

V.V. ZHUKOVSKA

**ENGLISH STYLISTICS:
FUNDAMENTALS OF THEORY
AND PRACTICE**

*Рекомендовано Міністерством освіти і науки України
як навчальний посібник
для студентів вищих навчальних закладів*

**Житомир
Вид-во ЖДУ ім. І. Франка
2010**

УДК 811.111'38 (075.8)

ББК 81.432.1-7-923

Ж86

Рекомендовано Міністерством освіти і науки України як навчальний посібник для студентів вищих навчальних закладів № 1/II-10138 від 09.12.09 р.

Рецензенти:

- Левицький А.Е.** – доктор філологічних наук, професор кафедри теорії і практики перекладу англійської мови Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка
- Черноватий Л.М.** – доктор педагогічних наук, професор, завідувач кафедри перекладу англійської мови Харківського національного університету ім. В.Н. Каразіна
- Гладуш Н.Ф.** – кандидат філологічних наук, професор, проректор з наукової роботи Київського національного лінгвістичного університету

Жуковська В.В.

Ж86

Основи теорії та практики стилістики англійської мови: Навчальний посібник. – Житомир: Вид-во ЖДУ ім. І. Франка, 2010. – 240 с.

ISBN 978-966-485-056-5

У посібнику викладено основні лінгвістичні та методологічні засади стилістики як науки, проаналізовано базові поняття стилістичної фонетики, морфології, лексикології, семасіології та синтаксису. Матеріал посібника сприяє не лише ґрунтовному оволодінню основами стилістики англійської мови, розвитку вмінь стилістичного аналізу тексту, але й вдосконаленню мовленнєвої компетенції та формуванню культури мовлення студентів.

Рекомендовано для студентів старших курсів та магістрів факультетів іноземних мов, викладачів англійської мови, а також для всіх, хто цікавиться проблемами стилістики.

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ISBN 978-966-485-056-5

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Proper words in proper places, make the true definition of a style.

Jonathan Swift

When we see a natural style, we are quite surprised and delighted, for we expected to see an author and we find a man.

Blaise Pascal

Style is the dress of thought; a modest dress, Neat, but not gaudy, will true critics please.

Revd Samuel Wesley

The original writer is not he who refrains from imitating others, but he who can be imitated by none.

Chateaubriand Francois-Rene,
Vicomte de Chateaubriand

No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader. No surprise for the writer, no surprise for the reader.

Robert Frost

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ПЕРЕДМОВА	7
UNIT 1. FUNDAMENTALS OF STYLISTICS	8
1. The origin of stylistics.....	8
2. The object and subject-matter of stylistics.	9
3. Methods of stylistics.	10
4. Types of stylistics.	11
5. Basic notions of stylistics.	15
UNIT 2. STYLISTIC PHONETICS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	ОШИБКА! ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.
1. Phonetic means of stylistics. Ошибка! Закладка не определена.	
1.1. Versification: rhyme and rhythm. Ошибка! Закладка не определена.	
1.2. Instrumentation: alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia.... Ошибка! Закладка не определена.	
2. Graphic and phonetic means of stylistics..... Ошибка! Закладка не определена.	
3. Graphic means of stylistics. Ошибка! Закладка не определена.	
UNIT 3. STYLISTIC MORPHOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.....	ОШИБКА! ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.
1. Affixation and its expressiveness. Ошибка! Закладка не определена.	
2. Stylistic potential of nouns. Ошибка! Закладка не определена.	
3. Stylistic potential of articles. Ошибка! Закладка не определена.	

