

# Cognitive and pragmatic approach to using stylistic devices in English literary discourse

by Elena Monakhova

**Elena Monakhova** Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University) [lfursova@mail.ru](mailto:lfursova@mail.ru)

**Published in Training, Language and Culture** Vol 3 Issue 1 (2019) pp. 37-52 doi: [10.29366/2019tlc.3.1.3](https://doi.org/10.29366/2019tlc.3.1.3)

**Recommended citation format:** Monakhova, E. (2019). Cognitive and pragmatic approach to using stylistic devices in English literary discourse. *Training, Language and Culture*, 3(1), 37-52. doi: [10.29366/2019tlc.3.1.3](https://doi.org/10.29366/2019tlc.3.1.3)

*Modern linguistics does not treat language as an autonomous object of study, but takes an integrated approach to considering the way various factors affect the functioning of different linguistic phenomena within a discourse. Discourse analysis addresses spoken and written texts with regard to a situational context, cultural and historical background, ideological, social and psychological factors, as well as communicative, pragmatic and cognitive aims of the author, which in its turn determines the choice of language units. Literary discourse is an interaction between the author and the reader designed to generate emotional response. It relies on cultural, aesthetic and social values, background knowledge and worldview, beliefs, assumptions and feelings, and uses stylistic devices to produce the desired effect. This study gives evidence of the complex use of cognitive and pragmatic aspects in the analysis of stylistic devices in literary discourse. This approach makes it possible to analyse linguistic factors traditionally represented in linguo-stylistics, and consider extralinguistic parameters in order to better understand the way stylistic devices operate in the given type of discourse.*

**KEYWORDS:** *literary discourse, rhetoric, stylistic device, pragmatics, cognitive study*



This is an open access article distributed under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited (CC BY 4.0)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The end of the 20th century saw a shift in scientific paradigms with the cognitive approach coming forward. At that point, linguists adopted the term 'discourse' to refer to written and spoken texts and their connections with extralinguistic factors (background knowledge, opinions, intentions, worldview, emotions, etc.). Discourse analysis has since then been used to approach texts as objects of reality rather than independent aesthetic artefacts, and consider the interactive relationship between spoken/written texts and listeners/readers.

Literary discourse is a verbal presentation of the author's perception of the world, whereby any language element explicitly or implicitly reveals the author's perspective and insight (Selden et al., 2016). While language means convey the author's intentions and conceptual information, they also appeal to an emotional response from the readers, as a piece of literary work is usually appreciated not because it is easy to comprehend, but because of the readers' emotive, evaluative and attitudinal response to it. Readers unravel meaning against the temporal, cultural and social context of their

own reality and approach texts with different sets of assumptions and experiences which will inevitably affect interpretation. Meaning is derived from a combination of factors, including the formal structure of the text and the contextual circumstances in which it is read. The meaning of a literary text is not always unwaveringly fixed, but is somewhat fluid as it cannot always be permanently pinned down through a process of analysis (Wolfreys et al., 2016). However, by looking at language one may construct stronger arguments about the meanings generated for particular kinds of audiences. Meaningful interpretation requires *stylistic analysis* that considers typical conversational scenarios, stylistic traits, and language means intertwined with the conversational situation, as well as the effect the writer/speaker wishes to have on the reader/listener (Carter, 2010). Linguistic techniques used to generate an additional or supplemental meaning, idea or feeling are called *stylistic devices*. Stylistic devices create imagery, put emphasis, clarify the meaning within a text to engage, entertain or capture readers' attention (Carillo, 2010).

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The paper uses the cognitive and discourse approaches to language study, as well as general methods of investigation such as systematic and structural analyses, literary, stylistic and philological approaches, formal logical and

comparative methods. The paper is premised on theoretical assumptions found in linguistic, stylistic, discourse and cognitive studies. The theoretical considerations are exemplified by works of fiction written by 20th century British and American authors. The data obtained were processed to formulate the key conclusions concerning the use of stylistic devices in English literary discourse.

## 3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The ancient Greeks and Romans developed a system of linguistic techniques for aspiring public speakers. Whether the speech to be given was deliberative, judicial, or panegyric, one could learn much by studying the art of rhetoric and numerous devices or patterns of language which the speaker could use to enhance the meaning of their message.

