# STYLISTICS

## LECTURE 1: GENERAL NOTES ON STYLE AND STYLE STUDY
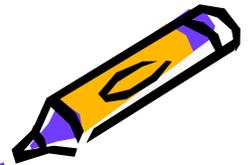
# 1.1. The Concept of Style

The term "*style*" originates from the Latin word *stylos*, which meant "*a stick for writing on wax tablets*". Later *stylos* came to denote metonymically also a manner of writing and speaking, in other words, the manner of using language. Then it was borrowed into European languages with this new meaning.
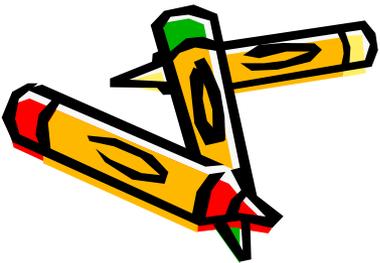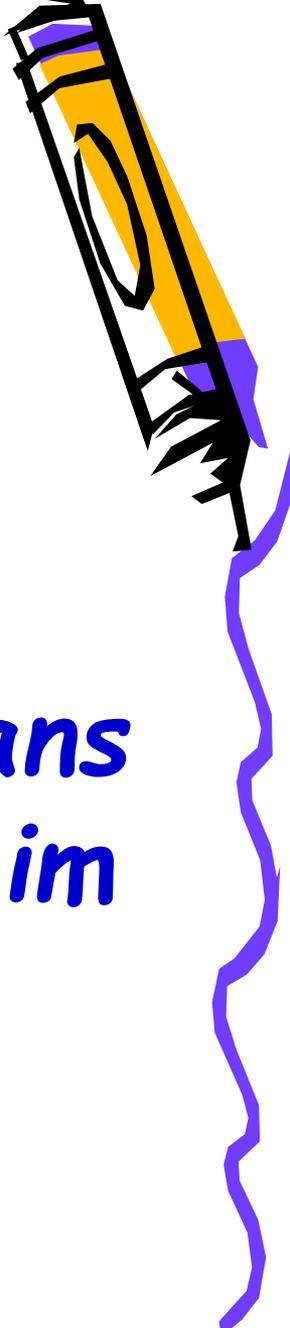
# I. Galperin:

"Style is a system of interrelated language means which serves a definite aim in communication."
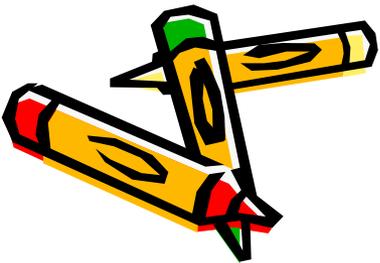
# Y. M. Skrebnev:

*"Style is a specificity of sublanguage. Style can be roughly defined as the peculiarity, the set of specific features of a text type or a concrete text. Style is just what differentiates a group of homogeneous texts (an individual text) from all other groups (other texts)."*
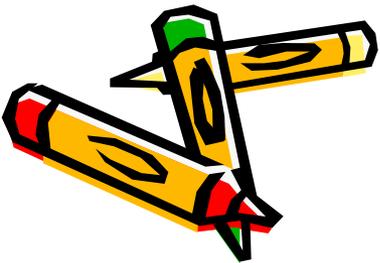
Seymour Chatman:
"*Style is a product of individual choices and patterns of choices among linguistic possibilities.*"
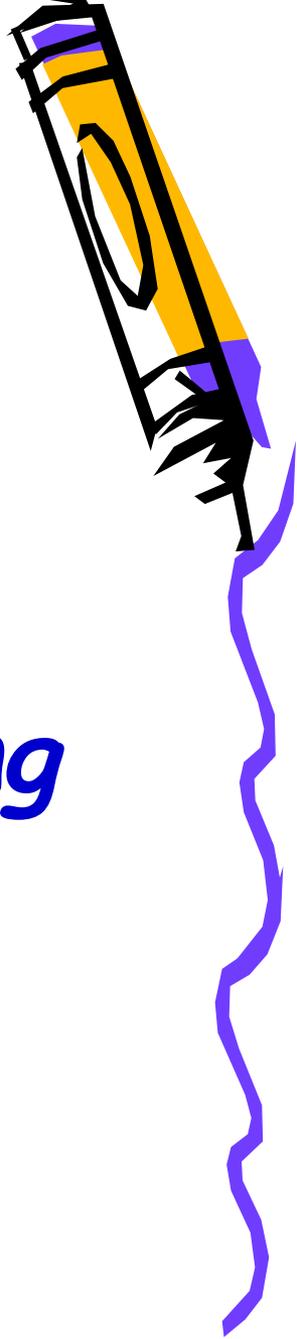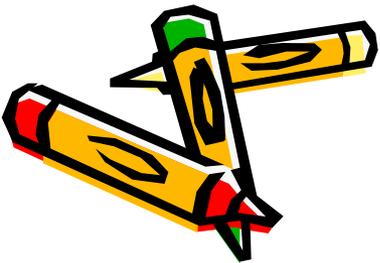
# The term "*style*" applies to the following fields of investigation:

- the interrelation between language and thought;
- the aesthetic function of language;
- expressive means in language;
- emotional colouring of language;
- a system of special devices called stylistic devices;
- the splitting of the literary language into separate subsystems (genres, registers, discourses, functional styles etc.);
- synonymous ways of rendering one and the same idea;
- the individual manner of a writer or a speaker in making use of language to achieve the desirable effect in speech or in writing.
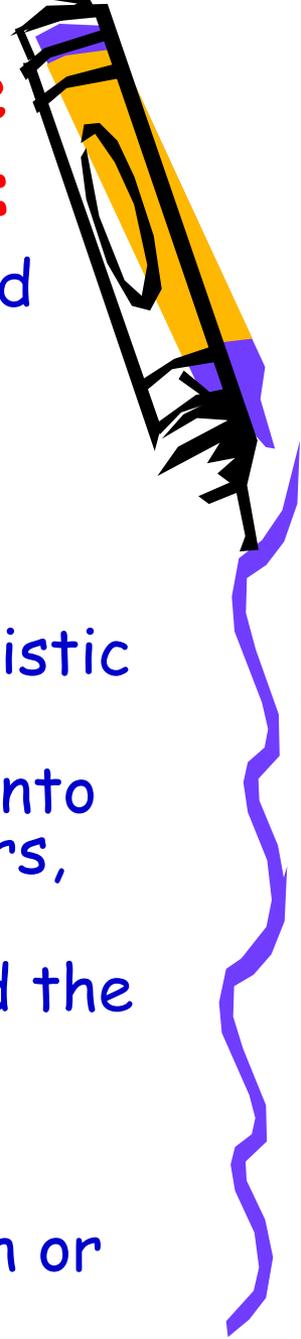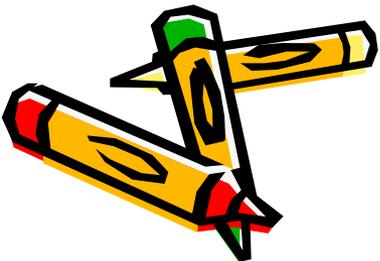
*Style*
*is the correspondence between thought and expression.*
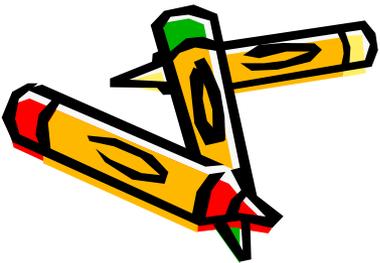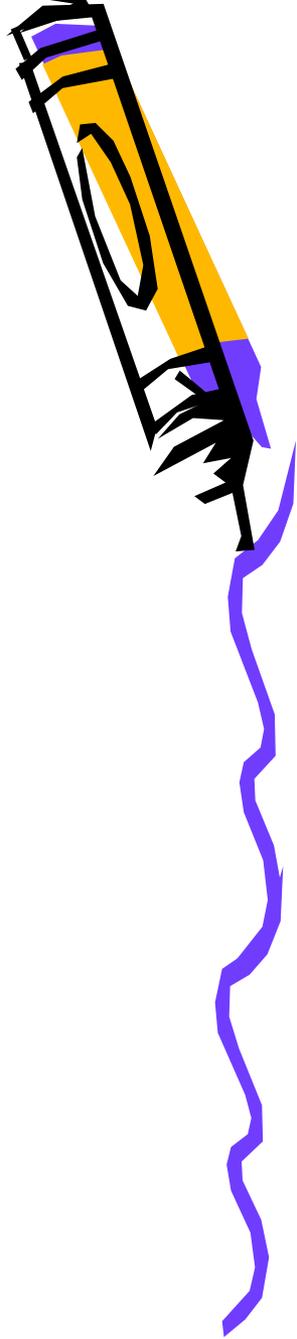
*The linguistic form of the idea expressed always reflects the peculiarities of the thought. And vice versa, the character of the thought will always in a greater or lesser degree manifest itself in the language forms chosen for the expression of the idea.*
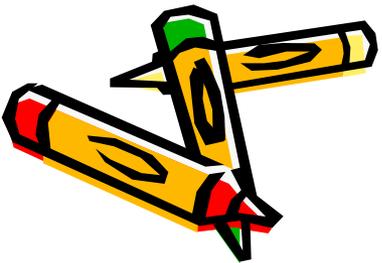
*Style is embellishment of language.*
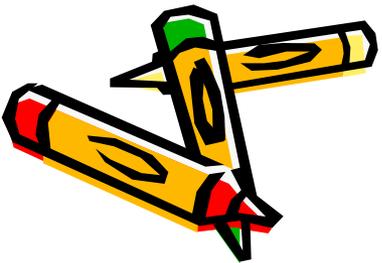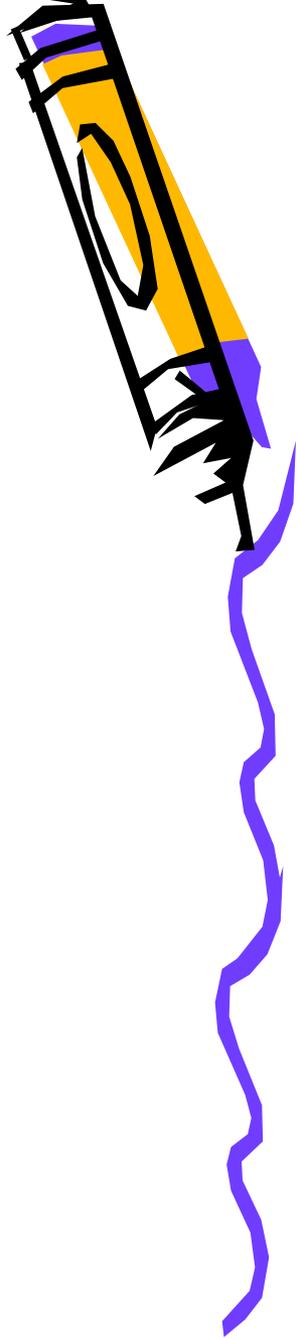
*Style is a technique of expression.*

**In this sense style is generally defined as the ability to write clearly, correctly and in a manner calculated to the interest of the reader.**
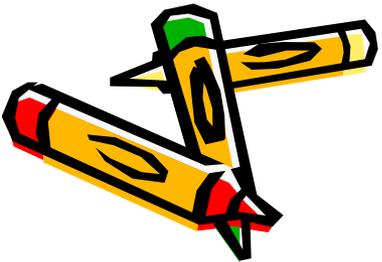
Style signifies
a literary genre.
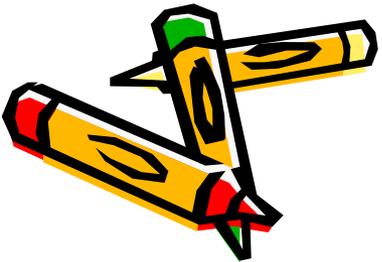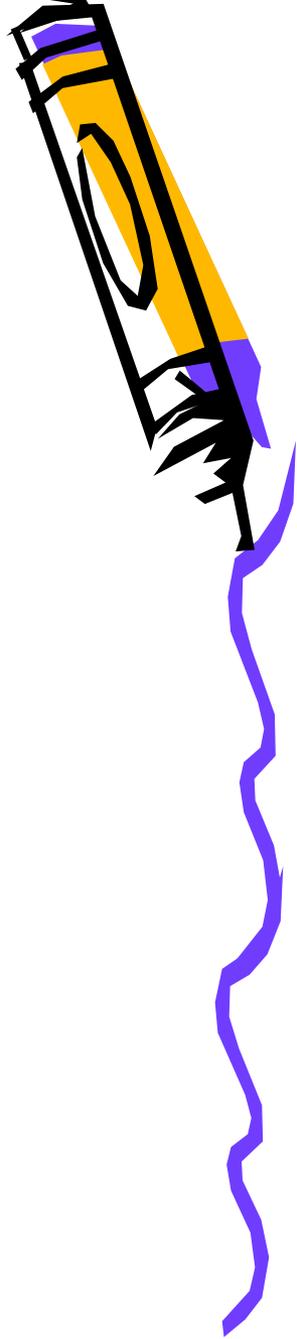
A style of language is
a system of interrelated
language means which
serves a definite aim in
communication.
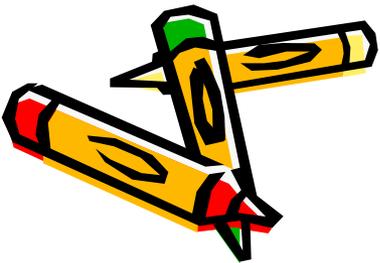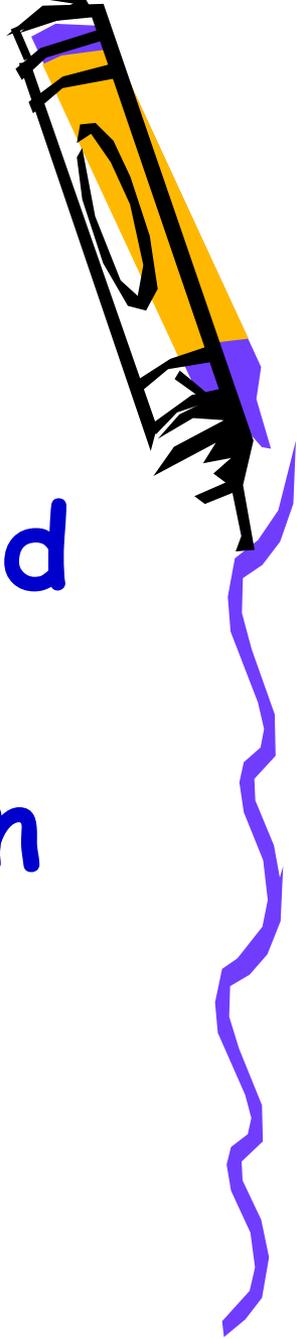
# I. Arnold mentions four styles:

- *poetic style,*
- *scientific style,*
- *newspaper style,*
- *colloquial style.*
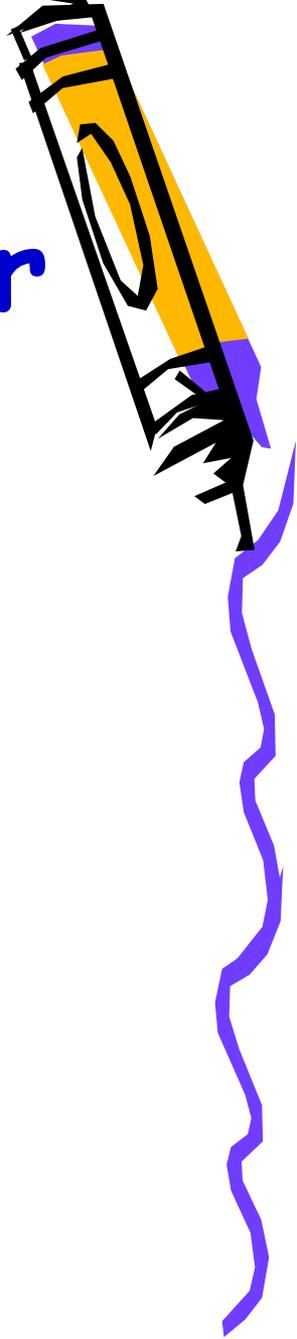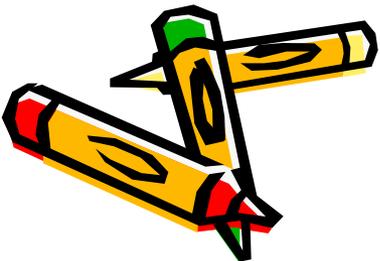
I.R. Galperin distinguishes five major functional styles in the English literary standard:

- *the language of belles-letres.*
- *the language of publicistic literature.*
- *the language of newspapers.*
- *the language of scientific prose.*
- *the language of official documents.*
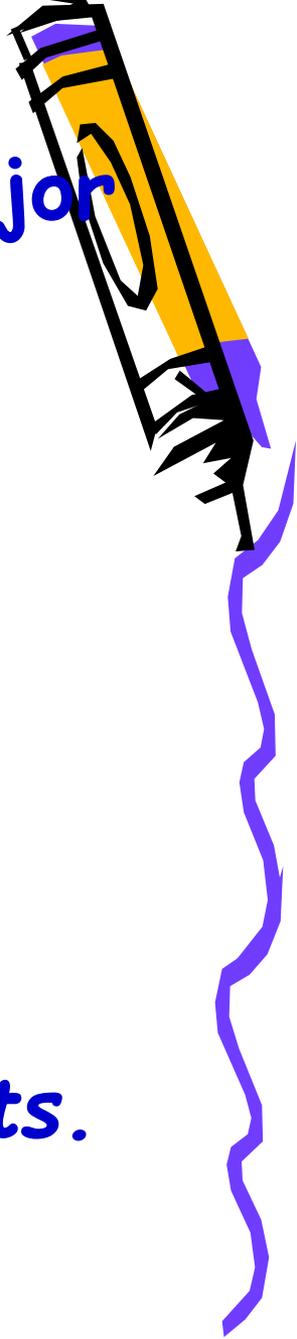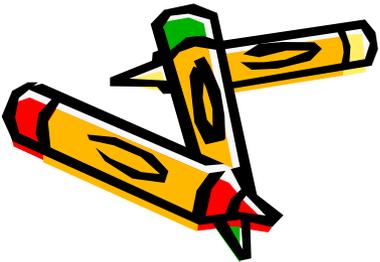
We distinguish six styles within the English language:

- *the belles- letters style;*
- *the publicist style;*
- *the newspaper style;*
- *the scientific prose style;*
- *the style of official documents*
- *the colloquial style.*
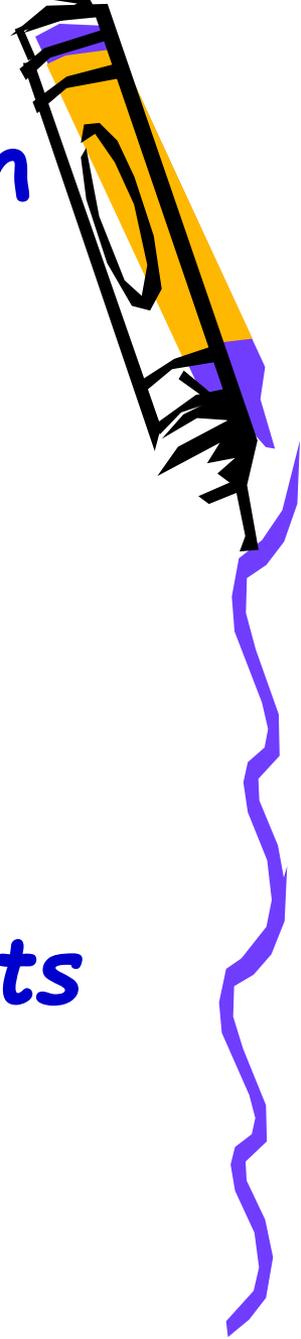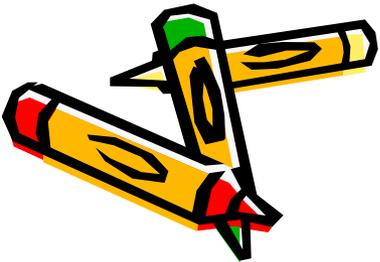
# 1.2. Style Study and its Subdivisions

*Style Study is a branch of general linguistics which investigates the principles and the effect of the choice and usage of various language means (lexical, grammatical, phonetic) to convey thoughts and emotions in different communication conditions.*
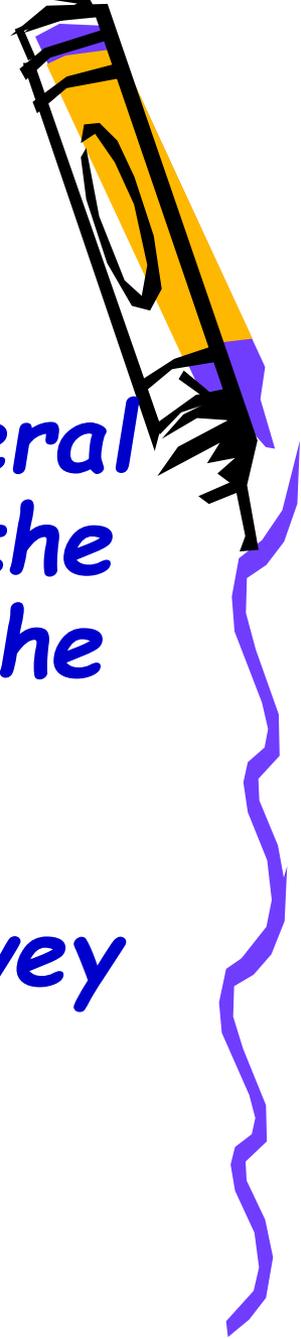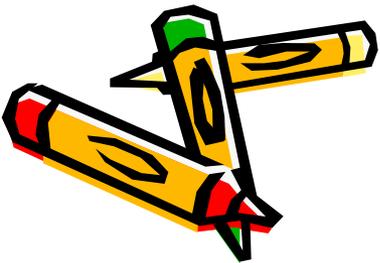
I. Galperin defines Style Study as a branch of general linguistics, which deals with the following two interdependent tasks:

a) *it studies the totality of special linguistic means (stylistic devices and expressive means) which secure the desirable effect of the utterance;*

b) *it studies certain types of texts "discourse" which due to the choice and arrangement of the language are distinguished by the pragmatic aspect of communication (functional styles).*
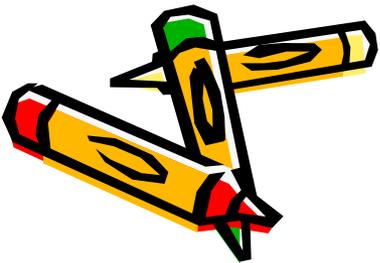
The subject matter of
Style Study is
emotional expression
of the language,
the totality of
the expressive means.
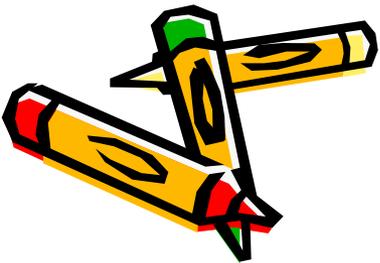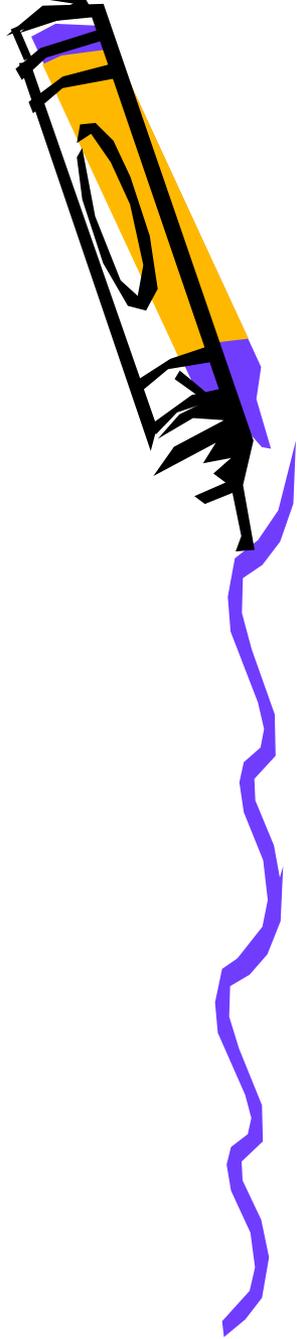
# The main aims of Stylistics are:

1) to analyze the choice of a definite language means in a row of synonymous forms expressing the thought to convey the information most fully and effectively;

2) to analyze different expressive means in the language hierarchy;

3) to define the stylistic function performed by any linguistic means.
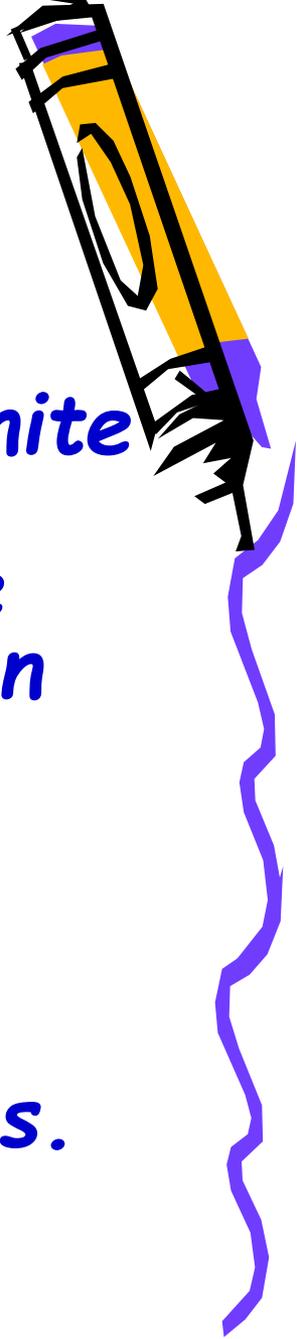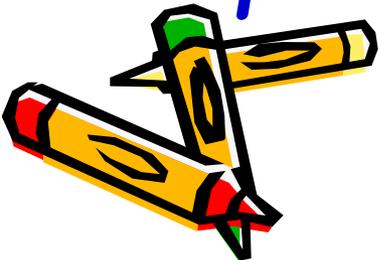
The stylistics of language analyses permanent or inherent stylistic properties of language elements while the stylistics of speech studies stylistic properties, which appear in a context, and they are called adherent. So, stylistics of language describes and classifies the inherent stylistic colouring of language units.
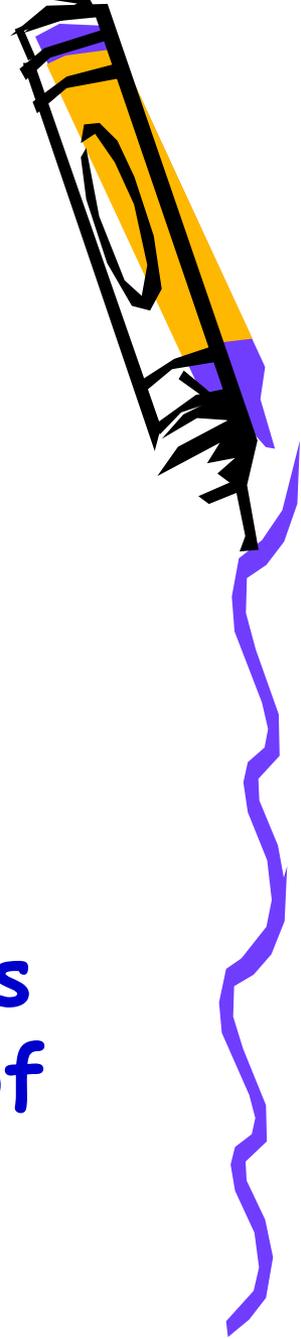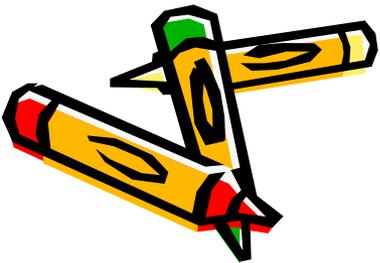
# T.A. Znamenskaya:

*Stylistics of speech studies the composition of the utterance – the arrangement, selection and distribution of different words, and their adherent qualities.*
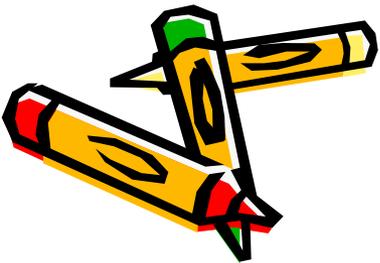
Stylistics of resources is a descriptive stylistics. It studies stylistically coloured language means, expressive abilities and semantic nuances of words, forms and constructions.
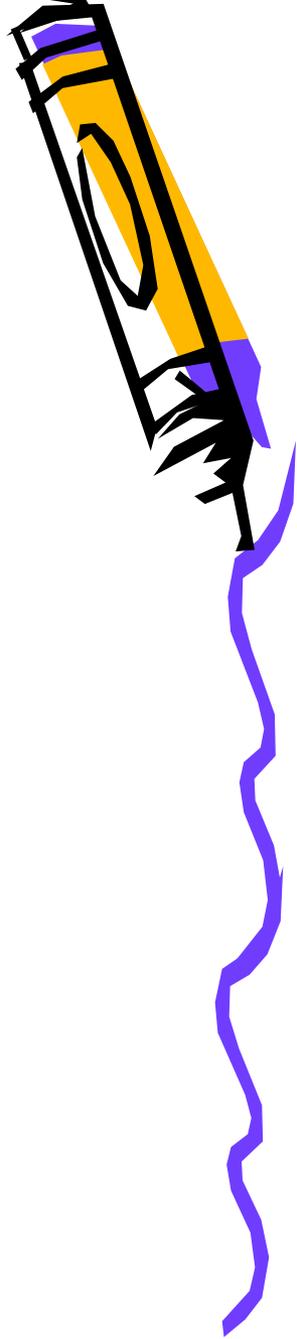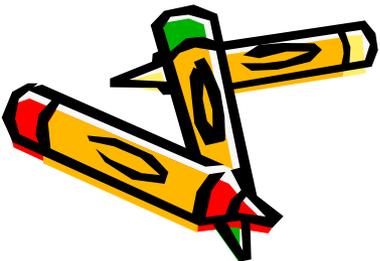
Comparative stylistics analyses the stylistic resources not inherent in a separate language but at the crossroads of two languages, or two literatures and is obviously linked to the theory of translation.
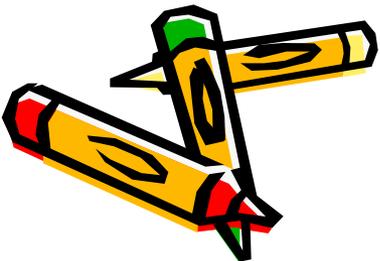
Linguo-stylistics compares National Language Standard or Norm with particular, typical to different spheres of communication subsystems (called functional styles) and dialects and studies language means with relation to their ability to express and evoke different feelings, additional associations and evaluation.
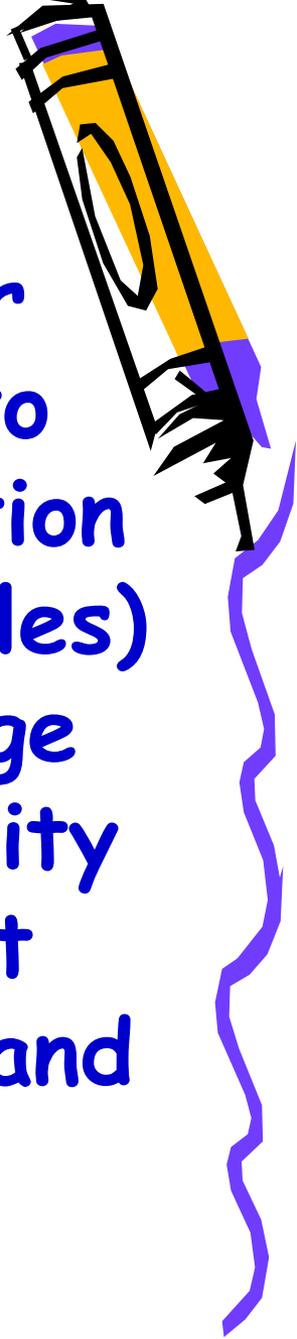
**Language means may be studied at different levels: vocabulary, grammar and phonetics, thus distinguishing *lexical, grammatical and phonetic stylistics*.**
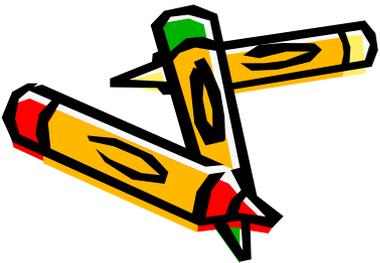
# Stylistic lexicology or Lexical stylistics

Lexical stylistics studies functions of direct and figurative meanings, also the way the contextual meaning of a word is realized in the text. Lexical stylistics deals with various types of connotations – *expressive, evaluative, emotive, ideological, pragmatic, stylistic;* neologisms, dialectal words and their behavior in the text. Lexical stylistics studies the principles of the usage of words and word combinations performing their expressive functions. So, it studies the semantic structure of the word and the interrelation of the denotative and connotative meanings of a word, as well as the interrelation of the stylistic connotations of a word and the context.
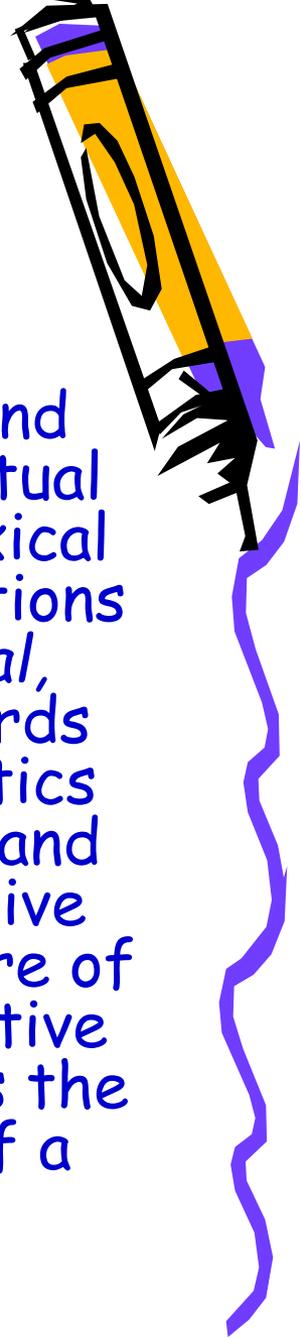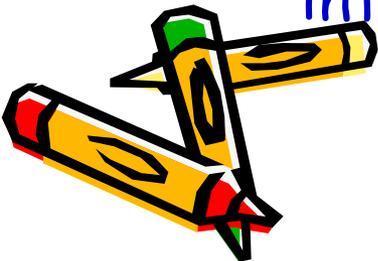
# Stylistic Phonetics or Phonostylistics

Stylistic Phonetics is engaged in the study of style-forming phonetic features of the text. It describes the prosodic features of prose and poetry and variants of pronunciation in different types of speech. Here are included rhythm, rhythmical structure, rhyme, alliteration, assonance and correlation of the sound form and meaning. Phonostylistics also studies deviations in normative pronunciation. Phonostylistics shows how separate sounds, sound combinations, stress, rhythm, intonation, etc. can serve as expressive means.
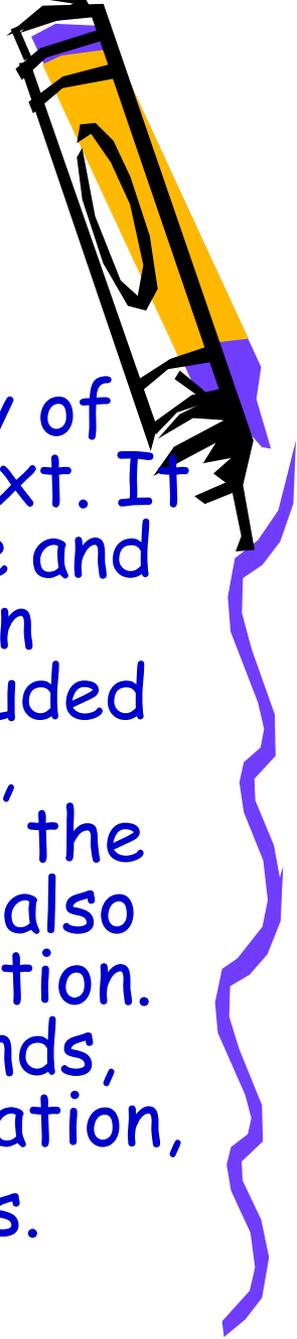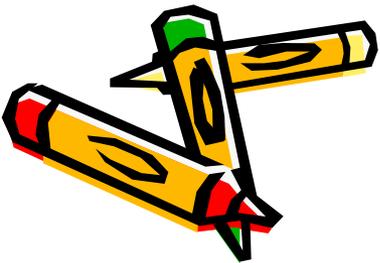
# Stylistic grammar

