

النقاش التركيبي لرواية الضباب لستيفن كينغ

Structural Discourse of the Mist by Stephen King

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This study endeavors to discuss *The Mist* (1980) by Stephen King (1947–), from a structural perspective, foregrounding his prowess as a literary technician in constructing horror novels and storytelling formation irrespective of a well-known career in story sketching. He experiments with a set of modern structures, mainly in the intended text and others generally, aligning him apart from his predecessors. This gives him in retrospect the privilege to make the story speak out through its evasive and unique structure, which in return it metamorphoses to become even more compelling and suspenseful for readers. Structural manipulation, one might say, has evolved into a sophisticated archetypal pattern, challenging readers to interpret its covert value. King's linguistic muscle integrates his diction where the language structure reflexively personifies and supports the story's events and the character's mindset. Thus, both literary and linguistic spheres cross paths in the novella's overall design. However, despite the fact that a cohort of researchers have visited King's writings over the past years, the implied and nuanced significance of his structure has not been scrutinized in depth. The subsequent comprehensive analysis conducted through the lens of variant

structural authorities pursues to reveal the innovative writing techniques and bearings in structuring *The Mist*.

Keywords: situation, story, dialogue, narrative, language

المستخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة التحليلية مناقشة رواية "الضباب" (١٩٨٠) للكاتب ستيفن كينغ (١٩٤٧-) من منظور هيكلي، موضحاً براعته كأديب في فن بناء روايات الرعب وتشكيل السرد، بغض النظر عن مسيرته الشهيرة في رسم القصص. يقوم كينغ بتجربة مجموعة من الهياكل الحديثة، وخاصة في النص المدروس وأعماله الأخرى بشكل عام، مما يميزه عن سابقيه. وتمنحه هذه التجربة الامتياز في تمكين القصة من التحدث من خلال هيكلها الفريد، الذي يضيف على الرواية سحراً وإثارة أكبر للقراء. يمكن القول إن استخدام كينغ للتلاعب بالهيكل السردى قد تطور إلى نمط من القوالب الأصلية، مما يترك التحدي للقراء في تفسير قيمتها الخفية. تظهر براعته اللغوية من خلال بناء اللغة بشكل رد فعلي، مدعماً لأحداث القصة وعقول الشخصيات. وبالتالي، يتقاطع الجانبان الأدبي واللغوي في التصميم الشامل لهذه الرواية. وعلى الرغم من أن باحثين عديدين قد قاموا بزيارة كتابات كينغ خلال السنوات الماضية، إلا أنهم لم يركزوا بعمق على الأهمية الضمنية والمعقدة لهيكل السرد الذي يستخدمه. وتسعى هذه الدراسة التحليلية الشاملة، من خلال المنظور الهيكلي لمجموعة من النقاد، إلى الكشف عن التقنيات الكتابية المبتكرة والتوجيهات التي يعتمدها كينغ في بناء رواية "الضباب".

الكلمات المفتاحية: الموقف، القصة، الحوار، السرد، اللغة.

Technical and Theoretical Paradigm

The king of "horror or modern Poe"¹ often nicknamed, Stephen King, is an American pioneer novelist credited for reintroducing the horror genre: content and form, in modern blood to the reader during the 21st century. This actualizes by internalizing postmodernist building blocks such as themes to name a few: alien creatures invasion, supernatural phenomena striking towns, and secret military experiments, etc.² Besides, he utilizes an American colloquial language, realistic modern local settings of common existence, everyday character,³ symbols, intertextuality, and meta-fictional maneuvers. King's novels mostly are written in fragmented or rhizome narrative style, starting in flashback or medias res and related by shifting between two voices, first and third-person viewpoints, as will be seen in *The Mist*⁴ (King, 1980). He manifests a genuine dexterity in composing full of events and dialogues story, which features suspense, mystery, and thick surrounding and emotional details (Encyclopedia, 2018). *The Guardian* in 2015 writes, "King isn't really thought of as an experimental novelist, which is grossly unfair," and it is his methods and writing style that make him the author he is (Smythe, Para 9). Thus, it is important to know how and in what way King employs those constituents to structure his artifact by grounding this study on a structural framework to decode and further understand his writing approach. Thereby, relative theoretical ideas and concepts by a group of literary and linguistic figures must be disclosed.