The Sophists, for instance, taught their students to analyse poetry and define parts of speech, instructed them on argumentation techniques to make a weak argument stronger and a strong argument weaker. Aristotle wrote a treatise, *The Art of Rhetoric*, in which he established a system for comprehending and teaching rhetoric and favoured persuasion not only through reason alone, but through the use of persuasive language and techniques (Bakker, 2010).

The ancient Romans borrowed many of the

*‘Stylistic devices create imagery, put emphasis, clarify the meaning within a text to engage, entertain or capture readers’ attention’*

rhetorical elements introduced by the Greeks, and depended even more on stylistic flourishes and compelling metaphors rather than on logical reasoning as compared to their Greek counterparts. Quintilian and Cicero, whose writings on rhetoric guided schools on the subject well into the Renaissance, identified *Five Canons of Rhetoric* – invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery). Among the five virtues of style that make the speech compelling and absorbing to the listener, Quintilian mentioned ornateness that involves making speeches and texts interesting by using figures of speech and manipulating the sound and rhythm of words (Dominik & Hall, 2010).

Ancient theory on literary devices distinguished between tropes and figures of speech. While a trope was defined as a change in the meaning of a word, deviation from the literal meaning and its figurative use (metaphor, metonymy, personification, allegory, hyperbole, synecdoche, irony, etc.), a figure of speech was referred to as the change in a syntactic construction, deviation from the typical mechanics of a sentence, such as

the order, pattern, or arrangement of words (anaphora, antithesis, amplification, ellipsis, anacoluthon, amphibology, parallelism, inversion, pleonasm, etc.).

In the Middle Ages, rhetoric shifted from political to religious discourse. Catholic clerics were the intellectual centre of the society, theological works were the dominant form of literature, and Latin as the language of the Roman Catholic Church was a common language for Medieval writings. While medieval theorists essentially worked on the study of tropes and figures of speech, rhetoric also gave ground to the study of other aspects, such as grammar and logic. Figures were thought of purely as devices of ornamentation, and studying them, and rhetoric in general, was a matter of memorising technical terms and definitions (Enos, 2013). The most remarkable writings concerning tropes and figures were *On Figures and Tropes* by the Venerable Bede, *The Art of the Verse Maker* by Matthew of Vendome, *The New Poetics* by Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *The Art of Versifying* by Gervase of Melkley, *Parisian Poetics* by John Garland, and *Labyrinth* by Eberhard the German. Based on the rhetorical tradition of antiquity, medieval rhetoricians distinguished tropes and figures which they divided into figures of speech (meaning a figurative use of a word or a phrase) and figures of thought (which were used in oratory and considered to be rhetorical devices) (De Temmerman, 2010).

Gervase of Melkley made an attempt to classify figures and tropes and grouped them into figures of identity (e.g. anaphora, epiphora, gradation, aposiopesis, metonymy, hyperbole etc.), likeness (e.g. metaphor, simile, catachresis) and contrariety (e.g. antithesis). Geoffrey of Vinsauf referred to figures of speech and thought as 'easy ornaments' (*ornatus facilis*) because in this case words were used in their literary meanings, while tropes were termed 'difficult ornaments' (*ornatus difficilis*) as they required using other names to refer to objects (Kaufer & Butler, 2013).

The earliest Renaissance treatment of tropes and figures which was widely circulated in the late 15th century was Niccolò Perotti's treatise *De Figuris*, first printed in 1473. In *De Figures*, which came out in 1512, Flemish grammarian Johannes Despauterius described ninety-two figures. He defined a figure as a form of speech altered by a certain art, and divided them into *metaplasms* (the changes which poets make to observe the rules of metre), *schemes* (those of words and those of thought) and *tropes* (Mack, 2011).

Every theorist of that period developed work that had preceded them or elaborated their own classifications. Thus, Peter Schade in his *Tables of Schemes and Tropes* divided figures into figures of diction, locution, and construction. In *Epitome Troporum Ac Schematum*, Joannes Susenbrotus

### *'Renaissance and Early Modern period scholars attempted to categorise tropes and figures to help learners understand and remember them better'*

hugely expanded the number of figures, categorised tropes into tropes of words and tropes of discourse, and grouped figures into grammatical and rhetorical (Binkley, 2012). A major contribution to the study of tropes and figures was Omer Talon's *Rhetorica*, in which he reduces the number of tropes to four (metonymy, irony, metaphor, and synecdoche), but places poetic metre and prose rhythm alongside the tropes, thereby reducing the number of figures (Murphy et al., 2013).

