1

The Concept of Style

1.1. Style in Rhetoric

Playing a central role in the Western tradition, rhetoric – along with grammar and logic – was one of the three ancient arts of discourse, and is understood as the art of verbal persuasion through effective expression (in speaking or writing), or the intentional use of language to influence an audience in a communicative situation: "communicate" and crucially "persuade", with an overt and distinctive perlocutionary effect. Both Greek and Roman classical rhetoricians, especially Aristotle, were pioneers in codifying the art of discourse, identifying its parts, motivations, and functions. In fact, much of our current understanding of the discipline of rhetoric is inevitably derived from these classical Graeco-Roman sources (see, for example, Anderson 1993; Bryant 1968; Burke 1945, 1962; D.L. Clark 1922, 1957; M.L. Clark 1953; Cole 1991; Conley 1990; Corbett and Connors 1999; Dillon 1986; Glenn 1998; Herrick 1996/2012; Ilie 2006; Jarratt 1991; Johnstone and Eisenhart 2008; Kennedy 1963, 1972, 1980, 1994; Kristeller 1961; Lauer 2004; Mailloux 1989; Murphy 1974, 2006; Pandey 2005; Richards 2008; Trapp 1985; Vickers 1988).

The role of style in rhetoric is fundamental; known as *lexis* for Greeks or *elocutio* for Romans, it was the third of rhetoric's three traditional canons, although its relevance and interest in epistemic postulations and conventions was treated differently in the oldest theory of communication (Ilie 2006; Pandey 2005). As Gregory and Carroll (1978: 2) point out:

> … the notion that there is a strong and constant relationship between the language we use in a particular situation and certain features of that situation is no new one. It lies behind the rhetorics of ancient Greece and Rome, the mediaeval list of "hard words", eighteenth-century English handbooks on Polite English, and the present series of technical dictionaries by Penguin Books …

Sociolinguistic Styles, First Edition. Juan M. Hernández-Campoy.

1.1.1. Ancient Greece

The origins of stylistics lie in the schools of rhetoric of Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire, with the *rhetor–orator* and *rhetoric–oratory* concepts: ῥήτωρ (*rhḗtōr*: "public speaker") and ῥητορικός (*rhētorikós*: "oratorical"). Like stylistics, rhetoric is focused on the effects of "verbal pyrotechnics", or verbal artistry, on an audience (Crowley and Hawhee 2004: 279), since speech is always planned with some listeners in mind (Kennedy 1963).

The systematic study of oratory began in the fifth and fourth centuries BC with Empedocles, Corax of Syracuse, and Tisias, and later with the Sophists (σοφιστής/*sophistes*: "wise/skilled man"), who were mostly itinerant professional teachers and practitioners of the art of verbal discourse in Hellenic society and might be considered as the first humanists (Cole 1991; Jarratt 1991)[1]. With the aim of moving audiences to action with arguments, Sophists like Protagoras (c. 481–420 BC), Gorgias (c. 483–376 BC), Prodicus (c. 465–395 BC), and Hippias (c. 460–399 BC) offered Greek citizens education in the effective use of reason, the form of argumentation, and the ability to speak cogently through special "training in inventing arguments and presenting them in a persuasive manner to a large audience" (Herrick 2012: 33). With their verbal techniques and promotion of liberal attitudes, the Sophists had an important influence on the Athenian societal and political system, contributing to the consolidation of a civilized social life with *demokratia* and the development of law. They prepared young noblemen for public life in the *polis* by teaching them how to debate convincingly through the art of rhetoric with the aim of, ultimately, becoming expert in public decision-making and tolerant of the beliefs of others in the Athenian assembly (Herrick 2012: 33). Although all citizens had the right to speak in the Assembly – the right known as *isegoria*: "equality in the agora" or assembly place – only Athenians who were trained in speaking and had sufficient education to understand the issues actually exercised this right: the professional *rhetores*. During the fifth century BC the term *rhetor* referred to someone who introduced a resolution into the Assembly, but by the fourth century it meant "an expert on politics", such as Demosthenes (c. 382–322 BC); later it acquired a general meaning of "one skilled in public speaking" (Crowley and Hawhee 2004: 8).

Rhetoric was viewed as a civic art and a foundational component of the fledgling democracy, a means of offering the best service to the community, as understood by Isocrates (436–338 BC), the most famous and influential teacher of rhetoric in ancient Athens:

> First, the Sophists emphasized the centrality of persuasive discourse to civilized, democratic social life. Their thinking on this matter was often insightful, and provoked discussion of rhetoric's role in democratic civic life. Second, the Sophist's appreciation for the sheer power of language also marked a theme that would continue to be important to later intellectual history in the West. Their explorations of this theme are still important to the discussion of language's centrality to thought and social life. Third, it is probably the case that the Sophist's arguments for a view of law as rooted in social conventions, and for truth as relative to places and times, influenced later philosophical and political thought. Finally, the Sophists' tendency to place rhetorical training at the center of education constituted an innovation that would continue to have influence for centuries. (Herrick 2012: 47)

Yet eventually the Sophists' persuasive verbal skills became excessive and over-elaborate, more concerned with the cultivation of an ornate style than with substance. Rhetoric began to be perceived as an empty and insincere language in which content might be completely subservient to style, the aim being to produce a specific desired impression on the audience. In addition, the Sophists and the power of their rhetoric began to be confronted with central

ethical concerns: this persuasive art of discourse could be used not only for good but also for bad purposes, and Sophists usually disregarded conventional Greek ideas about the moral uses of language and argument. Consequently, their activity soon became controversial, developed pejorative connotations, and was associated with charlatans, which "eventually gave Sophists an unsavory reputation and made 'sophistry' a synonym for deceitful reasoning" (Corbett and Connors 1999: 491). In his *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*, Plato (427–347 BC) accused the Sophists of using rhetoric as a means of manipulation and deceit instead of for discovering the truth, and condemned their rhetoric as "a knack of flattering with words": "For sophists like Gorgias, rhetoric is not a means to communicate persuasively 'truths' discovered through philosophical enquiry. Rather, it is a means to knowledge and understanding in the absence of a priori truth" (Richards 2008: 22). The Platonic art of rhetoric was a morality-based science (or *techne*) of dialectics, intended for the good of the individual and of the society, bringing about justice and harmony.

In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle (384–322 BC) developed a treatise on rhetoric that focused on the effects of language production on the audience and the heuristics of this art. Emphasizing the aesthetic dimension of language and the persuasiveness of emotional appeals and performance, as well as structured reasoning, he saw rhetoric as the "faculty of discovering the available means of persuasion in any setting" (1355b). Avoiding the moralizing function advocated by his teacher Plato, Aristotle's approach to rhetoric was both pragmatic and scientific. Unlike the Sophists, who taught by example, Aristotle preferred to develop principles that could be passed on to future students. The Sophists trained their students by making them memorize impressive speeches and to debate in order to learn persuasion by imitation and practice, whereas Aristotle instilled in his students the investigative, rational ability to discover what is persuasive in any given setting[2]. For this reason, he tried to find general rules for rhetoric that would work in any situation, with the ultimate goal of creating a comprehensive methodology, a set of intellectual tools that would help people learn these verbal skills. The intersection of style and argument was crucial in his conception of rhetoric as a connection between the *rhetor* and the community (Eisenhart and Johnstone 2008: 8). A successful rhetorician must therefore be conscious of the aesthetic dimension of language, have a thorough understanding of human emotions, the constituents of good character, and the community's most important values, and must possess some natural dramatic ability – in addition to the capacity to adapt messages to large audiences made up of people who lack special training in convincingly reasoned argumentation. Rhetoric and dialectic appear in his epistemic thought as two complementary arts of reasoning: the first was seen as a public speech exercise addressed to a large audience that lacked special logical training for resolving practical issues in the political and judicial arenas, while the second, in contrast, was a more private activity involving briefly stated questions and similarly brief answers addressed to a talented interlocutor or small group of trained advocates.

Aristotle codified rhetoric, identifying its parts and functions. He distinguished three basic "tasks" of rhetoric in the preparation of a speech or composition:

i) *invention*: the development of persuasive arguments;
ii) *arrangement*: the effective disposition of those arguments; and
iii) *style*: their formal presentation, cogently, artistically, and eloquently.

The aesthetic aspects of rhetoric – the delivery of any speech or composition using stylistic devices – are crucial to Aristotle since not only do they bring beauty to language but may also captivate an audience: "the way in which a thing is said does affect its intelligibility" (1404a).

In fact, as Crowley and Hawhee (2004: 280–313) state, a good style should reflect correctness, clearness, appropriateness, and ornament. It is the last two that belong to the rhetorical realm of style. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle discussed the importance of appropriate style in forms such as epic, tragedy, and comedy; this became a principle of classical rhetoric, poetry, and theatrical theory that was later conceptualized as *decorum* during the Roman period by Horace, and a canon of propriety in subsequent literary production (see 1.1.3). The standards of rhetorical appropriateness, used conventionally with rules for verbal behavior in a given context, are dictated by the community, being based on culture, tradition, and communal beliefs, so any style should be suited to its subject, occasion, and audience (Crowley and Hawhee 2004: 283). Consequently, according to Aristotle, the rhetorical settings in which speeches are delivered, the type of audience, and their rhetorical purpose (activity), required three different types or genres of civic rhetoric as appropriate means of persuasion (see Table 1.1):

i) *forensic* (judicial), concerned with determining the truth or falseness of events, usually in the courtroom;
ii) *deliberative* (political), which took place in legislative assemblies for decision-making, such as the establishment of new laws, involving weighing evidence for and against a policy or course of action that affected the whole *polis* and contributed to the general good of the citizenry; and
iii) *epideictic* (ceremonial), concerned with praise and blame, values, or just right and wrong, in public ceremonies, such as wedding toasts, retirement parties, inaugurations, or eulogies in a funeral, that conventionally required a dignified and subdued language.

Aristotle distinguished three means of persuasion – ways of persuading the audience – to be employed in any of the three rhetorical settings of the *inventio* (Richards 2008: 43):

i) *logos* (logical argument): the use of logical reasoning to construct a sound argument, inductively or deductively;
ii) *pathos* (emotional argument): the psychological management of the audience's emotions to influence their judgment through the use of linguistic resources as affective or emotional appeals; and
iii) *ethos* (ethical/moral argument) – probably the most persuasive according to Aristotle – which addresses the social psychology of the audience: that is, the personal character and credibility of the speaker are non-linguistic features that can affect the audience, including qualities such as perceived intelligence (*phronesis*), virtuous character (*arete*), and goodwill (*eunoia*).

Table 1.1 The three genres of rhetoric.

Genres of Rhetoric	Temporal orientation	Means	Ends	Audience
Deliberative	Future	Exhort and dissuade	Expedience, the (dis) advantageous	Decision-maker (legislator/voter)
Forensic	Past	Accuse and defend	The just and the unjust	Decision-maker (judge/jury)
Epideictic	Present	Praise and blame	The noble and the shameful	Spectator

Source: Ilie (2006: 575, Table 1).