In *The Morphology of the Folktale* (1928), Vladimir Propp (1895-1970) states, "stories are constructed by selecting items from a basic repertoire of thirty-one functions, that is possible

¹ Edgar Allan Poe's writing style shadows that of King's as both incorporate supernatural phenomena, claustrophobic settings, horror scenes, mystery, and suspense. For more information, see Strengell (2005).

² Contrarily, H.P. Lovecraft (1890-1937), a modern horror and science fiction novelist favors fictional settings, characters, and even constructed languages. For more information, see King (2000).

³ King's fiction differs from pre-modern literary outputs in multiple aspects, for instance *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker (1847-1912), uses a middle-class setting, characters, language, linear storytelling, etc. For more information, see Bloom (2007).

⁴ Felix Guattari (1930-1992) in *A Thousand Plateaus and Philosophy* ((1980) considers Postmodern novels fragmented and chaotic like a rhizome root sprouting all over the yard without a fixed beginning, middle, and ending; therefore, they lack a chronological order of events. For more information, see Klages (2006).

actions, but no tale contains all the items in his list" (Barry, 1995, p. 218). Propp leans his actions against seven types of characters operating as cogs to circulate actions within the story. This emphasizes that a specific number of structural archetypes sequentially govern any work plot. Robert Scholes (1929-2016) in *Structuralism in Literature* (1974) expands Propp's argument emphasizing that one persona may be in the position of multi-faceted roles, to say, a villain might perform a false hero or helper role. Conversely, one role, for instance, the antagonist is played by collective villains. However, only four characters: hero, helper, villain, and false hero and eight functions are relative to this study:

The hero leaves home. The hero is tested, interrogated, attacked, etc., which prepares the way for his receiving helper. The hero is branded. A false hero presents unfounded claims. A difficult task is proposed to the hero. The task is resolved. The hero is recognized. The villain is punished. (Propp, 1928, p. 13)

Besides, Tzvetan Todorov (1939-2017) in *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1973) draws a circle of five structural phases in plot development within the novel. The five stages for Todorov Gradually are the "equilibrium" or the balance of events and the "disruption of the equilibrium" which is the inception of imbalances. Later, the persona has the "recognition of the disruption" or things are not supposed to be the way they are, posing him to change the course of events and "attempt to repair the damage" to re-instate a "new equilibrium" or order. Nevertheless, it can be said the five parts seemingly act as identifying terms for Propp's functions as it is going to be shown afterwards.

In *Narrative Discourse* (1972), Gerard Genette (1930-2018) argues about how the narrative is told and the structures followed in the process per se by drawing a map of covert literary techniques and styles. He breaks down narration into three focalizations or viewpoints: external, internal, and zero focalization. First, an external, objective third-person narrator is when the perspective is outside the character and the reader has no access to its thoughts and feelings. It is a camera-like narrative recording the epidermal layer of personas. Second, the

inner level is when the character voices out their mind by the first-person and limited third-person narrator. Third, a zero-focalization omniscient third-person narrator is a revelation of more than one character's consciousness by a god-like figure author.

Genette even recognizes that a narrator might be intrusive and homodiegetic by which an overt character dramatizes the story, playing an intrinsic role in the action. The narrator time travels by analepsis for readers to experience and relive the past and proleptic to go back to the future. Likewise, writers make use of mimetic mode to dramatize the narrative with a scenic view and slow telling of the events; therefore, readers are privileged to hear and see as though the novelist has imbued the artifact with biological traits. Whereas, diegetic mode is in a short and rapid form to tell essential events and details, not to depict (Barry, 1995).

