

WRITTEN FLUENCY

Styles (varieties) and genres

1. Style

(...) the aim of stylistics is to analyse language habits with the main purpose of identifying, from the general mass of linguistic features common to English as used on every conceivable occasion, those features which are restricted to certain kinds of social context; to explain, where possible, why such features have been used, as opposed to other alternatives; and to classify these features into categories based upon a view of their function in the social context. By 'features' here, we mean *any* bit of speech or writing which a person can single out from the general flow of language and discuss – a particular word, part of a word, sequence of words, or way of uttering a word.

(Crystal & Davy, *Investigating English Style*, pp. 10-11)

The study of style involves **stylistic differentiation** (see the Prague School) – that is, the identification of "stylistically significant" or "stylistically **distinctive features**" in a given sample of language, or *text*. These features are based on choices made by the speaker/writer in his/her use of lexis (vocabulary), grammar (syntax) and phonology/graphology. The features influence the way in which particular messages are formulated and conveyed, and they indicate relationships between the language and the **extra-linguistic context** of communication; that is, they determine the **function** of the language used.

(Urbanová - Billingham, *A Reader in English Stylistics*, p. 6)

Distinctive features (also **significant features**) - features of lexis, grammar or phonology/graphology which are characteristic of one variety, enabling it to be identified and also distinguished from other varieties.

A **stylistically distinctive feature** correlates to a certain kind of **situational function**.

Examination of the extra-linguistic context helps to establish any **situational factors** accountable for **restrictions on the use** of a certain feature.

An aspect or aspects of the context exercise some **conditioning influence** on a stylistically distinctive feature – the notion of **situation** (split into **dimensions of situational constraint**) describes the kinds of conditioning influence.

Stylisticians (and stylistics) study the most significant **deviations** from random occurrence and their causes.

Style we regard as individual, unifying character which is present in any work resulting from intentional activity. **Stylistics**, in its turn, is a branch of linguistic research which examines the given language system with the intention of finding out what prerequisites and possibilities are contained in it that could be utilized for the purpose of differentiating various stylistic approaches so as to endow them with characteristically differentiated sets of features each of which would be noted for its specific, unifying sort of character.

(Vachek, *Chapters from Modern English Lexicology and Stylistics*, p. 125)

Levels of **linguistic analysis** (according to Galperin):

- **phonology** (spoken texts) and **graphology** (written texts)
- **word level** (word structure, morphology, origin)
- **word group level** (noun groups, verb groups, pre- and post-modification)
- **clause level** (word order, proportion of nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives)
- **sentence level** (major, minor, simple, compound, complex)

- **discourse** level (coherence and cohesion features, including pronoun reference, rhetorical devices)
- **vocabulary** level (choice of lexis based on subject or function of text)

(Urbanová, p. 12)

2. Functional styles

The Prague linguistic school - the theory of **stylistic differentiation** of language utterances.

→ **Bohuslav Havránek**: *Úkoly spisovného jazyka a jeho kultura* (in: *Spisovná čeština a jazyková kultura*, Prague Linguistic Circle's collective volume, Prague 1932, pp. 32-84). The essential parts of the paper translated into English by Paul. L. Garvin in his *Prague School Reader in Esthetics, Literary Structure and Style* (Washington, D.C., 1964) under the title *The Functional Differentiation of the Standard Language*.

Functions of the standard:

1. Communication (komunikativní)
2. Workaday technical (prakticky odborná)
3. Theoretical technical (teoreticky odborná)
4. Aesthetic (estetická)

Functional dialects:

1. conversational (hovorový)
2. workaday (pracovní, věcný)
3. scientific (vědecký)
4. poetic (básnický)

→ B. Havránek: *Úkoly spisovného jazyka a jeho kultura*.

