

Evolution of Stylistics : Rhetoric, Stylistics , Discourse Analysis & Computer Technology

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Overview

- Evolution of Stylistics
- Stylistics & Computer Technology
- Goal of Stylistics
- Microstylistics & Macrostylistics
- Stylistics is not confined to literature only
- Stylistics is Multidisciplinary in Nature
- Rhetoric
- Discourse Analysis
- Rhetoric, Stylistics & DA: Similarities

Origin in Rhetoric and Russian Formalist Approach

- Stylistics is the study of textual meaning. Historically, it arose from Rhetoric in ancient times. In modern age, it arose from the late-19th- and early-20th-century Russian formalist approach to literary meaning, which endeavored to identify the textual triggers of certain literary effects from their structures. As a result, for much of its history, stylistics has been concerned with the style, and consequent meaning, of literary works. However, the burgeoning of modern linguistics in the early part of the 20th century and the simultaneous rise of mass media (newspapers, radio, and television in the first instance) led stylisticians toward two new concerns

New Concerns (1)

Explaining aesthetic effects

- First, they wanted to establish whether there was anything unique about the language of literature that differentiated it absolutely from other language use. For this project, new insights from descriptive linguistics were crucial as an objective and rigorous way of describing—and comparing—texts in terms of their style. The eventual consensus that developed from such work was that there is no absolute division, in linguistic usage, between literary and nonliterary texts, though genres of all kinds (including nonliterary genres) may have stylistic preferences that help to identify them.

New Concerns (2)

Nonliterary Texts

- Second, stylisticians wanted to find out how style affected such important issues as political and social change, through the texts encountered by citizens in their daily lives. The result was the adaptation and application of stylistic analysis to nonliterary texts for the purpose of highlighting ideology—particularly hidden ideology—rather than for the purpose of explaining aesthetic effects. This development ultimately gave rise to what is now called “critical discourse analysis,” though this term now encompasses many studies that are minimally linguistic in their concerns.

- The initial enthusiasm for the insights that linguistics could bring to literary study, together with some of the principal notions from Russian formalism, such as “defamiliarization,” produced stylistics’ early theoretical core notions, such as foregrounding, external and internal deviation, and parallelism. These continue to be central to much stylistic scholarship, and for this reason it has not been possible to group texts relating to foregrounding and deviation together here, as they also range widely across the other categories necessary to map out the field.

Stylistics & Computer Technology

- It is also worth noting that the increasing use of computational methodologies borrowed from corpus linguistics means that today it is possible to examine not only foregrounded, but also background features of style. Meanwhile, stylistics has continued to follow the “new” subdisciplines of the field (sociolinguistics, pragmatics, psycholinguistics, etc.), as well as developing connections with other disciplines, notably psychology, to develop a range of more subtle tools of analysis to understand how the texts that are its central concern make meaning.

The Goals of Stylistics

The Goals of Stylistics •

Stylistics is adaptive in nature such that its •
framework, as a veritable linguistic analytical
approach, deals with a whole range of human
discourses: medical, religious, political, legal,
social, interpersonal, group communication,
and so on

Micro-stylistics & Macro-stylistics

- Broadly speaking, stylistics can be divided into two sub-fields: micro-stylistics, also called by Crystal literary stylistics dealing with the variations characteristic of literature as a genre and of the style of individual authors, and macro-stylistics which is usually termed as general stylistics, which deals with the whole range of non-dialectal varieties encountered within a language. Microstylsitics is a borderline discipline between language and literature.

Stylistics, Literature & Language

The preferred object of study in stylistics is literature, whether that be institutionally sanctioned 'Literature' as high art or more popular 'non-canonical' forms of writing. The traditional connection between stylistics and literature brings with it two important points, though.

Stylistics is Not Confined to the Study of Literature only

- Creativity and innovation in language use should not be seen as the exclusive preserve of literary writing. Many forms of discourse (advertising, journalism, popular music – even casual conversation) often display a high degree of stylistic dexterity, such that it would be wrong to view dexterity in language use as exclusive to canonical literature.

Stylistics deals with Language

- The techniques of stylistic analysis are as much about deriving insights about linguistic structure and function as they are about understanding literary texts. Thus, the question ‘What can stylistics tell us about literature?’ is always paralleled by an equally important question ‘What can stylistics tell us about language?’.

Stylistics is Multidisciplinary in Nature

- It focuses on language use in both literary and non-literary texts. In doing this, it uses insights from numerous disciplines such as literature, psychology, sociology, philosophy and so on. Therefore, while it has its own focus, it is multidisciplinary in nature. It has connections with other subjects and disciplines. For instance, the concept of 'foregrounding' in stylistics came from painting .



Rhetoric

- Rhetoric is the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the exploitation of figures of speech and other compositional techniques. Rhetoricians emphasize the composing processes of the texts or discourses.



What is rhetoric?

