

Controversies in Stylistics: Leading to the Culmination of New Approaches

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ABSTRACT

The tremendous development of stylistics over the last four decades has brought about the growth of different approaches. As the essence of stylistics is integrating linguistics with literature, it has become a controversial subject particularly among literary critics and linguists. The dissension among scholars is a product of their own research in and therefore grounded in solid empirical study. Thus, the article discusses various approaches as reported in the stylistics literature along with their respective strengths and weaknesses. Thus, the paper attempts to shed some light on the controversies of stylistics in general as well as the various approaches.

Keywords: Stylistics, literary critics, linguistic, controversies

INTRODUCTION

The field of Stylistics has evolved tremendously over the past four decades primarily due to parallel developments in linguistic theories. Essentially, Stylistics is an attempt to bridge literature and linguistics. This allows readers to comprehend, interpret and thus appreciate literature through linguistic analysis. According to Widdowson (1975), Stylistics is the study of literary

discourse from a linguistic orientation while Simpson (1993) and Verdonk (2002) state that Stylistics seeks to interpret literary texts through linguistic analysis.

Weber (1996) and Carter and Simpson (1989) detailed various developments in Stylistics pointing out that these transformations are generally attributable to the criticism Stylistics faced over the last five decades. These criticisms contribute to the teleological metamorphosis of Stylistics through postulation of various approaches in efforts address them (criticisms). This paper discusses the rationales that underpin the development of diverse approaches

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 7 July 2015

Accepted: 9 November 2015

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in Stylistics. It also intends to elucidate the critics' perspectives by means of the researcher's perspective in relation to their statements concerning Stylistics.

This paper will first highlight the interrelationship between the prevailing constructs and the emergence of new approaches as the shortcomings of the former led to the emergence of the latter as evidenced in the literature. Next, polemics within the field of Stylistics will be reviewed in relation to their impact on stylistics as a whole along with their role in mediating the evolution of new approaches in particular. Finally, the paper concludes with a brief summation on the net effect of these polemics on the Stylistics paradigm.

Essentially, the advent of new approaches to stylistics was a direct result of perceived weaknesses in Jakobson's Formalist Stylistics which he first postulated in his seminal paper, at the Indiana Style Conference in 1958. While scholars found this approach provided a framework for a thorough and systematic analysis of texts,

the actual interpretative process failed to establish linkages between the analytical and interpretative aspects. Attridge (1987) argues there is relatively a greater degree of paucity in relation to the reasoning dimension in Jakobson's approach. He further argued that the analysis of Formalist Stylistics approach is linguistically too formal on the one hand and it may not be relevant to literary analysis on the other. In his attempt to bridge this dichotomy as well as address the interpretative weaknesses in Formalist Stylistics, Halliday (1971) propounded the Functional Stylistics approach. Notwithstanding its merit of highlighting how meaning could be inferred by means of systematic choices of words, in direct contrast to previous approaches, the functionalist approach was nevertheless criticised for creating a certain 'world-view' in stylistic analysis. Fish (1969) critiques Jakobson's formula that the stylistics analysis, namely the analysis of style, produces an effect on readers in reading a particular text. He also contends that

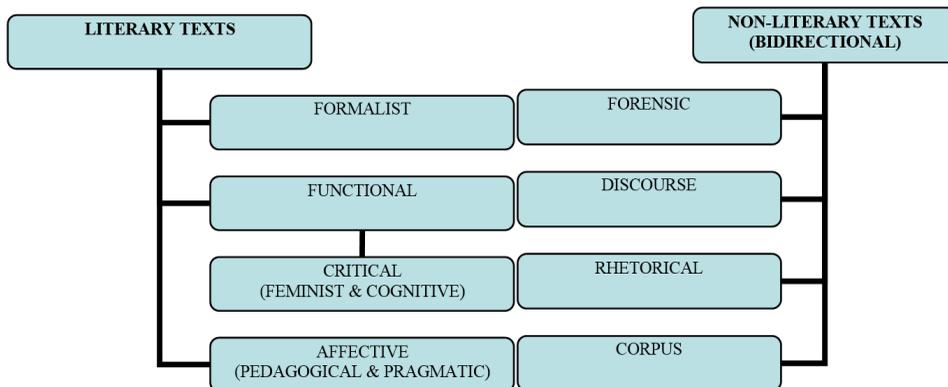


Figure 1. The Approaches to Stylistics.