Základní **funkční jazyky** (spis.):

- hovorový
- pracovní (věcný)
- vědecký
- básnický

Podle konkrétního **cíle projevu**:

- praktické sdělení, zpráva
- vybidnutí (výzva)
- přesvědčování
- obecné poučení (populární)
- odborné poučení (výklad, dokazování)
- kodifikující formulace

Podle **způsobu projevu**:

- sdělení
 - ústní
 - písemné
- obojí pak
 - soukromé
 - veřejné

Havránek's classification of functional styles:

A. According to the **specific purpose of the utterance**:

- **matter-of-fact communication, information** - praktické sdělení, zpráva
- **exhortation (appeal)** - vybidnutí (výzva), **suasion** - přesvědčování
- **general explanation (popular)** - obecné poučení (populární)
- **technical explanation (exposition, proof)** - odborné poučení (výklad, dokazování)
- **codifying formulation** - kodifikující formulace

B. According to the **manner** in which the utterance is presented:

- utterance (sdělení) – **oral** (ústní)
- **written** (písemné)

both of them – **private** (soukromé)
– **public** (veřejné)

→ **Josef Vachek**: *Chapters from Modern English Lexicology and Stylistics*:

Classification of styles according to:

• **approach of subject matter** -

- regard to content predominates - **purely informative style** (narrative, description)

- content and form equally considered -

- interdependence expressed casually - **simple communicative style** - **narrative or descriptive**

- interdependence expressed systematically - **argumentative style**

- regard to form predominates - **formalist style**

• **approach of recipient** -

- plain

- propagandist

• **medium employed** -

- spoken

- written

→ **I.R. Galperin**:

Functional styles of the English language:

- **the belles-lettres style** (poetry, emotive prose, drama);

- **publicistic style** (oratory and speeches, essay, articles);

- **newspaper style** (brief news items, headlines, advertisements and announcements, editorial);

- **scientific prose style**;

- **the style of official documents.**

→ I.R. Galperin:

(Functional styles and substyles – based on English, cannot be generalised):

- **styl beletrie**: poezie, umělecká próza, drama;

- **styl publicistický**: projevy v tisku, eseje, články v časopisech a v novinách;

- **styl novin**: novinové titulky, krátké zprávy, inzeráty;

- **styl vědecké prózy**: styl užívaný v humanitních/exaktních vědách;

- **styl oficiálních dokumentů**: obchodních, právnických a vojenských.

Podle Galp. existují jazykové styly pouze v psané podobě jazyka – to dnes již neobstojí.

(Knittlová, K teorii i praxi překladu, pp. 123-127)

3. Coherence and cohesion

The **coherence** of a text is a result of the interaction between knowledge presented in the text and the reader's own knowledge and experience of the world, the latter being influenced by a variety of factors such as age, sex, race, nationality, education, occupation, and political and

religious affiliations... A text which coheres for one reader may therefore not cohere for another.

(Mona Baker: *In Other Words*, p. 219, cit. Knittlová, p. 99)

Cohesion – a text has cohesion on the level of **syntax**, e.g. through concord, sequence of tenses, or relative pronouns, and, more importantly for discourse analysis, which goes beyond the sentence-limit, on the level of **inter-sentence connections or linkage**, e.g. through anaphoric reference, pronoun substitution, ellipsis, the use of definite and indefinite articles to indicate things already mentioned in the preceding text lines. These are collectively termed **grammatical cohesion**.

Cohesion established through **vocabulary**, e.g. collocations, repetition, synonymy, is known as **lexical cohesion**.

Cohesion is a surface-feature of a text; coherence is a sub-surface feature, because it concerns the level of ideas underlying the text, which are its origin,

(Urbanová, p. 113)

Cohesion - formal linkage between the elements of a text or discourse. The cohesive ties may be explicit and implicit. The main **grammatical cohesive devices**:

- **referring expressions** - pronouns, demonstratives, the definite article and comparatives
- **substitution and ellipsis** - nominal, verbal and clausal
- **conjunctions** (inside sentences and across sentence boundaries) - additive, adversative, causative (and temporal - according to Halliday and Hasan)
- **tense** - the basic tense forms of the verbs and the time reference they express.

