



## THE ORIGIN OF THE SUBJECT OF STYLISTICS AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract:** The further development of Stylistics was based on the three above mentioned sources from which Poetics went its own way and created the field of study known at present as Literary Criticism. Rhetoric and Dialectics developed into Stylistics. In Middle Ages Latin was exclusively used as the language of science, art and administration, and no attempts were made to deal with problems of speech. This period shows no progress in the development of stylistics.

**Key words:** Rhetoric, Poetics, Dialectics, Romanticism, New Idealists, formalism, Structuralism

In ancient Greece the use of language can be seen mainly as an effort to create speeches. Thus we may recognize a practical function of language in political and judicial speeches, and an aesthetic function in ceremonial ones. The art of creating speech was called Rhetoric (from the Greek *technē rhetorikē*) and was taught as one of the main subjects in schools. The aim was to train speakers to create effective and attractive speeches. Another language activity was the creation of poetic works. The process of artistic creation was called Poetics. Its aim was to study a piece of art, and, unlike rhetoric, it focused on the problems of expressing the ideas before the actual moment of utterance. The work of Aristotle (384 – 322 B.C.) entitled *Poetics* is considered to be a pioneer publication in this field. His distinction of epics, drama and lyrics within artistic works is still applicable. The third field of language use was the art of creating a dialogue. The study of creating and guiding a dialogue, talk or discussion, as well as the study of methods of persuasion, was called Dialectics. The “dialogue technique” as one of the most convenient and efficient form of exchanging experiences and presenting research results was introduced and supported by Socrates. This method is still known in pedagogy as the “dialogical” or “Socrates’ method”<sup>1</sup>.

An analogistic rhetoric of Cicero became a model way of public speaking, which means that aesthetically attractive speeches were popular. They enabled speakers to develop their individual styles. However, the influence of ancient India brought about a tendency to make speeches brief in the case of a sufficient amount of data and facts being available to a speaker. This tendency to economize the speech intentionally enhanced the distinction between the form and content.

The language of science, culture and administration was very different from the language of common people. However, it would be inappropriate to speak about styles at this stage. It was the same language (and the same style) but, of course, different phrases, clichés and stereotyped bookish Latin formulas were used in each sphere. The most apparent differences occurred in terminology. In the New Age on the one hand there were the traditions of Cicero and Aristotle, on the other, new theories of style have developed: individualist, emotionalist,

<sup>1</sup>Winter, Werner. *Styles as Dialects*. Proceeding of the Ninth International Congress of Linguists, p.324.

formalist,functionalist, etc.

In the era of Romanticism the notion and term style referred exclusively to the written form of language (from Gr. *stylos*= a carver, an instrument for writing).

Spoken language was the main subject of rhetoric.

The French classical theory of styles requested the usage of a high (*grand*) style in all verbal works of art as an opposite to the everyday communication of common people in which the middle and low (*plain*) styles were used. The styles were classified as 1. *stylus altus*(works of art), 2. *stylus mediocris*(the style of high society) and 3. *stylus humilis*(the style of low society but could be used in comedies). This theory reflects preliminary attempts to describe the notion of style as based primarily on the selection of expressive means<sup>2</sup>.

At the beginning of the 20th century a group of German linguists, B. Croce, K.Vossler and L. Spitzer, represented the school of the New Idealists. Their approach is known as individualistic or psychoanalytical because its main aim was to search for individual peculiarities of language as elements of expressing a psychological state of mind (in German "Seelische Meinung"). B. Croce regarded language as a creation and thus suggested viewing linguistics as a subdepartment of aesthetics. Karl Vossler was known for looking for clues to national cultures behind linguistic details and Leo Spitzer for tracing parallels between culture and expression. His working method became famous as the Spitzerian circle. However, the German school of individualists and psychoanalysts belongs to the past and there are no followers anymore.

The origin of the new era of linguistic stylistics is represented by the linguistic emotionalistic conception of the French School of Charles Bally. Ch. Bally worked under the supervision of Ferdinand de Saussure in Geneva and after Saussure's death published his work: "General course of linguistic"(1916). Bally's own concept of stylistics is classified as emotionally expressive because of his strong belief that each particular component of linguistic information combines a part of language and a part of a man who interprets or announces the information.

While at the beginning of the 20th century the Romance countries were mainly influenced by Bally's expressive stylistics and Germany by Croce's individual stylistics, a new linguistic and literary movement developed in Russia and became known as formalism.

The Russian Formalists introduced a new, highly focused and solid method of literary and linguistic analysis. Formal method used in linguistics was based on the analytical view of the form, the content of a literary work was seen as a sum of its stylistic methods. In this way, the formal characteristics of a literary work are seen in opposition to its content. In other words, the focus was on 'devices of artistry' not on content (i.e. how not what). The formalists originated as an opposition to a synthesis introduced by the symbolists. The development follows from synthesis towards analysis, putting the main emphasis on the form, material, or ,skill'.

The main representative was Roman O. Jakobson; others were J. N. Tynjanov and V. V. Vinogradov. Russian formalism originated in 1916, flourished in 1920 – 1923, and had practically ceased to exist by the end of the 20's. In spite of the short, about ten year, existence of Russian formalism, many ideas were modified and further elaborated. They became part of

<sup>2</sup>Winter, Werner. *Styles as Dialects*. Proceeding of the Ninth International Congress of Linguists, p.327.

structuralism, and can also be found in the works of the members of the Prague School ten years later. The crucial question of the movement known as Structuralism is what is language and what is its organization like? The main ideas of structuralism are presented in its fundamental work "General course of linguistic" written by F. de Saussure (1856 – 1913) and published posthumously by his student Ch. Bally in 1916.

The ideas of Structuralism penetrated not only into linguistics and literary criticism, but also into ethnography, folklore studies, aesthetics, history of arts, drama and theatre studies, etc. The program and methodology of work of the Prague Linguistic Circle (1926) were truly structuralistic. They introduced systematic application of the term structuralism, which brought about new phenomena introduced into linguistics and literary study. Its influence on stylistics was crucial. The main aspects of the movement can be summarized as follows:

- ✓ distinction between the aesthetic function of poetic language and the practical, communicative function of language;
- ✓ language is seen as a structure, supra-temporal and supra-spatial, given inherently (in the sense of Saussure's language);
- ✓ literary work is an independent structure related to the situation of its origin creation;
- ✓ individual parts of literary or linguistic structure are always to be understood from the point of view of a complex structure;
- ✓ the analyses of particular works were based on language analysis because it was assumed that in a literary work all components (i.e. language, content, composition) are closely inter-related and overlapping within the structure.

The founders and main representatives of the Prague Linguistic Circle were R. O. Jakobson, N. S. Trubeckoj, V. Mathesius, J. Mukařovský. Among others were also B. Trnka, B. Havránek, J. Vachek, K. Hausenblas and F. X. Šalda. Another structuralistic school originated in Copenhagen, Denmark represented by J. Hjelmslev, and in the U.S. represented by E. Sapir and L. Bloomfield.

In conclusion we would like to say that some information about stylistics as a branch of general linguistics, the definition of style and stylistics. Article attempts to provide a comprehensive theoretical background to the study of stylistics and its development.

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