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## DEVELOPMENT OF STYLISTICS IN LINGUOSTYLISTICS. STYLE AND STYLISTICS

**Norboyeva Nuriniso Usan qizi**

Samarqand davlat chet tillar insituti

Roman-german tillar fakulteti

3-kurs talabasi

[Nnuriniso2001@gmail.com](mailto:Nnuriniso2001@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

*The role of style in stylistics, its types, literature and linguistics. History of stylistics, stages of development and its place in linguostilistics.*

Stylistics is a sub-discipline which links literary criticism to linguistics. In linguistics, stylistic analysis is concerned with recurring patterns used in speech and writing; and in literature, it focuses on interpretation of a literary work. In other words, stylistic analysis tends to look for meaning in a text.

Stylistics is a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to language. The reason why language is so important to stylisticians is because the various forms, patterns and levels that constitute linguistic structure are an important index of the function of the text. The text's functional significance as discourse acts in turn as a gateway to its interpretation. While linguistic features do not of themselves constitute a text's 'meaning', an account of linguistic features nonetheless serves to ground a stylistic interpretation and to help explain why, for the analyst, certain types of meaning are possible (Simpson 2)

The study of style is so broad and cannot be wholly discussed in this modest dissertation. However, it is important to shed light on the basic concepts and theories of stylistics, the scientific study of style, and their development throughout history. It is also important to look at the most recent stylistic approaches applied in the field of literature and linguistics.

Development of Stylistics in Relation to Language and Psychology

The study of the language of literature and style is one of the most traditional application of linguistics.

Nevertheless, the notion of style, language used in a particular way, is old and can be traced back to the fourth century BCE Greece and Rome. Orators had to be skillful in convincing people and politicians with their speeches and that went with the ability to speak fluently and well.

This ability required some strategies, decoration, and influence on people's minds. So, language had to be said in a special manner to achieve its purposes. Steiner believes that language use was deliberately for "persuasion, instruction, ornamentation or dissimulation".



People who were able to use language effectively with great influence on emotions and opinions of the audience were referred to as rhetors, hence the effective language use is called “rhetorics.”

The first work that marked the beginning of the study of style could be Aristotle’s Rhetoric, an ancient Greek treatise on the art of persuasion, in the fourth century BCE. Rhetorical stylistics appeared secondly with the Latin book Rhetorica ad Herennium by 80 BC.

The book, along with Quintilian’s Institutio Oratoria (first century AD) lists ten figures of speech and ‘tropes,’ which now stand for recurring feature: onomatopoeia, antonomasia, metonymy, periphrasis, hyperbaton, hyperbole, synecdoche, catachresis, metaphor, and allegory[2] (Fahnestock 100).

Rhetors used linguistic tropes as means of ornamentation and ‘persuasive language’ to affect the audience psychologically, and this is what Steiner stresses: Language applied, in a perfectly deliberate and analyzable fashion, to the job or persuasion, instruction, ornamentation or dissimulation, as the case might be. Poetics came under the heading of rhetoric; both were patently of the realm of the grammarian and teachers of eloquent discourse.

Steiner’s statement highlights a new term called poetics, which split from rhetorical stylistics. The term poetics comes from the Greek poietikos, which stands for “pertaining to poetry.” Poetics deals mainly with the eloquent discourse.

Therefore, language of literature focused on its beauties like symbols, metaphors, irony, and diction to exaggerate the subject matter of a literary work. Thus, while rhetorical stylistics focused on the psychological effects of speakers’ words on audience, poetics emphasized aesthetic and eloquent effects of discourse on hearers.

The emphasis was directed to the aesthetic function of the language of literature which was viewed as the aesthetic transmission of thought. There was no great shift by the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries. By then, the focus was on the classical views of style, especially of Quintilian’s idea that “custom is the most certain mistress of language” (Galperin 46), following to the path of classical grammar and rhetorical schools. Chaucer, for example, was considered as the father of English literature when spoken and written media in England were French and Latin. However style was also marked by the free use of language.

This tendency was represented by two stylistic trends. The first was of William Shakespeare who advocated the free use of new vocabulary and forms borrowed from other languages, namely Latin and French. The second was of Edmund Spenser who called for the use of archaic words, trying to preserve old English. Books dealing with style include Leonard Cox’s The Arte or Crafte of Rhetorique and Thomas Wilson’s Arte of Rhetorique. The latter divided style into three types: elevated, middle and low.