- *Stylistic Morphology* is interested in the stylistic potentials of specific grammatical forms and categories, such as the number of the noun, or the peculiar use of tense forms of the verbs, etc.
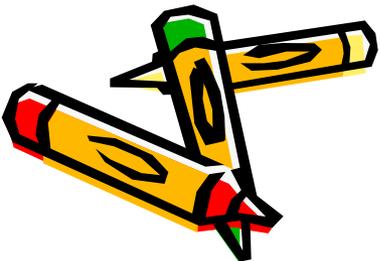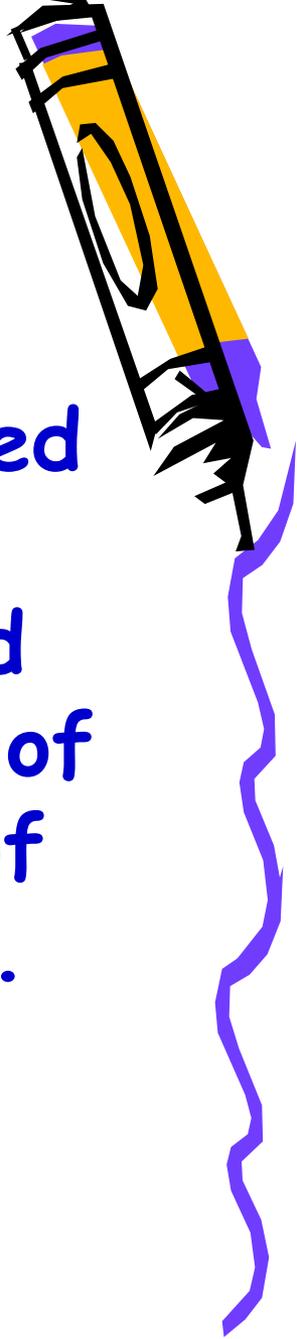
# Stylistic grammar

- Stylistic grammar studies syntactic, expressive means, word order and word combinations, different types of sentences and types of syntactic connections. It also deals with the origin of the text, its division on paragraphs, dialogs, direct and indirect speech, the connection of the sentences, types of sentences. Syntactical stylistics is the expressive values of the sentences, their structure as well as texts and speech flow.
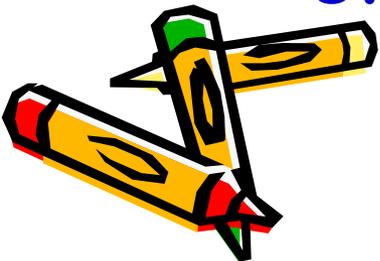
Literary stylistics studies the totality of expressive means characteristic to a work of art, a writer, a literary school or the whole epoch, and studies factors determining artistic expressiveness.
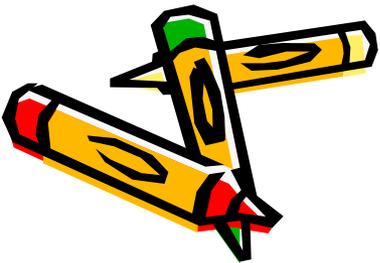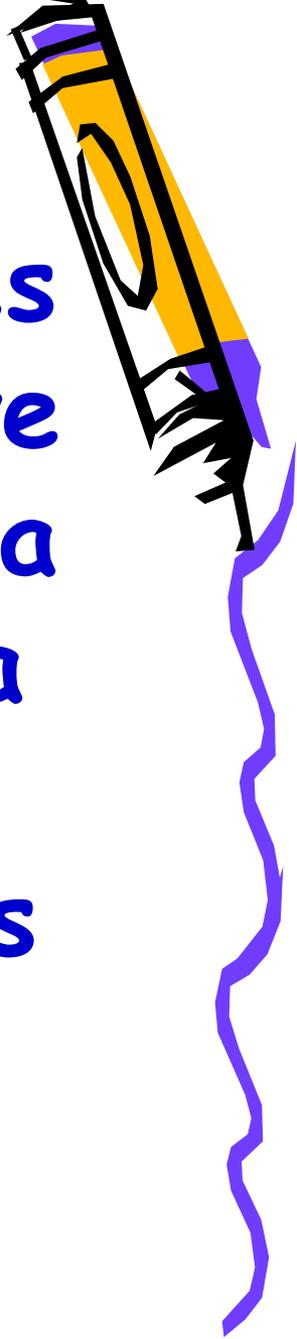
Functional stylistics deals with all the subdivisions of the language and all their possible usages, is the most all-embracing, "global" trend.
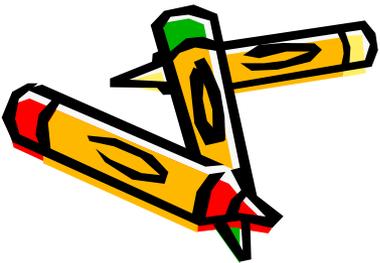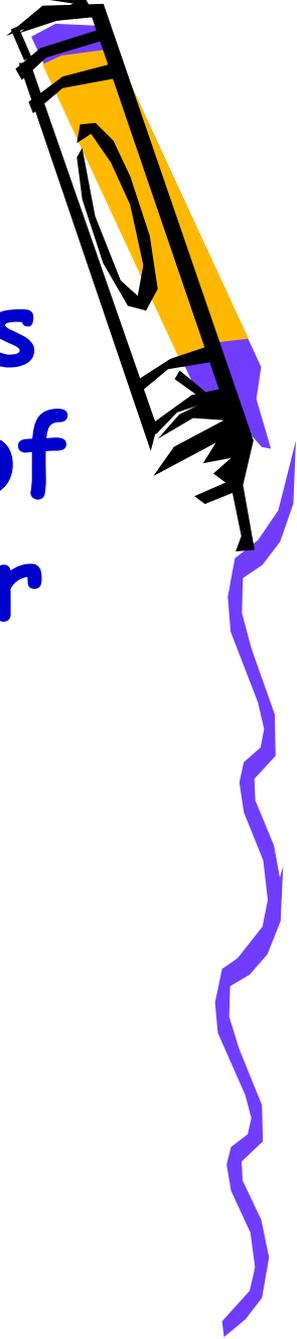
In terms of information theory the author's stylistics may be named the stylistics of the encoder: the language being viewed as the code to shape the information into the message, and the supplier of the information, respectively, as the encoder. The addressee in this case plays the part of the decoder of the information contained in the message; and the problems connected with adequate reception (perception) of the message without any informational losses or deformations, i.e., with adequate decoding, are the concern of decoding stylistics.
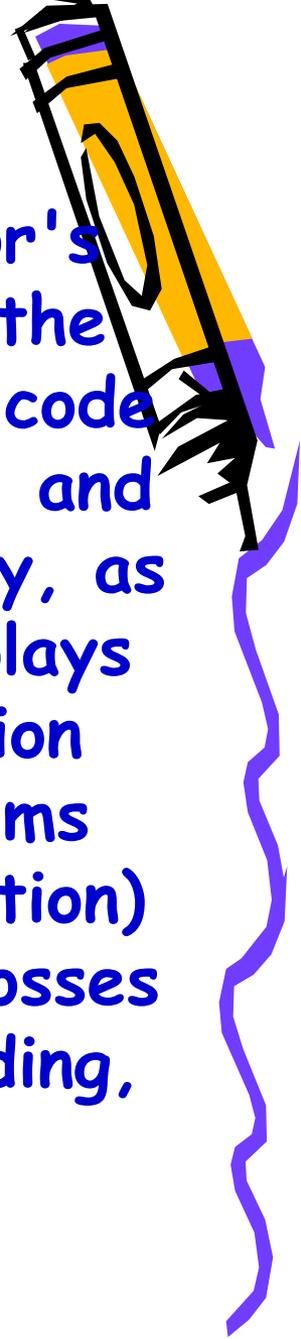
The stylistics, proceeding from the norms of language usage at a given period and teaching these norms to language speakers, especially the ones, dealing with the language professionally (editors, publishers, writers, journalists, teachers, etc.) is called practical stylistics.
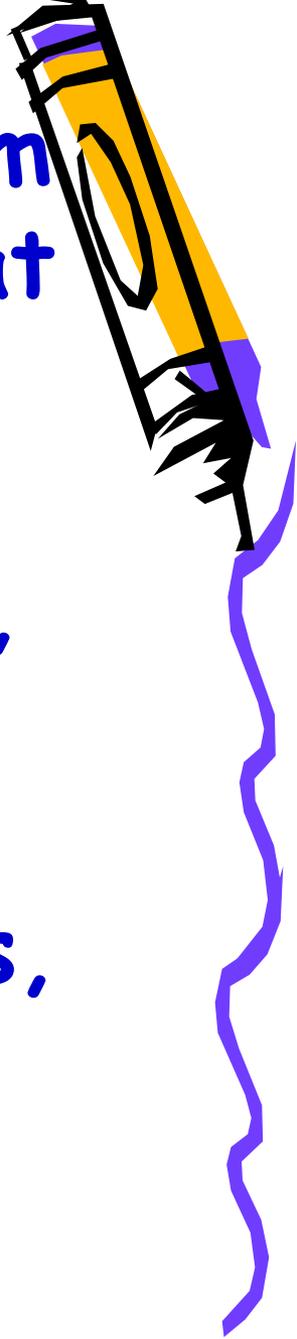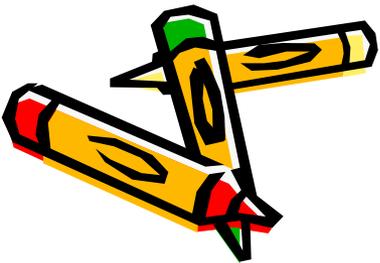
# The key notions of stylistics:

