

STYLISTICS AND ITS OBJECTIVES

Lecture 1

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Stylistics as a study of language

Historical development

- Earlier - study of elocution in rhetoric
- XX century – stylistics:
 - ▣ 1909 – a two-volume treatise on French stylistics (Ch. Bally);
 - ▣ 1928 – works of Spitzer;
 - ▣ 1960s – post-war developments in descriptive linguistics (GB, USA)

Stylistics vs. literary criticism

- Stylistics is close to literary and practical criticism:
 - ▣ The material studied is literary,
 - ▣ attention is largely text-centered,
 - ▣ intuition and interpretive skills are important.
- The **goal** of most stylistic studies –
 - ▣ to describe the formal features of texts
 - ▣ in order to show their functional significance
 - ▣ for the interpretation of the text.

Stylistics and other linguistic studies

- Stylistics draws on the models and terminology provided by all aspects of linguistics:
 - ▣ trends in literary theory;
 - ▣ the late 60s – generative grammar;
 - ▣ the 70s-80s - discourse analysis and pragmatics (shift away from the text itself to the reader and his or her responses => affective stylistics:
 - *text is an event, which comes into being as it is read*).

Stylometry

- uses stylistic analysis to investigate stylistic patterns (authorship of texts – ? Idiolect - !)
- examines:
 - ▣ word length, sentence length, connectives, collocations – used unconsciously => stable
- Procedure:
 - ▣ compares sets of variables in the disputed texts with those in an authentic text.

Stylistics as a science

- is a branch of general linguistics;
- studies style or the stylistic functioning of any unit of language (*sound, word, etc.*);
- => differs from all other linguistic subjects, (have a special system of language units for study).
- Thus, stylistics has no special system of language units, it studies language with its systems of units from the point of view of style.



Branches of stylistics

Branches of stylistics

- Functional stylistics:
 - sets of paradigms of language units of all levels of language hierarchy, serving to accommodate the needs of a certain situation =
 - **functional styles** - a system of coordinated, interrelated and interconnected language means intended to fulfill a specific function of communication and aiming at a definite effect (V. Vinogradov).

Branches of stylistics

□ Individual style study

- ▣ study of individual author's style, correlation between the creative concepts of the author and the language of his works.

□ The stylistics of decoding

- ▣ The author=the encoder, the language=the code, information is shaped into a message, the reader=the decoder.

□ Practical stylistics

- ▣ the norms of language usage at a given period
- ▣ teaching these norms to language speakers (esp. editors, publishers, teachers).

Branches of stylistics

□ Linguistic stylistics

- ▣ compares the norm and system of the language with special subsystems of the language, characteristic of different spheres of communication (FSs);
- ▣ studies the elements of language from the point of view of their ability to express and evoke emotions and additional associations.

□ Literary stylistics

- ▣ studies the possibilities of EMs and SDs characteristic of a literary work, an author or a literary trend;
- ▣ classifies styles acc. to: periods, authors, level, language.

Branches of stylistics

□ Comparative stylistics

- deals with the study of stylistic possibilities of two or more languages;
- includes the study of social life, the culture and the language of the time, when the literary work was written.

Branches of stylistics

- Phonetic stylistics
 - ▣ phonetic features of sublanguages,
 - ▣ rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, onomatopoeia.
- Morphological stylistics
 - ▣ stylistic possibilities within a grammar category.
- Lexical stylistics
 - ▣ stylistic function of lexical units (meanings, word-building).
- The syntactical stylistics
 - ▣ word order, types of sentences, syntactical relations.

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The notion of norm

The notion of norm

The norm is an abstract notion, an invariant which should embrace all variants with their most typical properties.

- **Halperin:** the norm is the invariant of phonetic, morphological, lexical and syntactical patterns, circulating in language-in-action (speech) at a given period of time.
- Characteristic property – its flexibility.
- Following the norm too rigorously – pedantic style.
- Neglect of the norm – an attempt to violate the established patterns of the language.

