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Stylistics: Text, Cognition and Corpora: A Book Review

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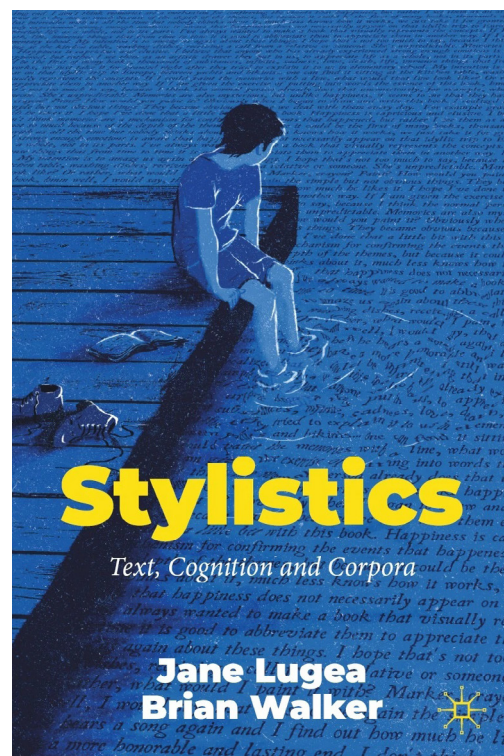
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STYLISTICS: TEXT, COGNITION AND CORPORA, BY JANE LUGEA AND BRIAN WALKER, CHAM: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN CHAM, 2023, 296 PP. ISBN: 978-3-031-10422-0, 32,09 € (EBOOK).

This book introduces the three main pillars of contemporary stylistic research: text, cognition, and corpus, and shows how these three pillars work together to reveal the beauty and complexity of style in a text. Traditionally, stylistics has always centered on text, but now it also considers the role of cognition and the use of corpora to provide an empirical basis and increase objectivity. This book fills the void of comprehensive explanations for Stylistics scholars by combining detailed textual analysis, cognitive processes in textual interpretation, and corpus methodology. According to Mahlberg (2017), cognitive and corpus approaches complement each other and support the goals of contemporary Stylistics. Each chapter provides an analytical framework informed by Cognitive Science and corpus methodology to examine the influence of literary texts on readers' understanding.

This book consists of ten main chapters comprehensively organized by Lugea and Walker. In the opening chapter, the authors invite readers to explore the world of stylistics by introducing the concept of style. The authors not only discuss what style is but also explain how it is formed within a text. Each chapter presents in-depth empirical data related to stylistics, characterization, and the features of novel characters within the text. Furthermore, each chapter is supported by theoretical approaches and qualitative methodologies that contextualize the analysis more thoroughly, providing readers with a more comprehensive understanding.

Chapter 1 of this book serves not only as an introduction but also as an invitation to understand the worlds created by the texts we read. In this chapter, the authors carefully establish a solid foundation for further exploration of the book's content. Authors explain that by understanding and integrating texts, cognition, and corpora, we can uncover the ways in which style is formed within texts, thereby allowing readers to appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of each literary work. The explanations in this chapter begin by introducing the idea that a text creates a "world," a meta-



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phor that illustrates how a text interacts with its discourse context and how the reader's understanding of the text is influenced by that context.

Chapter 2 in particular provides a detailed guide to the World Stylistics approach, using Text World Theory (TWT) by Werth (1999). This theory teaches that discourse participants, such as readers, use clues from the text and existing knowledge to form a mental representation of the discourse, called the text world. With the help of Cognitive Science, TWT provides tools to better analyze and describe discourse. To show how TWT works, the authors apply it to the opening paragraph of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy (1893), revealing how this novel has expressed its concern about social inequality from the start. However, they also note that TWT is less practical for the analysis of longer texts. Therefore, authors suggest using a corpus to help find entry points into the text for further analysis.

Chapter 3 of this book invites readers to dive into the world of narrative point of view by combining various studies from leading experts such as Short (1996) and Simpson (2000). The authors introduce a new way of thinking about narrative, narration, and story, showing how narrative texts enable writers to communicate with readers. Using textual cues and existing knowledge, readers form an impression of the world of the text, which consists of narratives and stories. The narrator acts as a storyteller who tells the story from his or her point of view, adding characters and having the option to use the character's point of view. The authors then focus on a concrete example from Hemingway's (1926) *The Sun Also Rises* (TSAR), which is known for its objective style and lack of subjectivity. Corpus analysis shows that Hemingway's narrator uses few adverbs, evaluative adjectives, and modal auxiliary verbs, supporting the assessment that the novel has a journalistic style. However, point-of-view indicators such as 'let's' and 'ought to' were found to be redundant in the characters' direct speech, not in the narrative.

