***What is Style? Explain rhetorical, traditional, modern and linguistic concepts.***

1. ***What is Stylistics?***

* **Style:-**

A Dictionary of Literary Terms defines **style** as:

“The characteristic manner of expression in prose or verse; how a particular writer says things. The analysis and assessment of style involves examination of a writer’s choice of words, his figures of speech, the devices (rhetorical or otherwise), the shape of his sentences, and the shape of his paragraphs-- indeed, of every conceivable aspect of his language and the way in which he uses it. Style defies complete analysis or definition… it is the tone and voice of the writer himself; as peculiar to him as his laugh, his walk, his handwriting and the expression on his face”

* **Rhetorical Cocept of Style**

The grand style (also referred to as 'high style') is a style of [rhetoric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhetoric), notable for its use of figurative language and for its ability to evoke emotion. It was coined by [Matthew Arnold](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Arnold). It is mostly used in longer speeches and can be used, as by [Cicero](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cicero), to influence an audience around a particular belief or ideology. The style is highly ornamented with stylistic devices such as metaphors and similes, as well as the use of personification. In poetry, it adopts strict adherence to metre.

In ancient Greece, the 'grand style' of rhetoric was known as 'adros', and in Latin 'supra' or 'magniloquens'. It was made prominent by Roman authors such as [Marcus Tullius Cicero](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Tullius_Cicero). However, it was not confined to classical antiquity. As interest in the classics increased from the sixteenth century onwards in Britain its use gained acceptance. Poets such as [William Shakespeare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare) and [John Milton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Milton) both used the grand style. [Augustine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustine), notable for his [On Christian Doctrine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_Christian_Doctrine), expanded on Cicero's partition of the three styles by describing them as follows: the plain style is intended merely to be understood, the middle (or temperate) style is intended to be enjoyable to listen to and the grand style is intended to also be persuasive. The grand style incorporates all three, as it informs the audience of a concept, pleases through rhetorical devices and persuades via its eloquence.

* **Traditional Concept of Style:-**

Style has been an object of study from ancient times. Aristotle, Cicero and Demetrius treated style as the proper adornment of thought. In this view, which prevailed throughout the Renaissance period, devices of style can be classified. The essayist or orator is expected to frame his ideas with the help of model sentences and prescribed kinds of “figures” suitable to his mode of discourse.

The traditional idea of style as something properly added to thoughts contrasts with the ideas that derive from Charles Bally, the Swiss philologist, and Leo Spitzer, the Austrian literary critic. According to followers of these thinkers, style in language arises from the possibility of choice among alternative forms of expression, as for example, between “children,” “kids,” “youngsters,” and “youths,” each of which has a different value.

This theory emphasizes the relation between style and linguistics, as does the theory of [Edward Sapir](http://www.britannica.com/biography/Edward-Sapir), who talked about [*literature*](http://www.britannica.com/art/literature)*that is form-based* (Horace, Virgil, and much of Latin literature) and *literature that is content-based* (Homer, Plato, Dante, William Shakespeare) and the near untranslatability of the former.

Style is also seen as a mark of character. The [Count de Buffon](http://www.britannica.com/biography/Georges-Louis-Leclerc-comte-de-Buffon)’s famous epigram that means “Style is the man himself” in his *[Discours sur le style](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Discours-sur-le-style)* suggests that, no matter how calculatingly choices may be made, a writer’s style will bear the mark of his personality. An experienced writer is able to rely on the power of his habitual choices of sounds, words, and syntactic patterns to convey his personality or fundamental outlook.

The traditional, literary critical attitude towards ‘Style’ is subjective and unscientific, and considers it a writer’s intuitive insight into aesthetics. This concept of style is essentially ambiguous because the reader may or may not share with the writer and critic the level and delicacy of intuitive perception. It is, therefore, undemocratic and imperialistic in its nature.

Style is a writer’s individual mode of expression. **(ALEENA)**

* **Modern Concept of Style:-**

The twentieth-century work on stylistics, particularly in Britain, by scholars such as Roger Fowler and [M. A. K. Halliday](http://www.britannica.com/biography/M-A-K-Halliday), looked at relationships between social, contextual, and formal linguistic analysis. There were also attempts to interrogate the logical assumptions underlying stylistics.

Modern stylistics uses the tools of formal linguistic analysis coupled with the methods of literary criticism; its goal is to try to isolate characteristic uses and functions of language and [rhetoric](http://www.britannica.com/topic/rhetoric) rather than advance normative or prescriptive rules and patterns.

Published as Linguistics and Poetics in 1960, Jakobson's lecture is often credited with being the first coherent formulation of stylistics, and his argument was that the study of poetic language should be a sub-branch of linguistics.

[Michael Halliday](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Halliday) is an important figure in the development of British stylistics. His 1971 study Linguistic Function and Literary Style: An Inquiry into the Language of William Golding's **The Inheritors** is a key essay. One of Halliday's contributions has been the use of the term [register](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Register_(sociolinguistics)) to explain the connections between language and its context.

For Halliday, register is distinct from [dialect](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialect). Dialect refers to the habitual language of a particular user in a specific geographical or social context. **Register** describes the choices made by the user, choices which depend on *three variables*:

1. Field ("what the participants... are actually engaged in doing", for instance, discussing a specific subject or topic),
2. T[enor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tenor_(linguistics)) (who is taking part in the exchange)
3. Mode (the use to which the language is being put).

