Post-Graduate Diploma in the Teaching of English

STYLISTICS

BLOCK I

HISTORY, THEORIES AND DEFINITIONS

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Contents

INTRODUCTION TO THE BLOCK

This Block introduces you to stylistics, which is a relatively new discipline, about sixty years old, although its antecedents can be traced in earlier forms of knowledge.

Units 1 and 2 of this Block together present a brief history of stylistics. Unit 1 begins with an introduction to the nature and scope of stylistics as a field of study, especially in relation to other kinds of literary criticism and theory. The Unit then commences an account of the history of stylistics by tracing its antecedents in the ancient Western classical (Greek and Roman) discipline of rhetoric. This is followed by the views of poets and critics writing in English, from the Renaissance to the mid-twentieth century, with regard to the language of literature.

Unit 2 continues and completes the history of stylistics. It starts with a discussion of the influential work of Ferdinand de Saussure, considered the father of modern linguistics, and of Roman Jakobson, a major member of the Prague Circle of Linguistics who moved later to the USA. The Unit discusses the key concepts in the work of these linguists and their impact on stylistics. The Unit then deals with the "arrival" of modern stylistics as a distinct branch of literary criticism and theory. The Unit concludes with a note on the application of various theoretical models of linguistic analyses to the interpretation of literary texts.

Unit 3 raises basic questions about the definition of the term "style" itself. In it we examine major definitions of, and statements about, style in general and its function in literary texts in particular.

Concluding the discussion of theoretical issues, Unit 4 introduces you to "foregrounding", a key concept in modern stylistics. We look at the various foregrounding devices that have been employed by creative writers and the thematic effect that the devices help to create.

The Block also contains a set of five essays as appendices, elucidating the ideas and concepts discussed in Units 1 and 2.

Unit 1

A Brief History of Stylistics – I

Contents

Unit 1
A BRIEF HISTORY OF STYLISTICS - I

1.0 Objectives

In this Unit and the next, we briefly trace the development of stylistics as a discipline. In the present Unit, we start with an Introduction defining the scope of stylistics and differentiating it from other kinds of literary criticism and theory. We trace the beginnings of the modern study of style in ancient rhetoric. We then move on to a consideration of the views of poets and critics from the Renaissance to the mid-twentieth century.

1.1 Introduction

Stylistics, as the name suggests, is the study of style. While "style" is a general term which can refer to the way or manner anything is done (e.g. "We don't like so-and-so's style of functioning"), or designed (e.g. "a building in the Moghul style of architecture"), stylistics in particular examines the style of written or spoken texts. Even more specifically, stylistics attempts to study the style or language of literary texts. How then, you may ask, is stylistics different from literary criticism? Literary criticism too attempts an interpretation and evaluation of literary works but it does so through a variety of entry points such as biography, literary and cultural history, sociology, psychology, psychoanalysis and so on, **in addition to** the language of the text in question.   On the other hand, stylistics concerns itself more or less exclusively with the language of literary texts and **through** a systematic examination of the language it arrives at an interpretation of those texts.   It does so by applying the insights and methods of linguistics to analyse the language of literary texts and to offer interpretations of those texts **on the basis of** that analysis. We can therefore say that stylistics is the application of linguistics to the analysis and interpretation of literary texts.

"Linguistics", as you are quite aware, having done a course on it as part of your PGCTE programme, is the scientific study of language.   It therefore follows that stylistics too should be scientific in its approach and methodology, i.e., rigorous, systematic and data-based. But one of the defining features of science (as opposed to arts or religion as fields of study) is objectivity; and can we say that stylistics, if it is to be called a science, is an entirely objective discipline?   Perhaps we will never

be able to answer this question with any degree of finality. All we can say is that the job of a stylistician consists of two parts: one, analysis of a literary text focusing on its linguistic features and two, offering an interpretation based on that analysis. While the first part can be done in an entirely objective manner, there will necessarily be an element of subjectivity in the shift—we can almost call it a leap—from analysis to interpretation. Thus, while we can say that in the case of other sciences, chemistry for example, the same experiments performed in identical conditions by two scientists will yield the same results, we cannot say with certainty that the same kind of linguistic analysis, with the same framework, done on the same poem by two linguists will lead to an identical interpretation! Perhaps we can return to this question—how truly scientific stylistics can be—at the end of this course.