Functional Stylistics cannot validate critical interpretations since it is an 'interpretive act' (Weber, 1996, p.2).

The perceived weaknesses of both Formalist and Functionalist approaches prompted Fish (1979) to propose Affective Stylistics to complement the two previous approaches. Relatively speaking, the affective approach was a reader-centred version of stylistics as the fundamental principles underpinning the approach emphasised the need to focus on the readers' assumptions, expectations and interpretive processes. Nevertheless, considering the fact that readers' response is a dynamic and evolving process, this was seen by scholars as a flaw, therefore, leading them to question the basic assumptions of the Affective approach.

Despite their underlying and obvious limitations, the formal, functional and affective approaches still reign supreme in modern stylistics, as these long-standing approaches are employed as core frameworks and act as guiding principles for new approaches. The limitations of Fish's Affective Stylistics led in the emergence of two diverse approaches, namely Pedagogical Stylistics and Pragmatic Stylistics. These two approaches emphasise the fact that stylistics analysis was centred on the content of a text.

Pedagogical Stylistics emerged in the 1980s. It accentuated that stylistic analysis constituted a method of textual reading. Proponents of this approach such as Widdowson (1973) and Carter (1986) highlighted its suitability for both native

and non-native speakers of the language. They went on to say that the approach also augmented the development of reading and writing skills while also sensitising its analysis to different uses of the language. Another feature of this approach was its focus on contextualisation with a wide acknowledgment from stylisticians that the former was an essential feature in textual analysis and interpretation.

In contrast, Pragmatic Stylistics emphasises contexts to draw attention to the fact that it (context) had a crucial role in stylistics analysis. This approach further posited that style was neither totally inherent in texts (the formalist view) nor totally resident in the readers' mind (the Affective view). Short and Pratt (1986) in advocating Pragmatic Stylistics nevertheless had different areas of foci. For instance, Pratt focused on speech act stylistics, which is concerned with what speakers say and their associated actions while speaking. In contrast, Short was more interested in pragmatics, for instance in the use of presupposition and inferences.

Critical Stylistics is a brainchild of Fowler (1986) and Birch (1989), founded on the principles of discourse analysis to demonstrate how language is used in social contexts. Drawing largely from Halliday's Functional Stylistics, this approach utilised analytical tools derived from systemic-functional grammar. Like Halliday, Fowler and Birch viewed language as a resource for meaning making; a social semiotic that constituted the 'reality' of the culture. However, diverging from their functionalist

heritage, they also emphasised the inherent complexities subsuming the relationship between language and ideology. As ideology is considered to be an essential textual component, social, historical, cultural as well as intertextual factors are taken into account in the meaning making process.

The concern of Critical Stylistics in ideology and representation culminated in the emergence of Feminist Stylistics, a prominent proponent being Mills (1992). As its name suggests, Feminist Stylistics is interested in unmasking patriarchal ideologies and denaturalising patriarchal assumptions. Halliday's transitivity is often used in the analysis. Basically, the analysis aims to critically examine the representations of women in literature and popular cultures.

Another approach which is dependent on Critical Stylistics for its foundational antecedents was Cognitive Stylistics. Sharing an affinity with the fundamental principles of Halliday's linguistics, Cognitive Stylistics is founded on explicitly constructivist assumptions. In fact, Cognitive Stylistics proponents like Freeman advocate a fixed correlation between form and meaning of texts. Meaning is perceived to be a relativistic ally inferential process that generates different interpretations, because different readers use different assumptions whilst deconstructing the text.

