STYLE

Studies in English Language

***A Course Book in English Grammar*, 2nd Edition –**

Dennis Freeborn

***From Old English to Standard English* – Dennis Freeborn**

***Style: Text Analysis and Linguistic Criticism* – Dennis Freeborn**

***Varieties of English*, 2nd Edition – Dennis Freeborn with Peter
French and David Langford**

***Analysing Talk* – David Langford**

***English Language Project Work* – Christine McDonald**

Series Standing Order

If you would like to receive future titles in this series as they are published, you can make use of our standing order facility. To place a standing order please contact your bookseller or, in case of difficulty, write to us at the address below with your name and address and the name of the series. Please state with which title you wish to begin your standing order. (If you live outside the United Kingdom we may not have the rights for your area, in which case we will forward your order to the publisher concerned.)

Customer Services Department, Macmillan Distribution Ltd
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS, England

STYLE

TEXT ANALYSIS AND LINGUISTIC CRITICISM

Dennis Freeborn

© Dennis Freeborn 1996

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No paragraph of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9HE.

Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

First published 1996 by
MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS
and London
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

ISBN 978-0-333-46877-7 ISBN 978-1-349-24710-3 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-24710-3

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
05 04 03 02 01 00 99 98 97 96

Typeset in Great Britain by
Aarontype Limited
Easton, Bristol

Contents

Symbols	xvi
Acknowledgements	xix
Introduction	xxi
I WHAT IS STYLE?	I
1.1 Dictionary definitions of style	1
1.2 Style in literary criticism and reviews of books	2
1.2.1 'The common pursuit of true judgement'	2
1.2.2 On Robert Browning's <i>Dramatic Monologues</i>	3
1.2.3 On W. B. Yeats's verse	3
1.3 Raymond Queneau's <i>Exercises in Style</i>	4
1.3.1 Samples from <i>Exercises in Style</i>	4
'Different types of speech' – Asides	4
'Different types of written prose' – Official letter	5
'Different styles of poetry' – Sonnet	5
'Character sketches through language' – Ignorance	5
'Experiments with grammatical & rhetorical forms' –	
Reported speech	5
'Jargon' – Botanical	5
'Odds & ends' – Permutations	6
Commentary on 'Botanical'	6
Commentary on 'Permutations'	6
2 WORDS	8
2.1 Choice of words – 'rules of good writing'	8
2.1.1 The Fowler brothers and the King's English –	
practical rules for good writing	8
Rule 1 – familiar and far-fetched words	9
Rule 2 – Concrete and abstract	9

5	WORDS AND GRAMMAR IN PROSE TEXTS II	47
5.1	Style and grammar in William Faulkner's <i>The Bear</i>	47
5.1.1	Punctuation, structure and style (i)	48
5.1.1.1	Commentary	48
	Interior monologue	48
	Punctuation	48
	Sentence structure	49
	Clause structures	49
5.1.2	Punctuation, structure and style (ii)	50
5.1.2.1	Commentary	51
5.1.2.2	Deconstructing the meaning	52
5.1.3	Vocabulary	53
5.2	Style and grammar in James Joyce's <i>Eveline</i>	54
5.2.1	Commentary	55
5.2.1.1	Vocabulary	55
5.2.1.2	Structure	56
6	TRADITIONAL RHETORIC	58
6.1	The medieval Art of Rhetoric	58
6.2	Tropes and figures	61
6.2.1	Tropes	62
6.2.1.1	Simile (or similitudo)	62
6.2.1.2	Metaphor	63
	Personification	64
	Tenor and vehicle	64
6.2.1.3	Metonymy and synecdoche	65
6.2.1.4	Other tropes	65
	Climax	65
	Hyperbole	65
	Irony	66
	Litotes	66
	Oxymoron	66
6.2.2	Figures	66
6.2.2.1	References to rhetorical figures in <i>Tristram Shandy</i>	66
	Aposiopesis	66
	Pun, or paronomasia	67
	Exclamation	67
	Apostrophe	68
6.2.2.2	Other rhetorical figures	68
	Antithesis	68
	Parenthesis	68
	Periphrasis	69
	Chiasmus or antimetabole	69
	Onomatopoeia	69
	Parison	70
6.3	Rhetoric and style	71