Another question we can raise at this starting point, but not attempt to answer precisely, relates to the viability or sufficiency of stylistics as the sole means of interpreting literary texts. When stylistics was sought to be set up as a necessary discipline for the study of literature—language after all is the medium of literature—there were fierce objections from literary critics to its emergence. In the polarization that took place in the nineteen sixties, extreme positions were often taken: thus, while a famous literary critic called Helen Vendler said that linguists are "simply under-educated at the reading of poetry" and were taking on "documents whose primary sense and value they are not equipped to absorb" (quoted in Barry 205), the linguist Harold Whitehall confidently asserted that "as no science can go beyond mathematics, no criticism can go beyond its linguistics." Fortunately, such a sharp divide does not exist anymore. Critics in the last few decades, ranging from the New Critics through Feminist and other ideologically-oriented critics to the Deconstructionists, do not discount the value of analysis of the language, though they may not undertake the analysis in rigorous linguistic terms. Stylisticians too do not now fight shy of taking on board insights from other disciplines such as feminist or cultural studies.

1.2 The Antecedents

We have said that stylistics as a discipline came into existence in the nineteen sixties. We shall presently mention the landmarks in its emergence but let us first briefly notice the antecedents to its advent. Though the mid twentieth-century stylisticians were the first to propose linguistic analysis as a necessary step in

interpretation, interest in the language of literature has had a long history.

1.2.1 Rhetoric

The word that first comes to our minds when we attempt to trace the history of language studies is **rhetoric**. Now, "rhetoric" was part of the trivium—the three subjects of study—in ancient Greece, the other two being grammar and logic. "Rhetoric" was originally the art of persuasion through speech but later came to include all forms of eloquence including writing. Rhetoric thus was developed by the Greeks as a field of study and as an aid to persuasion. It was carried forward by the Romans. Thus speakers and writers were taught how to construct an argument, what figures of speech to use and so on. In the Middle Ages it was part of the training of clerics in the Church as well as for other professionals like lawyers. The central place of rhetoric as the queen of all the arts continued in the Renaissance and is reflected in the popularity of manuals of rhetoric in the 16th century.

Activity A

*Read the extract (given in Appendix I) from Thomas Wilson's **The Art of Rhetorique**, published in 1553, and answer the following questions.*

(a) Who is the book meant for?
(b) Comment on the structure of the discourse here.
(c) What is the basis of the instructions given in the manual?
(d) Would you call the content and tone prescriptive or descriptive?

Discussion

(a) The book is designed to help and instruct "Orators" (primarily public speakers) but the term seems to include writers as well, i.e., all those who wish to use language "eloquently".

(b) The writing demonstrates what it advocates, i.e., it is itself highly structured. The subtitles clearly indicate and separate the points discussed.

(c) The basis of the information and instructions given in the manual is past, especially classical, authority, the ideas and practice of Greek and Latin writers and speakers ("the art compiled together, by the learned and wise men").

(d) The content as well as the tone is quite prescriptive. The reader is clearly told what he "must" "hath to" do to achieve eloquence in oratory.

That these manuals of rhetoric were widely read and followed is evidenced in the practice of 16th century writers. The structure of Philip Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie* (1595) is largely rhetorical. Shakespeare seems to have been aware of Wilson's book. Ulysses' famous speech on order in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act I, Scene iii, has been shown to owe something to Wilson's praise of order in another portion of his book. The speech of Brutus after the assassination of Julius Caesar in Shakespeare's play has been found to be tightly structured according to the rules of rhetoric.

There were, however, conflicting views even among the ancients regarding the ethical status of rhetoric as a field of knowledge and study. Plato feared that rhetoric, being itself an amoral device, might be abused to distort truth; he maintained that rhetoric should be subservient to philosophy, which is the pursuit of truth. On the other hand, Aristotle, in his book *Rhetoric* (c. 330 B.C.), held that rhetoric was "an art, a necessary condition of philosophical debate (quoted in Bradford)". The debate was thus about "the problematical relationship between language and truth" (Bradford 4-5).

