

© Copyright Michael Stubbs 2021.

This is an abstract of an article in *Text and Talk*, 2001, 41 (5-6): 813-32.

PRAGMATIC PATTERNS IN BRAM STOKER'S *DRACULA*

In an influential book on literary linguistics, first published in 1981 and revised in 2007, Geoffrey Leech and his colleague Mick Short discuss linguistic methods of analysing long texts of prose fiction. This article develops their arguments in two ways: (1) by relating them to classic puzzles in the philosophy of science, and (2) by illustrating them with a computer-assisted study of Bram Stoker's 1897 novel *Dracula*. This case study shows that software can identify a linguistic feature of the novel which is central to its major themes, but which is unlikely to be consciously noticed by human readers. Quantitative data on the novel show that it contains a large number of negatives. Their function is often to deny something which would normally be expected, and therefore to express the protagonists' distrust of their own senses in the extraordinary world in which they find themselves.