4. Stylistic potential of adjectives. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

5. Stylistic potential of pronouns. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

6. Stylistic potential of verbs. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

UNIT 4. STYLISTIC LEXICOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

..... **ОШИБКА! ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.**

1. Word and its semantic structure. Denotational and connotational meanings of a word. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2. Stylistic differentiation of the English vocabulary. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2.1. Stylistic functions of literary words. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2.2. Stylistic functions of conversational words. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2.3. Stylistically neutral words.....72

UNIT 5. STYLISTIC SEMASIOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. FIGURES OF REPLACEMENT **ОШИБКА! ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.**

1. Stylistic semasiology.. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2. Figures of replacement **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2.1. Figures of quantity: hyperbole, meiosis, litotes. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2.2. Figures of quality: metonymical group, metaphorical group, epithet, irony. **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

UNIT 6. STYLISTIC SEMASIOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. FIGURES OF CO-OCCURRENCEОШИБКА!
ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.

1. General characteristics of figures of co-occurrence.**Ошибка!**
Закладка не определена.

2. Figures of identity: simile.**Ошибка!** **Закладка** **не определена.**

3. Figures of inequality: climax, anticlimax; pun, zeugma.
..... **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

4. Figures of contrast (opposition): antithesis, oxymoron.
..... **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

UNIT 7. STYLISTIC SYNTAX OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
..... ОШИБКА! ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.

1. Stylistic syntax **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2. Stylistic functions of syntactic constructions..... **Ошибка!**
Закладка не определена.

2.1. Stylistic properties of syntactic constructions based on the reduction of the sentence structure.**Ошибка!** **Закладка** **не определена.**

2.2. Stylistic properties of syntactic constructions based on the redundancy of the sentence structure.**Ошибка!** **Закладка** **не определена.**

2.3 Stylistic properties of syntactic constructions based on the violation of the grammatically fixed word order within a sentence..... **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2.4. Stylistic properties of syntactic constructions based on the shifts in syntactic meaning.**Ошибка!** **Закладка** **не определена.**

3. Stylistic effects of peculiar arrangement of syntactical constructions in a sequence.....**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

UNIT 8. FUNCTIONAL STYLES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**ОШИБКА! ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.**

1. The functional style of science.**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2. The newspaper functional style**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

3. The functional style of official documents**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

4. The literary functional style**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

UNIT 9. STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTS OF DIFFERENT FUNCTIONAL STYLES... **ОШИБКА! ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.**

1. Basic elements for a literary text analysis**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2. The approximate scheme of stylistic and interpretative analysis of the extract from a literary text**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

3. Extracts from literary texts for overall stylistic analysis. Sample analysis of an extract from a literary text**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

4. Scheme of stylistic analysis of a scientific text**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

5. Extracts from scientific texts for stylistic analysis.....203

SUPPLEMENT.....**ОШИБКА! ЗАКЛАДКА НЕ ОПРЕДЕЛЕНА.**

1. Topics for reports.....**Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

2. Assignments for individual study **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

3. Exam questions.....167

GLOSSARY OF STYLISTIC TERMS **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

INDEX OF WORDS.....180

RECOMMENDED LITERATURE **Ошибка! Закладка не определена.**

ПЕРЕДМОВА

Серед теоретичних лінгвістичних дисциплін на факультетах іноземних мов важливе місце займає курс стилістики, оскільки він є підсумковим курсом, який узагальнює знання студентів про систему мови та особливості функціонування мовних одиниць у мовленні. Першочерговим завданням цього посібника є поглиблення загальнофілологічної підготовки студентів спеціальності *англійська мова і література*. Виклад теоретичного матеріалу із супровідними коментарями та ілюстративними прикладами надають студентам-філологам можливість теоретично і практично осмислити образність англійської мови, знайомить їх з особливостями текстів різних функціональних стилів та навчає методам лінгвостилістичного аналізу англomовного тексту. Основною **метою** посібника є:

- 1) викласти теоретичні засади курсу “Стилiстика англiйської мови”;
- 2) представити системний опис стилістичних ресурсів англійської мови на всіх її рівнях;
- 3) ознайомити з принципами мовленнєвої організації функціональних стилів сучасної англійської мови;
- 4) допомогти студентам оволодіти практикою лінгвостилістичного аналізу англomовного тексту, розвивати уміння та навички розпізнавання та інтерпретації стилістичних явищ різних рівнів;
- 5) поглибити стилістичну компетенцію, розвинути навички і вміння оцінювати і правильно використовувати мовні засоби у мовленні відповідно до конкретного змісту та мети висловлювання, ситуації та сфери спілкування.