A marked shift from literary texts into non-literary texts has been seen in recent years. In response to Leech and Short's (2007) call for utilising literary text to better understand a discourse, Gugin (2008)

advocated Bidirectional Stylistics i.e., the opposite of unidirectional approach of 'classic stylistics' for the analysis of literary text. In advocating this stylistics, he highlighted some strengths of it, such as its contribution to a better understanding of how literary works can be fully utilised to strengthen and further enhance our understanding of how particular linguistic structures function in various discourses. In this regard, he made specific reference to the pragmatics of pseudo-cleft in the fiction of Flannery O'Connor and convincingly argues the interrelationship between the analysis of literary texts and non-literary texts.

In addition, stylistics has also been accepted in the legal fraternity with the advent of Forensic Stylistics. Also known as 'stylometry', Forensic Stylistics deals with the examination of style in legal cases particularly the authorship. In contrast to 'forensic linguistics' which examines all forms of language namely speech, choice of words among others, 'Forensic Stylistics' is mostly concerned with the written language of a given author. Specifically, 'Forensic Stylistics' determine identity of the author of a document in the legal profession. Kingston and Kate (2006) explicate that in 'Forensic Stylistics', there are three types of style being analysed, namely formatting (error in spelling, punctuation, syntax), rhetoric (choice of words, poetic style, idioms, etc.) and subject matter. The ultimate goal of 'Forensic Stylistics' is to determine the identity of a document's author. For instance, the case of 'Succession of Killingsworth' in 1973, where a will was found to be invalid

as the notary did not write the will. Instead, it was his secretary who reportedly wrote the will and this was evidenced by means of an inappropriate vocabulary used in the document: ‘*revenue*’ instead of ‘*residue*’, a mistake that an experienced lawyer would not make but a new employee receiving dictation would.

There are three other approaches in relation to the analysis of non-literary texts namely Discourse Stylistics, Rhetorical Stylistics and Corpus Stylistics. Discourse Stylistics serves the purpose of drawing specifically on techniques and methods of discourse analysis. On the other hand, an analysis being carried out with the purpose

of impressing or affecting others emotionally is known as Rhetorical Stylistics. Finally, Corpus Stylistics deals with the interface between corpus linguistic and literary stylistics.

The various approaches to stylistics, their inherent strengths and deficiencies and their relevant critics are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

CONTROVERSIES

Generally, controversies pertaining to stylistics surround stylistics (in general) and the various approaches to stylistics. Polemics aligned with stylistics as a discipline stem from the fact that linguists in general are

Table 1
The Fundamentals

Approaches	Strengths	Weaknesses	Critics
Formalist (Jakobson)	Facilitates readers to analyse literary texts systematically.	Devoid of interpretative aspect.	Its weaknesses of interpretative dimension was criticised by Fish.
Functionalist (Halliday)	Facilitates both analysis and interpretation of literary texts by means of systematic analysis.	The absence of consideration for readers’ response.	Its complicated approach and the absence of readers’ response was criticised by Fish.
Affective (Fish)	Readers’ response is inherent in texts analysis.	Readers’ response was perceivably inconsistent.	The perceived ambiguity of readers’ response was criticised by Toolan and others.

Table 2
Modern Stylistics.

Approach	Strengths
Pedagogical	Useful in learning and teaching process (classroom); 1st or 2nd language contexts.
Pragmatic	Context is an important component in interpretation; analysis goes beyond the sentence level.
Critical	Ideology and representation is revealed through the analysis. The relationship between language and ideology is complex and indirect.
Feminist	Unmasking patriarchal ideology through critical examinations of the representation of women in literature and popular cultures.
Cognitive	Different readers make different assumptions in their processing of the texts because meaning is an inferential process, which leads to different interpretations.

