The Old Man and the Sea: A Generative-Transformational Analysis of Hemingway's Descriptive Syntax

Kathryn Louise (Waggoner) King

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[Signature]

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The Old Man and the Sea: A Generative-Transformational Analysis of Hemingway's Descriptive Syntax

Introduction

The purpose of this generative-transformational analysis\(^1\) of Ernest Hemingway's descriptive syntax in *The Old Man and the Sea*\(^2\) is to compare and contrast the descriptive techniques of the three basic sentence types--i.e., narrative, descriptive, and dialogue. The first step is to examine the complexity of the sentences. Secondly, I shall consider the generated sentences and their functions, many of which are descriptive. Thirdly, I shall examine the prepositional phrases to determine their descriptive properties. Finally, I shall determine verb density, adjective density, and adverb density. I have omitted a thorough examination of the noun as a descriptive word in this case because I believe that in *The Old Man and the Sea*, at least, Hemingway has used most of the nouns to identify or specify rather than to describe.

Narration

A random sampling of 30 narrative sentences reveals that


\(^2\) Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea* (New York, 1952). All the later quotations are from this text.
are compound-complex--i.e., they are combinations of 2 or more primary sentences (S\textsubscript{1}, S\textsubscript{2}, etc.) joined by conjunctions, and at least 1 of the primary sentences generates at least 1 sentence. Two of the narrative compound-complex sentences contain only 2 primary sentences and generate only 1 sentence. In the ninth of the 30 random narrative sentences (N-9), for example, the second noun phrase (NP\textsubscript{2}) of the verb phrase (VP) of S\textsubscript{1} generates an adverbial ("before") clause: "He had pushed his straw hat hard down on his head before he hooked the fish and it was cutting his forehead" (p. 50). In N-28, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{2} generates an adverbial appositive. Four of the narrative compound-complex sentences contain 2 primary sentences and generate 2 sentences. In N-7, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{2} generates an adverbial appositive; and the NP of the VP of the appositive generates a predicate adjective: "The bird went higher in the air and circled again, his wings motionless" (p. 37). In N-9, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{2} generates a compound sentence; and each of the 2 sentences of the compound sentence functions as a direct object of the verb (V) of the VP of S\textsubscript{2}. In N-14, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{1} generates an adjectival relative ("that") clause; and the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{2} generates an adverbial infinitive. In N-35, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{2} generates an adverbial ("while") clause; and the NP of the VP of the adverbial clause generates a clause.

For a complete list of the random samplings used in this analysis, see the appendix.
which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP of the adverbial clause. One of the narrative compound-complex sentences contains 2 primary sentences and generates 3 sentences. In N-20, the NP of the VP of S₁ generates an adverbial ("when") clause; and the NP of the adverbial clause generates 2 adjectival participial clauses. Four of the narrative compound-complex sentences contain 2 primary sentences and generate 4 sentences. In N-2, the NP of the VP of S₁ generates a relative ("that") clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP of S₁; the NP of the VP of the relative clause generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjectival clause generates a relative ("which") clause which functions as a predicate noun; and the NP of the VP of S₂ generates an adjectival relative ("which") clause: "But after forty days without a fish the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally salac, which is the worst form of unlucky, and the boy had gone at their orders in another boat which caught three good fish the first week" (p. 9). In N-6, the NP of the VP of S₂ generates an adverbial comparative ("though") clause; the NP of the VP of the "though" clause generates an adverbial comparative ("than") clause; the NP of the VP of the "than" clause generates an adverbial ("if") clause; and the NP of the VP of the "if" clause generates an infinitive clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP of the "if" clause. In N-13, the NP of S₁ generates 2 adjectival participial clauses; and the NP of the VP of S₂
generates 2 infinitives which function as direct objects of the V of the VP of S₂. In N-21, the NP of the VP of S₂ generates an adverbial ("until") clause; the NP of the VP of the "until" clause generates 2 adverbial ("until") clauses; and the NP of the VP of the third "until" clause generates a predicate adjective. One of the narrative compound-complex sentences contains 2 primary sentences and 3 sentences. In N-3, the NP of S₁ generates an infinitive clause which replaces the surface subject "it"; the NP of the VP of the infinitive clause generates a clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP of the infinitive clause; the NP of the VP of S₂ generates an adverbial infinitive clause; the NP of the VP of the adverbial infinitive clause generates an infinitive clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP of the adverbial infinitive clause; and NP₁ of the VP of the direct object infinitive clause generates an adjectival relative ("that") clause: "It made the boy sad to see the old man come in each day with his skiff empty and he always went down to help him carry either the coiled lines or the gaff and harpoon and the sail that was furled around the mast" (p. 9). Two of the narrative compound-complex sentences contain 3 primary sentences and generate 2 sentences. In N-15, the prepositional phrase (PP) of the VP of S₁ generates a clause which functions as the object of the preposition of the PP; and the PP of the VP of S₃ generates an adjectival relative ("that") clause. In N-16, the PP of the NP of the VP of S₂ generates a participial clause which functions as the object
of the preposition of the PP; and the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{3} generates a predicate adjective. One of the narrative compound-complex sentences contains 3 primary sentences and generates 3 sentences. In N-19, the NP of S\textsubscript{3} generates 3 adjectival participial clauses. One of the narrative compound-complex sentences contains 4 primary sentences and generates 1 sentence. In N-27, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{1} generates a clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP of S\textsubscript{1}. One contains 4 primary sentences and generates 2 sentences. In N-18, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{1} generates an adverbial ("when") clause; and the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{2} generates a predicate adjective. One contains 4 primary sentences and generates 6 sentences. In N-10, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{1} generates a predicate adjective; the NP of S\textsubscript{3} generates an adjectival appositive; the NP of the VP of the appositive generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial infinitive clause; the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{2} generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; and the NP of the VP of the "as" clause also generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause: "He was thirsty too and he got down on his knees and, being careful not to jerk on the line, moved as far into the bow as he could get and reached the water bottle with one hand" (p. 50). Finally, 1 contains 5 primary sentences and generates 3 sentences. In N-26, the NP of the VP of S\textsubscript{3} generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; the NP of the VP of the "as" clause also generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; and PP\textsubscript{3} of the VP of S\textsubscript{4} generates an
adjectival relative ("that") clause: "The old man dropped the
line and put his foot on it and lifted the harpoon as high as
he could and drove it down with all his strength, and more
strength he had just summoned, into the fish's side just
behind the great chest fin that rose high in the air to the
altitude of the man's chest" (p. 103). Thirty-one conjunc-
tions connect the primary sentences; 28 are "and's," and 3
are "so that's."