Посібник призначений для студентів старших курсів та магістрів факультетів іноземних мов, викладачів англійської мови, а також для всіх, хто цікавиться проблемами стилістики.

UNIT 1.

FUNDAMENTALS OF STYLISTICS

To do stylistics is to explore language, and, more specifically, to explore creativity in language. Doing stylistics thereby enriches our ways of thinking about language ... and exploring language offers a substantial purchase on our understanding of (literary) texts.

[Simpson, 2004: 3]

1. The origin of stylistics.

Stylistics is a branch of linguistics which investigates the entire system of expressive resources available in a particular language. It is a relatively new linguistic discipline. The word “stylistics” was firstly attested in the Oxford English Dictionary only in 1882, meaning the science of literary style, the study of stylistic features. However, the first reflections on style can be dated back to the ancient times. Ancient rhetoric and poetics, which are considered to be the predecessors of stylistics, treated style as a specific mode of expression, the proper adornment of thought. The orator or poet was expected to follow the norms of artful arrangement of words, to use model sentences and prescribed kinds of “figures” in order to achieve particular expressiveness. After the ancient period the normative approach dominated in style investigations.

The first attempts to evaluate and interpret the expressive possibilities of a national language were done in “*The philosophy of style*” (1852) by G. Spenser, “*Zur Stylistik*” (1866) by H. Steinthal, “*Из истории эпитета*” (1895) by A.N. Veselovsky, “*О преподавании отечественного языка*” by F. Buslajev, “*Из записок по теории словесности*” (1905) by O. Potebnya. In 1909 the Swiss linguist Charles Bally published his “*Traité de stylistique française*” (“*French stylistics*”) where he rejected the established normative approach to style and developed a linguistic stylistics. According to Ch. Bally the subject of stylistics is everything

emotional and expressive in language and in speech. As a separate linguistic discipline stylistics began to form only in the 20-30s of the XXth century.

In modern linguistics the term stylistics is employed in a variety of senses. But in general **stylistics** is defined as a branch of linguistics which studies the principles and effect of choice and usage of different language elements for rendering thought and emotion under different conditions of communication [Арнольд, 1990:7].

2. The object and subject-matter of stylistics.

The object of a science is a certain phenomenon which exists irrespective of the cognizing and transforming role of human mind. The subject-matter of a science covers one or several aspects of the given object [Методичні вказівки, 2001: 3]. As a linguistic discipline stylistics investigates a natural language.

The definition of the subject-matter of stylistics causes certain difficulties which are primarily connected with the complex nature of its object (i.e. language). Language is a hierarchy of levels. Each level is studied correspondingly by phonetics, morphology, lexicology, syntax and text linguistics. Each of these disciplines investigates language from a particular aspect. Phonetics deals with speech sounds and intonation; lexicology treats separate words with their meanings and the structure of vocabulary as a whole; grammar analyses forms of words (morphology) and forms of their combinations (syntax). In a word, these are level-oriented areas of linguistic study, which deal with sets of language units and relations between them. But it is not the case with stylistics, as it pertains to all language levels and investigates language units from a functional point of view. Thus stylistics is subdivided into separate, quite independent branches, each treating one level and having its own subject of investigation. Hence we have stylistic phonetics, stylistic morphology, stylistic lexicology and stylistic syntax, which are mainly interested in the expressive potential of language units of a corresponding level.

Stylistic phonetics studies the style-forming phonetic features of sounds, peculiarities of their organization in speech.

It also investigates variants of pronunciation occurring in different types of speech, prosodic features of prose and poetry.

Stylistic morphology is interested in stylistic potential of grammatical forms and grammatical meanings peculiar to particular types of speech.