Table 3
Non-literary Stylistics

Approach	Strengths
Bidirectional	Informs and illuminates linguistics and literature.
Forensic	Useful in resolving litigated questions relating to disputed authorship or meaning which has been used as an evidence on a wide range of legal cases.
Discourse	Focuses on the techniques and methods of discourse analysis.
Rhetorical	Persuasive to audience.
Corpus	The interface between corpus linguistics and literary stylistics.

unable to fathom the relevancy of utilising linguistics in the field of literary analysis.

In contrast, polemics regarding the various approaches are attributable to the different perspectives of different proponents in stylistics who hold divergent views in relation to the theoretical underpinnings of the principles associated with a particular approach. Hence, the notion of ‘objectivity’ and ‘scientific’ as propagated by Carter, Short, Simpson, Van Peer and Freeman often colour these polemics in an attempt to accentuate empiricism and logic while downplaying subjectivism. In these erudite exchanges, the functionalist approach is often subject to intense scrutiny and critique, as it is the most dominant and influential approach in the field of stylistics.

POLEMICS ON STYLISTICS AS A DISCIPLINE

Although the arguments raised by Fowler-Bateson are somewhat obsolete, it is nevertheless important to explore and be acquainted with its contents as it constitutes an important element of linguistic criticism. Fowler posits that the emergence of stylistics compels the need for a reappraisal of

contemporary ‘literary criticism’ as ‘it needs to be considerably modified if there is to be a successful interface between linguistics and literature’ (1975; in Birch, 1989). He further expounds that since the systems of literary knowledge are encoded in the structure of language, such a reappraisal and realignment are mandatory in order to mediate theoretical dichotomies that may arise with the advent of stylistics.

Unsurprisingly, literary critics chastised Fowler’s bold statement. Vendler, in reviewing Fowler’s ‘Essays on Style and Language’ (1966), expressed her disagreement with Fowler’s statement that systematic linguistic analysis would inevitably redefine prevailing literary criticism frameworks:

If linguistics can add to our comprehension of literature, someone trained in linguistics should be able to point out to us, in poems we already know well, significant features we have missed because of our amateurish ignorance of the workings of language. (Vendler, 1966)

Vendler's response towards Fowler's proposition is born of a *weltanschauung* that views Fowler's proposition as something heretical and inimical to the field of literary criticism. As further evidence of this resistance to change, Vendler's denigrates '... most linguists are-beginning students' (1966, p.458). This vehemence is underpinned by the presumption that since linguistics has only recently entered the world of literary analysis, the superficial analytical and interpretative endeavours of linguists are insufficient for linguists to be regarded as experts and on par with established literary critics (Simpson, 2004). Vendler's invective however does not account for the fact that linguistic criticism was not designed to supplant the role of literary criticism but rather complement the existing paradigm. In other words, it is merely an effort to offer an alternative method in the critical reading and interpretation of literary texts utilising linguistic 'toolkits'.

Bateson, a contemporary of Vendler, also entered the fray by appending a postscript to the review in which he questions the usefulness of linguistics in literary interpretation. In providing a definition of literature in response to Fowler's 'linguistic criticism', he avers that:

A work of literature is successful linguistically, the best words in the best order, when appropriate stylistics devices co-operate to unify humane value judgments, implicit or explicit, on some aspect of life as it is lived in the writer's own society. (Bateson, 1966)

This provocative statement prompted Fowler to question the rationale for the utilisation of the word 'humane'; for the deliberate insertion of the word was rightly construed to infer that the 'scientificness' of linguistic analysis is not 'humane' and hence, irrelevant for application within the field of literary criticism. As a rebuttal, Fowler and other stylisticians reiterated that the scientific and systematic method adopted in their analysis did not constrain linguists from critically interpreting texts, as it did literary critics.

Bateson entered the fray by concluding that the study of language was not a requisite ancillary to the study of literature. This contradicted his earlier assertion that literature was fundamentally a successful work of linguistics. It thus, provided ammunition for stylisticians to respond that they had sufficient grounds for analysing literature by means of linguistic analysis.