Technically, Genette offers a triad formation of how the speech or dialogue is designed within the text: "mimetic speech, transposed speech, and narrated speech" (pp. 168-169). The first is a direct and tagged utterance, rendering the exact same truth as said, unlike the second, which has no quotation marks but is a tagged and indirect thought. The Last is equivalent to the second one, except its dialogue does not mimic utterances to sustain a character's communication within the narrative flow.

Dialogue essence is to configure communication and it is Roman Jakobson (1896-1982) in *Selected Writings: Contributions to Comparative Mythology. Studies in Linguistics and philology, 1972-1982* (1985), who asks the question: how communication occurs, dividing speech acts into six factors by which the six overarching functions of language would be observed. The first category includes "the addresser, addressee, message, context, contact, and code; whereas the second integrates emotive, conative, poetic,⁵ referential, phatic, and metalingual" (Rudy, 1985, pp. 86-87). The six functions of language subsequently operates as such; the sender's orientation is towards emotive function because it evokes the subject's feelings and desires. The addressee is conative relative as the center is on the receiver's reaction

⁵ The word "poetic" is interchangeably used to mean literary language. For more information, see Bertens (2002).

to the sender's message. The context is referential ⁶for language is invested to describe the external reality of the message, which by itself is the material, idea, or experience of a particular communication, which needs decoding. Thus, the message factor operates on the poetic scale in that the meaning of the message is within the message per se, and for the latter to be channeled between the two speakers a contact should be there. The contact must be physical; achieved through a confrontation with each other and psychological; reached by being mentally present. This systemizes contact towards phatic function, which is the social drive of any communication. To end with, the message requires a metalingual code or a form of language familiar to the communicators where both focus on the language itself to decipher its meaning (Bertens, 2002).

In addition, Roland Barthes in *S/Z* (1970) offers five levels of semiotic codes to unveil the text's nuanced reading. Put gradually, symbolic code may reflect an image, which represents something else. Semiotic code has hidden meaning; there is a connotation to it that readers somehow understand. Proairetic or action code signifies something is going to occur as a result. Hermeneutic or enigma code is any mysterious part of the text immersing readers into it and leading them to read the whole thing. Lastly, cultural or referential code is cultural relative so that one may not grasp its inflection until understanding or being part of that specific culture.

Equally crucial to this study is *Linguistic Criticism* (1986) by Roger Fowler in which he stresses that language structure is fundamental in shaping and reasoning fiction. Fowler investigates a set of linguistic concepts to mention a few: cohesion, under-lexicalization, and collocation by which the text's language and its content bind together as it will be seen later. To begin with, cohesion is to evade the grammatical boundaries of sentences and connect them into a single utterance by utilizing pronominalisation or pronouns. The next one is under-lexicalization defined as "a lack of an adequate set of words to express specific concepts" signifying the notion of altering standard words by a set of descriptive patterns to conceive a

⁶ In Saussurean terms, referential or referent is the external reality of what the signifier, and signified try to represent. For more information, see Tyson (2006).

specific meaning and effect (Barry, 1995, p. 208). Third, collocation is words that have in common fixed or predetermined affiliation and congruity (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). It is intriguing to see in the following section how to apply such theoretical discourses to decompress *The Mist's* structure.

The Mist: Structural Discourse

Lasciate ogne speranza voi che entrate

All hope abandon ye who enter here

Dante Alighieri

Known for its gory content and survival apocalyptic world, *The Mist's* readers are prerogative to unveil King's plot or situation, characters, and story all along through Proppian structural archetypes. It is yet quite interesting to use the word "plot" here for King prefers what he calls "situations" stating, "I distrust plot because our lives are plotless. A strong situation renders the whole question of plot moot" (2000, p. 156). In other words, he imagines a character in a situation through which the events evolve, yet his situations incorporate that archetypal density.