> Rhetoric, particularly in Rome and in post-Renaissance education, had been taught as a form of supergrammar. It provides us with names and practical explanations of the devices by which language enables us to perform the various tasks of persuading, convincing and arguing. In an ideal world (Aristotle's thesis) these tasks will be conducive to the personal and the collective good. The rhetorician will know the truth, and his linguistic strategies will be employed as a means of disclosing the truth. In the real world (Plato's thesis) rhetoric is a weapon used to bring the listener into line with the argument which happens to satisfy the interests or personal affiliations of the speaker, neither of which will necessarily correspond with the truth. These two models of rhetorical usage are equally valid and finally irreconcilable. Lies, fabrications, exaggerations are facts of language, but they can be cited when the fissure between language and truth is provable. (Ibid.)

The debate about the central question raised regarding rhetoric, viz., the relationship between language and truth has continued down the ages. It assumed importance during the World Wars in the context of political propaganda (of the kind employed by Hitler and Mussolini), leading people to term rhetoric a most dangerous weapon. Stanley Baldwin, a British statesman of the 20th century, himself a powerful orator, denounced oratory as a harlot of the arts (Ramaswami and Seturaman I, 415). The rhetoric of advertising too, as the most ubiquitous means of persuasion in our own times, has, as we shall see later, raised grave ethical questions about the relationship between language and truth.

Historically, rhetoric as a field of study declined in importance during the 18th and 19th centuries as it had degenerated into a mechanical pursuit, simply a listing and memorizing of figures of speech and other devices.

1.2.2 Neo-classical Criticism

After that brief account of the origins of stylistics in rhetoric, let us move to what critics have had to say down the centuries after the Renaissance regarding the style of literature. A lot of discussion was centred on the question whether rhyme or blank verse was more appropriate to dramatic writing, especially tragedy. The observations of the British Neo-classical critics on literary language were mostly prescriptive and in conformity with received classical concepts like **propriety** and **decorum**. Thus Samuel Johnson, in his *Preface to Shakespeare* (1765), criticizes Shakespeare's frequent neglect of the "equality of words to things":

> trivial sentiments and vulgar ideas disappoint the attention, to which they are recommended by sonorous epithets and swelling figures
> (Ramaswami and Seturaman I, 256)

What irked Johnson most, however, was Shakespeare's propensity to puns, regardless of their appropriateness to the thematic context. Johnson's condemnation of the bard's inability to resist the temptation to indulge in quibbles is well known:

> A quibble is the golden apple for which he will always turn aside from his career, or stoop from his elevation. A quibble, poor and barren as it is, gave him such delight, that he was content to purchase it, by the sacrifice of reason,

propriety and truth. A quibble was to him the fatal Cleopatra for which he lost the world, and was content to lose it. (*Preface to Shakespeare,* Ramaswami and Seturaman I, 257)

The late Augustans (i.e. British writers in the second half of the 18th century) in general believed that the English language had, by their times and probably only in their times, settled to a state of stability and perfection, a golden mean as it were, and they judged earlier uses of English by their own contemporary standards. Thus Johnson faults Milton saying that "both in prose and verse he had formed his style by a perverse and pedantic principle. He was desirous to use English words with a foreign idiom", that "he wrote no language, but has formed what Butler calls a Babylonish dialect, in itself harsh and barbarous" (Ramaswami and Seturaman 242). Johnson however admitted that this "dialect" was "made, by exalted genius and extensive learning, the vehicle of so much instruction and so much pleasure that, like other lovers, we find grace in its deformity" ("Life of Milton", Ramaswami and Seturaman I, 242).

1.2.3 The Romantics

If the theory and practice of the Augustans was in conformity with the canons of classical criticism, often resulting in a learned and elevated style, the Romantics advocated simplicity and spontaneity. The Neo-classical poet Thomas Gray had declared that "the language of the age is never the language of poetry"—a tenet that the Romantics rejected out of hand. Wordsworth, for example, claimed, in his *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* (1800), that the principal object in his poems was "to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination".(Ramaswami and Seturaman I, 291) He added, clearly signalling a departure from the practice of his immediate predecessors, that he had deliberately avoided employing "personification of abstract ideas" as a "mechanical device of style" as he had avoided using what was called "poetic diction" (Note: "Poetic diction" is a derogatory term employed to denote the deliberately refined and artificial language employed by a number of 18th century poets, e.g. "finny tribe" for "fish" "feathered breed" for "birds", "foodful brine" for "sea".)

