

## **DARKNESS IN CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS*: A LINGUISTIC AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS**

*Dr. Khalil Hassan Nofal\**  
*Philadelphia University- Jordan*  
*knofal@Philadelphia.edu.jo*

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper is intended to discuss the concept of "darkness" in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. It incorporates a fairly detailed linguistic and stylistic analysis of the novel in terms of setting, lexical choices and grammatical choices which all indicate mystery, obscurity, murkiness and then darkness.

A linguistic and stylistic analysis of the novel is used to illustrate the literary value of the book. Most specifically all linguistic and stylistic devices used can not only provide a more detailed descriptive basis for widely accepted interpretation of the novel, but also identify the significant linguistic features which may not noticed by critics.

### **Keywords:**

Lexical, grammatical choices, collocation, clefting, short passive, fronting, parenthesis, front-weight, end-weight, complex NP, and complex sentences.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

At the heart of the critical linguistic approach is the notion of ideology. Within critical linguistics ideology is generally used to refer to the notion of world view or value system. It refers to the fact that all speakers and writers necessarily operate with assumptions, beliefs and expectations about the way the world is, and the way it ought to be. The sets of socially – based assumptions and beliefs are termed ideologies and, accordingly, all texts can be seen ideological in that they are shaped by, reflect, and hence potentially perpetuate, such value systems or ways of thinking. The terms "ideology" and "ideological", then, when used within critical linguistics refer to the sets of assumptions, beliefs and values which constitute a world view. Much of

---

\* Dr.Khalil Hassan Nofal\* Head/Department of English, Director/ Language Centre, Philadelphia University- Jordan E-mail: knofal@Philadelphia.edu.jo

critical linguistic work is directed towards relating lexico-grammatical features to these underlying world views.

Under the critical linguistic approach, then, the analyst is directed to describe not just the grammatical features of the text itself but also to account for the social and cultural contexts in which it was produced and consumed.

Halliday's approach to linguistic analysis is one which postulates that descriptions and explanations of lexico-grammatical choices and patterns need to focus not only on the words and structures themselves but also on aspects of the social cultural context in which those words operate.

This paper is meant to interpret and analyze Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" linguistically and stylistically. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is a very short novel. A hundred years after its publication, it is possibly "the most prescribed novel in literature courses in American universities" (Achebe, 1988). This raises why the text is so popular, but might also imply it is a poor choice of formal linguistic analysis. The novel is an overtly political text about late Victorian ideas of colonial power. It was attacked by Achebe (1988) for presenting stereotyped and racist views of Africans, and defended by others (e.g. Harris, 1988; Sarvan, 1988; Singh, 1988) who pointed out that the narrator Marlow describes the more unpleasant ideas of colonial exploitation as "sordid force and senseless delusion".

The novel is about many things: seafaring, river-boating, trade and exploration, imperialism and colonialism, race relation, the attempt to find meaning in the universe while trying to get at the mysteries of the subconscious mind.

The theme of civilization versus savagery is central to *Heart of Darkness*. Marlow's sudden assertion is that England was one of the dark places of the earth. The Thames was as a gate of explorers and ambassadors of civilization. It also introduces the closely related theme of light versus dark, or white versus black, light and dark have traditionally represented good and evil, and civilization has generally been viewed as good while savagery has been seen as evil. Conrad plays with this theme extensively, sometimes using the imagery in traditional ways and sometimes creating surprising and meaningful reversals. Especially notable in chapter one is the narrator's description of the brightness of the waterway that leads out to a horizon that merges seamlessly with the sky, contrasted with the brooding gloom over the city, London is west of the mouth of the Thames, and the sun sets into this gloom, which the narrator says looks like it kills the sun. At night the city is covered with a garish glare. So the city, the symbol of civilization, always forms a contrast with its surroundings.

Marlow hesitates before embarking on his journey and has the strange feeling that he is setting off not for the centre of a continent, but for the centre of the earth itself. In the end, it becomes apparent that his real journey has been the centre of the human spirit.