The Mist is about David Drayton, a quotidian hero who leaves home with his son Billy to buy a few supplies after a stormy night hits the town: "Billy and I are going up in the Scout" to "take a run up to town" (King, 1980, p. 17). Well, this is the equilibrium phase meaning everything is fine and nothing has happened yet. Equilibrium disruption begins when they become trapped with a group of everyday shoppers in a local supermarket after a mysterious mist has plagued Bridgton town in Maine state⁷ (Bloom, 2007). Drayton is tested after recognizing the disruption by protecting his boy from the monsters bursting out of the mist and Mrs. Carmody for which commonsensical helpers such as Ollie Weeks and Amanda Dumfries

⁷ *The Mist* intertextualizes with Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death* (1842) as both personify a mysterious entity of a specific color by which people are murdered. This explains why some of King's works stand as variations of others. For more information, see Strengell (2005).

assist him. Mrs. Carmody, who believes she is God's vessel on earth, and a villain disguised as a false hero, begins to brand Drayton as a false hero, agitating a congregation of frenzied villains and asking to sacrifice Billy to halt the mist:

"Expiation, that's right!" she shouted deliriously. "It's expiation gonna clear away this fog! Expiation gonna clear off these monsters and abominations! Expiation gonna drop the scales of mist from our eyes and let us see!" Her voice dropped a notch. "And what does the Bible say expiation is? What is the only cleanser for sin in the Eye and Mind of God?" "Blood." (King, 1980, p. 92)

Drayton undergoes a task designating him as the protagonist by fixing the disruption of events. A fight erupts as such to save Billy from Mrs. Carmody, culminating in her death: "Ollie stood in the classic target shooter's position, Amanda's gun clasped in both hands. Blood poured out between her fingers " (p. 94). A new balance emerges with Drayton embarking on a journey to find his wife, Stephanie ⁸ (Wood, 2011). However, aside from King's situation structure, narrative style is the module through which this text is projected.

In a 2008 review by *The Guardian* of King's writings, Kate Pullinger states, "first person can lend a story intimacy, while multiple third person can give a story a rich, polyphonic density" (Para 11). *The Mist* integrates Genette's trio focalizations, mainly an internal voice by the first-person to disclose Drayton's inner self. This mode is detected when Drayton's body bones tremble introspecting about Billy to calm his edgy self-down after a monster dashes into the roller door of the generator section:

I lay there cursing myself and rubbing my head, telling myself to
just take it easy, just get up and get out of here, get back to Billy,
telling myself nothing soft and slimy was going to close over my

⁸ The book ends on page 101 to signify that the first hundred pages unfolded the first adventure episode, and readers might anticipate the beginning of a new journey.

ankle or slip into one groping hand. I told myself not to lose control, or I would end up blundering around back here in a panic, knocking things over and creating a mad obstacle course for myself. (King, 1980, p. 33)

Secondarily, relying on an extrinsic viewpoint by the objective third person narration where King steps to only depict events, not the subjective mind (Pullinger, 2008). The subsequent quotation portrays a creature with huge tentacles constricting Norm, a poor shop employee, dragging him into the mist after striving for his life:

Norm grabbed the bottom edge of the loading door and yanked himself back in. The tentacle seemed to bulge, the way your arm will when you flex it. Norm was yanked back against the corrugated steel door-his head clanged against it. The tentacle bulged more, and Norm's legs and torso began to slip back out. The bottom edge of the loading door scraped the shirttails out of his pants. He yanked savagely and pulled himself back in like a man doing a chin-up. (King, 1980, p. 37)

To a similar extent, on zero perspective by the omniscient third party who records reflexive moments of characters' consciousness (Pullinger, 2008). In one part of the text, King uncovers Mrs. Carmody's mind to readers when she preaches to the trapped: Satan has plagued the world with the mist, and whoever will go out, death is awaiting them:

"All of you will die out there! Haven't you realized that the end of the world has come? The Fiend has been let loose! Star Wormwood blazes and each one of you that steps out that door will be torn apart! And they'll come for those of us who are left, just as this good woman said! Are you people going to let that happen ?" She was appealing to the onlookers now, and a little mutter ran through them. "After what

happened to the unbelievers yesterday? it's death! *It's death! It's-*"
(King, 1980, p. 81)