Renaissance and Early Modern period scholars attempted to categorise tropes and figures to help learners understand and remember them better. However, none of these attempts was entirely successful. First of all, they were very conservative and copied or relied heavily on earlier writers. Moreover, they tended to introduce categories which included numerous and diverse figures. Subsequently, many scholars abandoned classification in favour of a long alphabetical list of literary devices (Herrick, 2017).

Leech (2014) believes that poetry comes from

intentional linguistic deviation which creates artistic beauty, and singles out eight types of deviation: lexical (invention of new words), grammatical deviation (disregard of grammar rules), phonological (shifts in sounds or pronunciation), graphological deviation (disregard of the rules of writing), semantic (figurative use of words), dialectical (borrowing features of socially or regionally defined dialects), deviation of register (using features of different registers), and historical period deviation (using archaic words) (Leech, 2016).

Galperin (1981) distinguished between expressive means (EM) and stylistic devices (SD). While EM are described as linguistic forms that have the potential to make utterances emphatic or expressive, SD are defined as literary models in which semantic and structural features are blended to represent generalised patterns. The subdivision of EM and SD proposed by Galperin (1981) is based on the level-oriented approach:

1) phonetic EM and SD (alliteration, assonance, paronomasia, onomatopoeia, rhythm, rhyme, graphon);

2) lexical EM and SD (metaphor, allusion, personification, allegory, irony, metonymy, synecdoche, pun, zeugma, tautology, epithet, oxymoron, antonomasia, simile, hyperbole, meiosis, litotes, periphrasis, euphemism);

3) syntactical EM and SD (gradation, bathos, enumeration, suspense, antithesis, parallel constructions, chiasmus, inversion, repetition, detachment, prolepsis, asyndeton, polysyndeton, ellipsis, aposiopesis, question-in-the-narrative, rhetorical question).

One of the more recent classifications of EM and SD was suggested by Skrebnev (2003) who distinguished between *paradigmatic stylistics* (stylistics of units) and *syntagmatic stylistics* (stylistics of sequence). Skrebnev (2003) explores the levels of language and regards all stylistically relevant phenomena level-wise within both paradigmatic and syntagmatic stylistics.

Paradigmatic stylistics incorporates paradigmatic phonetics, morphology, lexicology, syntax, and semantics, or semasiology, or semantics (one more level singled out by the scholar).

Stylistic devices were originally used to make a text or speech aesthetic and persuasive and are now used as a starting point in text interpretation helping understand the author's message, identify the key idea of the text, and define the author's attitude towards the subject of narration, the characters and their actions. Stylistic devices are always emotionally charged, incorporate a bulk of information and are multifunctional, i.e. they are used for different stylistic purposes: to create imagery or humorous effect, to emphasise, to clarify, to engage or entertain the reader, etc.

#### 4. STUDY AND RESULTS

Stylistics is about explaining how the meaning of a text was created through the writer's linguistic choices, and this process is more language-driven than text-oriented. Pinning down the meaning of a text is of less concern to contemporary scholars than it has been to scholars in the past, mainly because of the emerging theories concerning language interpretation.

This study attempts to demonstrate how modern standards of text interpretation have departed from the traditional stylistics in two significant ways. The first has to do with pragmatic research. It is now more frequently held that meaning is not stable or absolute, but depends on the process of interpretation by the reader or listener. Our interpretation of something we read can depend on many contextual factors, including our cultural background and immediate surroundings. Moreover, analytical models have incorporated contemporary linguistic theories concerned with the process of reading and interpretation. The second approach is inspired by various cognitive theories that render it possible to combine traditional stylistic text analysis with discussions concerning the cognitive structures and processes that underlie the production and reception of language. This combined method implies analysing formal features of literary texts and explaining possible interpretations by describing how the literary-linguistic information is

represented and processed in the human mind.