In fact, Wordsworth went so far as to say that "between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be any essential difference" (Ibid. 296), a statement that his contemporary and friend S.T. Coleridge vehemently repudiated. Coleridge had a more sophisticated and nuanced view of the style of the language of poetry, which we shall examine in the Unit "Theories and Definitions of Style".

1.2.4 The Modernist Poets

When we move to the 20th century and consider the theory and practice of Modernist poets, we find them taking a much more complex view of both the content and the language of poetry. To quote T.S. Eliot, one of the most influential of Modernist poets:

> It is not a permanent necessity that poets should be interested in philosophy, or in any other subject. We can only say that it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be *difficult*. Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, **more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning** (emphasis added) ("The Metaphysical Poets", Ramaswami and Seturaman II, 184).

"Force language into his meaning": This conception of the poet's task not only seems to be relevant to a great deal of modernist poetry but is also in consonance with the conception of poetic style as the style of deviance, marked by departures from the rules of ordinary language. We shall return to the idea of style as deviance in the Unit "Theories and Definitions of Style".

Activity B

Sum up the views of poet-critics on the language of literature from the Renaissance to the Modernist Age.

Discussion

The Renaissance critics (such as Philip Sidney and Ben Jonson) and the critics of the Augustan Age (such as Dryden and Johnson) took a normative view of literary style and laid emphasis on the appropriateness of style to the theme or situation. In tragic drama,

for example, which invariably was basically in verse and was about men and women of high estate, the language employed was expected to be uniformly elevated. The Romantic poets, Wordsworth in particular, claimed that the language of poetry should be a selection from the language actually used by the people whose lives and emotions the poetry sought to describe. Modernist poets of the 20th century, like T.S. Eliot, were of the view that the language of poetry, like the lives that moderns lead, should of necessity be complex, indirect and tough.

1.2.5 The New Criticism

We have, in the section above, noticed the observations made by critics down the centuries regarding the language of literature. What is to be noted is that these observations were brief, sporadic and unsystematic. The focus of literary criticism in general had not been on language but on other factors such as biography (e.g. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, Dowden's *Shakespeare's Mind and Art*), the historical background (e.g. E.M.W. Tillyard's *The Elizabethan Background*) or literary history (e.g. C.S. Lewis' *Preface to Paradise Lost*). Thematic interpretation, when offered, was often impressionistic and subjective.

It was against such a background, and as a reaction to such a state of affairs, that the New Criticism began in the nineteen thirties, and it continued to dominate the literary-critical scene till the nineteen sixties. The germs of the approach are however to be found in the work of I.A. Richards in the nineteen twenties, who can be regarded as the most potent influence on, if not the founding father of, the New Criticism. Let us therefore first look at some of Richards' major formulations before we consider New Criticism in its relation to stylistics.

1.2.5.1 I.A. Richards

Ivor Armstrong Richards (1893-1979) was a versatile scholar who voyaged through several fields of inquiry such as philosophy, behaviourist psychology, logical positivism, neurophysiology, semantics, theories of communication, language teaching, as well as aesthetics and literary criticism. As students of ELT, you might have heard about his association with C.K. Ogden in the creation and popularization, in the nineteen forties, of "Basic English", a set of 850 most common English words. (In fact Richards "translated" a few famous texts including Plato's *Republic*.) His

work as a critic of literature was co-terminous with his teaching career at the Cambridge University. He was dissatisfied with the existing state of literary criticism which he found to be unsystematic, subjective and impressionistic. In fact, he declared that the literary criticism of the past consisted in "just a few conjectures, a supply of admonitions, many acute isolated observations, some brilliant guesses . . . a sufficiency of dogma, no small stock of prejudices, whimsies and crotchets" (cited in Ramaswami and Seturaman xxxvii). He sought to make literary criticism more scientific and objective—and this is where his relevance for stylistics emerges—or at any rate provide it with "experimental weapons". The major experimental weapon that Richards provided was a rigorous attention to the language of the literary text. It was such attention to the language of the text that his experiments with his students attempted to force: he handed out thirteen poems in English (without any attribution of author, date or context) and asked his students to interpret the poems in an exercise of what came to be known as **practical criticism.** The results of the experiment were disastrous. Deprived of the familiar signposts and props, such as information about the author or the period or about the form or technique, the students produced "interpretations" which were marked by obtuseness, a failure to construe even plain sense, half-baked technical knowledge and personal beliefs and prejudices which they read into the poems. The experiment is documented in his book *Practical Criticism* (1929).