King employs Drayton as an intrusive and homodiegetic narrator, who is an active insider to the story he tells in rhizome manner, which translates how chaotic and uncertain the events and characters' future will be.⁹ Drayton outset in a flashback to the night storm hits relating he has already been through an experience preparing readers to mostly an analepsis tale:

This is what happened. On the night that the worst heat wave in northern New England history finally broke-the night of July 19-the entire western Maine region was lashed with the most vicious thunderstorms I have ever seen." (p. 1)

In the denouement, the story flash-forwards with the present tense replacing the past as Drayton reminds readers of his narrative authority.¹⁰ With a rhizomatic mechanism, a conclusion or ending point does not seem to see the light as such at the end of *The Mist*, King in meta-fictional style states that "you mustn't expect some -neat conclusion. There is no *And they escaped from the mist*" (p. 100). A view of Billy and others then is laid down with their scheme to embark on another journey amid the mist:

As I write this, it is a quarter to one in the morning, July the twenty-third. The storm that seemed to signal the beginning of it all was only four days ago. Billy is sleeping in the lobby on a mattress that I dragged out for him. Amanda and Mrs. Reppler are close by. The Scout has enough gas to take us maybe another ninety miles. If we can get gas-

⁹ King's *It* (1986) starts in medias res unlike *The Mist*. For more information, see Bloom (2007).

¹⁰ Flashback and flash-forward are met-fictional techniques used to make novels more suspenseful, mysterious, and distracting to their audiences. For more information, see Quinn (2006).

here or further along - we'll keep going. I have a destination in mind.
(p. 100)

Featuring physical and emotional details, King's narrative has a bifurcation, mainly mimetic and in part diegetic. A review by *The Guardian* of *On Writing* (2000), discusses King's claim: "Pace is the speed at which your narrative unfolds. There is a kind of unexamined belief that the most commercially successful stories and novels are fast-paced. This idea is largely b*****t" (Para 11). *The Mist* utilizes mimetic details in character's dialogue such as Drayton shelters his family from the storm. The quotation describes details about where to hide, how Drayton shouts, and where and how hard thunder hits. It depicts Billy being scared, cuddling his father's legs, and being gestured to go to his mother as it was projected or dramatized to readers:

"Go downstairs," I told Steff, and now I had to shout to make myself heard.
Directly over the house thunder whacked mammoth planks together and
Billy shrank against my leg.

"You come too!" Steff yelled back.

I nodded and made shooing gestures. I had to pry Billy off my leg. "Go
with your mother. I want to get some candles in case the lights go off."
(King, 1980, p. 4)

Whilst diegetic details are observed in the informative chapters' titles,¹¹ which only by reading it, one might have a clue of the anticipated outcome in that chapter. For instance, chapter two titled "After the Storm. Norton. A Trip to Town" indicates Drayton's town trip with Billy and their encounter with Norton, a lawyer neighbor, after their house has been hit by a storm (p. 6). Analogously, chapter three: "The Coming of the Mist" informs the news of the mist's arrival predicting a series of unfortunate events (p. 24). Diegetic lines are further, apparent when

¹¹ The numbering of chapter's title forms a logic of event progression, with the numbering increases the events escalate.

Drayton tells Ollie to watch over Billy after being warned about what is in the mist to not to reach out for his car:

"The things out there could be everywhere, David. They could get you the minute you stepped out of your Scout into your dooryard."

"If that happened, the Scout would be yours. All I'd ask would be that you take care of Billy as well as you could for as long as you could." (p. 89)

Dialogue structure ¹²is profound for King who imbues a wide range of *The Mist* with the three dialogue patterns. ¹³ In *On Writing*, he confirms: "It's dialogue that gives your cast their voices, and is crucial in defining their characters: what people say often conveys their character to others in ways of which they - the speakers - are completely unaware" (2000, p. 173). The predominant speech is mimetic as when Drayton panics after finding two dead army men bodies from the Arrowhead Project ¹⁴and Ollie in a rush hushes him down:

""Don't scream, David. No one knows about this but you and me. And that's how I want to keep it."

