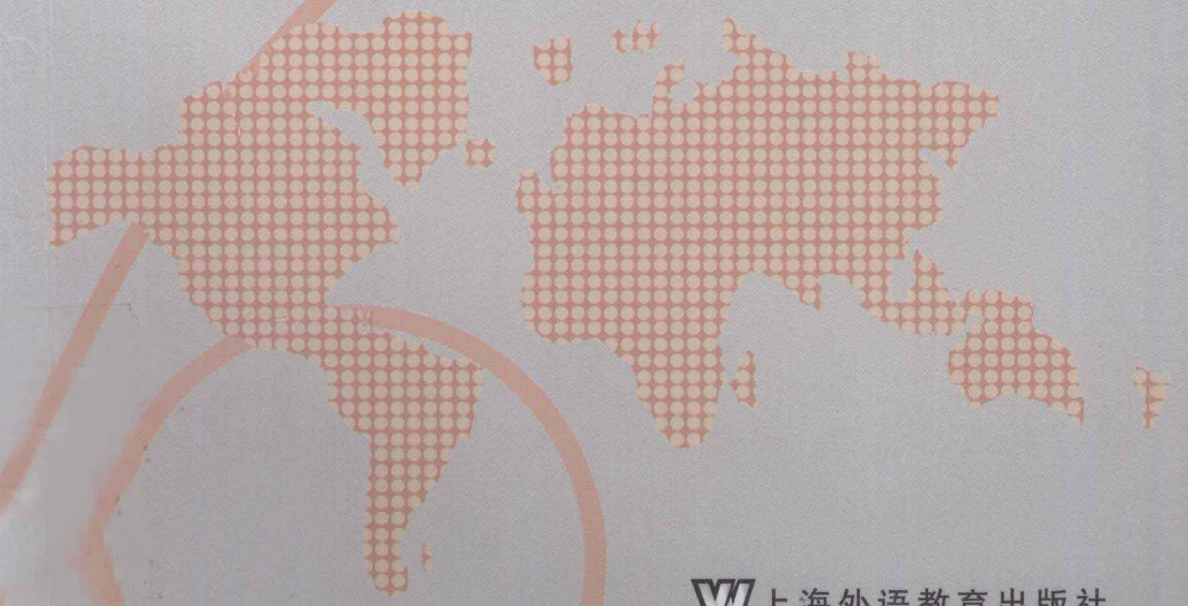
文体学研究论丛 1
Essays in Stylistics

文体学研究：回顾、现状与展望

Stylistics: Past, Present and Future

主编 俞东明



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Essays in Stylistics 文体学研究论丛 ❶

文体学研究：回顾、现状与展望

Stylistics: Past, Present and Future

主　编　俞东明
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文体学研究论丛

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序　言

诞生于20世纪初、兴盛于六七十年代的文体学，在进入新世纪以来又不断取得新的进展。作为国际文体学大本营的“诗学与语言学协会”(PALA)的会刊 *Language and Literature* 近期登载了 Peter Stockwell 的一篇回顾性论文[①]，文中解释了文体学能不断扩大影响的原因。在 Stockwell 看来，最为重要的原因在于文体学的实用性。由于文体学提供一种脚踏实地、切实可行的分析方法，因此在第二语言教学、应用语言学、现代语言研究、文学研究等系科都得以讲授推广。这种实用性也使文体学得以避免文学领域各派理论之间互相排斥、争辩不休的局面[②]，在基本享有共识的基础上发展出一些具体分析模式。在《反对理论》一文中[③]，Knapp 和 Michaels 将文体学置于他们反对的范围之外，因为在他们看来，这种学科属于实证性质，对于教学与研究有较大的实际意义。

文体学的实用性无疑也是其在中国得以取得长足发展的重要原因。此外，中国学术界在经历了多年政治批评之后，欢迎客观性和科学性，重视形式审美研究，这都为文体学提供了理想的发展土壤。20世纪八九十年代，文体学在西方(尤其是在美国)受到政治文化批评和解构主义的双重冲击，在国内则幸运地遇到了适宜的学术氛围。1985年原教育部外语专业教材编审委员会制订了《高等院校英语专业〈英语文体学〉教学大纲》，把文体学正式纳入了英语专业教学计划，各高校陆续开设了文体学课程，越来越多的学者和硕士、博士研究生开始从事文体学方向的研究。2004年隶属于中国修辞学会的文体学研究会宣告成立。两年之后，由研究会主办、清华大学和北京大学联合承办的首届文体学国际会议暨第五届全国文体学研讨会在清华大学成功举行。2008年10月，由研究会主办、上海外国语大学

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① Stockwell, Peter (2008) The Year's Work in Stylistics 2007, *Language and Literature* 17(4): 351－363.