Pragmatics emerged as a response to scholars' attempts to comprehend human actions and thoughts through their speech. Pragmatics considers language as an instrument of interaction: what people mean when they use language and how they communicate and understand each other. Pragmatics deals with the intentional choice of language means that affects the recipient ultimately evoking certain feelings, ideas and behaviour (Ninio, 2018). Thus, pragmatic analysis of literary discourse implies analysing the functioning of language units in a text, as well as all the issues connected with the authors and readers and their interaction in literary communication. The aim of literary discourse is to affect the reader emotionally and aesthetically, which is achieved to a great extent by stylistic markedness and different forms of stylistic or other variations in a text.

The functioning of stylistic devices depends on the factors which are considered to be pragmatic constituents of any text as a means of communication: participants of communication, pragmatic intention, pragmatic content, pragmatic effect and pragmatic potential (Van Peer, 2016). Participants of literary discourse do not communicate face to face; but the writer's thoughts, feelings, beliefs and objectives, as those of the creator of the text, are expressed directly;

*‘The functioning of stylistic devices depends on the factors which are considered to be pragmatic constituents of any text as a means of communication: participants of communication, pragmatic intention, pragmatic content, pragmatic effect and pragmatic potential’*

the reader indirectly influences the content of the text, the choice of language units, etc. The goal is achieved if there is mutual understanding, feedback and harmony in communication. The pragmatic intention is the author’s desire to have a certain impact on the reader, which is manifested through the choice of language means and structural peculiarities of the text. Pragmatic content deals with specific conditions and means of meaning transfer, as well as the evaluative, modal and persuasive intentions of the author. Pragmatic effect is the reader’s perception of the text that emerges through decoding its pragmatic content and pragmatic intention. Pragmatic potential means the inherent possibilities of language units to convey the content of a text (Chapman & Clark, 2014).

Practical application of the above principles will

be illustrated through antithesis, a stylistic device which was highly valued by ancient rhetoricians. This device can hardly be considered purely stylistic, for its lexical components are as important as its syntactic construction. In literary discourse, together with other stylistic devices, it is used to achieve a certain pragmatic effect.

*‘I love her dearly, you know, but remember the old poem: ‘Love will fly if held too lightly, love will die if held too tightly’.*

(R. Bradbury)

The protagonist is eager to apply to an agency that produces people’s copies to take a break from his wife who is deeply in love with him. The semantic core of the opposition are the antonyms *lightly – tightly*. Both parts of the syntactic construction represent the cause-effect relationship with the components *lightly – tightly* as the grounds for opposition. They lead to the opposition of *fly* and *die*, which become antonyms in this context. The antithesis is implemented via parallel constructions and repetitions *Love will... if held too...* This utterance is an allusion to Alexander Pope’s *Love, free as air, at sight of human ties, spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies*. The protagonist speaks in proverbs thus attempting to disguise his immoral deed and make the reader take his side.

In literary discourse, antithesis is used to describe



events and characters, present somebody's point of view and beliefs, or oppose people, their feelings and ideas. Antithesis contrasts characters, situations, natural phenomena, reveals the irony and paradox of a situation.

Along with pragmatic factors that are characteristic to any type of discourse, Paducheva (1996) distinguished four pragmatic factors defining the way stylistic devices function in literary discourse.

1. *Position of the narrator and the observer.* Events can be presented by the author, or by the narrator, who can be one of the characters:

*'What I said wasn't a lie, exactly, although it wasn't exactly the truth, either'.*

(J. Safran Foer)

Or just an observer:

*'One of the commonest symptoms of wealth today is destructive neurosis; in his century, it was tranquil boredom'.*

(J. Fowles)

The utterances of narrating characters are commonly more emotional and personal and are used to ensure better comprehension of the character's inner world and their relations with other characters. Narrating observers, on the other hand, are generally more objective and detached.