7	RHETORICAL STYLE	72
7.1	Structure and rhetoric in Dr Johnson's prose	72
7.1.1	Letter to Lord Bute	72
7.1.1.1	Commentary	73
	Clauses	73
	Negatives	73
	Passives	74
	Parallelism and balance	74
7.1.2	Letter to Boswell	75
7.1.2.1	Commentary	75
	Style	75
	Vocabulary	76
7.1.3	<i>The Rambler</i> and rhetorical style (i)	76
7.1.3.1	Commentary	77
	Vocabulary	77
	Rhetoric and patterning	77
	Nominalisation, verbs and structure	78
7.1.4	<i>The Rambler</i> and rhetorical style (ii)	80
7.1.4.1	Commentary	80
	Structure	80
	Rhetorical patterning	82
	Vocabulary	83
8	WRITING WITHOUT STYLE	84
8.1	Roland Barthes's <i>Writing Degree Zero</i> and Albert Camus's <i>The Outsider</i>	84
8.1.1	Commentary on <i>The Outsider</i>	86
8.2	Vikram Seth's <i>A Suitable Boy</i>	87
8.2.1	Commentary on <i>A Suitable Boy</i>	87
8.3	George Orwell's <i>Animal Farm</i>	89
8.3.1	Commentary on <i>Animal Farm</i>	90
8.3.1.1	'Grammatically simple sentences'	90
8.3.1.2	The vocabulary	91
	Unpretentious and sophisticated vocabulary	92
	Clichés	92
9	WORDS AND GRAMMAR IN PROSE TEXTS III – TWO NINETEENTH-CENTURY CLASSICS	93
9.1	Fenimore Cooper – <i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> (i)	93
9.1.1	First paragraph	94
9.1.1.1	Commentary – first rewritten version, first paragraph	95
9.1.1.2	Commentary – second rewritten version, first paragraph	96
9.1.2	Second paragraph	97
9.1.2.1	Commentary	98
	Second paragraph – formal vocabulary	98
	Second paragraph – nominalisations	98
	Second paragraph – post-modifying phrases and clauses	99

9.2	<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> (ii)	99
9.3	Sir Walter Scott <i>The Bride of Lammermoor</i> (i)	100
9.3.1	Commentary on vocabulary	101
9.3.2	Commentary on grammatical structure – first sentence	102
9.3.2.1	Rewriting the first sentence	103
9.3.3	Commentary on grammatical structure – second sentence	103
9.4	<i>The Bride of Lammermoor</i> (ii)	104
10	WORDS AND GRAMMAR IN VERSE	105
10.1	'The real language of men'	105
10.1.1	Commentary	106
10.1.1.1	The vocabulary	106
10.1.1.2	The order of the words	106
10.2	Poetic diction and word order	107
10.2.1	Thomas Gray's 'On the Death of Richard West'	107
10.2.2	Commentary	108
10.2.2.1	Poetic diction – the vocabulary	109
10.2.2.2	The order of words – the grammar	109
10.2.3	George Crabbe's 'Peter Grimes'	111
10.2.4	Samuel Johnson's 'London'	112
10.2.4.1	Commentary	113
10.2.5	'Propriety' in language use	114
10.2.6	John Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i>	116
10.2.6.1	The opening sentence of <i>Paradise Lost</i>	117
	Reference and meaning	117
	Vocabulary	117
	Structure	118
	Rhetoric	118
	The verse	119
10.2.6.2	'Latinate' vocabulary	120
10.2.6.3	Poetic rhetoric	122
	Commentary	122
10.3	'Linguistic creativity' in Gerard Manley Hopkins's poetry	122
10.3.1	Words and grammar in 'Harry Ploughman'	122
10.3.1.1	Words	123
10.3.1.2	Deviance in grammar	124
	Rhythm and sound	125
II	PROSE TRANSLATIONS	126
II.1	<i>The Swiss Family Robinson</i>	126
II.1.1	Commentary	126
II.1.1.1	Words	127
II.1.1.2	Phrases	129
	Discussion	129
II.1.1.3	Sentence structure	130
	Discussion	131