Altogether, 12 of the 19 narrative compound-complex sen-
tences contain 2 primary sentences, 3 contain 3 primary sen-
tences, 3 contain 4 primary sentences, and 1 contains 5 pri-
mary sentences. Three of the 19 generate only 1 sentence, 7
generate 2 sentences, 7 generate 3 sentences, 4 generate 4
sentences, 1 generates 5 sentences, and 1 generates 6 senten-
ces. The 19 sentences, therefore, contain a total of 50 pri-
mary sentences and 52 generated sentences, making a grand
total of 102 sentences.

Four of the random sampling of 30 narrative sentences
are complex--i.e., each contains only 1 primary sentence,
but each generates at least 1 sentence. Three of the 4 nar-
rative complex sentences generate only 1 sentence. In N-4,
the PP of the VP generates a noun ("where") clause which
functions as the object of the preposition of the PP of the VP.
In N-29, the NP generates an adjectival infinitive clause.
In N-30, the NP of the VP generates an adjectival relative
("that") clause. The other narrative complex sentence gener-
ates 6 sentences. In N-17, the NP of the VP generates an
adverbial ("before") clause and an adverbial ("as") clause; the NP of the VP of the "before" clause generates a predicate adjective; the PP of the NP of the VP of the "as" clause generates 2 adjectival relative ("that") clauses; and the NP of the VP of the second relative clause generates an adverbial ("as though") clause: "Just before it was dark, as they passed a great island of Sargasso weed that heaved and swung in the light sea as though the ocean were making love with something under a yellow blanket, his small line was taken by a dolphin" (pp. 79-80). Altogether, the 4 complex sentences contain 4 primary sentences and 9 generated sentences, making a total of 13 sentences.

Four of the random sampling of narrative sentences are compound--i.e., they are combinations of 2 or more primary sentences joined by conjunctions, but none of these sentences generates any sentences. Three of the 4 narrative compound sentences (N-5, N-11, and N-24) contain 2 primary sentences. The other (N-22) contains 3 primary sentences. The 4 compound sentences contain a total of 9 primary sentences. Five conjunctions connect the primary sentences; all are "and's."

Three of the random sampling of narrative sentences (N-1, N-12, and N-23) are simple--i.e., each contains only 1 primary sentence and generates no sentences.

All 30 narrative sentences contain a total of 66 primary sentences and 62 generated sentences, or 128 sentences altogether. Twenty-five of the 62 generated sentences function as adjectives, of which 8 are predicate adjectives.
Twenty-two function as adverbs. Fifteen function as nouns. Ten of the functional nouns are direct objects, 3 are objects of prepositions, 1 functions as a predicate noun, and 1 replaces the surface subject "it."

The 128 primary and generated sentences contain 85 prepositional phrases. Five of the 85 generate sentences. Two generate a clause which is the object of the preposition. Two generate a relative ("that") clause which modifies the object of the preposition. One generates 2 relative ("that") clauses which modify the object of the preposition. Seven prepositional phrases generate another prepositional phrase which modifies the object of the generating prepositional phrase. Sixteen of the 85 prepositional phrases function as adjectives. The other 69 function as adverbs. Sixty-three of the 69 modify verbs, 2 modify adjectives, and 4 modify adverbs which modify verbs.

There are 789 words in the random sampling of 30 narrative sentences. The average sentence length is 26.3 words. Eighteen sentences contain fewer than 26.3 words. Twelve sentences contain more than 26.3 words. The shortest sentence contains 6 words. The longest sentence contains 59 words.

Of the 789 words in the 30 narrative sentences, 114—or 14.5% of the total word count—are verbs. Of the 114 verbs, 103—or 13.1% of the total word count—are active voice verbs; 1—or .1%—is passive voice; and 10—or 1.3%—are "to be".

I discussed these generated sentences in the analysis of the compound-complex and complex sentences earlier. I think it necessary to discuss them again more thoroughly, however, when discussing the descriptive properties of the prepositional phrases.
verbs. There are 197 one-word adjectives, making 25.0% of the total word count. Sixty-seven, or 0.5% of the total word count, are descriptive adjectives; 92, or 11.7%, are articles; 35, or 4.4%, are possessive pronouns; and 3, or .4%, are possessive nouns. There are 62 one-word adverbs, making 7.8% of the total word count. Fifty-three, or 6.7% of the total word count, modify verbs; 6, or .7%, modify adjectives or functional adjectives; and 3, or .4%, modify adverbs or functional adverbs.

Within the random sampling of 30 narrative sentences, there are 361 descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences. Of those 361, 104--or 29.0--are verbs. One hundred, or 27.8%, function as adjectives. Seventeen of the 100, or 4.7%, are generated sentences; 16, or 4.5%, are prepositional phrases; and 67, or 18.6%, are descriptive one-word adjectives. The adverbs and functional adverbs number 157, making 43.2% of the 361 descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences. Twenty-two, or 6.0%, of the adverbs and functional

5 The other words are among the classes of largely non-descriptive words--nouns, pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions.