The 17th century witnessed another shift in style of the language used in literary texts. The tendency emphasized ‘refinement’, but it was towards opposite directions. While some writers preferred the adherence to classical norms, others, focused on simple language use to be understood by ordinary people. For this, Galperin states the trend’s norms, saying:

These norms led to the foundation of some movements in the following centuries. The 18th century was based on the previous idea that language should be refined and improved by



the use of standard English language norms. Two men were the pioneers of that trend: Samuel Johnson and Jonathan Swift.

For Swift, literary language should not contain "vulgar slanginess." He often criticized some university students for the use of vulgar language saying: They... come up to town, reckon all their errors for accomplishments, borrow the newest set of phrases and if take a pen into their hands, all the odd words they have picked up in a coffee-house, or at a gaming ordinary are produced as flowers of style.

Instead, Swift came up with his own perception of style as, "proper words in proper places." Hence literary language had to follow the established norms and rules that vocabulary borrowing and coining had to be restricted to safeguard literary language. In this regard, G believes that Swift called for a straightforward style in his quoted phrase "'to call a spade a spade', which has become a symbol for a plain and simple way of expression."

Samuel Johnson, in turn, protested against random use of literary language and called for selecting words from previous great writers' literary publications and rejecting all words used in colloquial English of his time. And for the sake of saving literary language, he published his first dictionary in 1753.

However, his stylistic view was criticized by De Quincey in his book *Essays on Style, Rhetoric, and Language* as being lifeless, purely bookish, and mechanical (188). The sense of perfection in language and style continued till the early years of the 19th century.

However, the century was an arena of struggle between different stylistic views. The purism of the 18th century collided with vulgarism[4] and led to the emergence of different styles. These views can be summarized in Mcknight's statement:

The spirit of purism was evidently alive in the early nineteenth century. The sense of a classical perfection to be striven for survived from the eighteenth century. The language must not only be made more regular, but it must be protected from the corrupting influences that were felt to be on all sides. Vulgarisms were to be avoided and new words, if they were to be tolerated, must conform not only to analogy but to good taste .

Purism trend did not last much due to the influence of the Romantic era. The Revolutionary wars between France and Britain, which lasted from 1793 to 1815, had its effects on style and the language used then. Many words such as "liberty, equality, and fraternity" flooded into use by writers. Expressions were free and literature was viewed as the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings".

This statement is mentioned twice by William Wordsworth in his preface to the "Lyrical Ballads." He goes to say that "style is manly," making it personal and linking it to writers' feelings and thoughts. This idea leads to the identification of individual style, hence, individual stylistics. Vulgarism, however, had also its say and appeared to be the most influential by the end of the century.

The works of Byron, Dickens, Twain, Crane, and other classic writers of the 19th century introduced colloquial language into standard literary English. This led to the rise of different styles dealing not only with social but also linguistic stratifications.

Galperin puts this idea forward:

The shaping of the belles-lettres prose style called forth a new system of expressive means and stylistic devices. There appeared a stylistic device...which quickly developed into one of



the most popular means by which the thought and feeling of a character in a novel can be shown, the speech of the character combining with the exposition of the author to give a fuller picture.

Speeches of lower classes floated to the surface in realistic novels as a means of depicting reality, and many works expressed social, psychological, and political concerns of the time. The focus on the study of language varieties led to the emergence of modern linguistics at the beginning of the 20th century:

Language is no longer regarded as peripheral to our grasp of the world in which we live, but as central to it. Words are not mere vocal labels or communicational adjuncts superimposed upon an already given order of things. They are collective products of social interaction, essential instruments through which human beings constitute and articulate their world. This typically twentieth-century view of language has profoundly influenced developments throughout the whole range of human sciences. It is particularly marked in linguistics, philosophy, psychology, sociology and anthropology. In all these fields the revolution in linguistic thought which Saussure and Wittgenstein ushered in has yet to run its full course.

The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure termed new linguistic dichotomies that helped in stylistic analysis like signifier, signified, langue, and parole. The latter has to do with style because if langue represents the system of rules shared among speakers or writers of a language, parole is, then, the specific use of the system or selection from that linguistic repertoire.

Following the steps of De Saussure, Charles Bally wrote his book *Traité de Stylistique*, considering stylistics as a systemic study. Bally came up with his "expressive theory" believing that linguistic forms convey thought and feelings.