Conrad deals in this novel with the dark heart of mankind. He tells us that man is inherently evil masked by civilization. The civilized people create morals to mask truth that they do not want to see. Such masking is what makes us human, but we must understand that it is only a mask and not a truth, because one day we will be faced with the darkness of the true nature of the world. See the following signs which were written above the entrances to Nazi concentration camps. See (Dutton 2007:2)

*"We come to free you from your ignorance"  
"We come to bring you the virtues of civilization"*

The following sign shows what the United States of American asserts in Iraq and Afghanistan:

*"We come to bring you democracy"*

Conrad, as Edward Said put it "allows the readers to see the imperialism as a system "(Said 1994: XXI) "Conrad speaks of colonialism as a religion, calling it a scared fire (Singh 1988: 279).

Conrad exploits the imagery of "black" and "white", "light" and "dark" in a number of ways. Darkness is night, the unknown, the impenetrable the primitive, the evil. Yet when he reaches Africa the colours of skin invert the accepted association of the contrast. "White" is above all ivory, the beautiful luxury of civilized man which is the root of all evil in the darkness.

Resigned to his mortality, Kurtz affirms the savagery of what he has seen and done. With a mixture of "sombre pride, ruthless power, craven terror," and "hopeless despair" he utters his final words "The terror! The terror!", but we never find out what this refers to.

Interestingly, Marlow as a storyteller has a frustrating reputation for fascinating people but never getting at the meaning of things; he keeps asking questions and suggesting mysteries rather than explaining and revealing.

## **2. LINGUISTIC AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS**

Darkness in the novel can be linguistically and stylistically analyzed as follows:

1. The narrative of the novel is embedded in different forms, which indicate darkness:

*The novel begins with unnamed narrator on a boat on the Thames. That is, Heart of Darkness is presented by unnamed, undefined speaker. The book ends with a paragraph from the unnamed narrator*

DARKNESS IN CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS*:  
A LINGUISTIC AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

*back on the Thames. Major places in the novel are never named. Congo region is never named. Conrad went to Brussels, where he arranged to travel to Belgian Congo, and up the River Congo, but these place names never appear. Even the word Africa appears only once. With a few exceptions, people are not named, but identified by their jobs: the lawyer, Marlow's aunt, the doctor, the manager, Kurtz's Intended, the clerk, the director, the accountable ....etc.*

*Breaking down is another indicator of darkness. Marlow's boat keeps breaking down "decaying machinery", Kurtz has a mental breakdown, and there are breakdowns in communication: people speak different languages, Marlow tells lies about Kurtz to his fiancée, and amongst the most frequent content words in the book is the lemma "silence" See (Stabbs : 2005 :8). Additionally, Kurt's dying words, "The horror! The horror!" are indications of his complete descent into darkness.*

**2. The setting itself is full of darkness from the very beginning to the very end:**

*Canards use the darkness of the situation contrasted to the light of society to show man's dependence on western morals and how, when these morals are challenged by the darkness, the light crumbles under its newly weakened foundation. The contrast between light and dark is most stark in the theme of setting, the changes in Europeans as they drive farther into the Congo, and the white man's collapse under the ultimate darkness of the innermost Congo.*

*The setting of Heart of Darkness is a very critical part of the novel. All incidents throughout the book indicate darkness. Marlow, for example, presents his story on a boat in the dark of night, creating a sense of evil surrounding the story. The darkness is so deep where Marlow rests during the telling of his tale, that he cannot see his friends, and instead tells the story to the darkness itself. Another incident, upon setting foot on the shore of the outer station, Marlow begins to see glimpse of the darkness that awaits him. The natives along the path are described in a manner closer to animals than humans:*

*"Near the same tree two more bundles of acute angles sat with their legs drawn up. One, with his chin propped on his knees stared at nothing, in an intolerable and appalling manner .... others were scattered about in a very pose of contorted collapse, as in some picture of massacre or pestilence".*