6 I include only the active voice and passive verbs because they describe action; I do not include "to be" or "to have" verbs because they merely declare a state of being or a state of possession.

7 I include the predicate adjectives among the descriptive one-word adjectives because they actually are, for the most part, descriptive one-word adjectives.

8 I do not include articles, possessive pronouns, possessive nouns, or demonstrative pronouns because they merely specify rather than describe.
adverbs are generated sentences. Of these 22, 18—or 5.0%—modify verbs, 1—or .2%—modifies an adjective, and 3—or .8%—modify adverbs. Sixty-nine, or 19.0%, of the 157 are prepositional phrases. Sixty-three, or 17.5%, of the prepositional phrases modify verbs; 2, or .5%, modify adjectives; and 4, or 1.0%, modify adverbs. Sixty-two of the 157, or 17.2%, are one-word adverbs. Of the 62, 53—or 14.7%—modify verbs, 6—or 1.7%—modify actual or functional adjectives, and 3—or .8%—modify actual or functional adverbs. Four of the 157, or 1.0%, are adverbial noun phrases—such as "the first week" in N-2—which modify verbs.

Of the 157 actual and functional adverbs, 138—or 38.3% of the 361 descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences—modify verbs; 98.5% of the 157 actual and functional adverbs modify verbs. Nine of the 157, or 2.4% of the 361, modify adjectives; 5.1% of the 157 modify adjectives. Ten of the 157, or 2.6% of the 361, modify adverbs; 6.4% of the 157 modify adverbs.

Descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences which describe action—i.e., verbs and adverbs which modify verbs—comprise 67.2% of the total number of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences.

Description

Narration, by definition, centers around action. It tells us what happens and, to a greater or lesser extent (depending upon the author), how it happens. In a book by
an author such as Hemingway, an author renowned for his action-filled books, it is not surprising to find that the majority of the narrative sentences are very complex and that the majority of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences describe action. Since descriptive sentences focus on persons and objects, however, it is difficult to anticipate the complexity of Hemingway's descriptive sentences; but it is not difficult to anticipate that the majority of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences in descriptive sentences written by any author will either be or function as adjectives.

A random sampling of 30 descriptive sentences reveals that 13 are compound-complex. Three of the 13 descriptive compound-complex sentences contain only 2 primary sentences and generate only 1 sentence. In the third of the 30 random descriptive sentences (DE-3), the PP of the VP of the VP of S₂ generates a participial clause which functions as the object of the preposition of the PP. In DE-9 and DE-19, the NP of the VP of S₁ generates a predicate adjective. Two of the descriptive compound-complex sentences contain 2 primary sentences and generate 2 sentences. In DE-9, the NP of the VP of S₁ generates an adverbial relative ("that") clause; and the NP of the VP of the relative clause generates a predicate adjective prepositional phrase. In DE-16, the NP of the VP of S₁ generates a predicate adjective; and the NP of the VP of S₂ generates a predicate adjective. Two of the descriptive compound-complex sentences contain 2 primary sentences
and generate 3 sentences. In DE-15, the NP of the VP of $S_1$ generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial comparative ("than") clause; and the NP of the VP of the "than" clause generates an implied predicate adjective—i.e., a predicate adjective which is implied by the "than" clause but which does not exist in the actual sentence: "It was higher than a big scythe blade [is high] and a very pale lavender above the dark blue water" (p. 99). In DE-27, the NP of the VP of $S_1$ generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; and the NP of the VP of the "as" clause generates an implied predicate adjective. One of the compound-complex sentences contains 2 primary sentences and generates 4 sentences. In DE-21, the NP of the VP of $S_1$ generates an adjectival participial clause; the NP of the VP of the participial clause generates an adverbial infinitive clause; the NP of the VP of the infinitive clause generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; and the NP of the VP of $S_2$ generates a predicate adjective. One sentence contains 2 primary sentences and generates 3 sentences. In DE-19, the NP of the VP of $S_1$ generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial comparative ("than") clause; the NP of the VP of the "than" clause generates an implied predicate adjective; the NP of the VP of $S_2$ generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; the NP of the "as" clause generates two adverbial comparative ("as") clauses; and the NP of the VP of both these
last 2 "as" clauses generates an implied predicate adjective:
"They were wider than a man's hand with his fingers spread
and the fish's eye looked as detached as the mirrors in a
periscope or as a saint in a procession" (pp. 106-107). One
sentence contains 3 primary sentences and generates 3 sentences.
In DE-13, the NP of the VP of $S_1$ generates a predicate adjec-
tive and a predicate adjective prepositional phrase; the NP
of the VP of $S_2$ generates a predicate adjective; and the VP
of the VP of $S_3$ generates 2 predicate adjectives. One con-
tains 3 primary sentences and generates 5 sentences. In DE-22,
the NP of the VP of $S_1$ generates a predicate adjective; the
NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial
comparative ("as") clause; the NP of the VP of the "as" clause
generates an implied predicate adjective; the NP of the VP
of $S_2$ generates a predicate adjective; and the NP of the VP
of $S_3$ generates 2 predicate adjectives: "His back was as
blue as a sword fish's and his belly was silver and his hide
was smooth and handsome" (p. 111). One sentence contains 3
primary sentences and generates 8 sentences. In DE-7, the NP
of the VP of $S_1$ generates an adjectival appositive; the NP
of the VP of the appositive generates a predicate adjective;
the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adjec-
tival ("although") clause; the NP of the VP of the "although"
clause generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the VP of
$S_2$ generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the VP of $S_3$
generates 2 adverbial ("when") clauses; and the NP of the VP
of the first "when" clause generates a predicate adjective.
"They were strange shoulders, still powerful although very old, and the neck was still strong too and the creases did not show so much when the old man was asleep and his head fallen forward" (pp. 19-20). Finally, one contains 4 primary sentences and generates 3 sentences. In DE-6, the NP of the VP of S1 generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the VP of S2 generates a predicate adjective; and the NP of the VP of S3 generates a predicate adjective. Eighteen conjunctions connect the primary sentences; all are "and's."