Fowler and other stylisticians use linguistic approach to literature to understand and appreciate literature. Fowler asserted that not everyone can 'catch' critical thinking. It is through experience that someone can understand and interpret literary texts thus can be a literary critic. Not everyone can understand literature when encountering a text for the first time (Carter (Ed.), 1982).

Reading literature is different from reading other discourses especially reading it in a second or foreign language. For native speakers especially literature students, are "sensible" speakers and do not need much linguistic assistance. Reading literature

requires a lot of components to be examined: the style, points of view, theme, plot, and historical background, to name a few. Style is an important component of literature. Fowler and other stylisticians believe that style is not “caught”, but rather has to be learnt and taught. Moreover, style is not exclusively literary. This is because, one employs one’s own style of writing. The word “choices” convey one’s style. Style is something that we can see and study in other discourses as well. The concern of stylistics in the study of style brings into manifestation Discourse Analysis in stylistics where Critical Discourse Analysis emerges (Weber, 1996). Their concerns are similar to stylistics namely analysing texts linguistically. The difference however, lies on the texts analysed. While stylistics seeks to analyse literary texts, Critical Discourse Analysis analyses other discourses such as media texts.

There is on-going debate between literary critics and linguists as one believes a person is born a natural grammarian or literary critics and there is nothing in between. Therefore, they view linguistic criticism or stylistics as something impossible. This is due to the inability of literary critics to comprehend linguistic analysis. Literary critics fall short of grappling the linguistic competence that is required in understanding and appreciating literary works. They fail to see the significant role played by stylistics in helping shape the understanding and interpretation of texts, especially for students.

Stylistics may not be very helpful in the first language contexts. Nevertheless, it is proven that stylistics is very much accommodating in ESL contexts. Scholars claim that stylistics enables ESL students to understand literary texts (Short (1989), Mackay (1986), Wallace (2003), Carter& Long (1991), Shakila (2004) and Ganakumaran (2007). In comparison with native speakers, literary texts may pose a real challenge to ESL students because of their relatively weaker knowledge base of literature components. Hence, their literary competence may not be sufficient to comprehend literary texts as opposed to native speakers.

However, ESL students are equipped with the knowledge of grammar. This gives them an edge as well as advantage in understanding literary texts through stylistic analysis. This knowledge can be tapped into understanding literary text at a satisfactory level, even the difficult ones. Short (1989, p.6) stated that stylistic analysis has been of particular concern to the foreign-language learners (non-native speakers) as it has been seen as a device by which the understanding of relatively complex texts can be achieved.

Even though there have been many supportive statements on stylistics, the 20th century still witnesses arguments and critiques on stylistics. In 1993, Jean-Jacques Lecercle criticised the aims, methods and rationale of stylistics. He suggested that stylistics is not relevant, the discipline is ‘ailing’ and the 20th century would see the disappearance of stylistics in academic world. He added; ‘no one has ever really

known what the term stylistics means and hardly anyone seems to care' (1993, p.14). His denunciation of stylistics reveals that he is in total disagreement with stylistics.

However, considering the works being carried out within this domain along with the exponential pace at which this construct has been growing at the 21st century, one wonders if Jean-Jacques Lecercle was able to see the significance of stylistics. Simpson (2004) puts forward that in the 21st century, stylistics is much alive and well. Modern stylistics is flourishing and witnessed by the proliferation of sub disciplines where stylistic methods are enriched and enabled by theories of discourse, culture and society. For example, Feminist Stylistics emerged due to the manifestation of Feminist Theory in stylistics. Cognitive Stylistics emerged from Cognitive Psychology and Discourse Stylistics from Discourse Analysis (2004, p.2).

Furthermore, stylistics is taught and researched at departments of language, literature as well as linguistics at various universities all over the world. It is a valued method in language learning and teaching especially second language learners as the latter are exposed to the formal knowledge of language. Therefore, linguistic orientation is something that is applicable to second language learners. Stylistics is a discipline that is not only helpful in understanding literature, it also assists in developing one's critical skills; in particular, the systematic analysis of stylistic enhances learners' critical thinking.