The main **structural cohesive devices** are parallelism and given-new information organisation. The unity of the textual structure of the text is further promoted by the time and place indicators.

(Dontcheva-Navrátilová: *Grammatical Structures in English: Meaning in Context*, p. 50)

Koheze - síť lexikálních, gramatických a jiných vztahů, které uvádějí jednotlivé části textu ve vztah.
→ Halliday & Hasan: *Cohesion in English* (1976): 5 hlavních kohezivních prostředků v angličtině:

- reference
- substitute
- elipsa
- konektory (*conjunctions*)
- lexikální koheze

Registers → Halliday, N.E. Enquist, Crystal & Davy

Halliday proposes three areas in which the language of a piece of text and its social context may be approached:

- the **field of the discourse**: this refers to the kind of speech event that is taking place, and will include the subject matter of the discourse
- the **tenor of the discourse**: this refers to the nature of the participants taking part in the discourse, what roles they are playing, for example, and their relationship with one another
- the **mode of the discourse**: this refers to the part the language is playing in the discourse, whether it is spoken or written, for example, and the nature of the language used.

(Declan Geaney: *Discourse Analysis and Related Topics for Teachers of English as a Second Language*, p. 21)

4. Variation in language

4.1. Register variation

Register - a variety of language that a language user considers appropriate to a specific situation. Register variation arises from variations in the following:

- **field** of discourse
- **tenor** of discourse
- **mode** of discourse

Features of the **context of the situation**:

- **mode** (variation according to the part the language is playing, what is that the participants expect the language to do for them in the situation) (**written vs. spoken language**)
- **tenor** (variation according to the relationship between sender and addressee, their statuses and roles) (**formal vs. informal, polite vs. familiar**)
- **domain** (variation according to the activity in which language plays part) (studied by stylistics and discourse analysis) (**legal language, advertising, public speaking, friendly conversation, etc.**)

(Dontcheva-Navrátilová: *Grammatical Structures in English: Meaning in Context*, p. 43)

4.2. Dialect variation

Dialect - a variety of language which has currency within a specific community or group of speakers.

Bases of its classification:

- geographical
- temporal (words or structures used by members of different age groups, or used at different periods in the history of a language)
- social (words or structures used by members of different social classes)

(Mona Baker: *In Other Words*, pp. 12-16)

A schematic survey of varieties:

SPOKEN

Informal conversation
Anecdotes, jokes
Formal conversation,
discussion, interview
Debates
Public speeches
Lectures

News broadcasting
Sports commentary
Radio/TV advertising
Religious sermons
Courtroom speeches

WRITTEN

Informal letters

Formal letters (e.g. business letters)

Publicistic literature
Academic articles, essays
Scientific/technical reports
Newspaper reporting
Sports reports
Printed advertisements
Religious tracts
Legal documents
Printed announcements
Printed instructions, manuals
Civil Service documents

Spoken vs. written language

TYPICAL SPEECH

Inexplicitness
Lack of clear sentence boundaries
Clause complexes/clusters
Simpler structures
Repetitiveness
Normal non-fluency
Monitoring features
Interaction features
Informality features
Lexical sparsity
Prosody

TYPICAL WRITING

Explicitness
Clear sentence boundaries
Sentences and paragraphs
More complex structures
Non-repetitiveness
Fluency
No monitoring features
No interaction features
Formality features
Lexical density
Punctuation

(Dontcheva-Navrátilová: *Grammatical Structures in English: Meaning in Context*, p. 54)

Formal vs. informal language

FORMAL REGISTER

- socially careful, distant and impersonal situations
- explicit clause and sentence linkers
- preference for impersonal constructions
- avoidance of contracted forms and end-position prepositions
- use of the subjunctive, subordinate finite and non-finite clauses

INFORMAL REGISTER

- intimate and casual situations
- preference to simple, personal and more emotive forms of expression

(based on Dontcheva-Navrátilová: *Grammatical Structures in English: Meaning in Context*, p. 58)