"Those army kids," I managed.

"From the Arrowhead Project," Ollie said. "Sure" " (1980, p. 71)

Less prevalent is the transposed utterance when Ollie asks Drayton about what he has said earlier about the tentacles monster to keep the locals indoors. He utters, "So I told them what had happened, pretty much as I told Norton. There was some laughter at first, then a deepening

¹² King often inserts dialogue paragraphs by combining dialogues within the narrative current. For more information, see King (2000).

¹³ From a Bakhtinian perspective, King writes *The Mist* in a conversational style where its characters engage their heterogeneous voices in a dialogic manner. This creates a polyphonic truth and a heteroglossic atmosphere. For more information, see Russell (2002).

¹⁴ The Arrowhead Project is a top-secret military experiment that ended in opening a dimensional portal to another world through which the mist and its abomination invade the earth. For more information, see King (1980).

uneasiness as I finished" (p. 48). And the narrated dialogue as when Drayton says "yes" to a shopper named Miller who plans to hand build some weapons to stand against what lurks in the mist:

"Tell you what I think," Miller said. "We ought to get half a dozen people to wrap some of those mop handles with cloth and then tie them down with twine. Then I think we ought to get a couple of those cans of charcoal lighter fluid all ready. if we cut the tops right off the cans, we could have some torches pretty quick."

I nodded. That was good. Almost surely not good enough-not if you had seen Norm dragged out-but it was better than salt. (p. 55)

In this respect, Jacobson's paradigm is pivotal for a dialogue to perform any communication, which is something King intends to do in *The Mist*. He asserts "Dialogue is a skill best learned by people who enjoy talking and listening to others—particularly listening, picking up the accents, rhythms, dialect, and slang of various groups" (2000, p. 176). The following quote implements the six factors and functions:

"I've heard stuff from maybe two dozen people," Ollie said. "Justine Robards. Nick Tochai. Ben Michaelson. You can't keep secrets in small towns. Things get out. Sometimes it's like a spring - it just bubbles up out of the earth and no one has an idea where it came from. You overhear something at the library and pass it on, or at the marina in Harrison. Christ knows where else, or why. But all spring and summer I've been hearing Arrowhead Project, Arrowhead Project."

"But these two," I said. "Christ, Ollie, they're just kids."

"There were kids in Nam who used to take ears. I was there. I saw it."

"But-what would drive them to do this?"

"I don't know. Maybe they knew something. Maybe they only suspected. They must have known people in here would start asking them questions eventually. If there is an eventually."

"If you're right," I said, "it must be something really bad."

"That storm," Ollie said in his soft, level voice. "Maybe it knocked something loose up there. Maybe there was an accident. They could have been fooling around with anything. Some people claim they were messing with high-intensity lasers and masers. Sometimes I hear fusion power. And suppose... suppose they ripped a hole straight through into another dimension?"

"That's hogwash," I said. (1980, p. 71)

The current dialogue revolves around Ollie, who shares his emotive perspective about a localized message with Drayton: What is the mystery behind the mist, and why the military officers blow their heads out. His message poetically operates for it is in and of itself defamiliarized or said in literary language. Referentially, Ollie contextualizes the message, claiming the mist is a military experiment and the two did what they did in fear of their unknown fate. In conative response, Drayton reacts in shock to why they have done it questioning Ollie's conspiracy theory. The phatic channel puts them in a physical and psychological loop for both stand adjacent in the market, and mentally immersed in each other's argument by the metalingual code or American colloquial language.