*Conrad continues to create a setting that is described as dark and dreary, always colored as black, brown, or yellow. Marlow always interprets this to represent evil, which is upheld by the actions of the natives within the Congo.*

*Upon leaving the outer station, Marlow sets forth with his team of sixty men, and quickly notices solitude that accompanies the first leg of their journey. Marlow then makes the rational explanation that if natives came to England and forced all the white men to carry their staff, the Europeans would move away quickly also. This statement is curious, because it highlights the brutality of the whites.*

*Whereas the outer station was described as organized, orderly, and under strict control by the Europeans, the central station is described as "on black water surrounded by scrub and forest...white men with long staves in their hands appeared languidly amongst the buildings...."*

- At the very beginning of chapter one, as darkness begins to fall, Marlow suddenly says this was once one of the dark places of the earth. He explains that when the Romans first came to England, it was a great, savage wilderness to them.
- Another important theme that develops in this chapter is Marlow's perception of the environment in the Congo region (which is never named). His first impression of the African coast is seductive and taunting, like some grand enigma.
- Marlow thinks of the natives as belonging to the wilderness and being a part of it ; they suffer and die in colonial civilization just as the colonials suffer and die in the wilderness.
- At a certain point in chapter two in which the narrator of the story quotes another character besides Marlow, the character is not even identified; he is simply a voice in the darkness telling Marlow to try to be evil, as if he is the voice of civilization itself.
- The sense repeatedly fail in this chapter, sight and hearing with the unnatural stillness of the night, and sight with the fog, which isolates the ship and seems to make the rest of reality dissolve into nothingness.
- In chapter three Kurtz was unable to see the candle in his final moments, perhaps because his inner darkness had at least consumed him.

Marlow mentions the continuous stream of flies at dinner before he tells how the manager's boy came in and announced Kurtz's death with the words, "Mistah Kurtz.... He dead;" perhaps those flies are symbolic of the triumph of the flabby, greedy, prestering devil in the end.

At the end of Marlow's tale, the narrator looks out and sees the Thames which he described at the beginning of the book as a bright, shining highway of righteousness. The river is now covered in gloom and leading into a foreboding darkness, as if his very sight has been clouded by the uneasiness of Marlow's story.

Now it can be stated that Darkness is initially referred to maps and places of darkness; therefore they have been settled by explorers and colonialists. The idea of map is an important symbol. Maps have dual purposes in that they unlock mysteries by laying out the geography of unknown lands and they create more mystery by inspiring curiosity about the unknown lands on and off the map.

The imagery of light and dark very clearly corresponds to the tension that is arranged between civilization and savagery. The word darkness still retains its traditional meaning of evil and dead. Darkness has another application (a color of skin). The darkness of the African skins is always mentioned. Marlow describes them as "mostly black and naked, moving about like ants" "White in shade," "dark things" seem to stir feebly. There is no differentiation between dark animals and dark people. Even the rags worn by the native people are described as tails "Black shapes" crouch on the ground, "creatures" walk on all fours to get a drink from the river.

Kurtz dies painfully both because his obsessive tasks were not complete, and because his soul has been sold. The word "horror" he pronounces on his deathbed is a judgment upon how he has lived his life. The wilderness was certainly creeping and merging into Kurtz's psyche.

3. The following lexico-grammatical choices and patterns indicate darkness:

#### 1. Lexical Choices:

- The most frequent words are: "silence", "nightmares", "trances", "phantoms", "apparitions" and "vision". Watt (1988) argues that there is a lack of clarity in the novel, pointing out that "mist" or "haze" is a persistent image. The following lexical items are frequently used in the novel which indicate darkness: :

*absurd, absurdity, blurred, bewilderment, bewildering, black shadows of disease and starvation, barren darkness of his heart, blind, craven terror, deaf, darkly, dusk, devil, drowsiness, distances, dark, darkness, fainted, frightful, fog, gloom, gloomly, hidden evil, impenetrable darkness, immense wilderness, invisible wilderness, immense matted jungle, infinite desolation, murky, mystery, night, profound darkness, unpardonable sin, shadow, shade, smoke, sleepless river, vapour, vague, very grave,, wilderness.*