Stylistic lexicology considers stylistic functions of lexicon, expressive, evaluative and emotive potential of words belonging to different layers of vocabulary.

Stylistic syntax investigates the style-forming potential of particular syntactic constructions and peculiarities of their usage in different types of speech.

The stylistic value of the text is manifested not merely through a sum of stylistic meanings of its individual units but also through the interrelation and interaction of these elements as well as through the structure and composition of the whole text.

Thus stylistics deals with all expressive possibilities and expressive means of a language, their stylistic meanings and colourings (the so-called connotations). It also considers regularities of language units functioning in different communicative spheres.

3. Methods of stylistics.

Methodology defines the approach of science to the object of investigation and specifies its general orientation in a research.

The most traditional method of stylistics is the **method of semantico-stylistic analysis** (*stylistic analysis*). This method aims at defining the correlation between language means employed for expressive conveyance of intellectual, emotional or aesthetic content of speech (or text) and the content of information.

The **comparative method** is considered to be the nucleus of the stylistic analysis method. To make the speech more effective speakers constantly select definite language means from a set of synonymous units. These language means have the best stylistic effect only in comparison with other language means which are either less expressive or neutral in the given context.

The **method of stylistic experiment** lies in substitution of the writer's words, utterances or constructions for new ones

with the stylistic aim. With the help of this method it is possible to characterize the stylistic properties of the writer's text and approve of the substituted units stylistic possibilities. This method was extensively used by such scholars as L. Shcherba, O. Peshkovskyi, L. Bulahovskyi.

The **quantitative method** consists in defining the quantitative properties of a language phenomenon. Using the quantitative data and specific calculations the **statistic method** aims at distinguishing peculiarities and regularities of language units functioning that can differentiate individual or functional styles. It establishes the statistic parameters of the analyzed text or texts. These parameters provide reliable and objective data for stylistic analysis.

4. Types of stylistics.

The structure of stylistics is conditioned by its subject matter, main tasks, aspects and methods of research. In the course of time several types of stylistics came into existence. Each type deals with a specific study of language units and their functioning in speech

General stylistics (*theoretical stylistics, theory of stylistics*) studies universal stylistic language means which exist in any language as well as regularities of language functioning irrespective of the content, aim, situation and sphere of communication. **Stylistics of a national language** deals with the expressive resources of a definite national language.

Some more types of stylistics are singled out on the basis of the following principles:

1) *The principle of language activities manifestation.*

One of the fundamental linguistic concepts is the dichotomy "*language – speech*" introduced by F. de Saussure. Language is viewed as a system of the signs, the relations between them and the rules of their usage. Speech is the materialisation of language in the process of communication.

According to the principle of language activities manifestation stylistics is subdivided into **stylistics of language** and **stylistics of speech**.

Stylistics of language deals with inherent (permanent) stylistic properties of language means while **stylistics of**

speech analyses acquired stylistic properties, i. e. which appear only in the context.

2) *The principle of language description.*

According to this principle stylistics is divided into **linguistic stylistics** (linguostylistics) and **literary stylistics**.

Linguistic stylistics studies the language units from the point of view of their effectiveness in definite types of speech. It investigates not only stylistic inventory of a national language, but also the means of its organization in different types of speech. It examines the correlation between a speech situation and linguistic means used by speakers and hence – different functional styles of speech and language. In the narrow sense of a word linguostylistics is also called functional stylistics. M.M. Kozhyna singles out **functional stylistics** as a separate branch of stylistics [Кожина, 1983]. It is defined by the stylistician as a linguistic science that studies peculiarities and regularities of language functioning in different types of speech, speech structure of functional styles, norms of selection and combination of language units in them. Its object is functional styles of speech and their types.

Literary stylistics deals with artistic expressiveness characteristic of a literary work, literary trend or epoch, and factors which influence it.

So, linguostylistics investigates expressive means of a language and literary stylistics studies the ways these expressive means are employed by a definite author, literary trend or genre.