11.2	Translations of the Bible	133
11.2.1	From the Sermon on the Mount	133
11.2.1.1	Vocabulary	134
11.2.1.2	Structure	134
11.2.2	St John's Gospel – 'In the beginning ...	135
	Vocabulary	135
	Structure	136
11.2.2.1	Commentary – vocabulary	137
11.2.2.2	Commentary – structure	137
11.2.3	Peter's denial	137
12	RHYME, RHYTHM AND SOUND I – PATTERNS OF STRESS AND RHYTHM	139
12.1	Patterns of stress and rhythm in everyday speech	139
12.1.1	Stress patterns in words	139
12.1.2	Stress patterns in sequences of words	140
12.1.2.1	Falling and rising rhythm	140
12.1.3	Equal-timed stress – isochrony	141
12.1.4	Reading a poem	142
12.1.4.1	Commentary	142
12.2	Patterns of stress and rhythm in verse	143
12.2.1	Nursery rhymes	143
12.2.2	Alliterative verse, stress-timed	145
12.2.3	Metrical verse	147
12.2.4	Alliterative metrical verse	149
12.2.4.1	Commentary on the York <i>Pentecost Play</i> verse	149
	Metre	149
	Rhyme	149
	Alliteration	149
12.2.5	Rhythm and metre	150
12.2.5.1	The metrical foot	151
13	RHYME, RHYTHM AND SOUND II – HEIGHTENING AND FOREGROUNDING	152
13.1	Foregrounding rhythm	152
13.2	Foregrounding the final syllables of lines – rhyme	153
13.3	Foregrounding consonants and vowels – alliteration, assonance, consonance	156
13.4	Gerard Manley Hopkins's 'Harry Ploughman'	157
13.4.1	Rhythm and metrical patterns	157
13.4.2	Alliteration	162
13.4.3	Assonance and rhyme	162
13.5	Gerard Manley Hopkins' 'Pied Beauty'	163
13.6	Sound and rhythm in Dylan Thomas's <i>Under Milk Wood</i>	164

14	RHYME, RHYTHM AND SOUND III	166
14.1	Free verse	166
14.1.1	Commentary	166
14.2	Doggerel	167
14.2.1	Commentary	168
	Rhyme	168
	Rhythm and metre	168
	Content	168
14.3	'Energetic rhythms and grisly rhymes'	169
14.3.1	'Energetic rhythms?'	169
14.3.1.1	Commentary	169
14.3.2	'Grisly rhyme'?	170
14.3.2.1	Commentary	170
14.4	'Thumping'	171
14.4.1	Commentary	172
14.4.1.1	W. B. Yeats	173
14.4.1.2	W. E. Henley	173
14.4.1.3	G. K. Chesterton	173
14.4.1.4	Rudyard Kipling	174
14.5	Verse and music – Edith Sitwell's 'Façade'	174
14.5.1	The words set to music	175
14.5.1.1	'Waltz'	175
14.5.1.2	'Fox Trot'	176
14.6	Games with words – 'concrete poetry'	177
14.6.1	Commentary	179
14.7	Six poems	180
15	POETIC PROSE	183
	Prose and verse	183
15.1	Poetry and rhetoric in <i>The Old Curiosity Shop</i> – 'The death of Little Nell'	183
15.1.1	Why <i>little</i> Nell?	183
15.1.2	Verse rhythms in prose	185
15.1.3	Prose or verse?	187
15.1.4	The vocabulary	188
15.1.5	Structure, rhetoric and style	189
15.1.5.1	Grammatical structure	189
15.1.5.2	Rhetoric – parallelism	190
15.2	Mock-elevated style in <i>Pickwick Papers</i>	190
15.2.1	Commentary	192
15.2.1.1	Vocabulary	192
15.2.1.2	Grammatical structure	192
15.3	Satire in <i>Dombey and Son</i>	192
15.4	Poetry and rhetoric in <i>The Rainbow</i>	193
15.4.1	Is the extract poetic?	194