*'In literary discourse, antithesis is used to describe events and characters, present somebody's point of view and beliefs, or oppose people, their feelings and ideas'*

2. *Perspective.* The perspectives of characters and the narrator commonly coincide. The perspective can be inner in relation to the events described, or outer, as of an onlooker. Sometimes the perspective can be very wide, covering a lot of space from the bird's-eye view description:

*'People were laughing, there were lines in front of the movie theaters, they were going to see comedies, the world is so big and small, in the same moment we were close and far'.*

(J. Safran Foer)

3. *Starting point.* Jose Ortega y Gasset indicated that the starting point for a person who learns the world around them is the person themselves. The I-perspective is the starting point to measure the notions of our conceptual system. If language units in a text indicate some physical space, the starting point will be the narrator/observer:

*'Things were happening around us, but nothing was happening between us'.*

(J. Safran Foer)



4. *Focus of attention.* People do not perceive reality homogeneously. Processing the information people get from the outside world, they focus on different objects singling them out among other things. The focus of situational components determines the choice of language means used to describe them. The most catching are unexpected elements that are given prominence in comparison with other factors. A person's emotional state is one more aspect affecting the choice of objects that get into the focus of attention, and the choice of language units for their description:

*'Even though Dad's coffin was empty, his closet was full.'*

(J. Safran Foer).

Along with other factors that define the way stylistic devices operate in literary discourse, it is possible to distinguish pragmatic factors resulting from the lexical and grammatical peculiarities of the device itself. The pragmatic potential of antithesis, for instance, is its capacity to convey contrasting information through the choice of opposing words, enhancing their contrast in a specific syntactical structure. From the lexical point of view, the device is based on the opposition of two antonyms or homogeneous parts of the sentence taken as opposed. From the syntactical point of view, it relies on parallel constructions and chiasmus. As a stylistic device, antithesis also has the form of a continuing

contradiction that lies within two or three consecutive sentences. The components of antithesis are linked by means of asyndeton or syndesis:

*'Every time I left our apartment to go searching for the lock, I became a little lighter, because I was getting closer to Dad. But I also became a little heavier, because I was getting farther from Mom.'*

(J. Safran Foer)

Both lexical and syntactical components play a critical part in conveying the meaning contained in antithesis (Baggaley, 2012). The information load depends on the possibility of a joint use of lexical components and their predictability. Therefore, antithesis contains the information at different levels. The first level comprises the cases of a high frequency of a combined component use, thereby the information at this level is easily interpreted. The wider the links between the elements, the broader and more contextually dependent the information, the more complicated is the process of its interpretation. The informative value of the first level suggests the only possible interpretation:

*'Sam had all the instincts, if none of the finances, of a swell.'*

(J. Fowles)

The meaning is derived from the context of the

sentence and does not require a wider perspective. Sam's life and work for the upper-class made him develop a habit of eating good food and using luxury things, though he could not afford them.

The informative value of the second level implies lesser probability of a joint use of components, and as a result, more alternatives for interpretation:

*'While their soul was climbing up to the sun of old European culture or old Indian thought, their passions were running horizontally, clutching at things.'*

(D.H. Lawrence).

A married couple are going to Europe for self-enrichment, where they conceive a passion for collecting things. The discrepancy between the intention and reality is depicted through the opposition of *soul* and *passion* which become occasional antonyms. It leads to the metaphoric opposition of the verbs describing movement *climbing up* – *running horizontally*, which reflects an eternal fight of spiritual impulses and human passions.

These verbs, which in the system of language are not an antonymous pair, are opposed in the structure of antithesis for better interpretation of the statement, which is also clarified by such components as *the sun of old European culture*, or *old Indian thought* and *clutching at things*.

The informative value of the third level demands a wider context for interpretation. These are the rarest and therefore the most interesting examples of antithesis. They are characterised by the discrepancy of components, illogical presentation of information, or some information gap that inspires the search for lacking information. Cognitive conflict breeds cognitive interest. The reader can find the explanation to what is said in a wider context, either in the text itself, or even drawing conclusions from personal background and experience:

*'My God, Hester, you are eighty-odd thousand to the good, and a poor devil of a son to the bad'.*

(D.H. Lawrence)

The protagonist, a small boy, after learning that his family is under financial pressure, takes to gambling at horse races. He is quite successful and wins over eighty thousand pounds, but passes away because of the psychological stress. In this example, a neighbour describes how he sees the state of affairs for the boy's mother: she has money which is good, but her son has died which is bad. The core of the opposition is *to the good* – *to the bad* that sustains the opposition of *eighty-odd thousand* – *a poor devil of a son*. The colloquial *odd* and *a poor devil of a* make the sentence less tragic and make the reader pause to think if the boy's actions had any sense. Yet conclusions can be drawn only on reading the whole story.