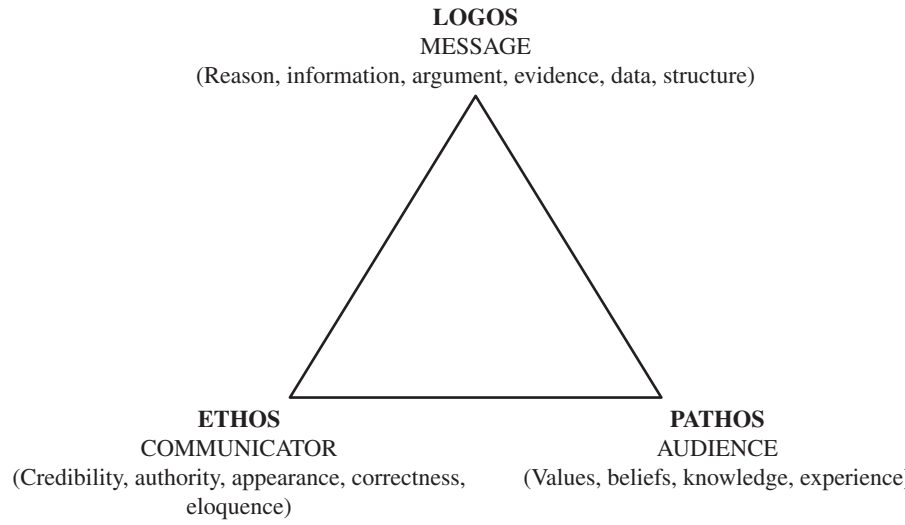

Figure 1.1 Aristotle's Rhetorical Triangle.

These appeals are prevalent in almost all arguments, and the relationship between them constitutes Aristotle's Rhetorical Triangle (Figure 1.1), where the message and subject, the audience, and the speaker are connected, complementarily and interdependently.

Ethos and *pathos* are the artistic proofs associated with the emotions as techniques that enable the *rhetor* to affect the audience's judgment:

> A trained *rhetor* must also understand what the community believes makes a person believable. If Aristotle's study of *pathos* is a psychology of emotion, then his treatment of *ethos* amounts to a sociology of character. It is not simply a how-to guide to establishing one's credibility with an audience, but rather it is a careful study of what Athenians consider to be the qualities of a trustworthy individual […] When people are convinced that a speaker is knowledgeable, trustworthy, and has their best interests at heart, they will be very likely to accept as true what that speaker has to say. (Herrick 2012: 84)

These three modes of proof, according to Corbett and Connors (1999: 493), constitute appeals to reason (*logos*), emotion (*pathos*), and ethics (*ethos*) that lead to the recognition of probability and verisimilitude as the essence of this persuasive art, rather than opinions, beliefs, or speculation.

1.1.2. The Roman world

The Hellenic principle of verbal skill, learned through the study of rhetorical art, leading to personal success in politics and the Athenian community and signaling refinement, wisdom, and accomplishment was continued and extended in classical Rome: "in order to play a significant role in Roman society, it was virtually a requirement that one be skilled in rhetoric" (Herrick 2012: 92). Following Greek *epistêmê* (theoretical knowledge) and *technê* (practice), Roman rhetorical education made the aesthetics of language central to effective speech by developing practical skill, wisdom, eloquence, and ingenuity in debate with special training

in style and diction (D.L. Clark 1957; M.L. Clark 1953; Kennedy 1972). The *technê rhêtorikê* devised by the Greeks became Latinized as *ars rhetorica*.

Rhetoricians such as Cicero and Quintilian played a crucial role in the transmission and development of rhetorical education, the *orator* and *oratory* being the Latin equivalents of the Greek *rhetor* and *rhetoric*, and the audience a fundamental constituent:

> The audience was a key component in the rhetoric of Rome. In Cicero, as in other great Roman rhetoricians, a concern for the audience's tastes, sensibilities, and values is consistently evident. In addition, whether in Cicero's desire to unite wisdom and eloquence or Quintilian's definition of rhetoric as the good citizen skilled in speaking, an ethical dimension attends Roman thinking about rhetoric. (Herrick 2012: 114)

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC) was the most influential Roman orator and rhetorical theorist. His *De Inventione* is a treatise on how to command the verbal skills of eloquence, in which he codified five canons of oratory to trace the traditional tasks, or activities, in the design of a persuasive speech (Burke 2014c: 21; Herrick 2012: 97; Richards 2008: 42) (Table 1.2):

i) *inventio* (invention): the development of valid or seemingly valid arguments;
ii) *dispositio* (arrangement): the principled organization of those arguments in the proper order and structure for the greatest effect;
iii) *elocutio* (style): the fitting of proper language to the developed arguments in order to move and persuade, with the use of figures of speech (*figurae verborum*) and figures of thought (*figurae sententiarum*) as rhetorical devices that enhance speaking or writing;
iv) *memoria* (memory): the art of recall, that is, the memorization, usually using mnemonic devices, of long and complex arguments to be extemporaneously presented during the speech; and
v) *pronuntiatio* (delivery): the actual presentation of the arguments to the audience in a pleasing way, making the right stylistic choices for the dignity of the subject matter, including proxemic and kinesic articulation – movement, gesture, posture, facial expression, vocal tone, and volume – to communicate meaning non-verbally.

This means:

> First of all, textual "material"/"data" was generated and/or discovered. Arguments were then formed from this material based on one of the three Aristotelian proofs: logos, ethos and pathos. This constituted the first canon of rhetoric. That material was then ordered for optimal effect in a given situation. This is the second canon. Thereafter, the textual material was stylised (the third canon). Finally, it was memorised (if it was a speech) and then delivered. These constitute the fourth and fifth canons respectively. The stylisation of the text in the third canon of rhetoric essentially took two forms. The first kind of stylisation was based on the clarity, preciseness and appropriateness of the language to be used. The second kind was based on style figures. These were either schemes (which deviate at the syntactic level of language) or tropes (which deviate at the semantic level). In addition to this, and linked to the category of appropriateness, there were three kinds of style which were thought to be appropriate in almost all speech situations; these were the high style, the middle style and the low style. (Burke 2014b: 1)

The audience is always a central concern in Cicero's oratorical theory, together with the complete orator. As in Greek rhetoric, his characterization of oratory in the classical Roman period is audience-oriented; eloquence and wisdom are complementary qualities (or virtues) that must be present in a true orator (*perfectus orator*) if he is to persuade and convince the

Table 1.2 The five canons of rhetoric.

English term		Meaning	Latin name	Greek name
1	Discovery	Coming up with materials for arguments	*Inventio*	*heúrisis*
2	Arrangement	Ordering your discourse	*Dispositio*	*taxis*
3	Stylisation	Saying/writing things well and in a persuasive manner	*Elocutio*	*lexis/phrases*
4	Memorisation	Strategic remembering	*Memoria*	*mnémē*
5	Delivery	Presenting your ideas	*Pronunciatio/Actio*	*hupókrisis*

Source: Burke (2014c: 21, Table 1.1).

ordinary audience member in an accessible and acceptable way: "I have been led by reason itself to hold this opinion first and foremost, that wisdom without eloquence does too little for the good of states, but that eloquence without wisdom is generally highly disadvantageous and is never helpful" (*De Inventione*, I.I; quoted by Herrick 2012: 96). There is, therefore, a constant dependence of oratory on – and adaptation to – the public's language and values: "The rhetor could not stand aloof from the concerns of the populace, and was in this way different from the practitioners of other arts" (Herrick 2012: 102). The orator must understand emotions fully in order to arouse powerful feelings in his audience. For this reason, Cicero made *pathos* (empathy and sympathy) an essential characteristic in orators, as a psychological management of the audience's emotions, influencing their judgment through the use of linguistic resources as affective or emotional appeals. In fact, the three functions he assigned to oratory in his *De Oratore* are also audience-oriented: to teach (*docere*), to delight (*delectare*), and to persuade (*movere*): these are all directed towards effects on listeners.

Like Isocrates in ancient Greece, Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (35–100 AD), "Quintilian", was the most famous and successful teacher of oratory in the period of classical Rome. His *Institutio Oratoria* was a treatise on the art of rhetoric and the training of the perfect orator, emphasizing style over substance in a movement known as the Second Sophists (Graham 1993). Being specially concerned with teaching judicial speech and the persuasion of the audience, he divided discourse into the following (see also Burke 2014c: 23; Herricks 2012: 109; Richards 2008: 42) (Table 1.3):

i) *exordium*: an introduction designed to dispose the audience to listen to the speech and predispose to a claim (*conquestio/conmiseratio/indignatio*);
ii) *narratio*: a statement of the facts that are essential for the understanding of the case and making a decision;
iii) *argumentatio*: the provision of evidence in support of claims advanced during the narratio (*confirmation/probatio*) and/or exposition and response to counterarguments (*refutation/reprehensio*); and, finally,
iv) *peroratio*, or conclusion: summarizing the most important points to demonstrate and stress the strength of the arguments, including appeals to feelings or values as common affinities (*pathos*) for the final effect.

According to Wisse (1989: 78), given their association with the emotions and the psychological dimension of the audience, *ethos* and *pathos* are used in the opening (*exordium*) and closing (*peroratio*) parts of a discourse respectively, causing a gradual increase from milder to

Table 1.3 A six-part composition plan from the anonymous *Rhetorica Herennium* (adapted from Burke 2014c: 23, Table 1.2).

Latin term		Part	Purpose
1	*Exordium*	Introduction	Foster good will, make your audience receptive and attentive and state your standpoint
2	*Narratio*	Background	Set the scene (past facts)
3	*Divisio/Partitio*	Brief list of arguments	State your arguments briefly
4	*Confirmatio*	Arguments in favor	Put forward your arguments in detail
5	*Confutatio*	Counter arguments	Deal with the views of your opponents
6	*Peroratio*	Conclusion	End appropriately (summarizing and employing style figures)

stronger emotive reactions. This enables the orator to communicate with *enargeia* ("energetic expression") to his audience, with a vivid performance or vigorous visual expression so that listeners actually experience an emotional engagement with what is being described (Plett 2002; Richards 2008: 45). The rhetorical setting and genre condition the use of the style and its stylistic devices in the *elocution*, giving rise to three levels of style (*genera dicendi*): the grand style (*genus grave/grande*: emotive and ornate, with impressive words), the middle style (*genus medium*), and the low or plain style (*genus humile*: idiomatic, everyday ordinary speech)[3]. In addition, there are four virtues of speaking (*virtutes dicendi*), clearly audience-oriented, common to the three levels of style; these were emphasized by both Cicero in *De Oratore* and Quintilian in *Institutio Oratoria* (Verdonk 2006: 199–200) as working towards the desired effect:

i) Correctness or purity (*latinitas*): correct and elegant use of language;
ii) Clarity (*perspicuitas*): there must be propriety but no obscurities or ambiguities in the language used;
iii) Decorum (*aptum*): style must be adapted appropriately to every condition in life, to every social rank, position, or age;
iv) Ornament (*ornatus*): decorative devices of style aimed at adding force to the intended effect and also affect through the use of (a) figures of speech such as tropes (simile, metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron, hyperbole, irony, and litotes) to change ordinary meaning and schemes (repetition, chiasmus, antithesis, and zeugma), arranging linguistic patterns to intensify or enhance meaning without actually changing it, and (b) figures of thought (rhetorical questions, apostrophe, amplification, and antithesis) with a pragmatic function in the presentation of the argument to the listener.

Quintilian's formulation of oratory – the art of the good citizen speaking well – like that of Plato, clearly implied a moral function and ethical commitment.

1.1.3. The Middle Ages and modern times

Just as they had been in Graeco-Roman society, Aristotle and Cicero have been the source of most rhetorical theory from the Middle Ages to modern times, in which discursive arrangement and stylistic choice are seen as crucial for effective influence of the audience.