- Conrad uses repetitive style. He repeatedly uses a large number of words with negative affixes:

*beardless, countless, colorless, dismantled, disappeared, discomposd, dishonor, disfavor, disappear, endless, formidable silence, heartless, hopeless, impossible / impossibility, impenetrable, improbable, impenetrable, impalpable greyness, immortals, implent, inconceivable / inconceivably, incredible, inexplicable, indistinctly, intolerable / intolerably, incomprehensible, incratable, indefinable, inexorable, innumerable, incredible ,inappreciable, intolerable / intolerably,inadmissible,indestructible,inestimable,incalculable loss, incontinently, indisputable, inexplicable, inconceivably sombre, inexorable time, indisputable right, irresistible, irresistible impression of sorrow, motionless, mysterious life, unearthly, unsound, uneasy/ uneasiness, unexpected/unexpectedness / unexpectedly, unexpected regions, unknown, uninterrupted, unstable, unrestrained pain / secrets,unspeakable,unostentatious,uncontrollable,unbounded,unsteady,unscathed,,unconnected,unappetizing,unwholesome,unspeakable,unavoidable,unextinguishable,,unexplored,uncoiled,unfamiliar,uncongenial,,unpleasant,unpardonable,unrecognizable, unreasonably,unnatural, unfathomable, unrestrained grief, uninterrupted shoal, unstable kind of food, unostentatious holes, unapproachable silence, uncontrolled desire, unsteady, sleepless*

In addition to these, there are occurrences of *no, not, never, nothing, nobody, nowhere.*

- Other major themes are conveyed by repeated lexical contrasts, especially "light" and "dark", "restraint" and "frenzy", "appearance" and "reality". In fashionable modern terminology, Conrad "deconstructs the often taken – for- granted oppositions, white –black and good –bad (Stubbs -2005:9).
- The words "heart","dark", "darkness", occur throughout the novel, but increase frequently at the very end when the story becomes "too-dark" – "too dark altogether".
- Lexical density (adjectival style): Using more adjectives will result in semantic richness, whereas avoiding them may result in descriptive sparseness or thinness. Using adjectives, therefore, tends to make the style of the text ornate or flowery. Conrad has another goal with his adjectival style: to slow the action in the text, and to slow the reader as well, as one feels that one has to concentrate one's attention on the details. Some

words occur in recurrent lexico-grammatical patterns. Conrad uses particular grammatical patterns including long strings of adjectives and nouns:

1. *the air was warm, thick, heavy, sluggish*
2. *their glance was guiteless, profound, confident and trustful*
3. *was it superstition, disgust, patience, fear.*
4. *joy, fear, sorrow, devotion, vapour, rage, who can tell?*

The adjectives and nouns in the sentences above function as subject complement. The verbs are linking verbs used to relate the adjectives and nouns to their head nouns subjects.

Conrad also repeatedly uses nominal groups consisting of an abstract noun plus an adjective with a negative prefix:

5. *the aspect of an unknown planet*
6. *the darkness of an impenetrable night*
7. *the extremity of an impotent despair*
8. *the heart of impenetrable darkness*
9. *the stillness of an implacable force*

It can be easily stated that the abstract head nouns are post- modified by prepositional phrases with head nouns pre- modified by head adjectives which are pre- fixed with negative markers (un, in, im) to denote darkness.

### 3. GRAMMATICAL CHOICES

Grammatical words denote vagueness and uncertainty:

Conrad uses not just lexical items such as "vague", "fog", "mist", and "indistinct" to express doubt, vagueness and uncertainty, but also grammatical function words such as "some", "sometimes", "somebody", "somehow", "kind of", "sort of" all collocate with other expressions of vagueness and uncertainty. The following are illustrative examples:

10. I don't know – something not quite right.
11. reminded me of something I had seen – something funny.
12. the outlines of some sort of building
13. seemed somehow to throw a kind of light.
14. I thought I could see a kind of motion.