Altogether, 9 of the 13 descriptive compound-complex sentences contain 2 primary sentences, 3 contain 3 primary sentences, and 1 contains 4 primary sentences. Three of the 13 generate only 1 sentence, 2 generate 2 sentences, 4 generate 3 sentences, 1 generates 4 sentences, 1 generates 5 sentences, and 2 generate 6 sentences. The 13 sentences, therefore, contain a total of 31 primary sentences and 44 generated sentences, making a grand total of 75 sentences.

Twelve of the random sampling of 30 descriptive sentences are complex. Three of the 12 descriptive complex sentences generate only 1 sentence. In DE-4, DE-29, and DE-30, the NP of the VP generates a predicate adjective. Three of the 12 complex sentences generate 2 sentences. In DE-1, the NP of the VP generates 2 predicate adjectives. In DE-2, the NP generates an adjectival relative clause; and the NP of the VP generates a predicate adjective prepositional phrase. In DE-26, the PP of the VP generates a clause which functions as the object of the preposition; and the NP of the VP of the PP
object generates an adverbial ("when") clause. One complex sentence generates 3 sentences. In DE-5, the NP of the VP generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; and the NP of the VP of the "as" clause generates a predicate adjective prepositional phrase and an implied predicate adjective. Two complex sentences generate 4 sentences.

In DE-11, the NP of the VP generates an adjectival appositive; the NP of the VP of the appositive generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial relative ("that") clause; and the NP of the VP of the relative clause generates a predicate adjective. In DE-20, the NP of the VP generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial relative clause; the NP of the relative clause generates a clause which replaces the surface subject "it" of the relative clause; and the PP of the VP of the relative clause generates a participial clause which functions as the object of the preposition: "He was so big it was like lashing a much bigger cliff alongside" (p. 107). Two complex sentences generate 5 sentences. In DE-22, the NP of the VP generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; the PP of the VP generates an adjectival relative ("which") clause; the NP of the VP of the relative clause generates an adverbial ("as") clause; PP2 of the VP of the "as" clause generates a participial clause which functions as the object of the preposition; and PP2 of the VP of the PP object generates a participial clause which
functions as the object of the preposition: "He was built as a sword fish except for his huge jaws which were tight "out now as he swam fast, just under the surface with his high dorsal "in knife; through the water without wavering" (p. 111). In DE-28, the NP of the VP generates an adjectival participial clause; the NP of the VP of the participial clause generates an adverbial infinitive clause; the PP of the VP of the infinitive clause generates an adjectival relative ("that") clause; the NP of the VP of the relative clause generates 3 predicate adjectives; and the NP of the predicate adjectives clause generates an adverbial relative ("that") clause. Finally, 1 sentence generates 7 sentences. In DE-17, the NP of the VP generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial comparative ("as") clause; the NP of the VP of the "as" clause generates an implied predicate adjective; the PP of the NP of the first predicate adjective clause generates an adjectival relative ("that") clause; the NP of the VP of the relative clause generates a predicate adjective; the NP of the predicate adjective clause generates an adverbial comparative ("than") clause; and the NP of the VP of the "than" clause generates a predicate adjective: "First it was dark as a shoal in the blue water that was more than a mile deep" (p. 104). Altogether, the 12 descriptive complex sentences contain 12 primary sentences and 37 generated sentences, making a total of 49 sentences.

Two of the random sampling of descriptive sentences are compound. DE-10 contains 2 primary sentences, and DE-14
contains 2 primary sentences, making a total of 5 sentences. Three conjunctions connect the primary sentences; all are "and's."

Three of the random sampling of descriptive sentences (DE-12, DE-24, and DE-25) are simple.

All 30 descriptive sentences contain a total of 51 primary sentences and 91 generated sentences, or 122 sentences altogether. Fifty-three of the 81 generated sentences function as adjectives. Thirty-eight of the 53 are predicate adjectives, 7 are implied predicate adjectives, and 8 function as descriptive adjectives. Twenty-two of the 81 generated sentences function as adverbs. Six of the 81 function as nouns. Five of the 6 function as objects of prepositions, and 1 replaces the surface subject "it."

The 122 primary and generated sentences contain 58 prepositional phrases. Six of the 58 generate sentences. Two of the 6 generate a clause which functions as the object of the preposition. The other 4 generate a clause which modifies the object of the preposition. Nine prepositional phrases generate another prepositional phrase which modifies the object of the generating prepositional phrase. Thirty-nine of the 58 prepositional phrases function as adjectives. The other 19 function as adverbs. Seventeen of the 19 modify verbs, 1 modifies an adjective, and 1 modifies an adverb which modifies a verb.

9See footnote 4.
There are 585 words in the random sampling of 30 descriptive sentences. The average sentence length is 19.5 words. Fifteen sentences contain fewer than 19.5 words. Fifteen sentences contain more than 19.5 words. The shortest sentence contains 4 words. The longest sentence contains 36 words.