Indeed, the Aristotelian canon of *style* concerned the selection of levels of language that the *rhetor* calculatedly makes in the construction of persuasive statements. The study of rhetoric continued during the Middle Ages in connection with formal education, the development of medieval universities, and the expansion of Christian religion, becoming transformed into the art of writing not only sermons (*ars praedicandi*) but also letters (*ars dictaminis*) (Corbett and Connors 1999: 497; Murphy 1974). Along with grammar and logic, rhetoric was one of the three ancient arts of discourse in the medieval *Trivium*[4]: Grammar was conceived as the mechanics of a language (in the combination of symbols and constructional rules), logic as the mechanics of thought and analysis, and rhetoric as the use of language to communicate persuasively.

As part of the scholastic practices of the earliest European universities that grew out of the Christian monastic schools, dialectical reasoning had a powerful influence on the articulation and defense of dogma, extending theological knowledge by inference (Kristeller 1961). Saint Augustine (354–430), for example, after his conversion to Christianity, developed the instructional function of rhetoric, wanting to use this initially pagan verbal art for spreading religion: the skilful manipulation of persuasive resources "as a means of persuading Christians to lead a holy life" (Corbett and Connors 1999: 498). In his *De Doctrina Christiana*, Augustine laid the foundations for the application of the general principles of rhetoric to the specific art of public preaching in homilies as the didactic "rhetoric of sermons" – or hemilectics, an epideictic variety of rhetoric – in which argumentation and exposition were more salient. In his *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) attempted to apply Greek rationalism – Aristotelian rhetorical and philosophical thought – to the principles and doctrine of Christianity for the inferential development or refutation of ideas, resolving contradictions, particularly in the areas of ethics, natural law, metaphysics, and political theory, and placing more emphasis on reason and argumentation.

The humanism of the Renaissance meant a rebirth of interest in classical rhetoric, which became a model for written discourse, and in its traditional analytical tools: figures of speech, *topoi*, lines of argument, invention and style, ethos, logos, and pathos (D.L. Clark 1922; Kristeller 1961). For example, in his *De Duplici Copia Verborum et Rerum* (or *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*), Erasmus of Rotterdam (c. 1466–1536) aimed to assist grammar-school students in the acquisition of elegance and variety of expression, with different stylistic elements of display in composition (Corbett and Connors 1999: 499). He focused on invention and elocution when dealing with *res–verba* (matter–form), emphasizing the abundance of stylistic devices in discourse: fertile invention and stylistic resourcefulness. Letter-writing had been one of the most popular rhetorical practices in an age when written correspondence was inevitably the most rapid means of communication for business and diplomatic affair. For this reason, "the man skilled in letter writing was as much sought after as the man skilled in oratory" (Corbett and Connors 1999: 500), and Erasmus' *Modus Conscribendi Epistolas* (1522) was a reflection of this social demand. Similarly, in understanding rhetoric as the art of speaking well (*bene dicendi*), the French reformist Peter Ramus (1515–1572) concentrated more on the aspects of *elocutio* (style) as effective use of language, exploring figures of speech (schemes and tropes).

A crucial principle of classical rhetoric in literature emphasized by Aristotle (in his *Poetics*), Cicero (in his *De Oratore*), and Horace (in his *Ars Poetica*) is *decorum*, in consistency with the canons of propriety. Decorum sets the limits for appropriate style and specific social behavior within set situations in epic, tragedy, and comedy. As an embryonic tenet of determinism and positivism, the notion of decorum suggests deterministically predictive patterns of sociolinguistic behavior in the characterization of fictional characters based on the societal

system: action, character, thought, and language must all be appropriate to each other, in line with the rules of decorum. The king must therefore behave and speak like a king, the queen like a queen, noblemen like the nobility, and servants like servants. Decorum was important not only in the Graeco-Roman period but also during and after the renaissance, when classical rules and tenets were revered (Clark 1922).

In the seventeenth century, with the advent of rationalism and empiricism, an important consequence of the translation of the Bible and scientific works into vernacular languages such as English, French, and Spanish instead of the classical languages was the rise of vernacular rhetoric. One of the concerns of intellectuals such as Francis Bacon (1561–1626) in his *Advancement of Learning* (1605) was the identification of a suitable style for the discussion of scientific topics, with clear exposition of facts and arguments but devoid of the linguistic ornamentation traditionally favored, explicitly preferring *res* to *verba*. Bacon conceived style as in conformance with the subject matter and the audience, viewing rhetoric and logic as distinct faculties with different objectives: rhetoric is subservient to imagination and logic to understanding (Corbett and Connors 1999: 507). Similarly, John Dryden (1631–1700) also defended the use of vernacular languages and plain vernacular linguistic resources (rather than Latinates), understanding that style should be in tune with the occasion, the subject, and the audience. In his Preface to *Religio Laici* (1682/1950: 162) he stated that "the expressions of a poem designed purely for instruction ought to be plain and natural, yet majestic […] The florid, elevated and figurative way is for the passions; for love and hatred, fear and anger, are begotten in the soul by showing the objects out of their true proportion […] A man is to be cheated into passion, but to be reasoned into truth."

Until the late eighteenth century rhetorical practice was primarily a rhetoric of writing associated with correctness and purity (Genung 1893), cohesion, and coherence (unity, mass, and coherence: Wendell 1891), framed as composition-rhetoric. After the nineteenth century argumentative rhetoric was developed, emphasizing the multimodal aims of discourse such as narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative (Corbett and Connors 1999: 518). George Campbell's (1719–1796) rhetorical postulations in his *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776/1868), for example, were largely a response to the empiricists John Locke (1632–1704) and David Hume (1711–1776), and influenced subsequent rhetorical theory. Placing the art of speaking among the "elegant" – as opposed to the "useful" – arts, Campbell was concerned with the psychology of the audience and viewed the functions of rhetoric as understanding (knowing), imagination (dreaming), passions (feeling), and will (acting): "[a]ll the ends of speaking are reducible to four; every speech being intended to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passions or to influence the will" (Campbell 1776/1868: 23). The perfect orator must therefore command perspicuity, vivacity, elegance, animation, and music (Campbell 1868: 238). Similarly, Henry Noble Day (1850) developed a multimodal rhetoric, whose ends are explanation, conviction, excitation, and persuasion: "[t]he process by which a new conception is produced, is by Explanation; that by which a new judgment is produced, is by Conviction; a change in the sensibilities is the effected by the process of Excitation; and in the will, by that of Persuasion" (quoted in Corbett and Connors 1999: 523).

In the twentieth century, the logical neo-positivism present in scientific thinking and the intellectual efforts made to apply scientific standards to the understanding of all phenomena meant that rhetoric was considered as a clearly inferior, even obsolete, art (Herrick 2012: 195). Nevertheless, science could not provide solutions based on physical causation to human social and moral issues and their motivations; values belong in human choices and therefore became an object of exploration. As a result, attention was focused on two foundational

components of rhetoric: argumentation and the audience, conditioning style and argumentation to audience. Scholars such as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958/1969) attempted to reveal the logical structure of everyday arguments and how social and moral values are used to persuade in such arguments. The role and centrality of audience is crucial in this new rhetorical theory, since the audience "will determine to a great extent both the direction the arguments will take, and the character, the significance that will be attributed to them" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 30). Orators must accommodate to the hearer's world views – to what audience believes and values – adapting their argumentation to their addressees, a task that, as Foss, Foss, and Trapp (1985/1991: 241–272) stated, has been implicit in rhetorical thinking for centuries, both in ancient and modern times.

Rooted in classical traditions but profiting from modern refinements in psychology, semantics, motivational research, and other behavioral sciences, rhetoric is currently viewed as the intentional use of language to influence an audience, and for this reason there is, as Richards (1936) suggested, a focus on the psychology of the listener "and its broadening of the function of rhetoric to include enlightening the understanding, pleasing the imagination, moving the passions, and influencing the will" (Corbett and Connors 1999: 538). Every use of language – written or spoken – is a rhetorical act, because all communication is inherently rhetorical and intentional: there is a message to transmit or a specific goal to achieve. For Burke (1962), "appeal" and "identification" are the essence of communication, since speakers must identify themselves with the audience, becoming an integral part of it, through deliberately designed verbal persuasion. Thus, styles constitute a mode of identification through speakers' conscious or unconscious attempts to suit their language to the requirements of the audience. Additionally, Reddy's (1979) conduit model of communication proposed a teleological model rooted in classical rhetoric that stresses the intentional nature – or the perlocutionary effect – of communication, alluding to the psychological consequences of the speech act: the aim of the addresser ("sender") with a message (or utterance) is to cause an effect in the addressee ("receiver"). Similarly, following Reddy, Berge (2001: 23) defines rhetoric as "a theory of communication that seeks to find the quality which makes it possible for an addresser to persuade or convince his addressee about something."

With a focus on "the pervasiveness of persuasiveness" in our occupational, social, and private lives, Herrick (2012) explores the universal nature of persuasion through rhetoric as a technique for gaining compliance in a world in which human beings are rhetorical beings. Individuals are engaged in rhetoric every time they express emotions and thoughts to other people with the aim of influencing them:

> Outside the arena of professional endeavors, we are perpetual persuaders in our personal relationships. Who doesn't make arguments, advance opinions, and seek compliance from friends? Moreover, we typically engage in all these persuasive activities without thinking we are doing anything wrong. In fact, it is difficult *not* to persuade. We also engage in the practice on almost a daily basis in our interactions with friends, colleagues at work, or members of our family. We may attempt to influence friends or family members to adopt our political views; we will happily argue the merits of a movie we like; we *are* that salesperson, religious advocate, or politician. In fact, it is difficult to imagine a human relationship in which persuasion has no role, or a human organization that does not depend to some degree on efforts to change other people's thoughts and actions. (Herrick 2012: 3–14)

Assuming that the function of language is not solely to communicate meaning but also to achieve persuasion in our social life, Herrick (2012: 7–15) emphasizes the importance of rhetoric in communicative processes and identifies five characteristics of this verbal art in

order to account for its nature and to demonstrate the centrality of audience. Rhetoric has the following properties: it is

i) planned, directing our attention to the linguistic choices about how to address an audience;
ii) always adapted to an audience – its values, experiences, beliefs, social status, aspirations, etc. – crucially guiding the inventional process;
iii) shaped by human motives, taking account of commitments (usually moral), goals, desires, or purposes that lead to action, as symbolic resources for drawing people together;
iv) responsive to a situation or to a previous rhetorical statement, making rhetoric an activity that is both "situated" (in time, location, subject and audience) and "dialogic" (interactional); and
v) mostly persuasion-seeking, to alter an audience's view or perception in the direction of that of a speaker by means of different rhetorical resources such as arguments (reasoning), appeals (emotions, loyalties, commitments), arrangement (ordering), and/or aesthetics (stylistic elements of display: schemes and tropes).

But in addition to its persuasive purposes, the art of rhetoric also has, according to Herrick (2012: 15–23), some social functions:

i) testing of ideas on their merits publicly, an audience being essential for that evaluation;
ii) enhancing the verbal effectiveness of advocacy and gaining adherence to one's arguments;
iii) distributing personal, psychological, or political power with arguments and counter-arguments, given that rhetoric, ideology, and power are linked to one another;
iv) discovering well informed (relevant and convincing) facts and truths that are crucial to decision-making;
v) shaping and building knowledge; and
vi) building community, in the sense of communal unity and membership.