The notion of norm

- A constant process of gradual change in the forms of a language and in meaning.
- => it is very important to master the received standard of the given period
 - ▣ in order to comprehend the correspondence of this or that form to the recognized form of the period.
- The norm can be grasped when there is a deviation from it.
- **Skrebnev:** *the essence of stylistic perception consists in mental confrontation of what one hears (or reads) with one's previous linguistic experience.*

The notion of norm

- *I haven't ever done anything*
- *I ain't never done nothing*

- Both – norm. But:
 - 1 – literary,
 - 2 – uneducated speaker.

- There are as many norms as there are sublanguages.

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Stylistic function and stylistic colouring

Stylistic function

- is the significant potential of words in the context (words used in unusual environment and with unexpected meanings);
- is connected with the author's frame of mind reflected in the text, his emotions;
- is of contextual nature. It belongs to stylistics of speech (language-in-action).

E.S. Aznaurova:

“the stylistic function is inherent in text, therefore it can be specified as the 2nd function of language after its principle function – the communicative”

- Information obtained with the help of the communicative function - ***what is said?***
- Information obtained with the help of stylistic function - ***how it is said and why?***

Stylistic colouring

- is a usual connotation or additional meaning of certain words;
- belongs to stylistics of language (language-as-a-system);
- indicates the typical sphere of word usage,
- is marked in dictionaries with certain labels:
 - ▣ *archaic, poetic, bookish, terminological, barbarism, slang, colloquial, dialectal, vulgarism, professionalism...*

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Stylistic context. Neutral context

Context

- A most important peculiarity of stylistic function of words is its inexplicitness.
- The reader has often to read between the lines, to decode the implication hidden in the context.
- **I. Arnold:** Context is the linguistic surrounding of the given stylistic element.

Context

- **O.Akhmanova:**
- **Stylistic context** is a semantically complete piece of written text, allowing to determine the meaning of a stylistic device contained in it.
- **Neutral context** – no SDs.
- The stylistic device + the textual surrounding = the stylistic context

M.Riffaterre

- **The microcontext** – a stylistically neutral series of words against the background of which the SD stands out distinctly.
- **The macrocontext** – that part of the literary message which precedes the stylistic devices and which is external to it.

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Expressive and Imaginative Means of Language

Expressive means

- The use of language – automatized
 - ▣ (people think of *what they say* – not of *how they say*).
- Utterances may be neutral or expressive.
- The addition of EM doesn't deautomatize the use of language –
 - ▣ EM exist in language-as-a-system (in dictionaries).

Expressive means

- are those elements
 - ▣ phonetic, morphological, lexical, phraseological and syntactical
- which exist in language as a system
- for the purpose of logical and emotional intensification of the utterance.

- They are used automatically as other elements of language.

1. Phonetic EMs

- the most powerful expressive means of any language;
- include:
 - ▣ change of range, pitch, melody, stress,
 - ▣ pausation,
 - ▣ drawling out,
 - ▣ whispering
 - ▣ and other ways of using one's voice.

2. Morphological EMs

a) word-building suffixes

- ▣ (only 3: -y/ie; -ling; -let).

b) structural EMs

- ▣ the use of shall in the 2nd and 3rd persons (*You shall do that!*);
- ▣ historical present time (*It was dark... Suddenly the door opens and Helen comes in*);

c) the emphatic use of pronouns.

3. Lexical EMs

- a) interjections – signals of emotive tension, rendering joy, sorrow, (dis-)approval, etc.

Alas! Hurray!

- b) qualitative adjectives:

Fantastic! Delightful! Monstrous!

- c) slang units;

- d) vulgarisms, expletives;

- e) phraseological units (make speech emphatic and emotional):

He, who mischief hatches, mischief catches.

4. Syntactical Ems

- emphatic constructions, which serve as emotional and emphatic synonyms for the usual structures:

- *He did it. // It is he, who did it.*

- All EMs belong to the language, we take them from our memory.

Imaginative Stylistic Devices

- are created in the context,
 - foreground an element of the utterance,
 - concentrate the reader's attention on it
 - and produce an artistic aesthetic effect.
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- When a stylistic meaning is added to an utterance, the process of deautomatization checks the reader's attention – has to decode the stylistic device created in the context.