15.4.1.1	Rhythm, metre and sound	194
	Metrical rhythm	194
	Repetition and parallelism	194
	Assonance, alliteration and vowel harmony	195
15.4.1.2	Vocabulary – lexical words	195
15.4.1.3	Grammatical structure	195
16	VERSE TRANSLATION	197
16.1	Homer's <i>Iliad</i>	197
16.1.1	Opening lines of Book III	198
16.1.1.1	Commentary	199
	Alexander Pope's translation	200
	Richard Lattimore's translation	202
	Christopher Logue's translation	202
16.1.2	Extract from Book XIX	202
17	FIRST PERSON NARRATIVE	206
17.1	<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> and <i>David Copperfield</i>	206
17.1.1	Discussion – structure and vocabulary	207
17.1.1.1	<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>	207
	Structure	207
	Vocabulary	207
17.1.1.2	<i>David Copperfield</i>	207
	Structure	207
	Vocabulary	208
17.2	Joseph Conrad's <i>Heart of Darkness</i>	208
17.2.1	Classification of participants	212
17.2.2	Vocabulary	212
17.2.3	Themes and imagery	212
17.2.4	Negatives	213
17.2.5	Participant-process analysis	213
17.2.5.1	Processes involving Marlow	213
17.2.5.2	Processes involving the African men	213
17.2.6	Clause structure: transitive/intransitive; focus of information	213
17.2.7	Foregrounded features of style	214
17.2.8	Narration and the spoken voice	215
17.2.8.1	Minor sentences	216
17.2.8.2	Introductory words and initial <i>and</i> or <i>but</i>	216
17.2.8.3	Use of 1st and 2nd person	216
17.2.8.4	Questions and exclamations	216
17.2.8.5	Reduction in informal speech	216
17.2.8.6	Informal vocabulary	217
17.2.9	Linguistic description and literary criticism	217

18 THE SPOKEN VOICE	218
18.1 Dialogue	218
18.1.1 Direct speech and free direct speech	218
18.1.2 Indirect, or reported speech	219
18.1.2.1 Declarative clauses	220
18.1.2.2 Interrogative clauses	221
18.1.3 Free indirect speech	221
18.1.4 Speech acts referred to in the narrative	223
18.2 Dialectal speech in novels	224
18.2.1 Discussion	225
18.2.2 Commentary	226
18.2.2 Scottish dialectal speech in <i>The Bride of Lammermoor</i>	228
18.3 The spoken voice in letters	231
18.4 The unspoken voice – interior monologue	232
18.4.1 James Joyce's <i>Ulysses</i>	232
18.4.1.1 Leopold Bloom	232
18.4.1.2 Molly Bloom	233
18.4.1.3 Stephen Dedalus	233
 19 ORIGINAL AND SIMPLIFIED TEXTS	 235
19.1 Robert Louis Stevenson's <i>Treasure Island</i>	235
19.1.1 Omission and changing of words	237
19.1.2 Grammatical structure – sentence level	238
19.1.3 Grammatical structure – clause level	239
19.1.4 The dialogue	241
19.1.5 Is a change of words a change of meaning?	241
19.2 Charles Dickens's <i>David Copperfield</i>	241
19.3 Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> 'made easy'	245
19.3.1 Commentary	246
19.3.1.1 Changes in the meanings of words	246
19.3.1.2 Shakespeare's use of language	247
 20 PARODY AND PASTICHE	 249
Part I – Parody	249
20.1 Guide-books	249
20.2 Guide-book to Woolbridge and the West Leys	250
20.2.1 Vocabulary	251
20.2.1.1 Connotation and collocation	251
20.2.1.2 Descriptive and evaluative adjectives	251
20.2.1.3 NPs with modifiers	251
20.2.1.4 Nouns in semantic sets	251
20.2.1.5 Unmodified nouns	252
20.2.1.6 Abstract nouns and 'literariness'	252
20.2.1.7 Relational and actional verbs	253
20.2.1.8 Adverbs	254