In this sense, according to Zdenek (2008), speaker's agency and context are crucial in rhetoric. The orator has to understand the audience, both individually and collectively, as well as the context of any rhetorical appeal. The centrality of audience adaptation to rhetoric was highlighted by Aristotle, who developed the *enthymeme*, attempting to link the rhetor's views and those of the audience, in other words, a commonality between them: an argument built from those values, beliefs, or knowledge held in common by a speaker and an audience (*Rhetoric*, Book I, Chapter I). The speaker must be sensitive to the audience's social, convictional, and emotional characteristics, and rhetoric is thus involved in a continuous adaptation of the speaker to an audience (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 23–24). "The classical rhetorical tradition is grounded in an ideology of individualism and agency: individual speakers (agents) seek to persuade specific audiences in specific situations. This conception of agency continues to influence our modern understanding of rhetoric" (Zdenek 2008: 148). But, according to Young (2008), while it is clear that rhetorical agency is key to rhetorical inquiry, its definition is not univocal, having undergone different formulations and reformulations (see also Geisler 2004):

> … there is a tension between the traditional rhetorical approach to agency, which focuses on the rhetor's capacity to act, and the postmodern approach, which claims that individual agency is

> socially constructed and illusory. Scholars in rhetoric continue to struggle to define rhetorical agency in a way that takes into account how it is constructed in texts and how it can result in action … (Young 2008: 227)

Leff (2003: 135) understands agency as co-constitutively conditioned by a speaker who is in turn constrained by the audience's demands, implying a source of tension between presumed rhetorical agency and the acknowledged constraints of the context: "[t]he humanistic approach entails a productively ambiguous notion of agency that positions the orator both as an individual who leads an audience and as a community member shaped and constrained by the demands of the audience." For this reason, according to Bell (2007a), Bakhtin (1935, 1953) depersonalized the speaker as "the speaking person:"

> Bakhtin does not talk about speakers but rather about "the speaking person". This is salutary. Sociolinguists can become inured to the term "speaker", and speakers can ironically become too easy to depersonalize, to treat as subjects, informants, eventually objects. But the speaking person is foremost a *person*, and this emphasis accords with Bakhtin's stress on addressivity and response, and on language as something that occurs between people. This also closes the circle to the study of style, which is first and foremost the variety of ways that individual speaking persons use language in dialogue with others. (Bell 2007a: 109)

White (1984) contributed to the development of constitutive rhetoric as a social constructionist line of thought that sees this verbal art as a broader domain of social experience, stressing the capacity of language to create, or reinforce, a collective identity for an audience: just as language influences people, so people may also influence language, because language is socially constructed and depends on the meanings that people attach to it. Language use is therefore inherently rhetorical.

Jolliffe (2008b) drew a rhetorical framework diagram for use in professional development workshops that synthesizes the main elements involved in this verbal art, distinguishing: i) the rhetorical situation, ii) appeals, and iii) surface features (Figure 1.2). As Phelan (2008: 60) describes it, the *logos* is located at the centre of the diagram as embodied thought, showing its indispensable role in a spoken or written discourse: "[r]egardless of whatever other aspects of rhetoric are taken into account, or whatever language features might be noted, all should ultimately point toward, and result in, the *logos*, and especially a reader's or audience's acceptance of that *logos*, due to the rhetorical efforts of the writer." Exigence (orator's motivation), target audience (segment of addressees), and purpose (intention) constitute the rhetorical situation, so that the speaker/writer, who is already at point B, wants to move the audience from point A to point B. As initially suggested by Aristotle, *logos, ethos*, and *pathos* are the rhetorical appeals that will give the speaker/writer the credibility that will generate emotion (sympathy and empathy) and affinities (or self-interest), because the audience's predisposition to begin moving from point A to point B requires their emotional engagement or direct self-interest. The arrangement of arguments cannot be casual (accidental), since the designated sequence of thoughts presented to an individual or collective addressee is essential if it is to lead to the effect of the whole. The surface features are diction, syntax, imagery, and figurative language and constitute the message and argumentation.

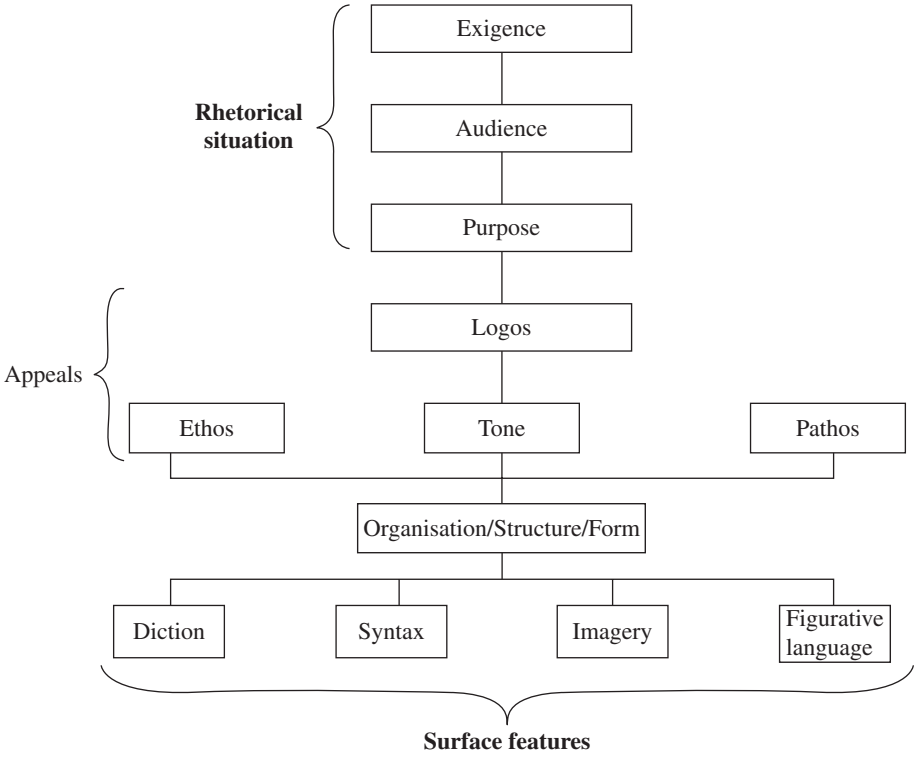

Figure 1.2 Jolliffe's rhetorical framework diagram (adapted from Phelan 2008: 60).

Retrospectively, as Johnstone (2010b) points out, the rhetorical canon of style has meant many different things in the rhetorical tradition, which has led to a range of epistemic positions: some scholars have seen style as a matter of clarity, others as a matter of appropriateness; style has sometimes been described as expressive of self, sometimes as responsiveness to the audience; by some as constitutive of truth, by others as merely ornamental. In fact, as Eisenhart and Johnstone (2008: 7) state:

> Throughout its history, rhetoric's fraught relationship with style has drawn it in and out of favor with other disciplines. The scope of this perpetual interest in style has shifted, of course. Much of the conflict between sophist and Platonic/Aristotelian traditions revolved around the significance of style and of style's role as a central component in rhetorical practice, teaching, and theory. During the Middle Ages, when philosophers such as Ramus deemed invention to be the realm of dialectic and philosophy, rhetoric retained a position as the art overseeing style, alongside delivery (Conley 1990). More recently, the mid-twentieth century's "new" rhetoric (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969) can be distinguished in part by its interest in style as constitutive rather than merely ornamental. Several conceptual developments, which did not so much occur in the mid-twentieth as disciplinarily cohere then, mark the current rhetorical attitude toward style. For example, Burkean treatments of metaphor (Burke 1945, 1950) depart rather dramatically from the Aristotelian (1991)[5] discussion of metaphors as other names, into an appreciation for the knowledge-making work of metaphor and the essentially metaphoric nature of rhetorical practices.

However, from a sociolinguistic perspective, the multiplicity of interpretations of the concept and nature of style as a phenomenon is, according to Johnstone (2010b), extremely stimulating:

> Style is a key concept in contemporary sociolinguistics, even if, in rhetoric, style seems to be somewhat out of style. Sociolinguists' term "style-shifting" labels what people are doing when they vary their speech and writing from situation to situation. Like rhetoricians, sociolinguists argue over multiple accounts of how style-shifting happens and what it accomplishes. And, as I suspect is also true in rhetoricians' discussions of style, all of these accounts are accurate in some ways, even if they are often represented as competing.

In any case, the renewed importance of language and persuasion in the increasingly mediated world, with the rise of mass-media communication, advertising, and the film industry, has led to a revival of rhetoric studies, accounting for the specific semiotic strategies, as well as linguistic figures of speech, used by the speaker to accomplish persuasive goals (see for example, Bateman and Delin 2006; Lotman 2006).

1.2. Style in Stylistics and Semiotics

Following the tradition of Aristotle's rhetoric, stylistics appeared definitively in the twentieth century as a discipline related to linguistics that focuses on the expressive resources of the language: the non-linguistic function and effects of linguistic features for communicative expression and meaning-making (Arnold 1981; Bally 1909; Black 2006; Bradford 1997; Burke 2006a, 2014a; Carter and Simpson 1989; Enkvist 1973; Fish 1980; Fowler 1986; Freeman 1981; Galperin 1971, 1977; Green 2006; Maltzev 1984; McMenamin 2002; Mukherjee 2005; Nørgaard, Montoro and Busse 2010; Riffaterre 1959, 1966; Sebeok 1960; Short 2001; Simpson 2004; Skrebnev 1994; Studer 2008; Verdonk 2002; Wales 2006; Znamenskaya 2004; amongst many others).

Stylistics is the most direct heir of rhetoric, replacing it and expanding on the study of elocution, or style, in language. According to Wales (2006: 215), "one major root lies in the earlier study of *elocutio* in Western and European rhetoric, concerned with stylistic devices and patterned language such as schemes and tropes." As seen in 1.1, Ancient Greek rhetors developed stylistic techniques, such as figures of speech and thought, to structure and elaborate an argument, as well as, crucially, to move the emotions, with a clear and distinctive perlocutionary effect on the addressee (affective meaning). During the twenty centuries since the Graeco-Roman period, rhetoric has been seen as either the art of effective speaking (delivery of speeches) or the art of writing well (composition), or even both. But, in its transformation into modern stylistics, it has been reduced to *elocutio*, or the art of style (Maltzev 1984: 14). Similarly, the term "stylistics" has been widely used during the twentieth century to refer to the study of authorial and group style, especially in literature (as its linguistic approach), as well as of the relationship between linguistic structure and textual meaning (see also Short 2001: 282):

> Traditionally, style is a literary concept, deriving from rhetoric and the classical notion of *elocutio*, which includes a set of rhetorical strategies used for persuasive purposes (cf., for example, Hough 1969: 1–4). Style originally referred to rhetorical figures of reinforcement

> and repetition that lent a message persuasive power. The core of the original meaning of style is still visible in modern stylistics, which, as a research discipline, potentially encompasses both literary and non-literary discourses. Stylistics is not primarily concerned with formal (i.e. constitutive) aspects of a text but emphasizes their stylistic significance, their meaningfulness, in the context in which they are produced. This definition involves the notion of style as a motivated choice of linguistic strategies applied to induce specific effects. (Studer 2008: 7)

Meaning assumes paramount importance in stylistics because it is conveyed and foregrounded not only by means of grammatical expression (words, word-combinations, sentences used, etc.) or phonetic expression (pronunciation), but also through suprasegmental expression (intonation, rhythm, etc.), involving choice between linguistic variants and, therefore, creativity (Enkvist 1964, 1986; Halliday 1971). In this sense, Chatman (1967: 30), for example, defined style as "a product of individual choices and patterns of choices among linguistic possibilities." Given that the effect of choice and usage of different linguistic features may predispose thought and emotions to different conditions of communication, according to Skrebnev (1994: 5), stylistics is concerned with a versatile and multidimensional object of study:

i) the aesthetic function of language;
ii) the expressive resources of language as stylistic devices for affecting the addressee[6];
iii) synonymous ways of conveying the same idea;
iv) emotional coloring in language to create a particular stylistic effect;
v) a system of stylistic devices for special effects, by particular combinational use of linguistic features;
vi) the splitting of the literary language into separate systems (style/register/functional style);
vii) the interrelation between language and thought for the interpretation (decoding) of the linguistic and non-linguistic message; and
viii) the author's individual manner and skills in making use of the language resources[7].