② 参见 Shen Dan (申丹)(2002) The Future of Literary Theories: Exclusion, Complementarity, Pluralism, *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 33: 159－169.

③ Knapp, Steven, and Walter Benn Michaels (1992) Against Theory, *Critical Inquiry* 8: 723－742.

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承办的第二届文体学国际研讨会暨第六届全国文体学研讨会胜利召开。

来自国内外90多所高校的140余名代表参加了在上外举行的研讨会。英国、美国、荷兰、日本和国内著名高校的10名教授做了大会报告，120余名国内外代表在四个分会场宣读了论文。进入新世纪以来，认知文体学研究在国内外都是发展最快的新兴文体学领域，也构成了这次研讨会的一大热门话题。西方认知文体学的领军人物之一 Michael Burke 做了《认知文体学：历史、发展与目前的应用》的大会报告。紧接着，胡壮麟教授在《有关认知文体学的若干认识》为题的大会发言中，质疑了认知文体学的某些方面，展示出中国学者不盲目跟着潮流走，而是对一些问题进行自己的深层次思考。近年来，“计量文体学”（“计算文体学”、“语料库文体学”）这一流派在西方发展迅速，其一大长处在于可以借助计算机对较长的文本和大量的文字（如长篇小说或一个报刊上的所有文章）展开文体分析。但20世纪60年代以来不断有学者挑战这种文体学研究，认为借助于计算机的计量方法较为机械，难以真正帮助进行文学阐释。从事计量文体学研究的学者近来努力应对这种挑战，力争在文学文体研究中展示计算机分析方法的优越性。在这次研讨会上，西方计量文体学的代表人物之一 David Hoover 做了《计量文体学研究方法》的大会发言，展示出这种方法在系统分析作者的文体变化、不同叙述者的不同文体等方面的优越性。然而，在提问中，有中国学者质疑了这种计算机计量方法在阐释具体作品微妙的深层主题意义方面的作用。如果说中西方学者的交锋和对话是这次研讨会的一个亮点的话，研讨内容的丰富和广泛则是这次研讨会的一个特色。在两天的研讨中，代表们就文体学在国内外的建设和发展、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、文学各体裁风格、文体学与外语教学、文体学应用研究前景等各种议题展开了热烈的研讨。正如会议纪要所言[①]，从会议代表的发言来看，国内外学者的研究范围既有理论探索，又有应用研究，既有文体学纵深研究，又有文体学跨学科研究，他们的研究在广度和深度上均有很大提高。我们要借此机会特别感谢这次会议的东道主上海外国语大学英语学院，感谢该院为大会的成功举办所作的精心准备和周到安排，也特别感谢远道而来的国外文体学家对中国文体学事业的大力支持。

在上海外语教育出版社的大力支持下，中国修辞学会文体学研究会决定推出“文体学研究论丛”系列图书。丛书的第一本即为俞东明教授主编

① 俞东明(2008)，2008文体学国际研讨会暨第六届全国文体学研讨会会议纪要，外国语第6期封底。

的这次研讨会的文集。文集不仅精选会议上宣读的论文，而且还应出版社的策划要求，收入了国内外权威期刊近期发表的论文，如美国的文体学顶级期刊 *Style*，英国的文体学顶级期刊 *Language and Literature* 以及我国《外国语》上的多篇论文。经过主编和各位编者的辛苦努力，现在“文体学研究论丛”之一——《文体学研究：回顾、现状与展望》即将付梓，可喜可贺。我们相信这套丛书的出版必将对我国文体学事业的发展起到较大的推动作用，产生深远的影响。

申　丹

2009 年春于燕园

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PART I Stylistics in the West

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Style in Fiction Revisited: The Beginning of *Great Expectations*[①]

Geoffrey Leech (Lancaster University, UK)

Abstract: The first half of this introductory essay illustrates, with reference to the five subsequent articles in this issue of *Style*, how topics presented in *SIF* (Leech and Short, *Style in Fiction: An Introduction to English Fictional Prose*) have been explored in new and fruitful ways since its original publication in 1981. The second half examines the opening of Chapter One of Dickens' *Great Expectations*, in particular the third paragraph, providing an example of the practical stylistic analysis of short prose passages, typical of *SIF*, and showing the interconnections between the main topics to be elaborated in this issue.