Additionally, four - word grammatical sequences are frequently used in the novel to show uncertainty which also indicate darkness: See Senn, 1980; Stampfl, 1991.

15. it seemed to me.....;
16. as far as I.....;
17. as though I had .....
18. as if I were .....
19. with the air of .....
20. the depths of the .....

Moreover, the two-word sequence is a pair of grammatical words "*of the*" which might seem of little interest: *of the forest, of the land, of the river, of the earth, of the wilderness, of the world, of the stream.*

**3. Collocations:** Collocations create connotations. The word "grass" is usually associated with death, decay and desolation: "it sprouts through the stones in the city of the dead" (Brussels) and through the bones of "dead men". More examples are:

21. the grass growing through his ribs was  
enertain blinds, a dead silence, grass sprouting between the stones.
22. the empty land, through long grass, through burnt grass..... in  
the ruins of grass walls. Day after day, I've got him. The grass was  
wet with dew.

The words "*glitter*", "*gleam*", "*glisten*" and "*glint*" connote things which are ominous and dangerous: the words "*glitter*", collocates with "*dark somber*" "*gloom*" and "*the infernal stream*". The word "*gleam*" collocates with "*blood*" and "*fire*"; people's eyes "*glitter*", "*glisten*", and "*gleam*"; arrows glint when they are being shot at Marlow.

Interestingly, the word "existence" collocates with words and phrases like **inscrutable, deadened, precarious, don't know, can't tell** .....etc.

23. .... which is the mistress of his existence and as inscrutable as  
destiny
24. .... man of us out of his little existence. And it moved not. A  
deadened.
25. ....where - far away – in another existence perhaps. There were  
moments.
26. ..Keep yours precarious grip on existence. Besides that they  
had.....
27. ....His very existence was improbable  
inexplicable.

28. .... in the facts of human existence, I don't know, I can't tell.

Moreover, "*wisdom*", "*truth*", "*knowledge*" collocate with words and phrases like "*subtle*", "*mystery*", "*riddle*", "*out of touch*" "*toil*", "*surface*", (*truth*), "*inner*", ("*truth*"), "*glimpsed*", ("*truth*"), "*delicate*" "*witchcraft*", "*hidden*", "*conceal*", and "*irritating pretence*". The verb phrases in these clauses undercut a sense of certainty, with verbs and adverbs such as "*seemed*", "*perhaps*", "*can't say*", "*I think*", "*did not bear*", and "*comes too late*".

29. ....quick glance of unconcerned wisdom. She seemed to know all about them.
30. ....a nod of mystery and wisdom. "I tell you" he cried.
31. ....the form of ultimate wisdom, then life is a greater riddle.
32. ....differences, perhaps all wisdom, and all truth, and all sincerity.
33. It's queer. How out of touch with truth women are. They live in the world.
34. ....and invincible like evil or truth, waiting patiently for passing away.
35. ....that which makes it truth, it's meaning it's subtle and penetrating.
36. ....The inner truth is hidden, luckily.
37. ....There was surface – truth enough in there things to save.
38. ....appalling face of a glimpsed truth – the strange commingling of desire.
39. ....perhaps all the wisdom, all truth, and all sincerity, are just composed.
40. ..witchcraft, full of improving knowledge.
41. looked with their air of hidden knowledge of patient expectation of unapproachable
42. ....I can't say. I think knowledge came to him at last.
43. seaman – couldn't conceal – knowledge of matters that would affect
44. You can hope from it is some knowledge of yourself that comes too late
45. ....I asked him Mrs. Kurtz's knowledge, however, extensive, did not bear upon.

**4. Hyponymy:** Conrad employs hyponyms to create a text that looks semantically richer and literally has more meaning packed into each clause

(How to make the text hang together through lexical cohesive devices). Hyponyms organize sets of synonyms hierarchically, synonyms that capture a semantic range from the general to the specific, from the abstract to concrete. The following is an illustrative example:

46. black shapes crouched, lay, sat between the trees leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair.