Znamenskaya (2004: 16–17) distinguishes two types of stylistic research that relate to a traditional debate about the canonical status of style: *lingua-stylistics* and *literary stylistics*. They have in common an interest in: i) the literary language from the point of view of its variability, ii) the idiolect (individual language) of a writer or speaker, and iii) poetic speech (with its own specific laws, for some trends). But they differ in that *lingua-stylistics* studies functional styles and the linguistic nature of the expressive means of the language (their systematic character and their functions), whereas *literary stylistics* is focused on the composition of a work of art, the various literary genres, and the writer's own outlook. According to Coupland (2011: 138), the use of the term "general stylistics" (as in Sebeok 1960 or Weber 1996) was intended to refer to "the general application of linguistic analysis – phonological, grammatical, lexical, prosodic – to texts of all sorts, distinguished from the subfield of literary stylistics." As Maltzev (1984: 15) stated, the opposing views expressed in these trends have also meant the establishment of dichotomies based on the opposition "stylistic neutrality" (norm) vs. "stylistic coloring" (deviation), such as:

linguistic stylistics *versus* literary stylistics
stylistics of the code *versus* stylistics of the message
stylistics of expression *versus* genetic stylistics

Neutrality as adherence to the norm through the use of unmarked structures, on the one hand, and stylistic coloring as creative deviation from the norm through the use of marked structures, on the other, have traditionally affected the notion and conception of style among scholars. It has sometimes been suggested that neutral language denotes without connoting. Yet apparently neutral linguistic features, in a certain context and in a specific combination, may create unexpected coloring. In addition to the grammatical meaning (noun, verb, adjective), a word also has a lexical significance belonging to the semantic structure that can, in turn, be divided into denotative and connotative meanings. While the first is related to the logical or nominative meaning, the second is associated with extralinguistic circumstances (situation, participants, etc.) and consists of emotive, evaluative, expressive, and/or merely stylistic components (Arnold 1981). For this reason, according to Znamenskaya (2004: 25), stylistics is first and foremost engaged in the study of connotative meanings of verbal acts in communicative events, as it interprets the opposition or clash between the contextual connotation of a given word and its denotative significance. This is so because of the unexpected violation of the norm or convention (recognized/received standard), which is the essence of poetic language: style as deviance. The violation of the norm is generated through deviation, which can take place at any level of the language (phonetic, graphical, morphological, syntactic, or lexical)[8]. The normal arrangement of a message both in form and content is based on its *predictability*, and the violation of the norm (de-automatization) generates a *defeated expectancy*, which is the basic principle of stylistic function for foregrounding (Arnold 1981; Znamenskaya 2004).

This issue inevitably leads to the inherently or adherently denotative-connotative properties of linguistic forms in their expressive potential to convey ideas and/or emotions in a communicative context, usually – though not necessarily – also associated with formal (bookish/solemn/poetic/official/standard) or informal (colloquial/rustic/dialectal/vulgar/non-standard) language.

Stylistic studies date back to the early twentieth-century works of formalists and functionalists (Mukherjee 2005; Taylor and Toolan 1984) – or textualists and contextualists, according to Bradford (1997: 12) – whose common aim was the identification of the nature and algorithm of stylistic effect. Although both approaches acknowledge the presence of patently literary features (figurative language) and elements of non-poetic language within a text, they differ on the effects and function of style:

> A textualist will be concerned principally with the ways in which the patently literary structure of the text appropriates and refracts its references to the world. A contextualist will be more concerned with the text as a constituent feature of a much broader range of discourses and stylistic networks: syntactic, lexical, political, historical, gendered, cultural. (Bradford 1997: 95–96)

1.2.1. Textualists

Mostly in the 1920s, formalists such as Charles Bally of the Geneva School and Roman Jakobson, Viktor Shlovsky, Valentin Vološinov, Lubomír Doležel, Lev Jakubinsky, Bohuslav Havránek and Jan Mukařovský of the Russian and Prague Schools centered their attention on the code and message (either literary or non-literary). They were inspired by the ideas of Saussure on the structure of language and the aesthetic ideas still under the influence of the symbolist movement, where the function of the linguistic sign is fundamental. The symbolist movement was a trend that began in French and Belgian poetry towards the end of the

nineteenth century and was associated with the poetry of Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Valéry, Verlaine, Rimbaud, and Maeterlinck. This movement exerted a strong influence on British and American literature, including that of W.B Yeats, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, and Wallace Stevens, and the New Criticism. Assuming that the sounds of language are given significant symbolic meanings with an emotive and suggestive potential, their aim was to express states of mind rather than objective reality by making use of the inherent power of words and images in order to suggest as well as denote. For Saussure (1916), each linguistic unit (phoneme or word) is a sign, which is linear, arbitrary, and part of social life, as it links the mental representation ("*signifiant/signifier*") of the utterance with the mental representation of the referent ("*signifié/signified*"): a linguistic sign is not "a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern" (Saussure 1916/1983: 66). Any sound pattern "may be called a 'material' element only in that it is the representation of our sensory impressions" (Saussure 1916/1983: 66). The linguistic sign is thus a two-sided psychological entity (see Figures 1.3 and 1.4) (see also Cobley 2006). In the communicative process, the correlation of *signifiant* and *signified* within the "circuit of parole" begins with the codification

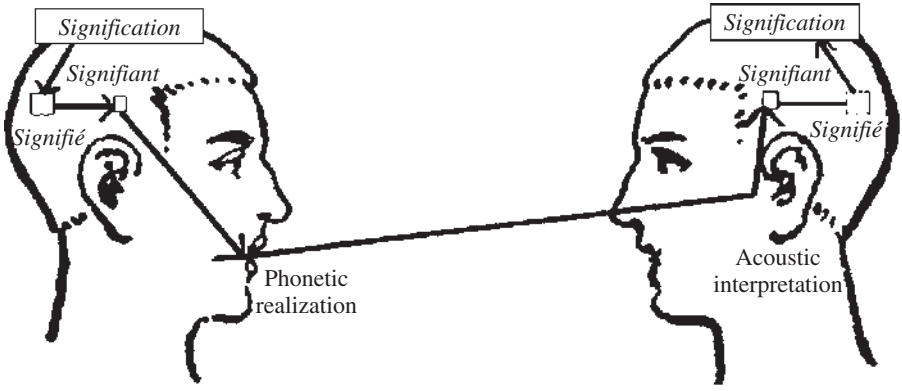

Figure 1.3 The Saussurean communicative process according to Rigotti and Greco (2006: 663, Figure 3).

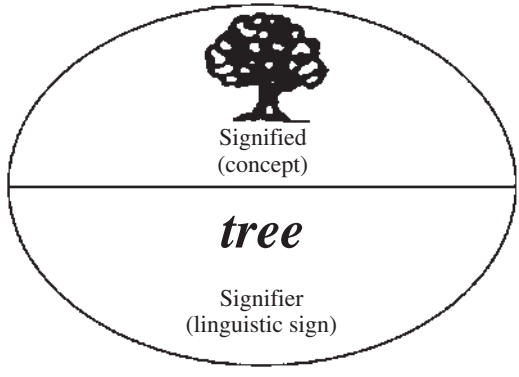

Figure 1.4 The linguistic sign as a two-sided psychological entity according to Saussure (1916/1983: 67).

of the actual meaning intended by the speaker and ends with the reconstruction (decodification) of this meaning tentatively carried out by the hearer (Rigotti and Greco 2006: 660); and *signification* appears as the counterpart of the auditive image – the value of the conceptual component of the linguistic sign.

In the context of the Geneva (or Saussurean) School, the Swiss philologist Charles Bally (1865–1947) was a pioneer in the development of a linguistic theory of style as modern stylistics, emphasizing the affective aspects of communication in non-literary language. Under the influence of Ferdinand de Saussure's (1857–1913) *langage–langue–parole* differentiation (Joseph 2001: 75), Bally (1909, 1913) complemented Saussure's *cognitive* dimension (conceptual aspects) of language with its *affective* (stylistic) nature, by concentrating on the writer and conceiving stylistics as the affective and expressive function of signs, in which style reveals the soul of the author (Wales 2006: 2015). He differentiated between *dictum* (content) and *modus*: how content is presented by means of styles that reveal the attitudes adopted by the speaker toward the proposition conveyed (Saussure 2006: 24). In this way, content can be transmitted according to various modalities. Language has two expressive functions: *natural effects*, such as onomatopoeia, diminutives, and phonetic symbolism, and *evocative effects*, which are the social references of language – the socio-situational context of occurrence evokes different types of language use. Words such as *daddy*, for example, have a higher marked affective meaning than *father*, and much higher than *penicillin*, whose significance is exclusively conceptual (R. Monroy, personal communication). The terminological opposition *denotation–connotation*, indicating a distinction in the realm of meaning (objective/descriptive meaning of a sign vs. its subjective/emotive meaning) was crucial in Saussure's conception of style and his theory of stylistics. In this theory, synonyms sharing the same conceptual content could evoke different emotional values, including the stylistic and poetic values associated with them as well as any ethical and aesthetic value judgments: "[t]he Swiss scholar conceives the stylistic study of the emotional aspects of linguistic expressions as involving the systematic establishment of series of synonyms sharing a core meaning but differing in the emotional values associated with them" (Rigotti and Rocci 2006: 440). These emotional values of a linguistic expression may be the result of i) its natural affective attributes, such as aesthetic values directly associated with the variant selected, or ii) its particular effects in the sociolinguistic context of a given speech community: the deliberate choice among all the linguistic resources (different stylistic, dialectal, and sociolectal alternatives) expected to excite emotions indirectly by evoking the speech community connotations with and attitudes to the variant selected. According to Rigotti and Rocci (2006: 440), "[t]he effect is considered to be particularly strong when the expression is used outside its natural milieu and when there is a readily available nonmarked alternative in the standard language to refer to the object denoted" (see also 6.2.5 and 6.2.6). In this way, Bally viewed literary texts as examples of particular language use.