20.2.2	Grammar	254
20.2.2.1	Complexity of structure – parallelism	254
20.2.2.2	Complexity of structure – formal style	255
20.2.2.3	The spoken voice	256
20.2.2.4	'Old-fashioned' style?	256
20.3	Guide-book to Llaregyb – a parody	256
20.3.1	Vocabulary	256
20.3.1.1	Adjective modifiers in NPs	256
20.3.1.2	Other vocabulary	257
	NPs with modifiers	257
	Nouns in semantic sets	258
	Abstract nouns	258
	Verbs	258
	Adverbs	258
20.3.2	Grammar	258
20.3.2.1	Parallelism and lists	258
20.3.2.2	Formal style	259
20.4	Stella Gibbons's <i>Cold Comfort Farm</i>	259
20.4.1	Commentary	260
	Part 2 – Pastiche	262
20.5	Medieval fantasy	263
20.5.1	Commentary	263
21	STYLES OF NEWS REPORTING	265
	Preliminary – political reporting and ideology	265
21.1	Tabloid and broadsheet newspapers	265
21.1.1	Readability	267
21.1.1.1	Vocabulary – long and short words	267
21.1.1.2	Structure	268
	Tabloid leader	268
	Broadsheet leader	269
21.2	Tabloid reporting style	270
21.2.1	Commentary	271
21.2.1.1	Naming	271
21.2.1.2	Colloquial vocabulary	271
21.3	Tabloid vocabulary	271
21.3.1	'Gnome-napped'	271
21.3.1.1	Commentary	272
21.3.2	'Posh kids'	273
21.4	Broadsheet and tabloid vocabulary	273
21.4.1	'Curried eggs'	273
21.4	Choices of vocabulary – what connotations imply	275
21.4.1	Degrees of violence	275
21.4.1.1	Commentary	275
21.4.2	Classifying participants	276
21.4.2.1	Commentary	278
21.5	Grammar, vocabulary and style	279

21.5.1	Commentary – vocabulary	280
21.5.1.1	Word-classes and length of words	280
	Tabloid	280
	Broadsheet	281
21.5.1.2	Core and non-core vocabulary	281
	Tabloid	281
	Broadsheet	281
21.5.2	Commentary – structure	282
	Tabloid	282
	Broadsheet	282
Bibliography		283
Index of texts quoted and used for stylistic analysis		284
General index		297

Symbols

Symbols and abbreviations are used because they save time and space in describing grammatical features.

Word-classes (parts of speech)

n	noun
v	verb
adj	adjective
adv	adverb
pn	pronoun
p	preposition
cj	conjunction
scj	subordinating conjunction
ccj	coordinating conjunction

Classes of phrase

NP	noun phrase
VP	verb phrase
AdjP	adjective phrase
AdvP	adverb phrase
PrepP	prepositional phrase
PossP	possessive phrase

Classes of clause (form)

NCl	noun clause
PrepCl	prepositional clause
AdvCl	adverbial clause
NonfCl	nonfinite clause

Classes of clause (function)

MCl	main clause
SCl	subordinate clause
RelCl	relative clause
AppCl	appositive clause (in apposition)

Elements of NP structure

Use lower-case letters:

d	determiner
m	modifier (= pre-modifier)
h	head word
q	qualifier (= post-modifier)

Elements of clause structure

Use upper-case letters (capitals):

