THE LANGUAGE OF LITERATURE

General Editor: N. F. Blake

Professor of English Language and Linguistics

University of Sheffield

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An Introduction to the Language of Literature

N. F. BLAKE

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Preface

In common with the other volumes in the series, this book attempts to explain style in terms which do not presuppose too extensive an acquaintance on the part of the reader with linguistic terminology. In some ways this volume provides the background for many of the others which have appeared or will appear in the series since it is a basic guide to style. Its orientation is not basically theoretical; it attempts to provide help in a pragmatic way for those who recognise the importance of language in literature, but who do not know where to start or how to exploit the particular knowledge and skills they possess. It is hoped that the book will be accessible not only to undergraduates on English and other courses, but also to sixth-formers preparing for the new A level English Language exams. Individual chapters have been delivered in modified forms as lectures to audiences in Britain and elsewhere in Europe. I am grateful to them for their comments and help. An earlier form of the introduction appeared in *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses* 1 (1988), and I am grateful to its editor for permission to re-use some of that material here.

I have thought it helpful to use mostly the same passages for the various chapters since most readers will be tackling an individual piece of literature in the same way, though there is some variety in the choice of work discussed. I acknowledge permission from Faber & Faber to reproduce the poem, 'This Lunar Beauty', by W. H. Auden.

I would like to thank Barbara Flather and Kath Keegan for their patience and help in the preparation of the typescript.

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