While Bally focused on style in ordinary language, the Prague School (or Prague Linguistic Circle), in contrast, was interested in literary form. They advocated a scientific method for studying poetic language, equating style with embellishment of language (aesthetic dimension), and assuming an empirical difference between literature and other types of language based on style and effect and through deviation (from the norms of everyday language) and rhetorical parallelism. Associating stylistics with literature, textualists maintained that the stylistic character of a literary text defines it inherently as literature, distinguishing it from the usual linguistic rules and conventions of non-literary discourse. The concept of "aktualisace" (or "foregrounding")[9] was developed in the Prague School to distinguish between marked (foregrounded) and unmarked (backgrounded) texts, suggesting a distinction between linguistic deviations and those linguistic devices that remain unnoticed due to their automatization

(Mukherjee 2005: 1044; Studer 2008: 8). They were thus mostly concerned with the linguistic properties of literary language, or "literariness", through the author's stylistic choice between alternative forms of expression as a way of differentiation from non-literary language. Roman Jakobson (1896–1982) was one of the pioneers of the Prague School associated with the development of modern stylistics within the Formalist strand, although he never used the word "style" in his work (Maltzev 1984: 15). Inspired by Bühler's (1934) Organon model and Saussure's levels of interaction between language and meaning (signifier, signified, and referent), Jakobson (1960) identified six different components of language in direct correlation with six functions (Figures 1.5 and 1.6) for his formulation of poetics (i.e. stylistics). In any act of verbal communication there is always a speaker (sender/addresser), a listener (receiver), a message form to transmit (specific utterance), a code used (language/dialect), a channel (speaking/writing) as the contact between the two, and a context in which the speech event occurs. These constitutive elements are the framework that characterizes social interaction, so they stand as the basic and invariable principle necessary in any conversational activity: who speaks to whom, when, how, what, and to what ends. In this model each component has a particular communicative function associated with it. The function of a given utterance consequently depends on its orientation to one of these six constitutive factors (Burke 2006b):

- The *emotive* function focuses on the sender – the intent of the addresser in the communicative act – as it signals something about what is happening in their mind and reveals something

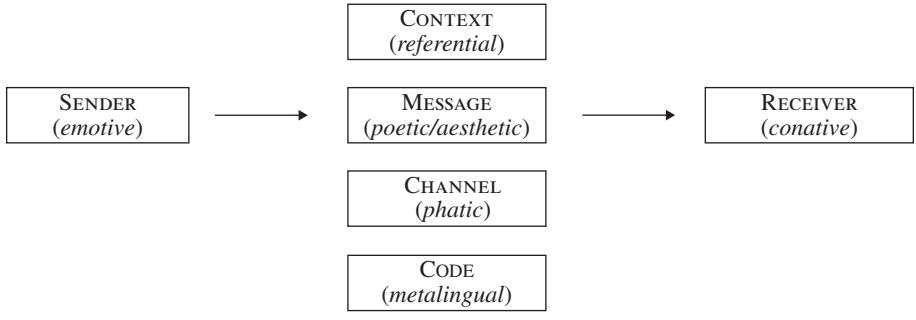

Figure 1.5 Jakobson's (1960) functions of language, based on Karl Bühler's (1934) Organon model.

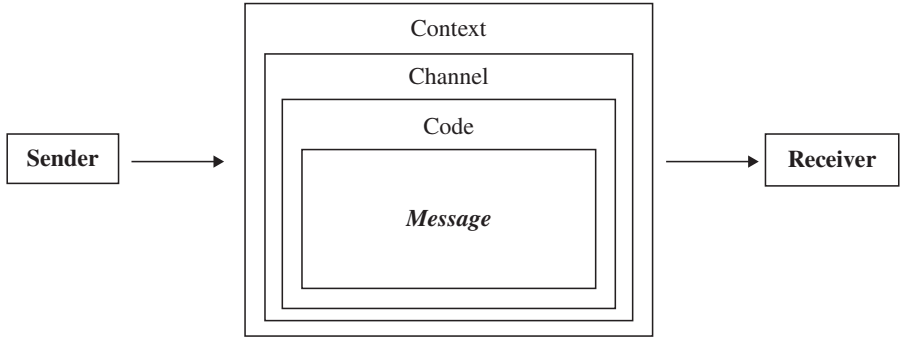

Figure 1.6 Hierarchy of influence in Jakobson's (1960) functions of language.

about how the listener should receive and/or react to what has been said; it is therefore self-expressive (emotive and affective), frequently occurring through interjections;

- The *conative* function is oriented towards the receiver, as the effect that the message has (or is intended to have) on its receiver, usually occurring through vocatives or imperatives;
- The *phatic* function refers to the channel used to communicate as contact between the interlocutors, by means of some discourse markers (or fillers), such as those used in a telephone conversation (*hmm, mmhmm, oh dear, I see, yeah*, etc.) to check the operational status of the channel – in other words, any message designed to establish, acknowledge, or reinforce social relations;
- The *metalingual* function concerns the code: any message that refers to the code used;
- The *referential* (denotative/cognitive) function alludes to any message that is constructed to convey information, thus referring to the context of the message, with a particular orientation towards some fragment of the world or reality;
- The *poetic* function refers to any message constructed to deliver meanings effectively; it thus focuses on the message itself and constitutes the creative use of language resulting in literary works (verbal art) that call for attention to their marked form.

Obviously, the most frequent function in literary texts is the poetic, centered on the message itself, where linguistic devices are more marked and exceptional. In contrast, factual texts (books, encyclopedias, journals) tend to be focused on contexts and are thus referential and with a more unmarked style (Nørgaard, Montoro, and Busse 2010: 187). Jakobson was particularly interested in the poetic function of language and the formal linguistic aspects of literary works, seeking an account for the distinctive literary nature of a given text (for example, Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss 1962). Drawing on the Saussurean notion of paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures of language (Koerner 2006), Jakobson suggested that the combinative nature of language (rules and conventions), together with the user's selective potential (choice), result in the poetic function (Bradford 1997: 35–36); that is, the axes of combination and selection result in a *principle of equivalence* for the arrangement of any linguistic sign in the conformation of an stylistic effect (see also Burke 2006b; Jakobson and Halle 1956):

> What is the empirical linguistic criterion of the poetic function? In particular, what is the indispensable feature inherent in any piece of poetry? To answer this question we must recall the two basic modes of arrangement used in verbal behavior, *selection* and *combination*. If "child" is the topic of the message, the speaker selects one among the extant, more or less similar nouns like child, kid, youngster, tot, all of them equivalent in a certain respect, and then, to comment on this topic he may select one of the semantically cognate verbs – sleeps, dozes, nods, naps. Both chosen words combine in the speech chain. The selection is produced on the basis of equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymy and antonymy, while the combination, the build-up of the sequence, is based on contiguity. *The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination*. Equivalence is promoted to the constitutive device of the sequence; word stress is assumed to equal word stress, as unstress equals unstress; prosodic long is matched with long, and short with short; word boundary equals word boundary, no boundary equals no boundary; syntactic pause equals syntactic pause, no pause equals no pause. Syllables are converted into units of measure, and so are morae or stresses. (Jakobson 1960: 358)

In the 1960s and 1970s, Michael Riffaterre (1959, 1966) in France and Stanley Fish (1980) in the United States further developed the affective stylistics (or decoding stylistics) initiated by Bally (1909) and continued by Jakobson (1960), though focusing on the addressee and now under the label of Reception Theory. While Jakobson spoke of a "poetic function" without

mentioning "style", Riffaterre explicitly refers to a "stylistic function", which, unlike that of Jakobson, is the result of violation of norms, rather than equivalence (R. Monroy, personal communication). In this argumentation, Riffaterre understood as fundamental the psychological processes involved in text processing and the emotional response of ideal readers ("super-readers", "informed readers", "model readers", "average readers", "archilecteur")[10], as active participants in the communicative process (Nørgaard, Montoro, and Busse 2010: 46–48). As Maltzev (1984: 19) pointed out, the "consideration of how the message is perceived by the addressee is a necessary pre-requisite for the formulation of a correct theory of the nature and function of style." According to Arnold (1981: 4), each act of speech has a performer (sender of speech), who carries out the act of encoding, and a recipient (addressee), who carries out the act of decoding the information. But the process of encoding is influenced by the epoch, the socio-historical and political situation, in addition to the personal ideological and aesthetic views of the author; while the process of decoding implies an interpretation of the text form with a minimal loss of its message and intended effect; in other words, getting the maximum information from the text itself, though without the author's background knowledge. But if the message encoded and delivered differs from the message received after decoding, failure may have occurred on the part of either of the participants (sender and/or receiver). In his reader-oriented theory, focusing on how the reader responds to, and may even influence, perceptions of style and effect, Riffaterre relied on the unpredictability of some linguistic features to create adherent emotional coloring and thus attraction in the addressee in a particular context. This is because the communicational function of a message depends on the receiver's response to (perception of) the unpredictable, rather than to the predictable stimulus. Riffaterre conceived style as an expressive, affective, or aesthetic emphasis added by the sender to the information transmitted through the linguistic structure. In the codification process of a message, a speaker or writer makes use of two sets of binary oppositions (minimal/maximal decoding and predictability/unpredictability) in its structure, and these oppositions affect the reception process. The use of unpredictable stylistic devices in a sequence of highly predictable elements, as a verbal strategy based on surprise, may make the addressee pay closer attention to the message and the decodification process. The function of style, accordingly, is to facilitate a "minimal decoding" by the addressee of the addresser's encoded unpredictable elements in their apparently predictable message. The context in which an unpredictable linguistic feature occurs requires its contrast with the predictable alternative. This means that style is not a succession of stylistic devices, but rather of binary oppositions whose poles (both context and stylistic devices) cannot be separated or absent.

1.2.2. Contextualists

Unlike the formalists (or textualists), in the 1930s the contextualists – John Firth and, later, M.A.K. Halliday and John Sinclair in the London School, Roland Barthes in France, and more recently Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan in sociolinguistics – concentrated on the relationship between text and context (see also Chapter 5). They assumed that literary (figurative) style is not entirely exclusive to literature: in the fabric of a text it is context that endows it with literary status. They understood that literary and non-literary styles are formed and influenced by contextual factors such as: i) the competence and disposition of the addressee, ii) the prevailing socio-cultural forces dominating linguistic discourses, and iii) the system of signification through which all linguistic and non-linguistic phenomena are

processed and interpreted (Bradford 1997: 72). This means that the speaking and writing conventions for a word, phrase, or locutionary habit reflect the dominating social, gendered, historical, cultural, political, and ideological forces, and provide stylistic devices with sense and, crucially, potential acceptance.

In this connection, if textual stylistics understood that style, and especially literary style, involves a deliberate shift from the primarily pragmatic (functional) role of language to disclose meaning towards a sphere of self-reference, the French semiotician Roland Barthes (1915–1980) also claimed that style is not exclusively confined to figurative language production, but is common to all types of linguistic form. He suggested that the textualist notion of style as an arbitrary self-referencing system is a condition of all types of discourse, since all codes of meaning and action – literature, music, fashion, politics, philosophy, and so on – involve arbitrary systems of signification (Bradford 1997: 74). Barthes (1953, 1964) contended that there is an active relationship between style and function, and sign and meaning, operating in all fields of representation, both literary and non-literary (Barthes 1964), in which conventions play a crucial role: "the conventions which prompt us to choose this or that style of garment are comparable with the conventions that govern our choice of words in the formation of a sentence: both are grounded in the assumption that the sequence of signs includes both an expressive gesture and a concession to the system of signification that makes such a gesture possible" (Bradford 1997: 73).