S	subject
P	predicator
C	complement
A	adverbial

Kinds of complement:

O	object (complement) or Co
Od	direct object
Oi	indirect object
Ci	intensive (complement)
Ca	adverbial (complement)
pt	adverb particle (complement)

Bracketing of grammatical structures

()	to mark phrases
[]	to mark clauses
< >	to mark coordinated elements (words, phrases or clauses)

Languages from which words have derived

OE	Old English
ON	Old Norse
OF	Old French
ME	Middle English
EMnE	Early Modern English
MnE	Modern English
Fr	French
L or Lat	Latin
f.	= from

Phonetic transcription

Square brackets are also used with symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet to indicate the pronunciation of spoken words and sounds, e.g. [æ], [f].

Other symbols

The sign Ø is used to mark the deletion (or ellipsis) of a word that is ‘understood’, e.g. *The letter Ø I wrote yesterday . . .* from *The letter **that** I wrote yesterday . . .*

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to Geoffrey Egginton for producing the musical examples on pages 175 and 176.

The author and publishers wish to thank the following for permission to use copyright material: Calder Publications Ltd on behalf of the Calder Educational Trust for material from Raymond Queneau, *Exercises in Style*, trans. Barbara Wright, Calder Publications Ltd, © Editions Gallimard 1947, translation © Barbara Wright 1958, 1979. Carcanet Press Ltd for Edwin Morgan, 'Summer Haiku', 'Bee's Nest', 'Siesta of a Hungarian Snake' and 'I am the resurrection and the life' from *Collected Poems*; and for William Carlos Williams, 'Between Walls' and 'This is Just to Say' from *Collected Poems*. Curtis Brown, London, on behalf of the Estate of Stella Gibbons for material from Stella Gibbons, *Cold Comfort Farm*, © Stella Gibbons 1932. Faber & Faber Ltd for extracted material from W. H. Auden, 'O where are you going' from 'Five Songs' from *Collected Poems*; for Christopher Logue, *The Husbands*, 1994; and for Christopher Logue, *War Music*, 1981.

The *Guardian* for extracts from John Mullin, 'PC who hit boy wins job reprieve', *Guardian*, 23 July 1994; and for a review by James Wood, 'A Suitable Boy', *Guardian*, 13 March 1993, © The Guardian. Mirror Syndication International for extracts from 'Fowl! Farmers' anger at Currie's egg crack', *Daily Mirror*, 5 December 1988; for Vince Wilson, 'Cup Fans Riot', *Sunday Mirror*, 8 January 1978; and for 'Gnome-napped', *Daily Mirror*, 10 August 1988. A. M. Heath & Co. Ltd on behalf of the author for material from George Orwell, *Animal Farm*, © estate of the later Sonia Brownell Orwell and Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd. David Higham Associates Ltd on behalf of the author for material from Russell Hoban, *Riddley Walker*, Jonathan Cape, 1980; and on behalf of the estate of the author for extracted material from Edith Sitwell, 'Some Notes on My Poetry' and Edith Sitwell, 'Waltz' and 'Fox Trot' from *Collected Poems*, Sinclair Stevenson. Newspaper Publishing plc for extracts from Nick Cohen, 'Currie provokes storm with salmonella claim', *Independent*, 5 December 1988; and for 'Slap case PC reprimanded but allowed to keep job', *Independent*, 23 July 1994. Oxford University Press for dictionary entries from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition. Laurence Pollinger Ltd on behalf of the Estate of