These hyponyms add significantly to the descriptive and emotive power of Conrad's language.

**5. Word Order:** Modern English is known for its relative lack of morphological inflection and hence its reliance on word order to reflect grammatical relationships. It follows from this that, in English, manipulation of word order is not generally available for conveying other kinds of meaning like foregrounding. There are exceptions, such as the occasional thematization (or fronting) of complements and objects for stylistic effect, but these are marked choices (themes).

English speakers have available to them a range of alternative ways of giving prominence to an element which is not in theme position. There have been neatly summarized by Knowles (1998:107-8):

*"English does not ..... possess a high degree of flexibility in the area of element order. To compensate for this, English has developed a small but useful number of devices for allocating appropriate prominence to thematic material."*

The chief devices are passivization, clefting (or it clefting), thematization (fronting), parenthesis, front-weight, end-weight, complex Noun Phrases, complex sentences and hypothetical sentences:

### **1. Short Passive:**

Short passive / agentless constructions are most commonly are frequently used in the novel and they are used for special discourse functions. They reduce the importance of the agent / doer of an action because the agents may not be known or they can not be mentioned for legal reasons for example or for other reasons. Short passive becomes a useful device: it allows the objects to be the subject of sentences, hereby giving them topic status. This may lead to haziness and ambiguity and then to darkness. The following are illustrative examples:

47. The sea and the sky were welded together without a joint.
48. One of their captains had been killed in a scuffle with the natives.
49. I was told the chief's son ..... made a tentative job.
50. The supernatural had not been touched after he fell.
51. I had been let into some conspiracy.
52. Two youths ..... were being piloted over.
53. I had been represented to the wife of the high dignitary.
54. After this I got embraced.

Short passive in the above examples are potentially used to obscure or at least de-emphasize the role or involvement of the unmentioned initiating agents. This is to say the use of short passives means those responsible for the actions/ processes are not brought into the picture and hence are less likely to be negatively assessed. The above short passives, then, may be used to present a given social entity in a more positive light or at least to mitigate negative evaluation of those social actors. In other words, short passivization above enables the removal of actors and hence is another way of avoiding connections in the word which indicates, consequently, darkness.

## 2. It- Clefting:

For it-clefting, the information is broken into two clauses, each with its own verb. It- Cleft is used to bring particular elements of the clauses into additional focus. These together may lead to ambiguity and haziness. The following are illustrative examples:

55. It was inconceivable how he had existed, how he had succeeded in getting so far, how he had managed to remain – why he did not instantly disappear.
56. It was difficult to realize his work was not out there in the luminous estuary.
57. It did not occur to him that Mr. Kurtz was no idol of mine.
58. It was ordered I should never betray him – it was written I should be loyal to the nightmare of my choices.

## 3. Themmatization: (marked theme):

When a clause constituent is moved to initial position. This is called thematic fronting and the fronted element is a marked theme. This is to say, fronting is a matter of marked themmatization. It means placing in initial position a clause element which is normally found after the verb to be the departure point. Fronting of circumstances (prepositional phrases) are commonly used in the novel. The following are illustrative examples:

59. At night I slept, or tied to, on the caoch.
60. With one hand I felt above my head for the line of the steam-whistle and jerked out screech after screech hurriedly.

#### 4. Parenthesis:

Parenthesis may hinder the readers to keep their mind the departure point (the theme) whatever it is. In other words, the parenthetical clause is used to separate the theme from the rheme, the given (known) information from the new information which also indicate ambiguity and haziness. The following are illustrative examples:

61. For a long time already he, sitting apart, had been no more to us than a voice.
62. And when one comes out here, you conceive, it is not to gaze at the moon.
63. His name, you understand, had not been pronounced one.
64. He was "that man". The half castle, who, as far as I could see, had conducted a different trip with great prudence and pluck, was invariably alluded to as "that scoundrel".
65. The retreat, I maintained – and I was right - was caused by the screeching of the steam – whistle.
66. Some, I heard, got drowned in the surf.

