

文体学研究论丛②  
Essays in Stylistics

# 文 体 学 研 究：

## 探索与应用

**Stylistics: Exploration and Application**

■ 主编 于善志

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# 文体学研究：探索与应用

## Stylistics: Exploration and Application

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## 文体学研究论丛

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## 序 言

2010年上海外语教育出版社推出了由中国修辞学会文体学研究会策划、俞东明教授主编的“文体学研究论丛”第一辑,论丛的第二辑《文体学研究:探索与应用》也很快要与读者见面了。近两年来,国际和国内的文体学研究都取得了新的进展。在国内,文体学研究在两个不同的范式展开,一是以中文系学者为主体的中国“传统”文体学研究,二是以外文系学者为主体的“西式”文体学研究。尽管都用了“文体学”一词,但两者的关注对象很不一样。在前者眼里,“文体”主要是指文学体裁(或文类)的语言和结构特征,此类“文体学”研究聚焦于体裁区分、体裁规范、体裁界线的跨越(变体)或者体裁的发展演变。即便考察对象是一个文本,关注的也是文本特征如何反映或偏离体裁规范,以及这种偏离如何对体裁发展做出了贡献。诚然,改革开放以来,有不少中文系的学者(尤其是中青年学者和研究生)受到了西方文体学的影响,有的撰文把西方文体学介绍给中国学者,有的在自己的研究中借鉴了西方文体学对作品语言的关注,但一般没有像西方文体学那样采用现代语言学的模式来进行语言特征研究,而且很多学者做的文体学研究依然是以印象为基础的传统的体裁研究。也就是说,在我国的“文体学”研究领域出现了“两张皮”的现象。如何使国内的“西式”文体学研究和“传统”文体学研究更好地互相借鉴、相互促进,是我们下一步应该关注的一个问题。

改革开放以来,外语系学者一般都在做“西式”文体学研究,即应用现代语言学的方法对作品的语言展开文体分析。我们知道,与传统的印象式文体研究相对照,西方当代文体学流派纷呈,如“功能文体学”、“话语文体学”、“批评文体学”、“文学文体学”、“语言学文体学”、“语用文体学”、“认知文体学”、“语料库文体学”、“教学文体学”等。然而,这些流派的区分是建立在不同标准之上的。“功能文体学”、“话语文体学”、“语用文体学”、“认知文体学”的区分,依据的是文体学家所采用的语言学模式,“语料库文体学”(计算文体学)采用了统计学或计算机辅助的方法。与此相对照,对于“文学文体学”、“语言学文体学”、“批评文体学”等文体学分支的区分则主要以研究目的为依据。文学文体学旨在更好地阐释文学作品,语言学文体学旨在对语言学理论的发展做出贡献,批评文体学则以揭示语篇的意识形

态为己任。值得注意的是,“文学文体学”的区分也可能仅仅以分析对象为依据,将分析文学作品的文体研究视为“文学文体学”。对于“教学文体学”的区分也往往有两方面的依据,一是以改进教学为目的,二是以教学为范畴。由于这些不同标准的共存,模糊和复叠的现象在所难免。在编文体学论文集时,有一种非常简便的划分法,即不考虑不同文体学流派的区分,仅仅依据研究对象来对论文进行分类。英国文体学家 Lambrou 和 Stockwell 主编的《当代文体学》论文集<sup>①</sup>将论文仅分为三类:“研究散文的文体学”、“研究诗歌的文体学”、“研究对话和戏剧的文体学”;英国的 McIntyre 和德国的 Busse 主编的《语言与文体》论文集<sup>②</sup>也仅将论文分为三类:“研究诗歌的文体学”、“研究戏剧的文体学”、“研究叙事虚构作品的文体学”。在每一类中,不同文体学流派都混合共存。像这样仅仅依据研究对象来分类,对主编来说无疑非常方便,然而,对想了解不同文体学流派的读者来说,则十分不便。在编本论文集的目录时,主编于善志教授几易其稿,最后采取了按流派区分的方法。这样做,有利于国内的读者更好地看到不同流派的研究方法,但同时我们也知道,一篇文体学论文其实可以根据不同的标准而划归不同的流派。近年来,语料库的研究方法在文体学研究中被越来越多地采用,为了突出这种方法,采用了语料库方法的 Michael Toolan 和杨信彰教授的论文都收入了“语料库文体学”。如果根据研究对象进行区分,Toolan 教授的论文会收入“文学文体学”;而如果根据语言学模式加以区分,杨信彰教授的论文则会收入“功能文体学”。总之,由于一篇论文的不同属性,采用任何一种标准的区分都难免“以偏概全”。

本集中的论文有两个来源:一是英国的 *Language and Literature*、美国的 *Style* 和国内的《外国语》上近期发表的论文,二是由中国修辞学会文体学研究会主办、宁波大学外语学院承办的“2010 文体学国际研讨会暨第七届全国文体学研讨会”上的宣读论文(经过了作者的精心修改),后者构成稿源的主体。在这次研讨会上,来自国内外的代表不顾鞍马劳顿,以极大的热情和强烈的兴趣投入大会和分会场研讨。会上宣读了一百多篇论文,议题非常广泛,包括文学文体学、功能文体学、话语文体学、认知文体学、语用文体学、教学文体学、叙事文体学、文体学与翻译、文体学与相邻学科、文体学各流派理论模式及方法论、语言各语体特征、文体学应用研究前

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① Marina Lambrou and Peter Stockwell, eds. (2010) *Contemporary Stylistics*, London: Continuum.