The grammatical construction of antithesis is no less important. One of the features of antithesis is parallelism of its two parts, which makes the construction symmetrical, so that two elements of antithesis, though opposed, are perceived as equally significant (Harris, 2019). Parallelism puts to the forefront the words that bear artistic and emotional load. Lexical units which are not antonyms in the system of a language, become opposed and acquire new shades of meaning in the context of antithesis through parallel constructions. Parallelism creates rhythm and makes the reader focus on the conceptual links within the statement:

*'They were too proud and unforgiving to yield to one another, and much too haughty to yield to any outsider'.*

(D.H. Lawrence)

It is very uncommon for antithesis not to be based on the parallel arrangement of its constructions. In this case, the reader is challenged to discover links between semantic components which carry the main burden of opposition and find the ground for contrasting them:

*'But she would not submit to reason; to sentiment she might lie more'.*

(J. Fowles)

Among the different types of thinking (visual,

practical, exploring, etc.), scientists single out the linguo-creative thinking, which is a double-natured way of reasoning: on the one hand, it is involved in the heuristic process of outside world perception, while on the other hand, it is engaged in creating language (Carter, 2015). People use the existing units and subject them to changes and interpretations to represent new notions and links between them. Today, the focus has shifted from the language units that represent the result of the author's creative activity, to the mental processes in the mind of a person performing creative activity. Creative use of language units is therefore just an external manifestation of important processes taking place in human consciousness. Words and word combinations are formal indicators of deep-rooted concepts. People use readymade cognitive structures, or models, to name new objects, images and situations. Communication does not imply creating a totally new meaning, but rather presumes that those involved in interaction will employ the elements that already exist in their minds (Asoulin, 2013).

The main feature of a linguo-creative personality that can be observed in literary discourse is the capacity to use language means appropriately to trigger a certain reaction. Linguo-creative activity is revealed in the author's ability to introduce structural, semantic and stylistic changes to the existing language units to come up with the new images.

Cognitive phenomena are represented through lexical and syntactical means. Language means that are applied to present a new vision of something can be either newly created units, or existing ones that undergo changes or are being used figuratively.

There are certain limits to linguo-creative activity in a discourse; those which function in any discourse are referred to as *constant*, and those typical of a certain type of discourse are termed *variable*. Constant units stem from conventional language forms and meanings (e.g. antithesis is limited by the number of units that can be opposed). Variable units belong with a certain type of discourse and their interpretation pretty much depends on the recipient's linguo-creative skills.

Linguo-creative consciousness balances between similarities and discrepancies. Similarities are a background fixed in human consciousness that helps foreground discrepancies which reveal new features of objects, or describe them from a different angle:

*'The ferns looked greenly forgiving; but Mrs. Poultney was whitely the contrary'.*

(J. Fowles)

Literary discourse affects the reader when they perceive the text as a complex semiotic system that requires decoding by engaging verbal and

nonverbal, perceptive and cognitive experience. The use of stylistic devices triggers exploratory, emotional and evaluative activity on the part of the reader, makes the impression of an increased informative content of the text. One of the instruments employed in analysing discourse, including literary discourse, is a *concept*. This term is used to explain mental and psychological resources of consciousness and the informative structure that reflects a person's knowledge and experience. A concept is a multilevel phenomenon: it belongs simultaneously to logical and intuitive, individual and social, conscious and unconscious domains. At the same time, a concept is an open and dynamic system which triggers off a set of ideas, images, notions, associations, etc. that accompany words, actions and gestures. They evoke new meanings when they get into new contexts and enlarge a number of possible combinations and links.

Stylistic devices are used in literary discourse as manifestations of concepts. Antithesis, for example, represents concepts in their opposing meanings. It can portray the two extremes of a single concept, or oppose different concepts.