CONTROVERSIES IN THE APPROACH

Functional Stylistics received its fair share of criticism and yet it is the most influential approach in stylistics. Stanley E. Fish (1981) in his paper 'What is Stylistics and why they are saying such terrible things about it?' criticised Jakobson's Formalist Stylistics and Halliday's Functional Stylistics in particular. He asserted that Functional Stylistics failed to include the readers' response in interpreting literary texts. He opined this was because readers' response is an important element in understanding literary texts.

He posits Halliday's functional grammar as complicated and involves a lot of functions and categories resulting in meaningless analysis. Halliday develops three principal language functions, namely *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual*. These three principals are interrelated. *Ideational* is the expression of content while *interpersonal* is the expression of interaction and *textual* is the expression of situation through coherent texts. Halliday regards 'language as social semiotic'. Language is an entity that is concerned from a sociological perspective; language is a social entity. He further explicates that communication is carried out from the texts. Therefore, social systems motivate the language code and not the mind (Halliday, 1978; Birch, 1989; Weber, 1996).

Fish (1981) then clarified that Halliday succeeded in putting the words into categories and functions, but failed in interpreting the texts. He believed the

explanation of the meaning is not the capacity of syntax to express it, but the ability of a reader to confer it. Therefore, readers' response is of great significance in understanding a text. Thus, he called for a new approach - Affective Stylistics.

Toolan (Weber, 1996), in his paper 'Stylistics and its discontents' and in efforts to get off the Fish 'hook', elaborated and discussed the Functional Stylistics with the aim to unwind Fish's argument. He posits that Fish's Affective Stylistics is unreliable as Fish put forth that all competent users of language share a remarkably complex interrelated and interdependent set of interpretative conventions for expressing and constituting their shared world. Toolan argues that this is the grammar that no grammar or linguistics book has ever adequately captured. Essentially, Fish is aware of the weaknesses of his argument (related to readers' response) since he later proposed a notion of 'interpretive community'. However, Toolan vehemently contested his notion of 'interpretive community', calling it ambiguous because he failed to explain on '...what these "interpretive communities" are, where they are, how they are constituted, influenced and changed' (Toolan in Weber, 1996, p.126). Fish's proposition is much more complicated. This is because not all competent users of language share the same language constraints as fluency varies from one learner to the other.

Halliday's functional approach has been used widely in the modern stylistics. A lot of new approaches to stylistics branched

out through this functional approach. According to Simpson (2004), over the years, stylisticians have returned regularly to the transitivity model in their analysis of text and especially in their analyses of narrative texts. Halliday's study is important owing to a number of reasons. Simpson then suggests that Halliday should have illustrated well on the usefulness of stylistic analysis in exploring literature and language. Halliday's approach also successfully shows how intuitions about a text can be explored systematically and with rigour using a retrievable procedure of analysis.

Recently, O'Halloran (2007) in her paper 'The Subconscious in James Joyce's 'Eveline': a Corpus Stylistic Analysis that chews on the 'Fish hook' intended to counter Fish's argument on the arbitrariness and the circular analysis of stylistics. She studied the 'subconscious' in 'Eveline' using a corpus-informed stylistic analysis. The method used is a combination of Halliday's transitivity analysis with corpus-informed formal analysis by Stubbs (2001). The study shows that stylistic analysis is neither as circular nor arbitrary as claimed by Fish. Corpus-informed stylistics is proven to reduce the arbitrary as well as circular attributes of stylistic analysis. The rebuttals from stylisticians on Fish's attack has proved important in helping shape the way stylisticians think about the connections between analysis and interpretation.