- *imagery,*
- *expressiveness,*
- *evaluation,*
- *emotiveness,*
- *expressive means,*
- *stylistic devices.*
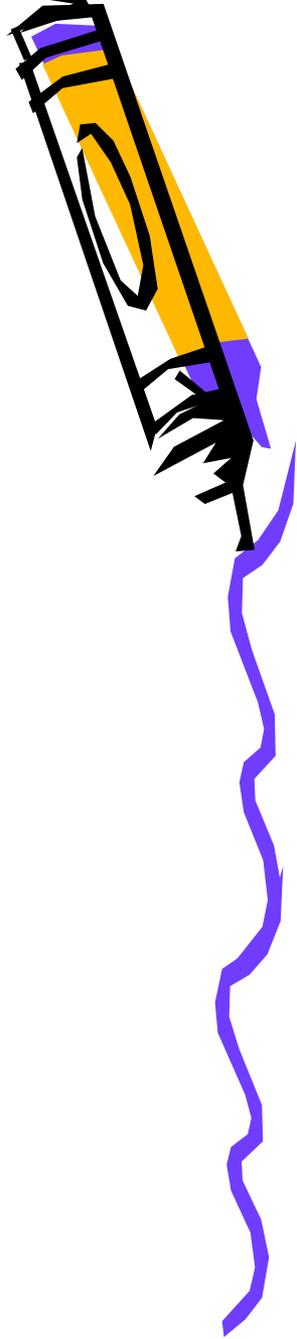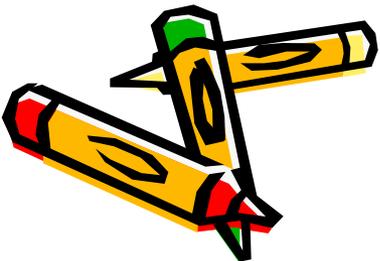
Text is understood as a product of speech (both oral and written), sequence of words, grammatically connected and, as a rule, semantically coherent.
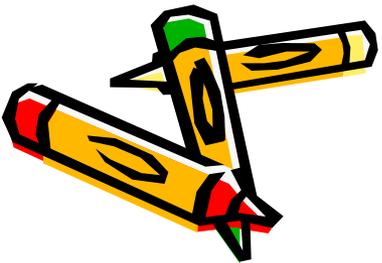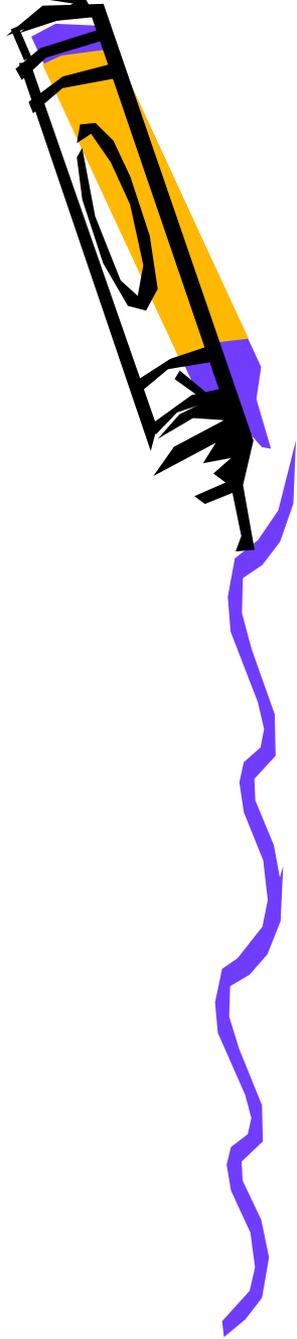
Stylistics focuses on the expressive properties of linguistic units, their functioning and interaction in conveying ideas and emotions in a certain text or communicative context.
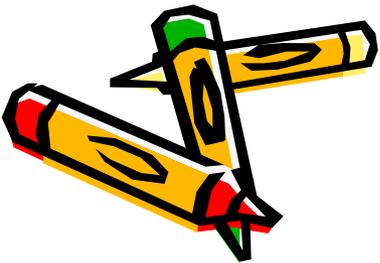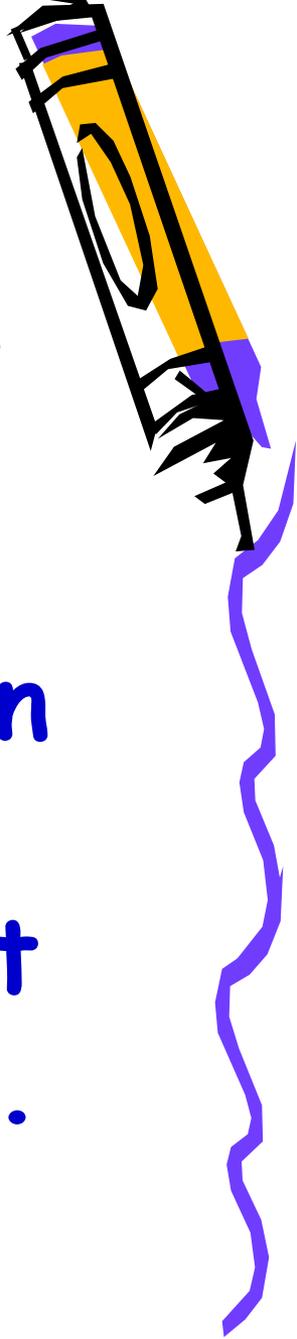
Expressiveness is understood as a kind of intensification of an utterance or of a part of it depending on the position in the utterance of the means that manifest this category and what these means are.
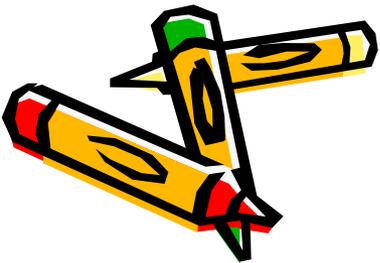
Emotiveness, and correspondingly the emotive elements of language, is what reveals the emotions of a writer or a speaker. They are designed to awaken co-experience in the mind of the reader.
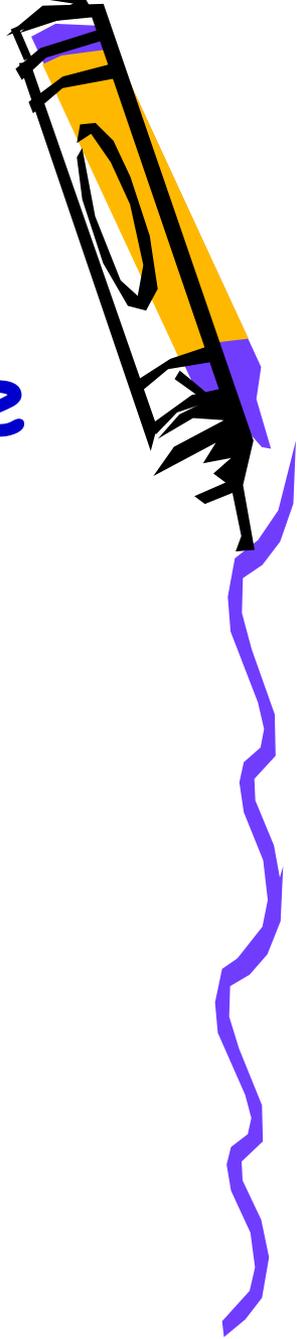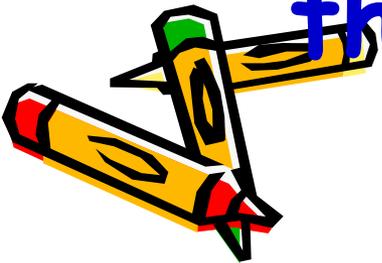
Expressiveness is a broader notion than emotiveness and is by no means to be reduced to the latter. Emotiveness is an integral part of expressiveness and occupies a predominant position in the category of expressiveness.
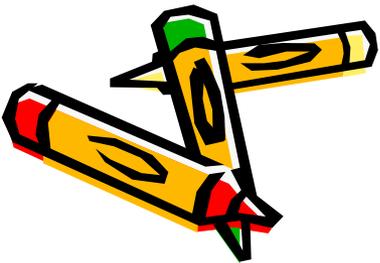
The evaluation is also based on whether the choice of language means conforms with the most general pattern of the given type of text – a novel, a poem, a letter, a document, an article, an essay and so on. The notion of evaluation takes into account that words may reveal a subjective evaluation and sometimes use it for definite stylistic effects, thus calling the attention of the reader to the meaning of such words.
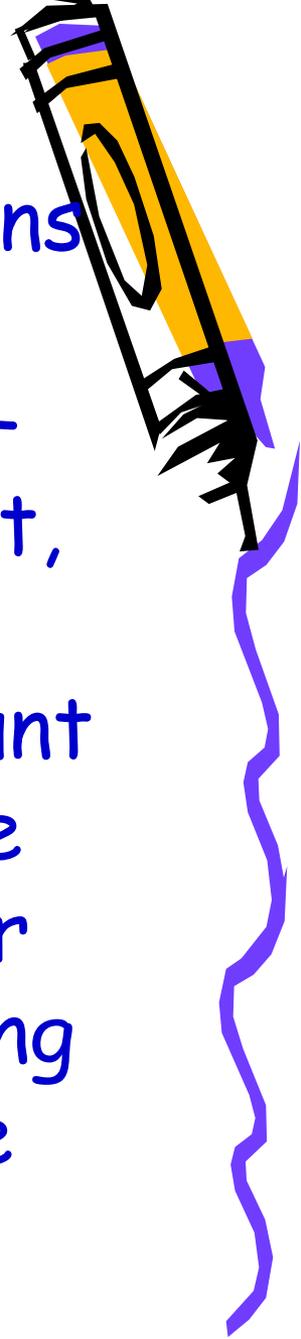
**Stylistics is first and foremost engaged in the study of connotative meanings. All language units can be conventionally divided into two groups:**