For him, stylistic analysis should focus on the linguistic forms and their effects on emotions. In this sense, he puts that "Stylistics studies the elements of a language organized from the point of view of their affective content; that is, the expression of emotion by language as well as the effect of language on them". From this view, three notions can be derived:

The notion of affective expression leads directly to the idea of choice or selection of specific diction to convey the authors thoughts and feelings.

Style is personal and subjective and can be expressed by linguistic forms.

Stylistic study includes historical, personal, and psychological contexts

One of the pioneers of stylistics who took this approach one step further is Leo Spitzer. Spitzer relates language use, or style, to the psyche of the author. His argument that the more we read a literary work the more it reveals the inner worldview of its author, and the better connection will be established between the work and us (Spitzer 27).

This psychological stylistic approach of "close reading" takes on its shoulders the ideology that a literary work should be interpreted first and then comes the application of linguistic analysis to validate or invalidate the hypotheses. By this, Spitzer compromise between impressionistic and scientific methods of analysis.

However, he turned to reject psychology from his analysis and took text as an organism that can stand on its own and focused only on the poetic language. In the same period and based on Spitzer's new approach, Roman Jakobson and members of Moscow Linguistic Circle (1915) came up with another contributing idea to the development of modern stylistics and coined



an opposing view to the previous ones, which stressed the emotional effects that authors communicate.

Instead, Jakobson emphasised 'poetic language[6]', and focused on the message for its sake. Hence, only the text should be considered, and social, historical, ideological or biographical contexts were rejected.

In other words, the study of language should be confined to the explanation of the formal linguistic features of a literary text. That is style, structure, imagery, tone, and genre which marked the rise of formalist stylistics.

Thus, Russian formalism is derived from the application of these principles to literary texts. In this regard, Victor Erlich claims that Russian formalism was determined to free literary analysis from other related disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and history, and the focus was on linguistic features and the artistic devices which characterize imaginative writing (1101).

However, formalism received much criticism because it does not pay any attention to the author, the context, the thought. That is, formalism does not recognize the relation between text and reality. This view gave rise to another language-based theory, Structuralism.

After Jakobson emigrated to Czechoslovakia in 1920, he, together with Mukařovský, formed Prague Linguistic Circle (1926). It was the cradle of structuralism which distinguishes literary and non-literary texts.

Mukařovský argues in that poetic use of language in literary texts 'deviates' from standard language use, challenging the assumption that all linguistic devices have to agree with the norms of the standard language (qtd. in Chovanec 43).

Accordingly, this deviation creates a "defamiliar effect" on the reader which is the key element to any work to be called a work of art. Jakobson thinks that defamiliarisation also can be found in structural patterns where the author deviates from the common structure.

Structuralism of Prague School related the use of poetic language to foregrounding [7] and automatism. The latter, refers to the use of linguistic devices for a communicative purpose without any attention to attract or surprise. The former, however, refers to the use of deviated linguistic devices, making the expression poetic and uncommon to the reader.

The relationship between foregrounding and automatization is illustrated by Mukařovský: Foregrounding is the opposite of automatization, that is, the deautomatization of an act; the more an act is automatized, the less it is consciously executed; the more it is foregrounded, the more completely conscious does it become.

Objectively speaking: automatization schematizes an event; foregrounding means the violation of the scheme" (19). By the same token, Jakobson, after his immigration to the U.S. in 1941, argued in his paper "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics" that poetics, which refers today to stylistics, should be ranked as an academic sub-branch of linguistics:

Poetics deals with problems of verbal structure, just as the analysis of painting is concerned with pictorial structure. Since linguistics is the global science of verbal structure, poetics may be regarded as an integral part of linguistics ..

Jakobson's notions gave birth to Russian Formalism, Structuralism, and helped develop New Criticism in America and Practical Criticism in Britain. New Criticism focuses on the language of the text. That is, the description of the aesthetics of the literary work, where as



Practical Criticism pays attention to the psychological processes which readers go through to understand literary texts. Analysis depends on cognitive stylistics.

However, Jakobson's notable achievement lies in setting six factors of speech event to achieve its communicative message. The "addresser" conveys the "message" to the "addressee" in a "context" with a "code" fully or partially familiar to both encoder and decoder. The final factor is the "contact," a physical or psychological connection between the two persons.

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