Literary stylistics is not homogenous. Taking into consideration the initial point of analysis, there may be distinguished three types of literary stylistics. From the point of view of the addresser, **author's stylistics** or **genetic stylistics** is singled out. This type of stylistics is interested in individual styles of writers focusing on their biography, beliefs, interests and other factors which could influence their literary creative work. Genetic stylistics is represented by some linguistic schools: logical analysis of M. Rouston, psychological analysis of M. Grammont, statistic stylistics of P. Guiraud, philological analysis of L. Spitzer.

From the point of view of the addressee (recipient), **reader's stylistics** or **stylistics of perception** or **decoding stylistics** is determined. Stylistics of perception is presented

by a number of trends: L. Shcherba's linguistic analysis, M. Riffaterre's stylistic analysis, I. Arnold's decoding stylistics.

The term decoding stylistics suggested by M. Riffaterre stands for a new trend in stylistics, a theory evolved by Professor I.V. Arnold. Decoding stylistics combines concepts of poetics, literary stylistics, semasiology, theory of communication, text theory, sociolinguistics, pragma- and paralinguistics, aesthetics, hermeneutics, etc. It focuses on the reader's perception of a literary text, his reaction to it.

The core of reader-oriented decoding stylistics is formed by special types of contextual organization known as foregrounding. Some concepts and the mechanism of foregrounding were first foreseen and pointed at by the Russian formalists Y. Tynyanov, B. Tomashevskyi, R. Jakobson, V. Schklovskyi. The latter introduced the notion which he called *ostranenie*. It expresses the idea that the function of literature is to restore freshness to perception which has become habitual and automated: to make things strange, to make the reader see them anew [Cook, 1995: 130]. This concept was later defined as foregrounding. Foregrounding establishes the hierarchy of meanings and themes in the text, bringing some to the fore and shifting others to the background. The following phenomena may be grouped under the general heading of foregrounding: coupling, convergence, strong position, contrast, irony, intertextual connection, defeated expectancy effect and a few others. Taken together they form the missing link between the whole text and its minor parts, and help to sharpen the response of the reader to ideas, images and emotions reflected in a work of art [Арнольд, 1990].

A literary text can be studied as some immanent fact, without taking into account the author's intentions or how this text is interpreted by the reader (***immanent stylistics***). This trend is represented by Moscow linguistic circle (P. Bogatyr'ov, G. Vinocur), structural analysis (R. Jakobson), new critics in England and the USA, French structuralists.

There are other types of stylistics such as:

Comparative stylistics investigates national and international features in stylistic systems of national languages, defines common and peculiar features in the

organization of functional styles, and specifies national peculiarities in speech structure of functional styles.

Contrastive stylistics focuses on stylistic systems of unrelated languages [Дубенко, 2005; Тимченко, 2006].

Historical stylistics deals with the stylistic system of a language in a diachronic aspect. It investigates the formation and evolution of functional styles during all stages of a national language development, dynamics of expressive units formation, temporal and qualitative changes in connotations, chronologically marked stylistic means. This branch of stylistics studies both the history of contemporary stylistic means and stylistic means of the past epochs of a definite national language or related languages.

Dialectal stylistics studies stylistic stratification and differentiation of language units within a definite regional or social dialect.

Statistical stylistics (*stylometrics*) analyses the peculiarities of language units functioning in texts of different functional styles obtaining the objective data by applying certain methods of statistics.

Practical stylistics is a discipline which deals with general knowledge about language and speech styles, stylistic norms, stylistic means, and ways of employment of language means for correct organization of speech.

Modern stylistics is constantly developing. It has several sub-disciplines where stylistic methods are enriched by the theories of discourse, culture and society. Such established branches of contemporary stylistics as feminist stylistics, cognitive stylistics and discourse stylistics have been sustained by insights from, respectively, feminist theory, cognitive psychology and discourse analysis [Simpson, 2004: 2].

Feminist stylistics is concerned with the analysis of the way that questions of gender impact on the production and interpretation of texts [Wales, 2001].