Fowler comments that different fields produce different language, most obviously at the level of [vocabulary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocabulary).  The linguist [David Crystal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Crystal) points out that Halliday's **'tenor'** stands as a roughly equivalent term for ‘**style’**, which is a more specific alternative used by linguists to avoid ambiguity.

Halliday’s third category, mode, is what he refers to as the symbolic organization of the situation. Downes recognizes two distinct aspects within the category of **mode** and suggests that not only does it describe the relation to the **medium**: written or spoken, but also describes the [genre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genre) of the text.

Halliday refers to **genre** as pre-coded language, language that has not simply been used before, but that predetermines the selection of textual meanings. The linguist [William Downes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Downes) makes the point that the principal characteristic of register, no matter how peculiar or diverse, is that it is obvious and immediately recognizable. **(SADAF)**

* **Linguistic Approach to Style:-**

As linguistics studies language scientifically, it studies style in an impersonal and objective manner. Stylistics defines, studies and analyses style objectively and technically applying methodology of linguistics. Literature was traditionally appreciated non-technically and the critic depended on his superior vision and arbitrary good taste of the reader.

Stylistics, on the other hand, evaluates a literary text precisely. Descriptive linguistics gives stylistic analysis of a text at phonological, syntactic and semantic levels of linguistic description. Stylistics uses its own meta-language and terminology to analyze a text and to analyze its items and structures. The communicative power of these isolated linguistic items and structures is evaluated objectively.

Riffaterre has well put the role and function of stylistics: “The author’s encoding is permanent, but the process of decoding changes as the language changes in the course of time. Stylistics should encompass this simultaneity of permanence and change.”

M. Riffaterre’s definition of style is more enlightening and also suggests the function of stylistics: “Style is the means by which the… encoder ensures that his message is decoded in such a way that the reader not only understands the information conveyed, but shares the writer’s attitude towards it.”

According to Aitchison, “The linguistic analysis of literary language is known as stylistics…the words style and stylistics have acquired somewhat specialized, narrow usage of linguistics applied to literature.” John Lyons defines stylistics “as the study of stylistic variation in languages and of the way in which this is exploited by their users” **(HIRA)**

* **STYLISTICS:-**
* **Concept no. 01:** Stylistics is a discipline that studies the ways in which language is used; it is a discipline that studies the styles of language in use.
* **Concept no. 02:** Stylistics is a branch of linguistics which applies the theory and methodology of modern linguistics to the study of style.
* **Definition of Stylistics:**

**Stylistics is a branch of linguistics which studies style in a *scientific and systematic* way concerning the manners/linguistic features of different *varieties of language* at *different levels*.**

* **Scope of Stylistics:**
* **Literary stylistics:** concentrating on the unique features of various literary works, such as poem, novel, prose, drama, etc.
* **General stylistics:** concentrating on the general features of various types of language use, including literary discourses and other practical styles.

**Stylistics** is a broad term that has assumed different meanings from different linguistic scholars. But it can simply be said to be the **study of style**.

Style on its own as defined by **Lucas** (1955) is: the effective use of language, especially in prose, whether to make statements or to rouse emotions. It involves first of all the power to put fact with clarity and brevity.

Style has also been defined as the description and analysis of the variability forms of linguistic items in actual language use. **Leech** (1969) quotes Aristotle as saying that “the most effective means of achieving both clarity and diction and a certain dignity is the use of altered from of words.”

Stylistics is also defined as a study of the different styles that are present in either a given utterance or a written text or document. The consistent appearance of certain structures, items and elements in a speech, an utterance or in a given text is one of the major concerns of Stylistics. Stylistics requires the use of traditional levels of linguistic description such as sounds, form, structure and meaning. It then follows that the consistent appearance of certain structures, items and elements in speech utterances or in a given text is one of the major concerns of stylistics. **(ALEENA)**

A linguistic Stylistic study is concerned with the varieties of language and the exploration of some of the formal linguistic features which characterize them. The essence and the usefulness of stylistics is that it enables the immediate understanding of utterances and texts, thereby maximizing our enjoyment of the texts.

The concepts of style and stylistic variation in language are based on the general notion that within the language system, the content can be encoded in more than one linguistic form. Thus, it is possible for it to operate at all linguistic levels such as phonological, lexical and syntactic. Therefore, style may be regarded as a choice of linguistic means, as deviation from the norms of language use, as recurrent features of linguistic forms and as comparisons.

Stylistics deals with a wide range of language varieties and styles that that are possible in creating different texts, whether spoken or written, monologue or dialogue, formal or informal, scientific or religious etc.

Again, stylistics is concerned with the study of the language of literature or the study of the language habits of particular authors and their writing patterns. From the foregoing, stylistics can be said to be the techniques of explication which allows us to define objectively what an author has done, (linguistic or non-linguistic), in his use of language.

The main aim of stylistics is to enable us understand the intent of the author in the manner the information has been passed across by the author or writer.

Therefore, stylistics is concerned with the examination of grammar, lexis, semantics as well as phonological properties and discursive devices. Stylistics is more interested in the significance of function that the chosen style fulfills. **(ZULAIKHA)**