Frieda Lawrence Ravagli for material from D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, and D. H. Lawrence 'Whatever Man Makes' from *The Complete Poems of D. H. Lawrence*. Random House UK Ltd for material from William Faulkner, 'The Bear' from *Go Down Moses*, Chatto & Windus, 1942. Reed Books for material from Anthony Burgess, *The Clockwork Orange*, William Heinemann. Rex Features for material from Mark Wood, 'Thanks a Bundle', *The Sun*, 22 July 1994; and for 'Posh kids are forced to sweep the streets', *The Sun*. Vernon Scannell for 'Jailbird'. Solo Syndication Ltd for material from Gordon Greig, 'Edwina egg row boils over', *Daily Mail*, 5 December 1988. A. P. Watt Ltd on behalf of the Royal Literary Fund for material from G. K. Chesterton, 'The Rolling English Road' and 'The Donkey'; on behalf of the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty for material from Rudyard Kipling, 'Cities, Thrones and Powers' and 'Boots'; and on behalf of Michael Yeats for material from W. B. Yeats, 'Three Songs to the Same Tune' and 'Girl's Song'.

Every effort has been made to trace all the copyright-holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publishers will be pleased to make the necessary arrangement at the first opportunity.

Introduction

This book is a continuation of the last chapter of *A Course Book in English Grammar* (2nd edition 1995) and its Postscript:

The analysis of these texts shows how important grammatical and lexical choices are in affecting the style of speech and writing. If we can recognise and specify these choices, we can then use this knowledge in the formal study of style, called *stylistics*. We study grammar not just for its own sake (though some of us do enjoy it), but in order to apply what we have learned in an interesting and useful way. We should also become more aware of the choices of vocabulary and grammar that are open to us when we write and talk.

Literary criticism and linguistic criticism

We respond to different styles of writing intuitively at first, and may try to describe them subjectively as *terse*, *brittle*, *flowing*, *transparent* and so on – the method of much literary criticism and book-reviewing. This is discussed in chapter 1. The approach to style from a linguistic point of view tries to be objective. We ask the question ‘How do I know?’ if a subjective description of style is made, and apply our understanding of the forms and functions of vocabulary and grammar in a way that (we hope) may be verified by others.

My intention is to provide a resource book that need not be followed in sequence, though there is in the first chapters an attempted logical development in the study of the vocabulary of texts first, and then the grammar. Of course the two are inseparable in their stylistic effects, and the following chapters look at a variety of genres that seem to me to provide interesting ways of studying style, drawing upon insights from the choices of words or structures as seems appropriate. You may therefore find some repetition in the definition of particular features of style, from chapter to chapter.

Rhetoric

Traditional rhetoric is important for its historical place in literary criticism. Only a few of the classical tropes and figures listed in such profusion in older books of

rhetoric have survived into modern criticism, but chapter 6 refers briefly, with illustrations, to a larger number.

Readability

A modern word-processing application will provide 'readability statistics' for a selected text, based upon the average number of sentences per paragraph, words per sentence and characters per word. The text must, of course, be spelt and punctuated according to the conventions of correctness of Standard English. These averages then provide a level of 'reading ease', from *very easy*, through *easy*, *fairly easy*, *standard*, *fairly difficult* and *difficult*, to *very difficult*. The computer is a mechanical tool, and takes no account of the meanings of words, and so must not be relied on. However, its assessment of readability is interesting to discuss and you may agree or disagree with the grading. So for this reason, the readability grade is printed after many of the texts.

Commentary and Data Book

We arrive at a lot of the conclusions about how vocabulary and structure contribute to the style of a text by preparing data beforehand. Words have to be listed, and their derivations and definitions looked up separately. The structure of a text has to be analysed and diagrammed. Once this is done, only some of the data proves to be relevant to the stylistic question being asked. It would have increased the size of the book too much to have included all the preliminary data, so only a little is included to illustrate the method.

However, teachers and lecturers will find it useful to be able to provide their students with the raw data sometimes, so that they can do some first-hand analysis, particularly on texts which are not followed by a commentary. This is a very time-consuming and routine kind of occupation, even with the help of the *Oxford English Dictionary* on CD-ROM. So the author has provided a supplementary *Commentary and Data Book* in typescript, available to teachers and lecturers. For details write to: Dennis Freeborn, PO Box 82, Easingwold, York YO6 3YY.