Before the publication of *Practical Criticism* Richards had, in his equally influential book *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924), distinguished between two uses of language, viz. **referential** and **emotive**:

> A statement may be used for the sake of the **reference,** true or false, which it causes. This is the **scientific** use of language. But it may also be used for the sake of the effects in emotion and attitude produced by the reference it occasions. This is the **emotive** use of language (211).

To return to *Practical Criticism,* after documenting and commenting on the responses of his students to the experiment he conducted ("protocols" as he calls them) Richards makes an attempt "to point some morals, to set up some guiding threads by which the labyrinth we have perambulated may be made less bewildering"(p.173). One of the ways to avoid the kind of ignorance and misreading that the protocols displayed, he says, is to identify four different functions of language which he calls "the

four kinds of meaning": (1) Sense (2) Feeling (3) Tone and (4) Intention. After explaining each of these terms, he proceeds to demonstrate how, depending on the type of discourse in question, one or more of these functions or kinds of meaning may be relevant. Let us understand Richards' formulation by means of an Activity.

Activity C	*Turn to Appendix II (which is an extract from Richards' essay) and read the first six paragraphs (i.e. from the opening paragraph of the extract to the end of the para which begins "Frequently, his intention . . . "). Try to point to the type of discourse where one or the other of the four meanings dominates or is more relevant.*

Discussion

"Sense" is obviously the dominant function in a piece of scientific discourse, such as an article on recent developments in nano technology. In literary discourse, on the other hand, in "confessional poetry" for example, "feeling" plays a major role. "Tone" may be equally important in the language of literature, but it may also have a part even in scientific discourse when it is designed to be more informal, as in articles on popular science. You would of course easily have guessed "intention" to be the key player in the language of politics, often at the expense of "sense", you might add! And what about the discourse of advertising? Is there in it a clever mix of "intention" with "sense" and "tone"?

Richards himself provides the answer to our question about the hierarchy of meanings or functions: read the rest of the extract and you will realize how complex the whole process of meaning-making may be.

1.2.5.2 Salient Features of the New Criticism

We can now turn our attention to the work of the New Critics (who were influenced a great deal by the work of I.A. Richards) and consider it in relation to stylistics, which is our subject of study. By the way, you would recall that Unit on "Form and Experience: The New Critical Approach" which you read as part of your PGCTE study material. I am sure you have preserved your PGCTE materials, so can you fish out that block and quickly read through that Unit once again (Unit 2 in Block I of the course "Interpretation of Literature"). Perhaps we can recapitulate the names of the major New Critics and also some of our major

statements there about the basic assumptions and practices of the New Critics

The term "New Critics" is primarily employed to refer to certain American critics, such as Cleanth Brooks, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, R.B. Heilman, W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley. Many of their critical assumptions and strategies of interpretation were shared by a few British critics such as F.R. Leavis, William Empson, L.C. Knights and G. Wilson Knight. Most of the influential work of the New Critics was done—and enjoyed nearly exclusive vogue—for two or three decades from the nineteen thirties.

From your re-reading of the Unit of the PGCTE material, you would have recalled the following to be the salient features of the New Criticism.

1. Literature occupies a privileged status among all forms of knowledge as the most efficient and powerful communicator of central human values. (This is the reason why the New Criticism is often included under the broad rubric of "Humanist Criticism".)
2. Literature is to be clearly and sufficiently distinguished from other forms and branches of knowledge.
3. Literature of quality is also to be clearly separated from inferior forms of literature, such as popular fiction, magazine stuff and so on.
4. The discourse of literature, especially that of poetry, especially that of the master works of poetry, is marked by a union of form and experience, an inseparability of matter and manner, thought and expression. (This is the organic theory of style and we shall study this in some detail in the Unit "Theories and Definitions of Style" later in this Block.)
5. To arrive at a valid interpretation of a literary text, you must focus on the text itself, the "words on the page" as they were called. The text, especially a poem, is an autonomous unit and the critic need not, indeed should not, go outside its text (e.g. to biography or literary history) in order to interpret it.
6. The theoretical assumption mentioned above (about the autonomous existence of a literary work) also determines the strategy of interpretation, viz. **practical criticism** or **close analysis** or **close reading** or **explication.** The reader must pay attention to the words, the images, and the symbols employed in the work and observe and record the interrelationships among them and how they lead us to the "vision" contained in the poem.