*'One knew the troops who had been in action. The ones who sang their way to death, the new recruits, were the dupes of the romance of war. But the others were dupes of the reality of war'.*

(J. Fowles)

The concept of *war* is revealed through the words *the troops, in action, death, recruits* and *war*. The narrator focuses on two types of people: recruits and experienced soldiers. They treat war differently thus opposing *romance* and *reality*. Yet all of them are referred to as ‘dupes’ by the narrator.

*‘I thought of her on Parnassus; I thought of her in Russell Square; things she said, she did, she was. And a great cloud of black guilt, knowledge of my atrocious selfishness, settles on me. All those bitter home truths she had flung at me, right from the beginning ... and still loved me; was so blind that she still loved me...In a way her death was the final act of blackmail; but the blackmailed should feel innocent, and I felt guilty. It was as if at this moment, when I most wanted to be clean, I had fallen into the deepest filth; free for the future yet most chained to the past’.*

(J. Fowles)

It is a part of a long, emotionally charged inner monologue which depicts the protagonist’s state of turmoil. The reader has to employ a wide range of background knowledge because the opposition *innocent – guilty* represents the opposition of the concepts *Innocence* and *Guilt*, which in their turn are constituents of a larger domain of *Justice*; the opposition *clean – filth* introduces concepts of *Cleanness* and *Filth* which metaphorically represent the domain of *Morals*; the opposition

*free – chained* represents the concepts of *Freedom* and *Confinement*; and *future – past* correlates with the concept of *Time*.

Whenever stylistic devices represent a single concept, they essentially bring one object to the fore and offer its detailed description. If, on the other hand, a stylistic device represents several concepts, it will make the scenario more informative by implementing a wide range of knowledge and giving a multifaceted description of an event or a phenomenon.

Stylistic devices in literary discourse reflect the affairs as observed by a character or the narrator. Conceptualisation can be presented in its *dynamic evolution* when different objects and phenomena interact during a short period of time; or as a *static event* when objects are placed relative to each other. Conceptualisation is similar in both cases; it is based on a situation which involves objects interacting (or remaining detached) within the boundaries of an indicated space.

*‘When the ultimate Mediterranean light fell on the world around me, I could see it was supremely beautiful; but when it touched me, I felt it was hostile. It seemed to corrode, not cleanse’.*

(J. Fowles)

In this case, antithesis conceptualises the situation where the character arrives in Greece; the

situation involves two objects (*I* and *light*) that interact with one another (*touched me*). The opposition *to corrode – to cleanse* helps accept the light as a participant in this scenario; readers have to rely on their background knowledge and life experience to compare the effect with corrosion and purification.

*'Sarah and Charles stood there, prey – if they had but known it – to precisely the same symptoms; admitted on the one hand, denied on the other; though the one who denied found himself unable to move away'.*

(J. Fowles)

The characters are mentioned early on in the sentence, the situation is static, and conceptualisation is introduced as an event that is being actually observed. Though there is no interaction between the characters, the readers somewhat feel like they are observing an awkward situation because of different reactions to the same event and the overwhelming emotional pressure.

Stylistic devices can conceptualise the situation that happened before. The narrator retells preceding events which have translated into the situation at hand:

*'Her father had forced her out of her class, but could not raise her to the next. To the young men of the one she had left she had become too select*

*to marry; to those of the one she aspired to, she remained too banal'.*

(J. Fowles)

Conceptualisation can employ information which is part of a person's experience or common knowledge. The narrator has a certain freedom to manipulate the concepts so that the situation can be perceived differently. For instance, some abstract phenomenon can be introduced as a physical object:

*'But in fact, his façade was sobriety, while theirs was drunkenness, exactly reverse of the true comparative state'.*

(J. Fowles)

While abstract nouns *sobriety – drunkenness* represent the key opposition, the keyword for the conceptualisation is *façade*. Relying on the background knowledge, the reader understands that the metaphoric use of the word *façade* implies external visual assessment of the situation, and focuses on words *sobriety* and *drunkenness* presented as physical objects.