② Dan McIntyre and Beatrix Busse, eds. (2010) *Language and Style*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

景等。从会议代表的发言来看,国内外学者们的研究在广度和深度上均有很大提高,研究的范围既有文体学理论探索,又有文体学理论的应用研究,既有文体学纵深研究,又有文体学跨学科研究。我们知道,近二三十年来英国一直是国际文体学研究的中心,这次研讨会请来了英国的三位著名文体学家 Mick Short, Michael Toolan 和 Geoff Hall 作大会发言。他们的论文是本论文集的一个亮点。

由于篇幅和版权所限,本文集仅仅收入了研讨会上宣读的部分论文,但依然较好地体现了这次国际研讨会论文的前沿性和广阔性。借此机会特别感谢这次会议的东道主宁波大学外语学院,感谢该院为大会的成功举办所做出的巨大贡献。也特别感谢上海外语教育出版社的大力支持。这次研讨会的成功和本论文集的出版一定会对我国文体学事业的发展产生深远的影响。

申 丹

2011 年秋于燕园

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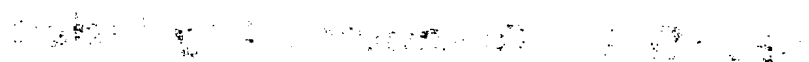
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## **PART I    Discourse Stylistics**



# A Manifesto for Discourse Stylistics

Geoff Hall (Nottingham Ningbo University & Swansea University)

**Abstract:** This Manifesto urges the continuing and under-explored validity of Discourse Stylistics (DS) understood as analysis of literary or other texts which, with a primary linguistically-informed focus on the language of a text or set of texts, nevertheless also believes in the need to look behind and beyond the immediately apparent linguistic features to the co-texts and contexts which prompted the emergence of the text in the first place if its language is to be more fully understood and explained.

In short, DS is a kind of discourse analysis illustrated here with reference to two of Tennyson's best known poems, which can take advantage of tools like corpus analysis to offer a link between stylistic and wider cultural and historical studies to the mutual benefit of both disciplines. In some ways this is a call for more systematic, rigorous and linguistically-informed literary criticism. Similarly, the value of a discourse analysis which is an expert practice or specialism not immediately accessible or intuitively obvious to non-specialist readers is urged.

A reading of Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade" shows how DS can mediate and extend poetry and cultural history. "In Memoriam" is examined to explore a role for DS in understanding reading historically, as well as larger issues of gender in language use.

**Key words:** discourse stylistics; Tennyson; readers of literature; corpus stylistics; gender and style; "Charge of the Light Brigade"; "In Memoriam"

## 1. Introduction

I open by outlining my understanding of Discourse Stylistics with a recognition also that Discourse Stylistics (DS) lost some of its impetus and appeal in recent decades. I will argue and then demonstrate the advantages of approaching literature as discourse (language use in contexts) informed by advances in our understanding of the workings of language use as ideology and as a set of social and cultural activities while also attending fully to the linguistic detail of texts as a primary determinant of meaning-making. It is my contention that while reviews of stylistics tend now to refer to discourse stylistics as a historical phenomenon whose day is passed, or at best just one more possible approach among others, the potential of this approach was never really fully explored and is more urgent an imperative now than ever. Discourse stylistics (DS) asks: Where do these words and texts come from? Why were they selected? The old stylistic idea of “choice” is key but not in itself sufficient, or needs extension in dealing with texts.

I necessarily engaged in my talk too with readership as part of “context” and specifically with cognitive poetics (CP) as a now arguably dominant trend in stylistics and a valuable complementary approach to DS. CP is concerned in part to explain how hypothesised ordinary or “natural” readers, often individual readers, take the meanings they do, almost amounting to a branch of psychological investigation. DS offers a more critical perspective which asks why readers as socially and historically situated beings might look for and take and exchange such meanings, how they are able to do that from the texts which are most valued by these readers, and crucially, as a critical approach with much in common with literary criticism and cultural studies, DS also asks what other, alternative meanings might be made. Why do some texts persist as meaningful cultural artefacts through education systems or beyond while others lose interest for non-specialist readerships? A DS approach is in fact interested to notice and explore precisely features that ordinary readers might *not* consciously notice or engage with in order to understand social interaction and social and cultural meaning-making in a wider contextualised and historicised perspective. A crude contrast

might be that CP explains the (in themselves) uninteresting readings which typically occur when less critical readers read, while DS seeks to generate more insightful but less obvious readings but always with reference to empirical and especially linguistic evidence. Another and related important difference between CP and DS, then, is the belief of the former position that researchers in literary studies often have much to offer the stylistician, even though literary critical work typically needs to become much more empirical and less intuitive and speculative to convince or stimulate more fully a wider audience where CP (understandably) simply tends to find such scholarship increasingly fanciful or implausible.