1. Style in Fiction Revisited

In the early 1980s, which saw the publication of *SIF* (our abbreviation for *Style in Fiction: An Introduction to English Fictional Prose*), the study of fictional prose style using the methods of linguistics was an immature field of research. In those days, with notable exceptions such as Fowler's *Linguistics and the Novel* (1977), most research on stylistics focused on poetry.

Now, twenty-five years later, the situation has changed, and the linguistic analysis of prose fiction has reached considerable maturity (see Emmott; Fludernik, *Fictions*; Hardy; Hoover; Hori; Simpson; Stock-

① We are grateful to *Style* for permission to reprint this essay.

well, *Science Fiction*; Toolan, *Stylistics*; *Narrative*; and Verdonk & Weber). Partly this has been due to a shift in the centre of gravity of linguistic research, away from a core of syntax, phonology, lexicology, and semantics and towards wide-ranging interdisciplinary studies of text and discourse. Neighbouring and overlapping sub-disciplines such as cognitive science, pragmatics, and discourse analysis (including critical discourse analysis) have featured in this expansion of interest. For example, Carter and Simpson argued for a discourse-analysis-oriented approach and Sell for a pragmatics-oriented approach to the language of literature. On the other hand, the ability to explore whole works of literature from a linguistic viewpoint, rather than to confine attention to short gobbets and passages, has been enhanced through the methods of corpus linguistics, harnessing the power of the computer.

These broader perspectives on style were already opening up when the first edition of *SIF* was written (1981), as can be noted from its chapters with such titles as "Mind Style," "The Rhetoric of Text," and "Discourse and Discourse Situation." At that stage, however, the applications of such themes to literary style were somewhat tentative and unsophisticated relative to what is happening today. And one research domain was totally lacking in *SIF*: that of narratology, which the authors felt could be omitted because of its relative independence from the choice of language. Since then, narratology has not only developed into a major research field, but has increasingly concerned itself with the cognitive themes on which much recent work on fictional style has centred. The "logic of the story" (Herman, *Story Logic*; *Narrative Theory*) is no longer something "out there" in the fictional world, but is "in here," in the minds of the reader, the narrator, and the characters (Fludernik, *"Natural" Narratology*).

This growing emphasis on cognitive linguistics (the "cognitive turn" as it has been called) has been accompanied by more sophisticated theorizing about the conceptual models needed to explain the construction of meaning in literary works. One of the most promising cognitive theories is that of mental spaces and conceptual blending (Fauconnier, Fauconnier & Turner, Coulson & Oakley) which has been applied increasingly to literary texts, witness Dancygier ("Blending and Narrative Viewpoint")

and other articles in the number of *Language and Literature* she edited. In her article in the present number of *Style*, Dancygier takes this theory further, using "narrative anchors" to show how blending of mental spaces can explain a reader's construction of coherence for Margaret Atwood's *The Blind Assassin*, a novel broken into apparently disjoint episodes, narrators, and texts.

Related kinds of mental modelling which represent the "cognitive turn" include theories of mental processing and how the mind represents reality. In her article on "Mind Style 25 Years On," Semino shows how improved models involving such constructs as conceptual schemata, mental space blending, and cognitive metaphor have advanced our understanding of how the mind represents the fictional worlds of literary texts.

This emphasis on the mind does not mean, of course, that stylistics has no need to relate the cognitive world to the formal features of texts. To some extent, the remarkable growth of corpus linguistics (see McEnery and Wilson, Kennedy) alongside cognitive linguistics has been a healthy influence, helping to achieve a balance between what is observed on the page of text and what is represented in the mind. As a corpus (in the electronic sense), the works of a great novelist reduce to nothing but a vast array of letters, spaces, and punctuation marks. Yet computational research provides tools for searching, analysing, and classifying this mass of data in ways that could barely be contemplated in 1980. Hoover's article suggests how corpus linguistic techniques can be employed to reveal the answers to large questions such as elements of continuity and change in the oeuvre of a single writer, Henry James, in this case. However much cognitive linguistics and corpus linguistics seem to be at the opposite ends of a scale of abstraction, they are in fact increasingly seen as collaborators (Gries & Stefanowitsch). The power of the computer in finding patterns of recurrence and variation can support (or challenge) the models we build to explain the cognitive workings of language in literature: for example, the patterns that can be said to form a mind style. "Corpus stylistics" and "cognitive stylistics," two terms that have come into use since 1981, are not so compartmentalized as might be supposed.