In the functional model of language developed by M.A.K. Halliday (1978, 1985) of the London School, the context of situation was a central pillar in his neo-Firthian theory of languages as a social semiotics, and also had a particular ascendancy over stylistic enquiry: linguistic meaning-making as a social phenomenon influencing and influenced by the context in which it occurs – the bridge between language and the external world – and where every user's linguistic choice is functional. The focus on social context and situational factors, enabling the linguistic manifestation of ideology, meant that his theory played a significant role in stylistics and some approaches within related disciplines, including sociolinguistics (see Chapters 5 and 7):

> Because of its focus on linguistic constructivism (i.e., the claim that language constructs, or "construes", rather than represents meaning), and its claim that all texts through their linguistic choices realize contextual factors such as register, genre and ideology, the Hallidayan approach to language has been considered particularly suited for investigations of the ways in which social meanings are created through language. Another central concept in critical discourse analysis is that of "naturalization", that is, the claim that certain discourses and the ideologies they reflect have become so ingrained (and thereby naturalized) in society that language users tend not to notice them as ideologies at all. (Nørgaard, Montoro, and Busse 2010: 12)

Language, according to Halliday (1994), is able to express simultaneously three different types of meaning that are intimately intertwined in the stylistics of a given text: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Ideational or experiential meaning refers to the way that experience is represented or constructed through language, conditioned by the configurations of participants, processes, and circumstances in the linguistic system (transitivity); interpersonal meaning denotes the relations created between interlocutors in communication (mood and modality); finally, textual meaning is concerned with the organization of text (theme structures and cohesion) (see also Nørgaard, Montoro, and Busse 2010).

Admitting the existence of linguistic variation within language, and exploiting the concepts of *register* and *genre* (see Chapter 2), Halliday (1978, 1985) conceived language as

a systemic resource for meaning, rather than merely a system of signs, in which every single linguistic act involves choice from a describable set of options at any level for its communicative purposes. The sets of meaning resources are selected and used by individuals in particular social contexts that facilitate disambiguation, with *field* (subject matter or topic), *tenor* (roles of the participants in an interaction), and *mode* (channel of communication) as variables in *registers*, rather than styles. All speakers, therefore, use different styles in different situations depending on the context of situation (topic, addressee, and medium). The first typology of styles was developed by Aristotle, when he drew a distinction between literary language and colloquial language based on: i) the choice of words – lexical expressive means such as foreign words, archaisms, neologisms, poetic words, and metaphor; ii) word combinations such as word-order and word-combinations; and iii) figures of speech (Znamenskaya 2004: 37–38). Since then, a range of scholars, such as Arnold (1981), Crystal (1988, 1995), Galperin (1977), Gregory and Carroll (1978), Joos (1961), Kuznetz and Skrebnev (1960), Morokhovsky, Vorobyova, Liknosherst, and Timoshenko (1984), and Skrebnev (1994), among many others, have developed their own typological classification of styles (registers, or functional styles), though without reaching unanimity (see Table 1.4, and Tables 2.2–2.3 in Chapter 2)[11].

Arnold (1981) correlated oratorical, colloquial, poetic, publicist/newspaper, official, and scientific styles with Jakobson's (1960) communicative functions (see 1.2.1) that they fulfill in language, and obtained a continuum of distinctiveness, or hierarchy in semi-implicational scale, where oratorical and scientific are almost opposite (Table 1.5).

According to Fowler (1986/1996: 192), different "fields" produce different kinds of language, especially at the lexical level; "tenor", according to Crystal (1980/1985: 292), might stand as a roughly equivalent term for "style", and "mode" refers to the symbolic organization of the communicative situation (written, spoken, etc.) and, according to Downes (1984/1998: 316), even the genre of the text. As we will see in Chapter 5, Halliday's theory inspired the communicative-function model accounting for style-shifting (Register Axiom) developed by Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan in sociolinguistics.

Fowler (1986) suggested the term *linguistic criticism* for stylistics in order to reflect the primacy assigned to language and to suggest that the aim of stylistic studies must be not simply a mechanistic description of the formal features of texts – phonological, grammatical, or lexical – for their own sake, but rather to find linguistic evidence for a critical judgment and a broad textual interpretation, grounding hypotheses on a rigorous, methodical, and explicit textual basis to produce an analysis that is verifiable. In this way, stylistics appears as a sub-discipline of hermeneutics, providing a meta-language for principled systematic discussion on *how* texts mean and *what* they mean (Wales 2006: 213).

Epistemic contextualism is a late twentieth-century philosophical view put forward by theorists such as Michael Blome-Tillmann, Michael Williams, Keith DeRose, David Lewis, Stewart Cohen, Gail Stine, and George Mattey, whose main tenet states that knowledge attributions are context-sensitive: an action, utterance, or expression can only be understood in relation to a context (Price 2008) and context-sensitive utterances "express different propositions relative to different contexts of use" (Stanley 2005: 16). As a result, such context-dependence entails that utterances of a given sentence, made in different contexts, may differ in truth value and/or meaning, just as the typical deictic terms *I*, *here*, and *now* – when used as part of a behavior or an utterance, render their meaning variable, depending on certain features of the context in which they are uttered. *I*, for example, can correctly be uttered by different people at the same time, thus referring, perfectly correctly, to more than one individual. According to contextualists, the standards for attributing knowledge to someone

Table 1.4 Typologies of functional styles: examples.

Kuznetz and Skrebnev (1960)	Galperin (1977)	Arnold (1981)	Crystal (1988, 1995/2000)
1. **Literary or Bookish Style** a) publicist style b) scientific (technological) style c) official documents 2. **Free (Colloquial) Style** a) literary colloquial style b) familiar colloquial style	1. **The Belles-Lettres Style:** a) poetry b) emotive prose c) the language of the drama 2. **Publicist Style** a) oratory and speeches b) the essay c) articles 3. **Newspaper Style** a) brief news items b) headlines c) advertisements and announcements d) the editorial 4. **Scientific Prose Style** 5. **The Style of Official documents** a) business documents b) legal documents c) the language of diplomacy d) military documents	1. **Literary Bookish Styles** a) scientific b) official documents c) publicist (newspaper) d) oratorical e) poetic 2. **Colloquial Styles** a) literary colloquial b) familiar colloquial c) common colloquial	1. **Regional varieties** 2. **Social variation** 3. **Occupational styles**: a) religious language b) scientific language c) legal language d) plain (official) language e) political language f) news media language • news reporting • journalistics • broadcasting • sports commentary • advertising 4. **Restricted Language** a) knitwrite in books on knitting b) cookwrite in recipe books c) congratulatory messages d) newspaper announcements e) newspaper headlines f) sportscasting scores g) airspeak, the language of air traffic control h) emergency speak, the language for the emergency services i) e-mail variety, etc. 5. **Individual variation**: idiolect

Table 1.5 Arnold's (1981) functional styles and their communicative function (adapted from Znamenskaya 2004: 126).

Function Style		Intellectual communicative	Pragmatic	Emotive	Phatic	Aesthetic
Literary Bookish Styles	*Scientific*	+	–	–	–	–
	Official documents	+	+	–	–	–
	Publicist and newspaper	+	+	+	–	–
	Oratorical	+	+	+	+	+
	Poetic	+	–	+	–	+
Colloquial Styles	*Colloquial*	+	+	+	+	–

vary from one user's context to another, and what range of alternatives are relevant is sensitive to conversational context. As Rysiew (2011) states, a complete proposition is only expressed by a knowledge sentence if it is relative to a contextually-determined standard. Otherwise, acontextually, no proposition is expressed. Indeed, if the standard is changed, what the sentence expresses is also changed (see DeRose 1999, 2009; Dretske 1981/1999, 2000; Fantl and McGrath 2009; Pollock 1986; Rysiew 2011, among others).

1.2.3. Recent Developments

The practice of interdisciplinarity during the 1970s led to the proposal and development of new approaches:

> However, with the development in the 1970s of disciplines such as discourse analysis and pragmatics in linguistics on the one hand and reception aesthetics and reader-response criticism in literary theory on the other, stylistics shifted its focus to the text in its interactive discourse context (functional stylistics, discourse stylistics, or contextualized stylistics) and to the reader as constructing the meaning of the text, rather than as simply the decoder of a given message or single or eternal truth encoded by the writer. There was a more explicit recognition that the parameters of the situational context contributed to a text's meaning, and that therefore contextualization needs to be part of the theory or model. (Wales 2006: 216)

After the mid-twentieth century, as Simpson (2004: 2) states, there was a proliferation of sub-disciplines in stylistics whose discourse, culture, and society-based theories have enriched its methods, accounts, and applications: cognitive stylistics (Burke 2006a; Gavins and Steen 2003; Jeffries, McIntyre, and Bousfield 2007; Semino 1997; Semino and Culpeper 2002; Stockwell 2002; Tsur 1992, 1998; Turner 1991); feminist stylistics (Mills 1994a, 1994b, 1995, 2006; Wales 1994); discourse stylistics (Crystal and Davy 1969; R. Fowler 1981; Emmott 1997; Werth 1999; Widdowson 2004); corpus stylistics (Burrows 2002; Semino and Short 2004; Stubbs 1996, 2005; Studer 2008; van Peer 1989; Wynne 2006); pragmatic stylistics (Lafuente-Millán 2000; Lecercle 1999; Leech 1992; MacMahon 2006; Radwańka-Williams and Hiraga 1995; Sell 1991; Simpson 1989; Sperber and Wilson 1986; van Dijk 1976; Widdowson 2004); pedagogical stylistics as well as applications (Clark 1992; Clark and Zyngier 2003; Freeborn 1996; Pope 1995; Short and Archer 2003; Zyngier 2006); traditional literary approaches (Brumfit 1983; Carter and Simpson 1989; Collie and Slater 1987; Crystal

and Davy 1969; Fowler 1966, 1986; Freeborn 1996; Freeman 1981; Pope 1995; Sebeok 1960; Short 1989, 1996; Simpson 1997; Traugott and Pratt 1980; Weber 1996; Widdowson 1975, 1992; Wright and Hope 1996); and others including narratology, advertising, media communication, critical discourse analysis, and multimodal stylistics (see also Burke 2014a).

1.3. Style in Sociolinguistics

Style and stylistics, as seen in 1.1 and 1.2, have a longstanding history both outside and inside the field of sociolinguistics (Coupland 2011: 138); and the history of style within sociolinguistics is as old as sociolinguistics itself: "concepts linked to style have in fact been of fundamental concern to understanding language in society throughout the history of the discipline, despite a rather long interlude when, at least from the variationist perspective, it was conventional to work with a very restricted concept of style" (Coupland 2011: 141).

Sociolinguistics, as we will see in the following chapters, differs from stylistics in that it seeks to find causal relationships between stylistic variation and their social and ideological contexts (Bradford 1997: 85). That is, as Wales (2006: 213) points out, style in sociolinguistics "is seen as a variable within a continuously evolving sociolinguistic system." According to Fowler (1981: 174):

> [B]asically it is a theory of varieties, of correlations between distinctive linguistic choices and particular socio-cultural circumstances. The individual text can be described and interpreted in relation to the stylistic conventions which generate it and the historical and sociological situation which brought it into existence.

