

ROUTLEDGE REVIVALS

Style and Stylistics

Edited by
Graham Hough



Style and Stylistics

First published in 1969, Professor Hough's work examines stylistics – the bridge between linguistics and literary criticism. The book gives a short survey of stylistics from the literary point of view, and tries to answer the question of how much stylistics contributes to the understanding of literature. It brings together Continental European work on stylistics and Anglo-American critical writing which has a similar purpose though usually under a different name. In calling the attention of the student of literature to trains of thought with which he is not generally familiar, and with detailed analysis on different literary styles and methods, Professor Hough provides important new critical insights.



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Style and Stylistics

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General Editor's Introduction

The study of literature has normally centred on the consideration of work, author, or historical period. But increasingly there is a demand for a more analytic approach, for investigation and explanation of literary concepts of crucial ideas and issues—topics which are of general importance to the critical consideration of particular works. This series undertakes to provide a clear description and critical evaluation of such important ideas as 'symbolism', 'realism', 'style' and other terms used in literary discussion. It also undertakes to define the relationship of literature to other intellectual disciplines: anthropology, philosophy, psychology, etc., for it is in connection with such related fields that much important recent critical work has been done. *Concepts of Literature* will both account for the methodology of literary study, and will define its dimensions by reference to the many activities that throw light upon it. Individual works will describe the fundamental outlines of particular problems and explore the frontiers that they suggest. The series as a whole will provide a survey of recent literary thought.

It is often claimed that stylistic study using linguistic methods may provide a new intellectual discipline for literary criticism. Professor Hough examines the claims

of stylistics, in a variety of its forms, to determine both its benefits and its limitations. His is consciously a literary approach, continually asking, 'How does this method advance our understanding of particular literary works, or in a wider context, of the phenomenon of literature itself?' His scepticism about quantitative analysis is not due to any hostility towards scientific procedures in their own right, but rather to his rigorous questioning of the criteria of what is relevant in any given literary case. The resulting appraisal has important bearings on the scope and character of the critic's task.

WILLIAM RICHTER

Contents

	Preface	ix
1	The concept of style and the origins of style-study	1
	<i>Older Concepts of Style</i>	1
	<i>The Modern Concept of Style</i>	5
	<i>The Beginnings of Modern Style-study</i>	12
2	Linguistic style-study	21
	<i>Up to Saussure</i>	21
	<i>Bally and His Successors</i>	25
3	Literary stylistics: methods and problems	31
	<i>Stylistics and Literary Art</i>	31
	<i>Special Expressive Devices</i>	33
	<i>Individual Style</i>	38
	<i>Period Style</i>	48
	<i>History of Style</i>	52
	<i>Statistical Methods</i>	53
4	Some practitioners	59
	<i>Leo Spitzer</i>	59
	<i>Erich Auerbach</i>	68
	<i>Damaso Alonso</i>	73
	<i>I. A. Richards</i>	80
	<i>William Empson</i>	90
	<i>John Holloway</i>	95
	<i>Stephen Ullmann</i>	98
	<i>Donald Davie</i>	99
5	Conclusion: limits and possibilities	103
	Select Bibliography	111

I would maintain that to formulate observation by means of words is not to cause the artistic beauty to evaporate in vain intellectualities; rather, it makes for a widening and deepening of the aesthetic taste. It is only a frivolous love that cannot survive intellectual definition; great love prospers with understanding.

LEO SPITZER

Preface

The object of this essay is to give a short account of the modern study of literary style. It is necessarily selective and incomplete, but I have tried to indicate the main directions that such work has taken, and the directions it might take in the future. Style-study has often grown from linguistics, sometimes from other starting-points. But whatever its origin, stylistics is inevitably a study of language. The only matter for dispute is how literary language should be studied. Linguistics is by now a formidable and autonomous discipline, and its relation with literary studies has not been easy. Many of its concerns are irrelevant to literature, and some of its methods are disliked by most literary students. Yet in the end it cannot be irrelevant. The study of language and the study of literature obviously have a common frontier, and stylistics is the border area.

This book is written from the literary point of view. I hope what I have said will not seem positively wrong to professional linguists; but it is not my aim to satisfy their demands or their criteria of relevance. I have not tried to inquire how linguistics could revolutionize the study of literature, but how much it can contribute to the

study of literature as that is ordinarily understood. A subsidiary aim has been to bring together Continental work in stylistics and English work which, though it has never been called 'stylistics', has actually the same object. There is something to be gained by seeing them in the same perspective.

I should like to thank Peter Seuren, of Darwin College and the Cambridge Department of Linguistics, for kindly reading my typescript and clarifying some linguistic matters that were very dimly present to my consciousness.

*Darwin College
Cambridge*

G.H.