Of the 585 words in the 30 descriptive sentences, 72—or 12.2% of the total word count—are verbs. Of the 72 verbs, 13—or 1.4% of the total word count—are active voice verbs, 8—or 1.4% are passive voice verbs, 44—or 7.4% are "to be" verbs, 10 and 2—or .3% are "to have" verbs. There are 205 one-word adjectives, making 35.1% of the total word count. Descriptive adjectives number 104, or 17.8%, of the total word count. Sixty-nine, or 11.8%, are articles; 26, or 4.4%, are possessive pronouns; 5, or .9%, are possessive nouns; and 1, or .2%, is a demonstrative pronoun. There are 36 one-word adverbs, making 6.2% of the total word count. Fifteen of the 36, or 2.6% of the total word count, modify verbs; 19, or 3.2%, modify adjectives; and 2, or .4%, modify actual or functional adverbs.¹¹

Within the random sampling of 30 descriptive sentences, there are 254 descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences. Of those 254, 26—or 10.3%—are verbs.¹²

¹⁰ Include one verb of sense ("looked") among the "to be" verbs because it functions as a "to be" verb.

¹¹ See footnote 5.

¹² See footnote 6.
Actual and functional adjective number 151, making 59.4% of the total number of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences. Eight of the 151, or 3.1% of the total, are generated sentences; 39, or 15.4%, are prepositional phrases; and 104, or 40.9%, are descriptive one-word adjectives. Seventy-seven—or 30.3% of the 254 descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences—are actual or functional adverbs. Twenty-two of the 77, or 9.6% of the total, are generated sentences. Of these twenty-two, 2—or 3.1% of the total—modify verbs; 12—or 4.7%—modify adjectives; and 2—or .8%—modify adverbs. Nineteen of the 77, or 7.5% of the total, are prepositional phrases. Of these 19, 17—or 6.7% of the total—modify verbs; 1—or .4%—modifies an adjective; and 1—or .4%—modifies an adverb. Thirty-six of the 77, or 14.2% of the total, are one-word adverbs. Fifteen of the 36, or 5.2% of the total, modify verbs; 19, or 7.5%, modify adjectives; and 2, or .8%, modify actual or functional adverbs.

Of the 77 actual and functional adverbs, 40—or 16.5% of the 254 descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences—modify verbs; 51.2% of the 77 modify verbs. Thirty-two of the 77, or 13.1% of the 254, modify adjectives; 41.6% of the 77 modify adjectives. Five of the 77, or 1.5% of the 254,

13r do not include implied predicate adjectives among the descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences because they are not actually present in any of the sentences. Also, see footnote 7.

14See footnote 8.
modify adverbs: 6.5% of the 77 modify adverbs.

Descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences which describe action comprise 26.6% of the total number of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences.

Dialogue

Narration and description belong solely to the author, and we expect a good author to use effective descriptive techniques in both these areas. Dialogue, however, while still an important part of most novels, is more restricted than narration and description. Once an author has created a character, he must speak through that character. The character must say that which is most logical for him to say in a way which is most logical and natural for him to speak. Thus, we may expect a well-educated poetical character to use complex descriptive techniques in his speech, but we certainly do not expect a simple fisherman or his young, uneducated helper to use complex descriptive techniques in their speech. The dialogue Hemingway creates in The Old Man and the Sea is faithful to the characters he creates. The simple characters, for the most part, speak simply. The sentences spoken are shorter, less complex, and less descriptive than the narrative and descriptive sentences, thereby offering a rather sharp contrast to the narrative and descriptive sentences. That the majority of the limited description in the dialogue is action-centered can be explained, I believe, by careful consideration of the characters themselves.
and of the situation in which they are involved. It is logical that simple characters in a critical situation should talk about what is happening and compare it to what has happened and try to anticipate what is going to happen.

The random sampling of 30 dialogue sentences reveals that only 2 are compound-complex. One contains 2 primary sentences and generates 1 sentence. In the seventh dialogue sentence (DI-7), the VP of the VP of S₁ generates a "how" clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP. One contains 2 primary sentences and generates 2 sentences. In DI-22, the VP of the VP of S₁ generates a clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP; and the VP of the VP of S₂ generates an infinitive clause which acts as the direct object of the V of the VP: "'Damn my fish,' the boy said and he started to cry again" (p. 126). The 2 dialogue compound-complex sentences contain a total of 4 primary sentences and 3 generated sentences, or 7 sentences altogether. Two conjunctions connect the primary sentences; both are "and's."

Sixteen of the random sampling of 30 dialogue sentences are complex. Ten of the 16 generate only 1 sentence. In DI-8, DI-12, DI-15, DI-19, DI-23, DI-25, DI-29, and DI-30, the NP of the VP generates a clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP. In DI-19 and DI-26, the NP of the VP generates a predicate adjective. Five of the 16 dialogue complex sentences generate 2 sentences. In DI-1, the NP of the VP generates an adverbial ("as") clause; and
the PP of the VP of the "as" clause generates a clause which functions as the object of the proposition. In DI-9, the VP of the VP generates a clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP; and the NP of the VP of the direct object generates an adverbial ("because") clause. In DI-10, the NP of the VP generates an adjectival relative clause; and the NP of the VP of the relative clause generates a clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP of the relative clause. In DI-16, the NP of the VP generates a clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP; and the NP of the VP of the direct object generates a predicate adjective. In DI-27, the NP of the VP generates a "how" clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP; and the NP of the VP of the direct object generates a predicate adjective. Finally, 1 complex sentence generates 3 sentences. In DI-17, the NP of the VP generates a clause which functions as the direct object of the V of the VP; the NP of the VP of the direct object generates an adverbial ("when") clause; and the NP of the VP of the "when" clause generates a predicate adjective: "'I let you carry things when you were five years old'" (p. 29). Altogether, the 16 dialogue complex sentences contain 16 primary sentences and 23 generated sentences, making a total of 39 sentences.