7. As for the "goals" of criticism, though the New Critics claimed that they were primarily interested in **interpretation,** their work quite often resulted in **evaluation**, setting up hierarchies, such as "the line of wit" or "the great tradition".

Now, which of these features of the New Criticism, in your opinion, hold an affinity with the assumptions and practices of stylistics? Features (5) and (6) above seem to point to the obvious similarities. Both New Criticism and stylistics stressed the need for focusing on the medium of discourse, viz. the language of the text. They shared an empirical bias, with an emphasis on detailed verbal analysis. The New Criticism and stylistics, the latter at least in its early stages, eschewed references outside the text to authorial intention or contexts of history. Both were confined to the analysis of literature, though stylistics, in its more recent developments (as we shall see later) has reached out to other context-oriented approaches such as gender theory and postcolonial studies. If the New Criticism represented an **intrinsic** approach to literature (focusing on the text and not on **extrinsic** factors such as biography or history), the same term could have been employed to refer to stylistics too, at least in its early stages. Lastly, both the New Criticism and stylistics (again the latter in its early stages) confined themselves to analysis of literary works, though stylistics has now come to include studies of other kinds of texts too, such as advertising and political speeches and writings.

In spite of such similarities of approach and methodology, however, there were important differences between the two disciplines. First, the New Critical view that literature is a privileged mode of discourse—i.e. the view of literature as a kind of religion communicating universal values—was not necessarily shared by the stylisticians. This was quite understandable because the stylisticians were basically linguists and linguistics being a science one mode of discourse is as worthy of analysis as another. Secondly, the stylisticians would not have gone all the way with the New Critics in the latter's belief that literary language is different from ordinary language. It is true that some of the theories underlying stylistic analysis stressed the element of **deviance** that marked literary language from ordinary language. (We shall discuss this in a separate unit.) However, there were other concepts of style, e.g. style as an exploitation of all the possibilities and resources that language holds, which were also used by stylisticians in their practice. Thirdly, **description** for its own sake was never practised by the New Critics; description always led to **interpretation** and often to **evaluation**. Many of the early stylistic analyses, on the other hand (e.g. J.H. Sinclair's

analysis, entitled appropriately "Taking a Poem to Pieces", of a Larkin poem), rested with description. Lastly, and most importantly, while the New Critics claimed to make close verbal analyses of literary texts, the analyses were highly selective—confining themselves to patterns of images and symbols—and were neither rigorous nor systematic; at any rate, there was no linguistic framework as the basis of their analyses.

Activity D

*Read the extract given in Appendix III. The extract is from **An Approach to Literature** (1964) by Cleanth Brooks, John Thibaut Purser and Robert Penn Warren. It is a New Critical analysis and interpretation of a short poem. What are the linguistic features that the analysis takes into account? What other features does it leave out?*

Discussion

The analysis makes a fairly extensive study of the **diction** employed in the poem (**vocabulary** or **lexical choices** as a linguist might call them), e.g. why "wrinkled sea"? why "hands"? why "walls"?. The analysis then goes on to relate these choices to the overall design of the poet in investing the bird with a human—indeed powerful—personality and attributes. The linguist, of course, would have arrived at the same conclusion employing a different methodology. For example, the linguist would have employed a **features analysis** scheme and pointed out how there is a deviation from the norm here. The eagle, which has the feature [-human] collocates here with words such as "hands" "watches" and "lonely" which have the feature [+human].

1.3 Summing up

This Unit constituted the first part of a brief history of stylistics as a discipline. We began with an introduction spelling out the scope of stylistics and the features that distinguish it from other schools of literary criticism and theory. We then briefly discussed its distant beginnings in the ancient art of rhetoric. We ended with a consideration of the views of poets and critics down the centuries on the language of literature.

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