboteurs into our midst. Do you have the means to destroy it?" He tapped a cigarette into an ebony holder and lighted it."

Banks used the imperative form twice in this text in the speech of Lieutenant Han with the soldiers to show that the soldiers are like the toys that he plays with and orders to do what he wants but at the same time he is like a toy to Colonel Tung and he take orders from him too which indicates that the society is divided into levels and each one has toys under his order and has bigger people above him who use himself as a toy.

- Sentence complexity:

There is no usage of complex sentences in this text but there is a usage of compound sentences and that appears in the usage



of coordination there are no subordination words used in the text which means that the text has no dependent clauses, and all the clauses are independent. Compound sentences, which are formed of two simple sentences connected with conjunctions like “and” were used 131 times in the text. The sentences were not that long because that helps the usage and aids the reader in following the events and it tells us that the events are happening after each other and there are no pauses in time in other words it didn't take them too much to end the life of the huge fish. There are 96 sentences in the whole text, the average of words per sentence is 29.96 and the max sentence length is 133 (words) which assures that he is targeting the working-class audience and he wanted to make sure that they feel friendly as if he is telling them the story while having tea with each other.

Besides the noun and verb phrases that are used in the text as explained before, there is a noticeable usage of prepositional phrases. That was clear from the number of prepositions which are used to clarify the relation between sentences and put links for the reader to understand what is happening and follow the events. In the text there were 570 prepositions

In addition to the content word classes that were covered in the lexical category part, some function words have a role in the text and in helping the author to clarify the relation between sentences used. The number of conjunctions used are 23 and 20 of them are only the words "and" that is because the author tries all the time to link between similar things of two simple sentences to form a compound one. The number of determiners used in the text is 97 and 98% of them is the definite article "the" because most of the nouns are known things for the author and previously mentioned for the reader.



The number of pronouns used is 37 and only 7% of them is a first person "I and we" while 91% of these pronouns are third person because the author is telling the story of people he was not living with during these events "they, them, it". Moreover, the number 570 is the number of the used prepositions in the text to cut the string of nouns that forms a form of complexity to the reader.

6- Findings:

This research conducted a stylistic analysis of one of Russell Banks's short stories "The Fish" using the Leech and Short model to analyze the texts on the lexical and grammatical level. In this short story, Banks managed to use different semantic fields but most of the words relate to one semantic field which is the "nouns" with several words equal to 175 words to help in building the events of the story in the right way. Then comes the "verbs" and he used 116 verbs, most of them were in the past simple tense as he is narrating the events that happened in the past and these verbs helped the reader to experience the sense of action that was happening during the story. After that, he used a lot of prepositions about 570 to clarify the relation between the words and the arrangement of the events in the text and that's why the most used prepositions are "of" with 83 times and "to" with 107 times. There are also 97 determiners to clarify the things the author is referring to and that's why 95% of the determiners are "the".

All these details were putting the reader in the mood of the story to feel like he is living the real adventure. The conclusions pointed to how Banks was able to subtly impart knowledge to his readers while also portraying the darker side of humanity in his work. Also, how the model of Leech and Short could be



useful in revealing the hidden messages in any literary work by answering the questions existing in their checklist. Now we can say that the number of adjectives or adverbs used in any literary work is useful and it is meant by the author to deliver a message, so, it is not only just a number, or words written in a string. Also, the types of sentences matter because they show what type of readers the author is addressing and that was clear in the simple sentences Banks used in the story because he was targeting the working-class people.

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