One of the random sampling of dialogue sentences is compound. DI-11 contains 2 primary sentences which are connected by the conjunction "and."
Eleven of the random sampling of dialogue sentences (DI-2, DI-3, DI-4, DI-5, DI-6, DI-13, DI-14, DI-20, DI-21, DI-24, and DI-28) are simple.

All 30 dialogue sentences contain a total of 22 primary sentences and 26 generated sentences, or 58 sentences altogether. Six of the 26 generated sentences function as adjectives; 5 are predicate adjectives, and the other functions as a descriptive adjective. Three of the 26 function as adverbs. Seventeen of the 26 function as nouns. Sixteen of the 17 function as direct objects, and the other functions as the object of a preposition.

The 52 primary and generated sentences contain 9 prepositional phrases. One generates a clause which functions as the object of the preposition.15 Two of the 9 prepositional phrases function as adjectives, 5 function as adverbs modifying verbs, and 1 functions as an indirect object.

There are 222 words in the random sampling of 30 dialogue sentences. The average sentence length is 7.4 words. Twenty-one sentences contain fewer than 7.4 words. Nine sentences contain more than 7.4 words. The shortest sentence contains 2 words. The longest sentence contains 20 words.

Of the 222 words in the 30 dialogue sentences, 54—or 24.4% of the total word count—are verbs. Forty-two of the 54, or 18.9% of the total word count, are active voice verbs; 1, or .5%, is a passive voice verb; 0, or 0%, are "to be" verbs; and 1, or 1.4%, are "to have" verbs. There are 41

15See footnote 4.
one-word adjectives, making 12.1% of the total word count. Twenty of the 40, or 9.0% of the total word count, are descriptive adjectives; 15, or 6.9%, are articles; and 5, or 2.3%, are possessive pronouns. There are 14 one-word adverbs and 1 adverbial noun phrase, making 6.8% of the total word count. Twelve of the 15 (including the adverbial noun phrase), or 5.4% of the total word count, modify verbs; and 3, or 1.4%, modify adjectives.\(^{16}\)

Within the random sampling of 30 dialogue sentences, there are 89 descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences. Of these 89, 43—or 48.3%—are verbs.\(^{17}\) Twenty-three of the 89, or 25.3%, function as adjectives. One of the 23, or 1.1% of the 89, is a generated sentence\(^\text{18}\); 2, or 2.2%, are prepositional phrases; and 20, or 22.5%, are descriptive one-word adjectives.\(^{19}\) Actual and functional adverbs also number 23, making 25.9% of the total number of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences. Three of the 23, or 1.3% of the 89, are generated sentences modifying verbs; 5, or 5.6%, are prepositional phrases modifying verbs; 14, or 15.7%, are one-word adverbs (11, or 12.4%, modify verbs; and 3, or 3.4%, modify adjectives); and 1, or 1.1%, is an adverbial noun phrase modifying a verb.

\(^{16}\)See footnote 5.

\(^{17}\)See footnote 6.

\(^{18}\)See footnote 7.

\(^{19}\)See footnote 8.
Of the 23 actual and functional adverbs, 20—or 22.5% of the 99 descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences—modify verbs; 97.5% of the 23 actual and functional adverbs modify verbs. Three of the 23, or 3.4% of the 99, modify adjectives; 13.0% of the 23 modify adjectives.

Descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences which describe action comprise 72.9% of the total number of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences.

Conclusion

In summary, Hemingway's narrative and descriptive syntax in *The Old Man and the Sea* are both rather complicated, but his dialogue syntax is not nearly so complicated as the other two. The narrative syntax is only slightly more complicated than the descriptive syntax. In the random sampling of 30 narrative sentences, 19 are compound-complex, 4 are complex, 4 are compound, and only 3 are simple. In the random sampling of 30 descriptive sentences, 13 are compound-complex, 17 are complex, 2 are compound, and only 3 are simple. The average narrative sentence length is 26.3 words; the average descriptive sentence length is 19.5 words. The random sampling of 30 narrative sentences contains a total of 122 sentences—66 primary, 62 generated. The random sampling of 30 descriptive sentences contains a total of 122 sentences—51 primary, 91 generated. The dialogue syntax presents a striking contrast to such complexity. In the random sampling of 30 dialogue sentences, only 2 are compound-complex, 16 are complex,
14 is compound, and 11 are simple. The average dialogue sentence length is only 7.1 words. And the random sampling of 20 dialogue sentences contains only 59 sentences—23 primary, 26 generated.

When analyzing the generated sentences in each of the three sentence categories, we again see a sharp contrast between the narrative and the descriptive sentences on the one hand and the dialogue sentences on the other. Of the 62 generated sentences in the narrative group, 25 function as adjectives, 22 function as adverbs, and 15 function as nouns; more than two-thirds of the generated sentences in the narrative group function as modifiers. Of the 91 generated sentences in the descriptive group, 52 function as adjectives, 22 function as adverbs, and 6 function as nouns; more than seven-eighths of the generated sentences in the descriptive group function as modifiers. Of the 26 generated sentences in the dialogue group, however, 6 function as adjectives, 2 function as adverbs, and 17 function as nouns; only one-third of the generated sentences in the dialogue group function as modifiers.