#### 5. Front -weight:

Front -weight means long and complex (i.e. heavier) elements are placed at the beginning of the clause. This placement may disturb the readers and disable them to keep in their mind complex information from the beginning of the clause as they reach the end. This may result in mystery, obscurity, murkiness and then darkness. The following is an illustrative example:

67. A narrow and deserted street in deep shadow, high horses, innumerable windows with venation blinds, a dead silence, grass sprouting between the stones, imposing carriage archways right and left, immense double doors standing ponderously ajar, I slipped through one of these cracks, went up a swept and ungarnished staircase, as arid as a desert, and opened the first door I came to.

#### 6. End-weight:

The preferred distribution of elements in the clause is called the principle of the end-weight: long and complex (i.e. heavier) elements are placed at the

end of the clause. This placement may help the readers to follow the message more easily because they do not have to keep in their mind complex information from the beginning of the clause as they reach the end. But many heavy elements also contain a large amount of information which may disturb the reader. The following is an illustrative example:

68. But there was in it one river especially, a mighty big river, that you could see on the map, resembling an immense snake uncoiled, with its head in the sea, its body at rest curving afar over a vast country, and its tail lost in the depths of the land.

## 7. Complex Noun Phrases

The basic noun phrase can be expanded with noun modifiers. Premodifiers, like attributive adjectives occur before the head noun, while postmodifiers, like relative clauses, occur following the head noun. The following examples illustrate this point where much of the new information occurs in the modifiers in noun phrases, resulting in a very high density of information, which in turn, leads to ambiguity and haziness.

69. A haze rested on the low *shores* that ran out to sea in vanishing flatness.
70. It had born all the *ships* whose names are like jewels flashing in the night of time, from the *Golden Hint* returning with her round *flans* full of treasure, to be visited by the Queen's Highness....
71. The *worst* that could be said of him was that he did not represent his classes.
72. All that mysterious *life* of the *wilderness* that stirs in the forest, in the jungles, in the hearts of wild men.
73. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from *those* who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look at it too much.
74. .... he began, showing in this remark the *weakness* of many *tellers* of tales who seem so often unaware of what their audience would best like to hear.
75. But there was in it one river especially, a mighty big *river*, that you could you see on the map, resembling an immense *snake* uncoiled, with its head in the sea, its body at rest carving afar over a vast country, and its tail lost in the depths of the land.

## 8. Complex Sentences:

Complex sentences are another means of ambiguity and haziness as they carry much information which may disturb the readers. The following examples illustrate this point:

76. The great wall of vegetation, an exuberant and entangled mass of trunks, branches, leaves, boughs, festoons, motionless in the moonlight, was like a rioting invasion of soundless life, a rolling wave of plants, piled up, crested, ready to topple over the creek, to sweep every little man of us out of his little existence.
77. Looking past that mad helmsman, who was shaking the empty rifle and yelling at the shore, I saw vague forms of men running bent double, leaping, gliding, indistinct, incomplete, and evanescent. It was the shaft of a spear that, either thrown or lunged through the opening, that caught him in the side just below the ribs.
78. His clothes had been made of some stuff that was brown holland probably, but it was covered with patches all over, with bright patches, blue, red, and yellow, patches on the black, patches on the front, patches on elbows on knees; colored binding around his jacket, scarlet edging at the bottom of his trousers; and the sunshine made him look extremely gay and wonderfully neat withal, because you could see how beautifully all this patching had been done.
79. The woods were unmoved, like a mask - heavy, like the closed door of a prison – They looked with their air of hidden knowledge, of patient expectation, of unapproachable silent.
80. A quarrelsome band of footsore sulky niggers trod on the heels of the donkey ; a lot of lents, campstools, in boxes, white cases, brown bales would be shot down in the courtyard, and the air of mystery would deepen a little over the muddle of the station.

## 9. Hypothetical / Conditional Sentences:

Conditional sentences indicate impossibility and then darkness. Many instances of the conditional sentences (if 3) are fairly distributed throughout the novel to indicate negativism and impossibility which in tern indicate darkness.