Rhetoric is the “art of persuasion”. It’s a practical everyday art of convincing others of your way - the “art of good argument”.



And what is Aristotle's Rhetoric

Written in 4BC, Aristotle wrote a treatise (essay) called “ars rhetorica” (the art of rhetoric). This focused on how rhetoric could be used to persuade using “probably knowledge”, rather than pure emotion - something he accused the Sophists of.

Aristotle's

ETHOS

Credibility



PATHOS

Emotion

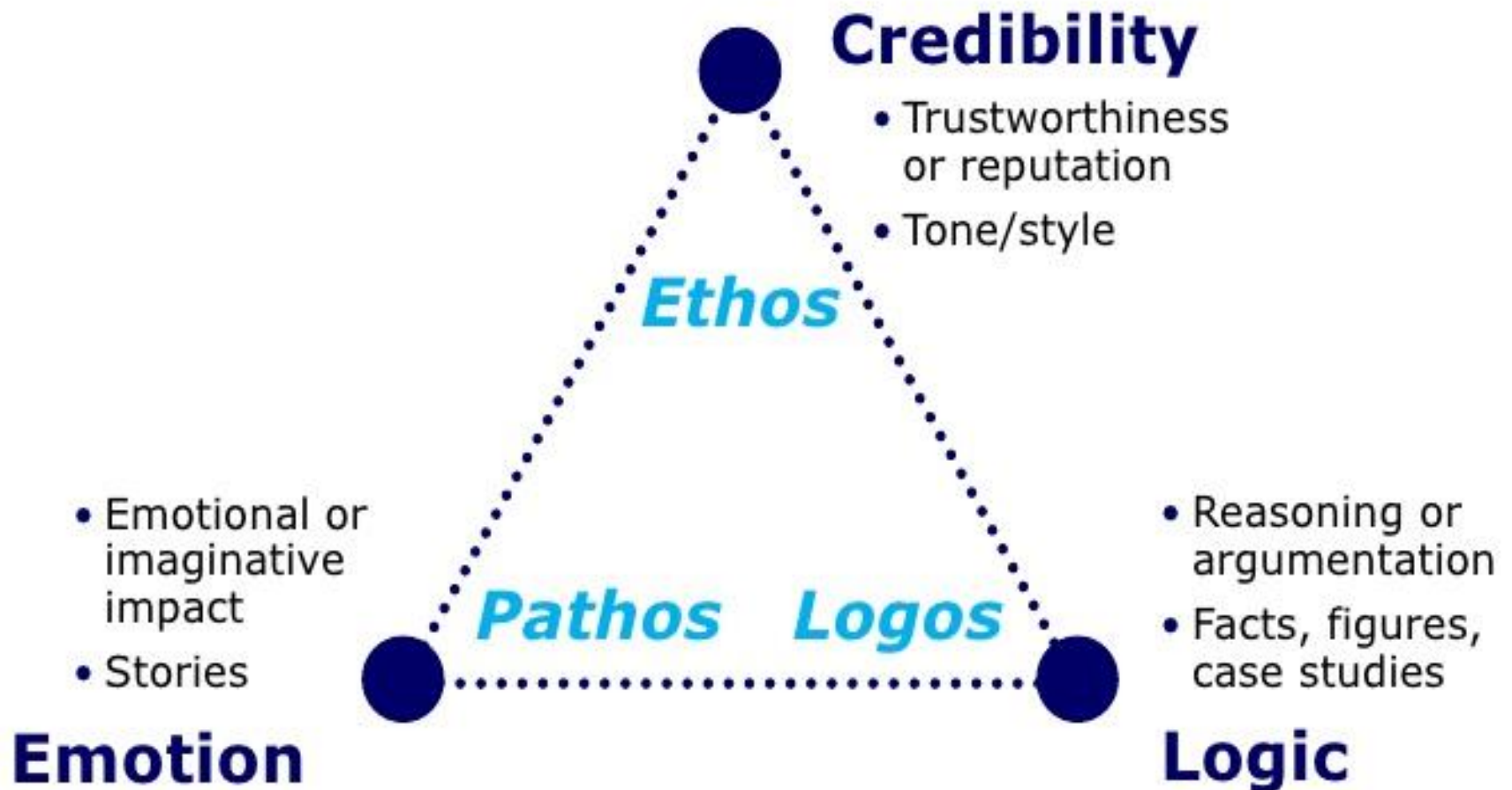


LOGOS

Logic



Aristotle's rhetorical triangle



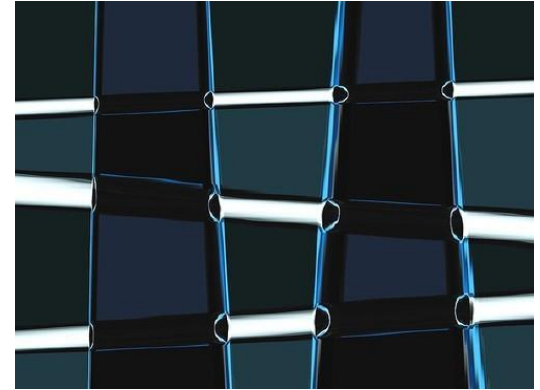
What makes a “good arguer”