Among the 95 prepositional phrases within the narrative sentences, 15 function as adjectives and 62 function as adverbs. Among the 59 prepositional phrases within the descriptive sentences, 32 function as adjectives and 13 function as adverbs. Among the 9 prepositional phrases within the dialogue sentences, 3 function as adjectives, 5 as adverbs, and 1 as an indirect object noun.
Of the total word count in the narrative sentences, 13.2% consist of descriptive verbs; of the total word count in the descriptive sentences, 4.5% consist of descriptive verbs; and of the total word count in the dialogue sentences, 19.4% consist of descriptive verbs. Of the total word count in the narrative sentences, 9.3% consist of one-word descriptive adjectives; of the total word count in the descriptive sentences, 17.2% consist of one-word descriptive adjectives; and of the total word count in the dialogue sentences, 9.3% consist of one-word descriptive adjectives. Of the total word count in the narrative sentences, 7.9% consist of one-word adverbs; of the total word count in the descriptive sentences, 6.3% consist of one-word adverbs; and of the total word count in the dialogue sentences, 6.9% consist of one-word adverbs.

Of the total number of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences in the narrative sentences, 99.0% are verbs, 77.0% are actual and functional adjectives, and 42.2% are actual and functional adverbs; 47.3% of the total are action-centered—i.e., they are either verbs or adverbs which modify verbs. Of the total number of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences in the descriptive sentences, 10.4% are verbs, 59.4% are actual and functional adjectives, and 30.3% are actual and functional adverbs; 36.6% of the total are action-centered. Of the total number of descriptive words, phrases, and generated sentences in the dialogue sentences, 48.3% are verbs, 25.2% are actual and functional
adjectives, and 25.2% are actual and functional adverbs; 70.8% of the total are action-centered.

In conclusion, it is evident that Hemingway's narration in *The Old Man and the Sea* is adverb-centered, that his description is adjective-centered, and that his dialogue is verb-centered. Since the majority of the narrative adverbs modify verbs, we can see that Hemingway's narration consists not only in revealing one act after another; it consists also in trying to make his readers picture exactly what is happening. That Hemingway's description is adjective-centered is not remarkable. Descriptive sentences describe persons and objects and, therefore, necessarily employ adjectives. As explained earlier, the dialogue is verb-centered probably because simple characters in critical situations talk about what is happening and compare it to what has happened, and also try to anticipate what will happen.
APPENDIX

Narrative sentences

N-1: "In the first forty days a boy had been with him" (p. 9).

N-2: "But after forty days without a fish the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally salao, which is the worst form of unlucky, and the boy had gone at their orders in another boat which caught three good fish the first week" (p. 9).

N-3: "It made the boy sad to see the old man come in each day with his skiff empty and he always went down to help him carry either the coiled lines or the gaff and harpoon and the sail that was furled around the mast" (p. 9).

N-4: "He rowed slowly and steadily toward where the bird was circling" (p. 36).

N-5: "He did not hurry and he kept his lines straight up and down" (p. 36).

N-6: "But he crowded the current a little so that he was still fishing correctly though faster than he would have fished if he was not trying to use the bird" (pp. 36-37).

N-7: "The bird went higher in the air and circled again, his wings motionless" (p. 37).

N-8: "Then he dove suddenly and the old man saw flying fish spurt out of the water and sail desperately over the surface" (p. 37).

N-9: "He had pushed his straw hat hard down on his head before he hooked the fish and it was cutting his forehead" (p. 50).

N-10: "He was thirsty too and he got down on his knees and, being careful not to jerk on the line, moved as far into the bow as he could get and reached the water bottle with one hand" (p. 50).

N-11: "He opened it and drank a little" (p. 50).

N-12: "Then he rested against the bow" (p. 50).
N-13: "He rested sitting on the un-stopped mast and sail and tried not to think but only to endure" (p. 30).

N-14: "During the day he had taken the sack that covered the bait box and spread it in the sun to dry" (p. 31).

N-15: "After the sun went down he tied it around his neck so that it hung down over his back and he cautiously walked it down under the line that was across his shoulders now" (p. 31).

N-16: "The sack cushioned the line and he had found a way of leaning forward against the bow so that he was almost comfortable" (pp. 37-38).

N-17: "Just before it was dark, as they passed a great island of Sargasso weed that heaved and swung in the light sea as though the ocean were making love with something under a yellow blanket, his small line was taken by a dolphin" (p. 79-80).

N-18: "He saw it first when it jumped in the air, twin gold in the last of the sun and flapping wildly in the air" (p. 80).

N-19: "It jumped again and again in the acrobatics of its fear and he worked his way back to the stern and crowded and rolling the big line with his right hand and arm, he pulled the dolphin in with his left hand, stepping on the gainsed line each time with his bare left foot" (p. 80).

N-20: "When the fish was at the stern, plunging and cutting from side to side in desperation, the old man leaned over the stern and lifted the burnished gold fish with its purple spots over the stern" (p. 80).

N-21: "Its jaws were working convulsively in quick bites against the hook and it pounded the bottom of the skiff with its long flat body, its tail and its head until she clubbed it across the shining golden head until it shivered and was still" (p. 80).

N-22: "The old man unhooked the fish, rebaited the line with another sardine and tossed it over" (p. 80).

N-23: "Then he worked his way slowly back to the bow" (p. 80).

N-24: "He washed his left hand and wiped it on his trousers" (p. 80).
N-25: "Then he shifted the heavy line from his right hand to his left and washed his right hand in the sea while he watched the sun go into the ocean and the slant of the big cord" (pp. 26-27).

N-26: "The old man dropped the line and put his foot on it and lifted the harpoon as high as he could and drove it down with all his strength, and more strength he had just summoned, into the fish's side just behind the great chest fin that rose high in the air to the altitude of the man's chest" (p. 103).

N-27: "He felt the iron go in and he leaned on it and drove it further and then pushed all his weight after it" (pp. 103-104).

N-28: "Then the fish came alive, with his death in him, and rose high out of the water showing all his great length and width and all his power and his beauty" (p. 104).