The study of the relationship between language and society through the correlation of extralinguistic factors (socio-demographic and/or contextual variables) with intralinguistic elements has therefore enabled sociolinguistics to account quantitatively for variability in language. Sociolinguistic studies have demonstrated that: i) the social (and biological) characteristics of the speaker, ii) the situation of use, and iii) the linguistic environment of the variable under study are the three ingredients of (socio)linguistic variation. Accordingly, as we will see in Chapter 3, correlation of extralinguistic factors with linguistic variables has enabled sociolinguistics to detect, locate, describe, and explain the symmetry between social variation and linguistic variation in terms of *sociolinguistic variation* (see Figure 1.7). In this correlation, as Rickford and Eckert (2001: 1) stress, style enjoys a pivotal position in sociolinguistic variation, with *stylistic* variation constituting a principal component together with *linguistic* and *social* variation. Additionally, the observation of stylistic variability, for example, as Labov (1966) showed, has been crucial for the detection and understanding of phenomena such as linguistic change in progress (see 2.1.6, 3.3.3 and 3.3.4).

Nevertheless, despite its openly acknowledged centrality in sociolinguistic variation, the study of style within the variationist tradition, as Macaulay (1999) regretted, was initially marginal, receiving little attention in general terms:

> Single-speaker variation has received considerably less attention from sociolinguistics over the years than other types of variation. Methodological complications alone – i.e. how to follow a single speaker through different (and in particular informal) situations – are by no means sufficient to explain the neglect of this area of study. (Gadet 2005: 1353)

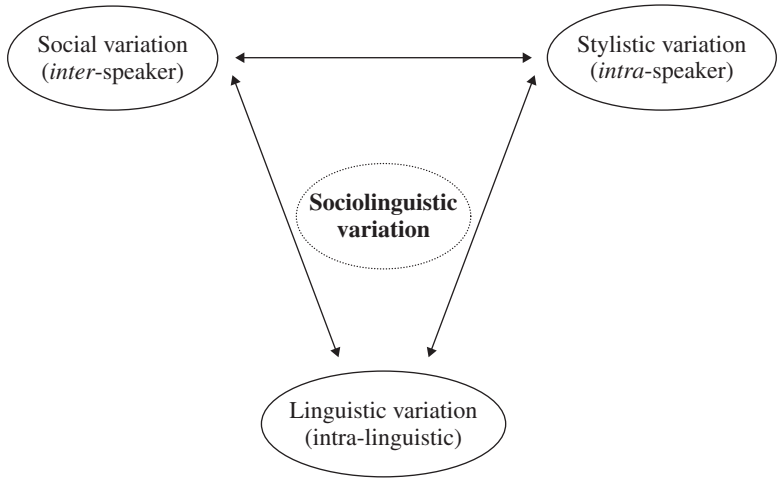

Figure 1.7 Sociolinguistic interface relating *stylistic* (or intra-speaker) variation with *linguistic* variation and *social* (or inter-speaker) variation. *Source*: Hernández-Campoy and Cutillas-Espinosa (2012b: 2, Figure 1).

Despite the ubiquity of intra-speaker variation, in variationist sociolinguistics style was treated as a mere independent parameter, together with social factors, in the correlational sociolinguistic study of urban communities: "[i]n the quantitative study of language variation over the past fifteen years, style is one dimension that has often been measured but seldom explained" (Bell 1984: 145). Style has traditionally been understood in a narrow sense, focusing on context and topic and only cursorily on speaker and listener. Consequently, it has been restricted to different varieties of language produced by different degrees of formality in particular situations and with particular interlocutors (see Chapter 2). This allowed a distinction between *inter*speaker (social) and *intra*speaker (stylistic) variation (Figure 1.8)[12], based on Halliday (1978): "[t]he social dimension denotes differences between the speech of different speakers, and the stylistic denotes differences within the speech of a single speaker" (Bell 1984: 145).

As explained in 4.3.5, *inter*-speaker variation alludes to social differences between groups of speakers reflected in their speech: "[t]he range of variation for particular sociolinguistic variables across the different speakers" (Bell 2007a: 90). Different empirical studies carried out in linguistically different and geographically distant urban centers all over the world have demonstrated the crucial influence of socio-demographic and biological factors on the way people speak in social interaction, as well as the existence of sociolinguistic patterns in speech behavior (see also 3.1): factors such as social class, sex, age, social networks, mobility, ethnicity, race, and social ambition interact, producing outcomes such as sociolects, genderlects, chronolects, and ethnolects. On the other hand, *intra*-speaker variation alludes to stylistic differences in a single speaker reflected in their speech: "[t]he range of variation for particular sociolinguistic variables produced by individual speakers within their own speech" (Bell 2007a: 90; see also Tannen 1984/2005).

More recently, interest in stylistic variation has gone beyond its initial status as a mere independent correlational parameter and focuses on explaining its nature, mechanisms and, especially, motivations at more semiotic and performative levels, allowing the distinction established by Bell (2014) between *micro* and *macro* approaches to style in sociolinguistics.

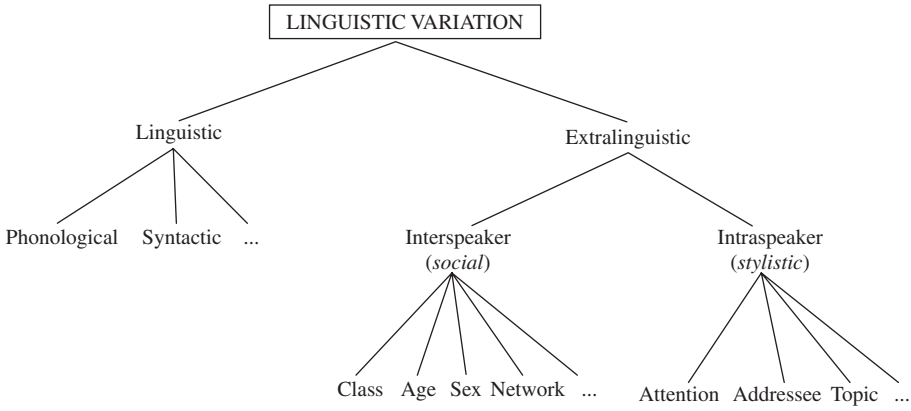

Figure 1.8 Linguistic variation in sociolinguistics. *Source*: Bell (1984: 146; Figure 1).

According to Bell (2014: 294–297), the traditional micro view of style-shifting is minimalist and conceives style as part of linguistic variation, simply adopting individual tight linguistic variables whose alternating variants occur in reaction to highly specified linguistic environments and are unevenly distributed in a stylistic continuum of formality for extralinguistic reasons (see Chapter 3). The macro approach to style-shifting is maximalist both linguistically and socially, wide-ranging, and eclectic, and conceives style as proactive choice from a linguistic range that ranges from the usual variables of pronunciation through to discourse and genre patterns as well as socio-situational factors. Like physical appearance, dress, music, and posture, language is seen as a semiotic resource, where style is a crucial part of social meaning-making and the projection of difference between individuals and groups due to the symbolic significance of choice (see Chapter 6). Over the last two decades, there has been crossover between these two approaches, and style has become a key ingredient of variationist sociolinguistic research:

> …. in the past decade or more there has been an increasing and fruitful crossover between the two. Variationist analysis has been extended to a wide range of stylistic material, and richer social concepts have been applied to all kinds of language. When I began research on style in the 1970s, I could justifiably label it "the neglected dimension". Now style is at the centre of sociolinguistic theorization and method … (Bell 2014: 297)

The following chapters deal with the shift from reactive (responsive) to proactive (initiative) accounts for style-shifting, where speakers' agency in society emerges as a crucial role for social meaning-making and positioning.

Notes

1 Ancient sources do not agree about who was the inventor of rhetorical theory: some argue it was Empedocles – a sixth-century philosopher, poet, and magician – while others maintain that it was Corax of Syracuse and Tisias – two fifth-century Sicilian rhetoricians who wrote a handbook of rhetoric.

2 "The Older Sophists taught by example rather than precept. That is, they prepared and delivered specimen speeches for their students to imitate. Some may have prepared lists of sample arguments, later called topics, that could be inserted into any speech for which they were appropriate. Such collections, if they existed, would have been called arts *(technai)* of rhetoric; that is, they would have been the rhetoric textbooks of the day. The Greek word for art, *techne*, means roughly 'knowledge generalized from experience', and so an 'art' of rhetoric could consist of a set of examples, instructions, or even principles that had been collected for the use of students by rhetors and teachers of rhetoric" (Crowley and Hawhee 2004: 10).

3 In literature the grand style was regarded as suitable for epic and tragedy, the middle style for didactic poetry, and the low style for comedy and pastoral poetry, as in Virgil's works, and in correlation with social divisions or ranks: the epic characterizes *Aeneid* (warriors), the didactic *Georgics* (peasants), and the pastoral *Eclogues* (shepherds) (Verdonk 2006: 205).

4 The *Trivium* was the medieval liberal arts education based upon grammar, logic, and rhetoric that was preparatory to the *Quadrivium* (geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music). The Trivium and Quadrivium together constituted the seven liberal arts of classical study.

5 Aristotle and Kennedy (1991).

6 Consubstantial to the concept and function of style are the properties of expressiveness and emotiveness: "[a]ll stylistic devices belong to expressive means but not all expressive means are stylistic devices. Phonetic phenomena such as vocal pitch, pauses, logical stress, and drawling, or staccato pronunciation are all expressive without being stylistic devices" (Znamenskaya 2004: 34). Morphological forms like diminutive suffixes (*girlie, piggy, doggy*), grammatical forms (*do sit down!*), and lexical intensifiers (*awfully, terribly*) may also have an expressive effect. Stylistic devices are figures of speech and thought (figurative language) design to achieve a particular effect.

7 Style is "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 1977/1981: 12). It follows then that the individual style of a speaker or writer is marked by its uniqueness: "individual style, therefore, is a unique combination of language units, expressive means and stylistic devices peculiar to a given writer, which makes that writer's works or even utterances easily recognizable" (Galperin 1977/1981: 17). This is related to the concept of authenticity (see 6.2.5).

8 Although not all deviations from the norm result in expressiveness, as an incorrectly deviated linguistic license may lead to absurdity or nonsense (Znamenskaya 2004: 88).

9 See Garvin (1964) and van Peer (1986).

10 "Riffaterre coined the term 'Superpoem' to account for the immensely complex phenomena disclosed by the work of Jakobson, Levin, and other linguist-critics, and he invented the notion of a 'Superreader' to account for a putative and very unreal presence who is capable of accommodating these effects simultaneously, along with an *ex cathedra* knowledge of who the poet is, and how this particular poem relates to work by the same poet and by other writers" (Bradford 1997: 44). The "average reader" appears as the sum of the individual reactions to a given stimulus (R. Monroy, personal communication).

11 The International Office for Standardization (ISO) defined standard ISO 12620 on Data Category Registry to register an ontology of descriptive linguistic terms (GOLD: General Ontology for Linguistic Description, http://linguistics-ontology.org/), started by Farrar and Langendoen (2003), where eleven styles (or registers) were identified: bench-level, dialect, facetious, formal, in-house, ironic, neutral, slang, taboo, technical, and vulgar (http://www.isocat.org/rest/dc/1988).

12 According to Labov (2001b: 87, footnote 2), Gumperz's (1964) original term for inter-speaker variation was *metaphorical shifting*, as opposed to *transactional shifting*. Similarly, Blom and Gumperz (1972) differentiated between *situational* and *metaphorical* switching to describe responsive and initiative style practices respectively (see also 4.3.8).