The second part of this paper offers two brief illustrative examples from classic Victorian English literature of how DS can illuminate readings of a canonical work, by close attention to the language use in contexts, to reveal aspects of meaning-making a casual or less informed reader would not immediately register and the value of such research for wider cultural and human understandings.

## **2. What is Discourse Stylistics (DS)?**

Discourse Stylistics as I see it best practised, begins with a careful and systematic, linguistically-informed examination of a text. But it is not afraid to then move beyond the formal features of the text to context and intertext, interdiscursivity including the activities of readers, to production, distribution, and consumption of the text — precisely in order to better understand those linguistic features with which we began:

“Too narrow a focus on linguistic forms does not release what is essentially of interest in the study of literary texts.” Carter and Simpson (1989, 4) wrote this in their own, first “manifesto” for discourse stylistics. What is the text doing? How does the text cohere and generally “work”? And then, how does it not work, what are the silences, absences, gaps identifiable? What is not immediately apparent but demonstrably or at least arguably behind the words and structures that do appear? What is the text doing in society? Literary criticism tends to skip over the first of these questions in its hurry to reach the

second, where traditional or formalist stylistics excels in close and systematic attention to the language of a literary text but cannot fully account for where that language has come from and how it might mean in contexts. DS aims to synthesise and build on the advantages of both approaches to overcome their relative disadvantages.

Thus what is of central concern to DS is what Bakhtin (1981) called the “addressivity” of the text — how we can account dialogically for the use of these words and structures rather than others in this text at that point in time and what readers of varying kinds have found salient about the text. We then ask in what format it arrived in readers’ hands, at what price, which readers and so on, and in this way DS offers a methodology to connect the study of text and discourse, literature and culture, an interdisciplinary bridge to understand the uses that have been made of these privileged linguistic artefacts (literary texts). The DS of literary texts is a kind of discourse analysis which asks not only “how did this text come to be as it is?” but also “how/why is or was it written and read? (Or not)?”

“Discourse stylistics views literary texts as instances of naturally occurring language use in a social context, where discourse analysis should reveal as much about the contexts [for example the society that produced this text or valued it] as about the text [...]. Discourse stylistics at its best will necessarily be a thoroughgoing interdisciplinary, even transdisciplinary endeavour.” (Simpson & Hall, 2002: 136)

In that earlier paper, Simpson and Hall (2002) attempted to build on the idea established in earlier days of British applied stylistics when Roger Fowler, for example, himself very aware of the writings of Bakhtin, argued that “‘Literature’ is *not* a distinct variety; any of the texts which are regarded as literary can be analyzed as being built out of one or more varieties just as other texts are.” Unfortunately Simpson and Hall (2002) found little evidence of new research being built on DS principles, and the situation has not improved much in the ten years since then. Valuable DS work has from time to time been published but the effort of this paper and other recent work of mine is to urge a more self-conscious orientation for such work, more of a “school” which would reference each other’s work and see it as part of an ongoing



project to investigate these kinds of uses of language from such a point of view.

In general, much stylistics has remained too conservatively textual in a narrow sense, the text as isolated monad, or at best skipping in a rather unprincipled way from textual to extra-textual, without taking on the full poststructuralist implications of history as texts/texts as history (texts, that is, as discourse — see, e.g. Hall, 2008) and the intertextual nature of linguistic and literary creativity. In fact it could be charged, ironically, that stylistics, like New Criticism before it, did not actually take the “textual” seriously enough as an object for analysis. I will demonstrate some of what this means as I move to my examples in the second half of this paper.

One implication of this opening discussion is that the discourse analyst, as well as the discourse stylistician, will need to consider how we did not read, what we did not read, as well as how, historically a given text has and has not been read. This brings me to my contrast with one important aspect of cognitive poetics in its theoretical interest in hypothesised “ordinary readers” and readership.

### **3. Cognitive Poetics (CP) and readership**

Reading can be seen as a sociocultural practice (characteristic and approved ways of reading, routines around reading, reading events, ways to take meaning from books) or as a more individualised psychological activity (eye movements, knowledge of orthography, schema activation, inference and the rest) — or ideally as the interaction of both; a contextualised mental activity. One important contrast between the DS approach I am advocating and typical CP interests lies in the difference between an interest in what is shared in our readings — the favourite pronoun in CP writings is an insistent “we” — and a more resistant and suspicious distancing and relativising of that proposed cultural consensus (preferring empirical studies of actual readers reading to generalised models). To see reading only as it is seems to me to risk quiescence: this is how we read and how we should read. A DS stance by contrast (like the literary institution itself, arguably)