N-29: "He seemed to hang in the air above the old man in the skiff" (p. 104).

N-30: "Then he fell into the water with a crash that sent spray over the old man and over all of the skiff" (p. 104).

Descriptive sentences

DE-1: "The old man was thin and gaunt with deep wrinkles in the back of his neck" (p. 9).

DE-2: "The brown blotches of the benevolent skin cancer the sun brings from its reflection on the tropic sea were on his cheeks" (pp. 9-10).

DE-3: "The blotches ran well down the sides of his face and his hands had the deep-creased scars from handling heavy fish on the cords" (p. 10).

DE-4: "But none of these scars were fresh" (p. 10).

DE-5: "They were as old as erasions in a fishless desert" (p. 10).

DE-6: "Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same color as the sea and were cheerful and uninfected" (p. 10).

DE-7: "They were strange shoulders, still powerful although very old, and the neck was still strong too and the strength did not show so much when the old man was asleep and his head fallen forward" (pp. 13-16).
DE-9: "His shirt had been patched so many times that it was like the sail and the patches were faded to many different shades by the sun" (p. 60).

DE-9: "The old man's head was very old though and with his eyes closed there was no life in his face" (p. 26).

DE-10: "The clouds over the land now rose like mountains and the ocean was only a long green line with the gray blue hills behind it" (p. 30).

DE-11: "The water was a dark blue now, so dark that it was almost purple" (p. 28).

DE-12: "The line showed like a phosphorescent streak in the water straight out from his ship..." (p. 52).

DE-13: "He was right in the sun and his head and back were dark purple and in the sun the stripes on his sides showed wide and a light lavender" (p. 53).

DE-14: "It was sharp and hard, full of teeth" (p. 37).

DE-15: "It was higher than a big asphodel blade and a very pale lavender above the dark blue water" (p. 37).

DE-16: "His dorsal fin was down and his huge pectorals were spread wide" (p. 22).

DE-17: "First it was dark as a shadow in the blue water that was over a mile deep" (p. 106).

DE-18: "The fish had turned from his original purple and silver, and the stripes showed the same pale violet colour as his tail" (p. 106).

DE-19: "They were wider than a man's hand with his fingers spread and the fish's eye looked as detached as the mirrors in a periscope or as a paint in a projector" (p. 106-107).

DE-20: "He was so big it was like lashing a much bigger ship alongside" (p. 107).

DE-21: "He was a very big, fake shark built to swim as fast as the fastest fish in the sea and everything about him was beautiful except his jaws" (p. 110).

DE-22: "His back was an blue as a sword fish's and his belly was silver and his sides were smooth and handsome" (p. 111).

DE-23: "He was built as a sword fish except for his huge jaws which were tight shut nor as he swam fast, just under the surface with his huge dorsal fin leaping through the water without warning" (p. 111).
DF-24: "Inside the closed double lip of his jaws all of his eight rows of teeth were slanted forwards" (p. 111).  
DF-25: "They were not the ordinary pyramid-shaped teeth of most sharks" (p. 111).  
DF-26: "They were shaped like a man's fingers when they are crooked like claws" (p. 111).  
DF-27: "They were nearly as long as the fingers of the old man and they had razor-sharp cutting edges on both sides" (p. 111).  
DF-28: "This was a fish built to seel on all the fishes in the sea, that were so fast and strong and well armed that they had no other enemy" (p. 111).  
DF-29: "There was only the heavy sharp blue head and the big eyes and the clicking, thrusting all-swallowing jaws" (p. 111).  
DF-30: "The breeze was steady" (p. 117).

**Dialogues sentences**

DI-1: "'Santiago,' the boy said to him as they climbed the bank from where the skipper was hauled up" (p. 10).  
DI-2: "'I could go with you again!'" (p. 10).  
DI-3: "'We've made some money!'" (p. 10).  
DI-4: "'No,' the old man said" (p. 10).  
DI-5: "'You're with a lucky boat!'" (p. 10).  
DI-6: "'Stay with them!'" (p. 10).  
DI-7: "'But remember how you went eighty-seven days without fish and then we caught big ones every day for three weeks!'" (p. 10).  
DI-8: "'I remember,' the old man said" (p. 10).  
DI-9: "'I know you did not leave me because you doubted'' (p. 10).  
DI-10: "'It was papa made me leave!'" (p. 10).  
DI-11: "'I am a boy and I must obey him!'" (p. 10).  
DI-12: "'So do I,' the boy said" (p. 29).
DI-13: "'Now I must get your sardines and mine and your fresh baits!' (p. 29).

DI-14: "'We brings our gear himself!' (p. 29).

DI-15: "'He never wants anyone to carry anything!' (p. 29).

DI-16: "'We're different,' the old man said" (p. 29).

DI-17: "'I let you carry things when you were five years old!'" (p. 29).

DI-18: "'I know it,' the boy said" (p. 30).

DI-19: "'I'll be right back!'" (p. 30).

DI-20: "'Have another coffee!'" (p. 30).

DI-21: "'We have credit here!'" (p. 30).

DI-22: "'Damn my fish,' the boy said and he started to cry again'" (p. 136).

DI-23: "'Do you want a drink of any kind?' the proprietor asked" (p. 136).

DI-24: "'No,' the boy said" (p. 136).

DI-25: "'Tell them not to bother Santiago!'" (p. 136).

DI-26: "'I'll be back!" (p. 136).

DI-27: "'Tell him how sorry I am!'" (p. 136).

DI-28: "'Thanks,' the boy said" (p. 136).

DI-29: "'I didn't know sharks had such handsome, beautifully formed tails!'" (p. 140).

DI-30: "'I didn't either,' her male companion said" (p. 140).
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