Pathos



Ethos



Logos

In his “art of rhetoric” he identified three key traits of a “good arguer:

- **Pathos**: appeal to the emotion of the audience
- **Ethos**: a sense of credibility and “moral competence”
- **Logos**: good logical structure

PATHOS



PATHOS

THE APPEAL TO EMOTION

Pathos

A photograph of a black and white goat with large, curved horns nuzzling an orange tabby cat on a grassy field. The goat is on the left, leaning its head towards the cat on the right. The background is a soft-focus green lawn.

Pathos appeals to the emotion of the audience. This can be done in a number of ways, for example by passion of delivery or by the use of metaphor or story telling.

Ethos

Ethos is all about the sense of weight and expertise of the arguer. Aristotle specifically noted that Ethos wasn't necessary about the character of the arguer, but the character of what the arguer says.

Logos

Logos is all about making sure your argument is well structured and based on sound data / evidence. Structuring your argument and basing around data, makes an argument particularly difficult to counter.

Rhetoric & Stylistics

- Rhetoric is the art of communication in words. It is an extensive study of how to make human communications effective, while by 'stylistics', we mean scientific study of linguistic style by identifying the devices in language. Rhetoric and stylistics, the two disciplines, are both concerned with text (Spoken & written), and come to it from two different ends. Stylistics is rhetoric's most direct heir or stylistics is the modern name of rhetoric .

Discourse

- According to Crystal (2003:141), is “a continuous stretch of
- Language larger than the sentence.” Leech et.al.(1982:133) refer to discourse as “chunks of language in actual use .” Discourse may be spoken or written literary or non-literary, eg ‘an interview’ ,a ‘novel’, ‘a speech by a politician’, ‘a lecture to students ’ or any other series of speech events in which successive sentences or utterances hang together(Matthews,2007:107) .

Discourse analysis

- Discourse analysis is composed of a wide range of sub-disciplines, such as pragmatics, conversational analysis, speech act theory and ethnography of speaking. The discipline studies language used in the context, so its subject matter is language as a whole, either written or spoken, in terms of transcriptions, larger texts, audio or video recordings, which provides an opportunity to the analyst to work with language rather than a single sentence.

Discourse Analysis & Stylistics

Discourse Analysis and **Stylistics** are broad-based disciplines which deal with the functional aspects of language. Both aim to show why and how the text means what it means (linguistically). While D.A. analyzes what is communicated in Discourse, Stylistics analyzes how it is communicated. In Stylistics we are more concerned with showing the uniqueness of the text we are analyzing .

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Discourse Analysis & Stylistics

- Discourse and Stylistics are two different but closely related linguistic disciplines that are inseparable. The relationship between them can be likened to the proverbial controversy in the actual maternity of the hen and the egg. This is because it is very difficult to draw a line of demarcation between Discourse and Stylistics. While on the one hand, there is hardly any exercise on Discourse without a bit of Stylistic input, Discourse, on the other hand, “is broader in its analysis (Aziz n.pag). While Discourse is essentially communication, Stylistics on the other hand is concerned with the study of the pattern and style of what is communicated.

Discourse Analysis

- Discourse Analysis (henceforth DA) is the study which aims at discovering linguistic regularities in discourses using grammatical, phonological and semantic criteria (eg cohesion, anaphora, inter-sentence connectivity) (Crystal, 2003:141). To put it in another way, DA deals with the various devices used by the speakers and writers when they put sentences together to form a coherent and cohesive whole (Aitchison, 1999:97):

What distinguish stylistics from other types of critical practice?

What sets stylistics apart from other types of critical practice is its emphasis, first and foremost, on the language of the text, while discourse analysis is mainly concerned with the real speech situations, verbal communication, talk or conversation, in terms of speech acts. It, in turn, is very difficult to analyse real conversation in terms of speech acts because explicit performative utterances are rare and any attempt to expand primary performatives runs immediately into the problem of what is / are the correct expansion(s).

DA & Stylistics

- Both approaches pursue meaning not only in terms of the linguistics element and the sense it makes to the hearer but also seems to see any word in terms of who said it, to whom, where, in whose presence, with what objects around and what effect it has on the hearer (reader).

Rhetoric , stylistics and discourse analysis

- Rhetoric , stylistics and discourse analysis have some similarities. All the three domains of language deal with linguistic choices . They are part of socio-linguistics. Despite these similarities, they have some differences.

Conclusion

- Rhetoric, Discourse Analysis and Stylistics seem to be linked to socio-linguistics, that is language studied in relation to society. Stylistics is the modern name of rhetoric and where Stylistics stops, Discourse Analysis starts working.

Thank you very much