There is another way in which advances in empirical methods can go hand-in-hand with advances in cognitive linguistics and cognitive science. The article by Emmott, Sandford, and Dawydiak, takes up the stylistic concept of foregrounding (in *SIF* related to psychological and linguistic salience) and shows how prominent features of text can be experimentally correlated with increases in the reader's attention. Intriguingly, however, the text-altering technique of attention-tracking employed does not appear to register signals salient from a narratological, as opposed to a linguistic standpoint: perhaps an indication of the psychological difference between the *manner* of speaking and the *matter* spoken of. Can it be, after all, that the age-old dualist model of style (see *SIF* chapter 1) has some validity?

The article by Short illustrates a further meeting-ground between the empirical world of corpus stylistics and the cognitive world of meaning construction and interpretation. By compiling and annotating a corpus of both literary and nonliterary texts, Short and Semino and their team (see Semino & Short) exhaustively test out the twin scales of speech and thought presentation put forward in the last chapter of *SIF* and show how these need correction and refinement by the addition of extra types of speech and thought presentation and a whole extra scale for the presentation of written texts. The field now needs to be renamed (more awkwardly) as "speech, writing and thought presentation" (SW&TP). In the present article, however, Short focuses on the scale of thought presentation, complementing the cognitive themes of other contributions by concentrating on the way different modes of presentation characterize the narrative viewpoint.

2. The beginning of *Great Expectations*

The themes above need to be located in texts. For this purpose, I turn to the analysis of a small piece of prose writing, an example of the "practical stylistics" that was a prominent feature of *SIF*. To those who have used *SIF* as a textbook, this section will recall Chapter 3 of the book, which presents a method of analysis exemplified with three short passages from the beginnings of short stories. My own choice here is another

opening: that of Dickens's *Great Expectations*, focusing especially on the third paragraph. The opening page of a novel may be thought too easy a choice: indeed, the selection of any passage from a long novel is unrepresentative, rather like studying the Mona Lisa by contemplating her left eyelid, and the first page of a novel is especially so because of its scene-setting concentration of thematic interest. But choosing the start of a work of fiction does have the advantage of freedom from prior context, and, for pedagogical purposes, it is a handy way of giving students immediate access to issues of style.

One reason for attempting this piece of practical analysis is to illustrate what I hope are the strengths of a now somewhat neglected method, found in *SIF*, of focussing stylistic analysis first and foremost on the formal features of the text, letting these develop into a springboard for interpretation. This is what Dancygier, in her contribution, describes as "constructing meaning(s)," and I suggest that it is in systematizing this construction that cognitive stylistics has advanced the field. But a drawback of *SIF* was that the conviction carried by such interpretative comments rested primarily on an appeal to the reader's intuitive understanding.

A second reason is to exemplify how the various themes to be explored in the other articles in this issue can be integrated in application to fiction writing, something that cannot be realistically attempted except with a short extract. Constraints of space, however, mean that I will need to deal cursorily with these stylistic models, leaving many of their details to be elaborated in the articles that follow.

In the following extract, the third paragraph is highlighted, with lines numbered. The first two paragraphs and the beginning of the tumultuous fourth paragraph are given as context.

Chapter I

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I give Pirrip as my father's family name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister — Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. As I

never saw my father or my mother, and never saw any likeness of either of them (for their days were long before the days of photographs), my first fancies regarding what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones. The shape of the letters on my father's, gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, "*Also Georgiana Wife of the Above*," I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly. To five little stone lozenges, each about a foot and a half long, which were arranged in a neat row beside their grave, and were sacred to the memory of five little brothers of mine — who gave up trying to get a living exceedingly early in that universal struggle — I am indebted for a belief I religiously entertained that they had all been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers pockets, and had never taken them out in this state of existence.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea. My first vivid and broad impression of the identity of things, seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. At such a time I found out for certain, that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana wife of the above, were dead and buried; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias, and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also dead and buried; and that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing, was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip.

"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!" (Dickens 3－4)

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