81. They (would have been) even more impressive, those heads on the stakes, **if** their faces (had not been) turned to the house.

82. I (could have been) more disgusted **if** I (had travelled) all this way for the sole purpose of talking with Mr. Kurtz.
83. **If** she (had offered to come) aboard I really think. I (would have tried) to shoot her.
84. I think I (could have raised) an outcry **if** I (had believed) my eyes.
85. **If** he (had not heard) me coming, I (would have fallen) over him, too.

The bracketed verbs in the above examples indicate the hypothetical meaning is absolute, and amounts to an implied rejection of the conditions.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this amazing novel, Conrad provides the essentials that would capture the readers' attention. It has all the trappings of the conventional adventure tale: mystery, exotic setting, suspense, obscurity, murkiness and then darkness. The novel is most symbolic and ambiguous. Conrad deliberately leaves out almost all people, places and times unknown as indicators of darkness.

Most importantly, in some ways, the language of *Heart of Darkness* deviates from the norm of everyday language use, but many recurrent phrases in the novel are significant because they exploit the routine phraseology: words and grammar of the language which all indicate darkness.

An overall discourse schema in the novel is Europe and Africa, the River Thames and the River Congo, light and dark, all with much commented ambiguity between these poles:

"And this (the Thames) also "said Marlow Suddenly "has been one of the dark places on the earth" bearing in mind the little of the book and its very last phrase "the tranquil waterway (the Thames) seemed to lead into the heart of an immense darkness" stand hand in hand.

#### 5. REFERENCES

- Achebe, C.(1988). "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*", in R. Kimbrough (ed) *Joseph Conrad: Heart of Darkness*, pp.251-62. New York: Norton.
- Dutton, D.G. (2007) A review of: *Journey into the Heart of Darkness. The Psychology of Genocide, Massacres, and Extreme Violence: Why Normal People Come to Commit Atrocities*. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International.
- Greaney, M. (2002). *Conrad, Language, and Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harris, W. (1988). "The Frontier on which *Heart of Darkness* Stands" in R. Kimbrough (ed) *Joseph Conrad: Heart of Darkness*, critical edn, 3rd edn, in pp.262-68. New York: Norton.
- Kimbrough, R. (ed) (1988). *Joseph Conrad: Heart of Darkness*, critical edn, 3rd edn, New York: Norton.



- Knowles, F. (1998). "New versus old" in Hickey, L. (ed) *The Pragmatics of Translation*, Clevedon (Avon), Multilingual Matters Ltd., PP. 103-13.
- Said, S. (1994). *Culture and Imperialism*. Vintage: London.
- Sarvan, C.P. (1988). "Racism and Heart of Darkness" in R. Kimbrough (ed) Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*, critical edn, 3rd pp 280-85. New York: Norton.
- Senn, W. (1980). *Conrad's Narrative Voice*. Bern : Franck.
- Singh, F.B. (1988). "The Colonialistic Bias of *Heart of Darkness*", in R. Kimbrough (ed) Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*, critical edn, 3rd pp.268-80. New York: Norton.
- Stampfl, B. (1991) "Marlow's Rhetoric of Self-Description in Heart of Darkness " *Modern Fiction Studies* 37:183-96.
- Stubbs, M. (2003). "Conrad, concordance, collocation: *Heart of Darkness* or light at the end of the tunnel <<http://www.uni-trier.de/fileadmin/fb2/ANG/linguistic/stubbs-2003-Conrad-lecture.pdf>>.
- Stubbs, M. (2005). "Conrad in the computer: examples of quantities stylistic methods". <http://lal.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/14/1/5>.
- Watt, I. (1988). Impressionism and Symbolism in *Heart of Darkness*", in R. Kimbrough (ed) Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*, critical edn, 3<sup>rd</sup>, in pp.311-36. New York: Norton.
- Zimbaro, P. (2007). *The Lucifer effect: Understanding how good people turn evil*. New York: Random House.