On another tier, King comments, "A few critics accused me of being symbolically simplistic" to which he replies "Symbolism doesn't have to be difficult. If it is there and if you

notice it, I think you should bring it out (2000, p. 197). *The Mist* weaves within a well-structured semiotic web of five covert codes, which poses King's dexterity in semiotics and justifies his literary caliber of symbolism or codes, bringing that:

Symbolism does serve a useful purpose. It can serve as a focusing device for both you and your reader, helping to create a more unified and pleasing work. I think that, when you read your manuscript over (and when you talk it over), you'll see if symbolism, or the potential for it, exists. If it doesn't, leave well enough alone. If it does, however—if it's clearly a part of the fossil you're working to unearth—go for it. Enhance it. You're a monkey if you don't. (2000, p. 193)

The mist's monsters like fast-paced and flesh-eating spiders, infesting its hosts with thousands of baby spiders serve a potential symbolic code deciphered to represent death. A Semiotic code is traced back to Amanda's gun, invoking a feminist statement of gender-bending for being a woman carrying a gun, which is usually a male behavior. Ollie's pulling out a gun at Mrs. Carmody is decoded as proiaretic for it anticipates her death. The title in its essence encodes a hermeneutic value as it anxiously propels readers to read the whole work in order to know what the mist mystery is. Actually, the very nature of the mist, that is, having no starting and ending points resonate the entire book's rhizomic narrative. Lastly, Drayton's Scout, a vehicle type, serves cultural code for its history in American school scouting and camping, making it the solid choice in an apocalyptic setting.

Besides semiotics, King considers a bundle of Fowler's subliminal linguistics strategies to structure *The Mist's* language in a way that mirrors its content. Heidi Strengell in *Dissecting Stephen King* mentions, "A sensitive author is capable of interpreting the fears and the emotions of the community and of expressing them in language that his readers can understand" (2005, p. 6). Readers might notice Drayton's cohesive sentences in chapter one: "I found the candles behind the Kewpie doll with its glazed dead man's eyes. They were still wrapped in their

cellophane. As my hand closed around them the lights went out and the only electricity was the stuff in the sky" (King, 1980, p. 3). King pronominalises those lines by avoiding word repetition and altering the word *candles* for the pronoun *they* and the *I* for *my* to mirror Drayton's state of mind when he does not stutter, repeat himself, and shows no fear of darkness after the lights go off with a storm looming. Under-lexicalization presents itself when "Brown's eyes dropped to the beer Ollie was holding." "You're *drinking!*" he said, and his voice was surprised but not totally devoid of pleasure. "You'll lose your job for this" (p. 47). Drayton describes the market manager's voice with the phrase "devoid of pleasure" instead of *unpleasant* after catching Ollie drinking beer to take the edge off. It marks the lack of vocabulary articulated by his cortical system for being in a traumatizing and panic context. In addition, collocation is evident after a shopper offers Drayton some donuts to which he jokes back "All that white sugar is death. Worse than cigarettes" (p. 74). Such a language game where *death* is predetermined with *sugar*, rather than *unhealthy* captures how Drayton's mind slips as the undergone turbulent feelings and thoughts processed by his nervous system interchange the color of sugar with that of the mist.

It is worth saying that King binds *The Mist* with literary and linguistic structures and techniques to cement the raw material with a modernized form. However, readers would better appreciate how King flows the form features through the story veins after broadening their structural spectrum.

Conclusion

After *The Mist* publication, King debunks critics' claims of not being a genius of form with his centripetal processes even further modernizing the horror genre by deconstructing its pre-modern tradition and bringing forth a whole set of experimental structures and ideas. However, the horror aspect is still residual and referential in the text, though the past tradition of that writing has been dismantled. With its everyday language, real-life characters, setting,

and overall structure, *The Mist's* unrealistic story is oppositional to its subliminal texture, invoking how King's postmodern style bricolages unorthodox methods to create an original mosaic.

Besides, his language and dialogue structure emphasizes a weight of linguistic knowledge through which the content supplements its function. King does not only write for the big screen adaptation and to entertain audiences, yet literary, linguistic, and structural schemes lay beneath, transforming his work of art into a technical referent. King has inspired many 21st-century novelists to produce works with unconventional form and fabula where reality intertwined with anomalies, such as Neil Gaiman's *American Gods* (2001), and Tom Perrotta's *The Leftovers* (2011).

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