Another argument on the approach of stylistics is conceived in 1996, where Mackay critiques the 'objective' and 'scientific' approach of stylistics in his

article 'Mything the Point: A Critique of Objective Stylistics'. He criticises the 'objectivity' and 'scientificness' of stylistics proposed by Carter, Simpson, Van Peer and Freeman. Like other stylistic analysis, the aims of its model and framework are to be retrievable and systematic. Mackay argues that the terms 'objective' and 'scientific' are not useful in stylistic analysis. The 'scientific' method of stylistics, which he refers to the frequencies, is unreliable for it is not liable in interpreting literary texts.

Mackay explains that 'word count by itself would prove nothing because words are not definable in numerical terms' (1996, p.3). Therefore, he posits that the style of an author is not the frequencies of the words used. Stylisticians cannot draw a conclusion on the frequencies of words used in a text. The frequencies are just the word choice, and can never be foregrounded as the style of the writer. It should be seen the other way around. This is because the writer's words choice marks his or her style of writing. Therefore, frequencies are accountable in interpreting literary texts. Mackay (1996) also suggests that the approach that is proposed by the stylisticians is by accident can be viewed as 'objective' and 'scientific'. He suggests that their approach is not even a design.

In order to respond and particularly to counter Mackay's arguments, Short, Freeman, Van Peer and Simpson published an article entitled 'Stylistics, Criticism and Myth representation Again: Squaring the Circle with Ray Mackay's Subjective Solution for All Problems' in 1998. Their

purpose is to explicate on the 'objective' and 'scientific' term that is used in stylistics. The objectivity and scientificness of a stylistic analysis can be seen through the retrievable and systematic model and framework. Therefore, there is no doubt that the stylisticians' approach is not an accident as claimed by Mackay but design.

These stylisticians also suggest that Mackay has misconstrued what stylisticians had originally said about 'objectivity' and 'scientificness'. They explain that Mackay believes 'objective' must mean something like 'true for all the time'. However, his notion of 'objective' is something that no scientist and stylisticians would agree upon. For stylisticians, 'being objective means to be detailed, systematic and explicit in analysis'. This does not mean that the analysis should be true for all the time. Stylisticians aim to transmit explicit and empirical analyses 'which open for all to see and find fault with'. They believe that 'understanding is always provisional, and can always in principle be revised and improved' (1998, p.5).

In addition, Mackay's critique is not really new, but 'merely one in a tradition of ill-considered complaints'. Stylisticians have been subjected to various arguments and critiques on the objectivity and scientificness of stylistics over the last 40 years or so. Mackay is continuing the tradition of literary critics such as Vendler, Bateson and Lecercle to name a few, in criticising the objectivity and scientificness of stylistics approach. The critiques and arguments on the objectivity

and scientificness of stylistics analysis can be considered dated.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing discussion, it appears that these controversies play an important role in the development of stylistics. The critiques and arguments warrant stylisticians to continuously explore and consistently improve their approaches. As any other discipline, be it linguistics or others, it is through constructive advice, arguments and critiques by scholars at either within or across disciplines that help it to reach what it is presently. Similarly, stylistics too is subject to such conventions. As can be seen, the controversies within each style and approach have sparked the advent of improvised stylistics such as Critical, Feminist, Cognitive, Discourse, Corpus, Rhetorical, Forensic and Bidirectional. Thus, the success of stylistics in infiltrating other fields and in contact with other research paradigm is proven.

The flourishing development of stylistics from the 20th century through the present shows that stylistics is a subject and field that had attracted the attention of many academicians (Simpson, 2004). Therefore, stylistics remains liable, practical and essential in understanding texts, literary ones in particular. It should be noted that the long-standing dispute as evidenced in the controversy between literary criticism and linguistic criticism would not just stop here. Literary critics, with experience and vast knowledge on literary criticism will not be able to see the usefulness of

linguistic analysis in literary studies. This could be perhaps due to their lack of formal knowledge of language or their refusal to admit that a new rival has emerged. Stylistics, in fact, has opened the world of literature to anyone and everyone in reading, teaching, analysing and thus appreciating literature.

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