In Chapter 4 of this book, the reader is invited to understand the basic differences between narrative and discourse when talking about character. The authors explore various techniques for presenting a character's Speech, Writing and Thought Presentation (SW&TP). To explain how SW&TP can be analyzed using a corpus, the authors start by manually annotating these categories in Evelyn Waugh's (1903-1966) short story entitled 'Mr. Loveday's Little Outing'. This process is guided by the model SW&TP, which helps create a more detailed and structured analysis. Then, the authors go on to compare the results of this analysis with the fictional portion of Lancaster's corpus SW&TP (LancFic). Through a combination of a stylistic framework and a corpus approach, the author shows that analysis that is usually complicated can become easier and more focused. In addition, this analysis also involves a comparison between 'norms' SW&TP in fiction and researched texts.

Chapter 5 of this book invites us to delve deeper into the analysis of dialogue in drama through a combination of Pragmatics and Conversation Analysis (CA) models. By taking a quote from the British film *I, Daniel Blake* produced in 2016 (p. 116), the authors show how Gricean Conversational Implicature, Speech Acts, CA, and (im)politeness complement each other in understanding character interactions. A corpus approach is used to study dialogue in sitcoms, compare the characters' dialogue linguistically, and reveal prominent patterns of language use from the main characters. These patterns were further analyzed using a pragmatic (im)politeness framework, which revealed the meaning behind their speaking styles. This case study shows how quantitative deviations in texts relate to our social intuitions about the norms of oral communication, providing deep insight and analytical focus for understanding narrative style more comprehensively.

On the journey to understanding characters in fiction, Chapter 6 of this book invites readers to explore the concepts of character and characterization. The author introduces a character analysis checklist from Culpeper's (2001) work, then expands it to apply to characters in prose and drama. With detailed analysis, the authors show how keywords can be used to analyze the characters in Shaw's (1916) *Pygmalion*. At first these keywords were just a list of words, but they become full of meaning when viewed through the Cognitive Stylistic Framework, which emphasizes the importance of text, cognition, and corpus.

Moving on to Chapter 7, the authors take us deeper into the world of figurative language in fiction. They explain that understanding metaphor, metonymy, and simile requires a textual and cognitive approach supported by a corpus approach. Using the idea of Encyclopaedic Knowledge from Langacker's (2008) *Cognitive Grammar*, the authors help us understand the cross-domain mappings underlying metaphor and simile, as well as the domain mapping in metonymy. This chapter enriches our understanding of figurative language in fiction, showing how an integrated approach can reveal hidden depths of meaning in texts.

Chapter 8 takes us through research on thought style as an accumulation of linguistic features carried out over fifty years. The authors map various lexical and grammatical features that have been related to thought style while introducing pragmatic and cognitive approaches to deepen understanding of fictional thought. The chapter culminates in the innovative use of corpus methods and *Cognitive Grammar* to revisit Benjy's classic study of mind style in Faulkner's (1929) *The Sound and the Fury*. With these new techniques, the authors re-examine existing understandings of the text, illustrating Stylistics' commitment to a rigorous and replicable methodology. This book shows how new approaches can reinvigorate the analysis of classic texts, enriching our understanding of thought and character in literature.

Chapter 9 invites readers to delve deeper into the linguistic world of Humour Studies. By explaining the main characteristics of humorous discourse: ambiguity, incongruity, and resolution, the authors introduce the General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH) was proposed by Raskin and Attardo (1991). The GTVH is particularly relevant for stylistic analysis because the idea of script opposition helps analyze irony, and Knowledge Resources (KRs) structure the construction of jokes at various levels. The authors then incorporate TWT into joke analysis, defining the KRs situation as the world of joke texts, thereby integrating text and context in humour discourse. This modification connects GTVH to Stylistics research, showing the application of concepts and models from the previous chapter to humour. This chapter also shows how corpus methods can be used to validate claims about inappropriate or unexpected language use, providing new insights into humour analysis.

Chapter 10 concludes the discussion of this book by making the practice of Stylistics explicit. The authors provide a detailed guide to completing a Stylistics project, summarizing key principles such as rigor, replicability, and objectivity. This final chapter is a practical guide for readers who wish to explore and apply Stylistic analysis to their own work. Reading this book in full is like putting together a puzzle, where each piece combined reveals a complete and clear picture. The two authors of this book have succeeded in presenting

the study of Stylistics coherently and interestingly and are equipped with the results of fifty years of research, making the contents of this book empirical and comprehensive. The study of Stylistics still needs to be followed up and developed to provide stronger tools for scholars to explore the effects and meaning of literary works.

Overall, this book provides a thorough and innovative exploration of contemporary stylistics, integrating text, cognition, and corpus approaches. Its strengths lie in the clear presentation of theoretical concepts and the practical tools it offers for analyzing literary texts. However, the book's reliance on corpus analysis may be daunting for readers unfamiliar with these methods, and the application of TWT may prove less practical for analyzing longer texts. Despite these limitations, the book's combination of cognitive science and corpus methodologies makes it a valuable resource for scholars seeking to deepen their understanding of stylistics.

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