Cognitive stylistics is a relatively new, rapidly developing field of language study that attempts to describe and account for what happens in the minds of readers when they interface with (literary) language. Cognitive stylistics is mainly concerned with reading, and, more specifically, with the reception and subsequent interpretation processes that are both active and activated during reading procedures. At its core, cognitive

stylistics is interested in the role that unconscious and conscious cognitive and emotive processes play when an individual or group of individuals interface with a text that has been purposely designed with the aim of eliciting certain emotions in a reader [Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics, 2005].

Discourse stylistics. Present-day stylistics is interested in language as function of texts in context, and acknowledges that they are produced in a time, a place, and in a cultural and cognitive context. In a word, it considers language as discourse, that is a text's status as discourse, a writer's employment of discourse strategies and the way a text 'means' as a function of language in context (how it functions as discourse) [Simpson, 2004: 8].

During the last three decades of the twentieth century, computer technology has made it possible to conduct extensive and complex research on specific linguistic features — either lexical items or grammatical structures — and their systematic associations with other linguistic and nonlinguistic features. This new type of research is called *corpus linguistics*, which is the empirical study of language using computer techniques and software to analyze large, carefully selected and compiled databases of naturally occurring language [Sotollo, 2005: 245].

Corpus stylistics is a new direction at the interface between the fields of stylistics and corpus linguistics, namely the use of a corpus methodology to investigate stylistic categories in different text types or in individual texts. The qualitative and quantitative analyses of stylistic phenomena rely on the evidence of language usage as collected and analysed in corpora.

5. Basic notions of stylistics.

The main notion of stylistics is that of **style**. We speak of style in architecture, painting, clothes, behaviour, and work and so on. Thus style in its most general sense is a specific characteristic of human activity arising as a result of choice, within the accepted norms, of a definite mode or manner of conducting this activity. Style is indicative of the actor's social role, of the social group to which he belongs or strives to belong, as well as of his individual features and psychological state [Maltzev, 1984: 5].

The word style is used in many senses that it has become a breeding ground for ambiguity. That's why it is interesting to quote different observations regarding style.

Style is understood as a mark of character. The Count de Buffon's famous epigram, "*Le style est l'homme mkme*" ("*Style is the man himself*") in his "*Discours sur le style*" (1753), and Arthur Schopenhauer's definition of style as "the physiognomy of the mind" suggest that a writer's style bears the mark of his personality.

V.V. Vynogradov treats style as socially cognized and functionally conditioned internally united totality of the ways of using, selecting and combining the means of lingual intercourse in the sphere of one national language or another, a totality corresponding to other analogous ways of expression that serve different purposes, perform different functions in the social communicative practice of the given nation [cited after Скребнев, 2005: 19].

S. Chatman defines style as a product of individual choices and patterns of choices among linguistic possibilities [cited after Galperin, 1977: 12].

O. Achmanova states that style is one of the distinctive varieties of language, language subsystem with a peculiar vocabulary, phraseology, and constructions. It differs from other varieties by expressive and evaluative properties of its constituents and is connected with certain spheres of speech communication [Ахманова, 1969: 455].

Y. Skrebnev defines style as a peculiarity, the set of specific features of a text type or of a concrete text. Style in this respect is just what differentiates a group of homogenous texts (an individual text) from all other groups (other texts) [Скребнев, 2003: 18].

Style may be also defined as a set of characteristics by which we distinguish one author from another or members of one subclass from members of other subclasses, all of which are members of the same general class [Galperin, 1977: 12]. In this respect one more definition of style connected with the individuality of the author can be presented.

Individual style of a writer is a unique combination of language units, expressive means and stylistic devices peculiar to a given author, which makes the writer's works or even utterances easily recognizable [Galperin, 1977: 17].

So, **style** denotes the collective characteristics of writing, diction or any artistic expression and the way of presenting things, depending upon the general outlook proper to a person, a literary school, a trend, a period or a genre.