The situation is conceptualised as follows: Charles behaved as a sober person, while his friends were laughing and shouting the way drunk people commonly do; but the state of events was the other way around, which is highlighted in the final part of the statement.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Contemporary research of linguo-stylistic phenomena demonstrates scholars' interest in stylistic devices as complex units interpreted by considering both linguistic and extralinguistic factors. Stylistic devices should be analysed using the elements of pragmatic and discourse analysis. Special attention should be paid to the pragmatic potential of stylistic devices which raises the possibility of a wider interpretation of semantic and structural components of stylistic units. The analysis of stylistic devices is not confined to the interpretation of their structure and semantic

components; they can be correlated with people's cognitive activity and background. Readers do not just perceive ideas presented in literary discourse explicitly; authors refer to their readers' background knowledge and experience to find new ways to conceptualise objects and situations. Using this approach, we can consider stylistic devices as complex units which involve linguistic factors, pragmatic constituents and abstract conceptual domains. It is a step forward from the intertextual analysis to discourse analysis which takes into account linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

## References

- Asoulin, E. (2013). The creative aspect of language use and the implications for linguistic science. *Biolinguistics*, 7, 228–248.
- Baggaley, J. (2012). Thesis and antithesis. *Distance Education*, 33(1), 117–123.
- Bakker, E. J. (Ed.). (2010). *A companion to the ancient Greek language*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Binkley, C. S. L. R. A. (2012). *Rhetoric before and beyond the Greeks*. SUNY Press.
- Carillo, E. C. (2010). (Re)figuring composition through stylistic study. *Rhetoric Review*, 29(4), 379–394. doi: [10.1080/07350198.2010.510061](https://doi.org/10.1080/07350198.2010.510061)
- Carter, R. (2010) Methodologies for stylistic analysis: Practices and pedagogies. In D. McIntyre, & B. Busse (Eds.), *Language and style* (pp. 55–68). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carter, R. (2015). *Language and creativity: The art of common talk*. London: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9781315658971](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315658971)
- Chapman, S., & Clark, B. (Eds.). (2014). *Pragmatic literary stylistics*. Springer.
- De Temmerman, K. (2010). Ancient rhetoric as a hermeneutical tool for the analysis of characterization in narrative literature. *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, 28(1), 23–51. doi: [10.1525/RH.2010.28.1.23](https://doi.org/10.1525/RH.2010.28.1.23)
- Dominik, W., & Hall, J. (Eds.). (2010). *A companion to Roman rhetoric*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Enos, T. (2013). *Encyclopedia of rhetoric and composition: Communication from ancient times to the information age*. New York, NY: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9781315058009](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315058009)



- Harris, R. A. (2019). The fourth master trope, antithesis. *Advances in the History of Rhetoric*, 22(1), 1-26. doi: [10.1080/15362426.2019.1569412](https://doi.org/10.1080/15362426.2019.1569412)
- Herrick, J. A. (2017). *The history and theory of rhetoric: An introduction*. New York, NY: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9781315404141](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315404141)
- Galperin, I. R. (1981). *Stilistika anglijskogo yazyka* [English stylistics]. Moscow: Vysshaya Shkola.
- Kaufer, D. S., & Butler, B. S. (2013). *Rhetoric and the arts of design*. New York, NY: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9780203811078](https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203811078)
- Leech, G. N. (2014). *A linguistic guide to English poetry*. London: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9781315836034](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315836034)
- Leech, G. N. (2016). *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9781315835976](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315835976)
- Mack, P. (2011). *A history of Renaissance rhetoric 1380-1620*. Oxford University Press.
- Murphy, J. J., Katula, R. A., & Hoppmann, M. (2013). *A synoptic history of classical rhetoric*. Routledge.
- Ninio, A. (2018). *Pragmatic development*. New York, NY: Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9780429498053](https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429498053)
- Paducheva, E. V. (1996). *Semanticheskije issledovanija* [Semantic studies]. Moscow: Yazyki Slavyanskoi Kultury.
- Selden, R., Widdowson, P., & Brooker, P. (2016). *A reader's guide to contemporary literary theory*. London: Routledge.
- Skrebnev, Y. M. (2003). *Osnovy stilistiki anglijskogo yazyka* [Fundamentals of English stylistics]. Moscow: Astrel.
- Van Peer, W. (Ed.). (2016). *The taming of the text: Explorations in language, literature and culture*. Routledge. doi: [10.4324/9781315544526](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315544526)
- Wolfreys, J., Robbins, R., & Womack, K. (2016). *Key concepts in literary theory*. London: Routledge.