- Those which, along with their denotative meaning, possess a connotation (i.e. carry some additional information, either expressive or emotive) are called stylistically marked, or stylistically coloured.

- Those which do not have a connotative meaning are stylistically neutral.
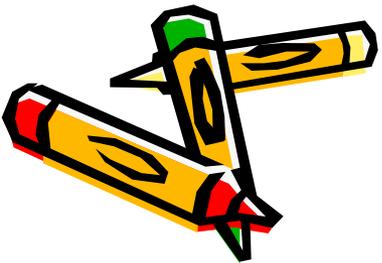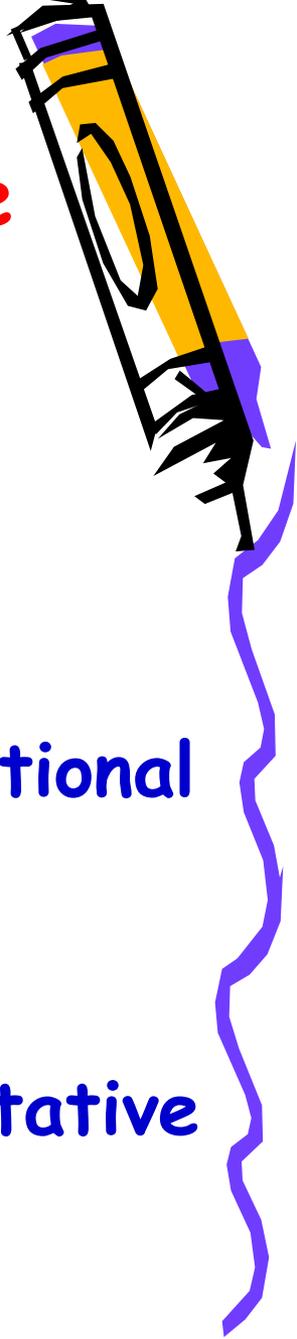
The linguistic units of phonetic, morphological, lexical, syntactical language levels which enter the first group are called Expressive Means (EM).
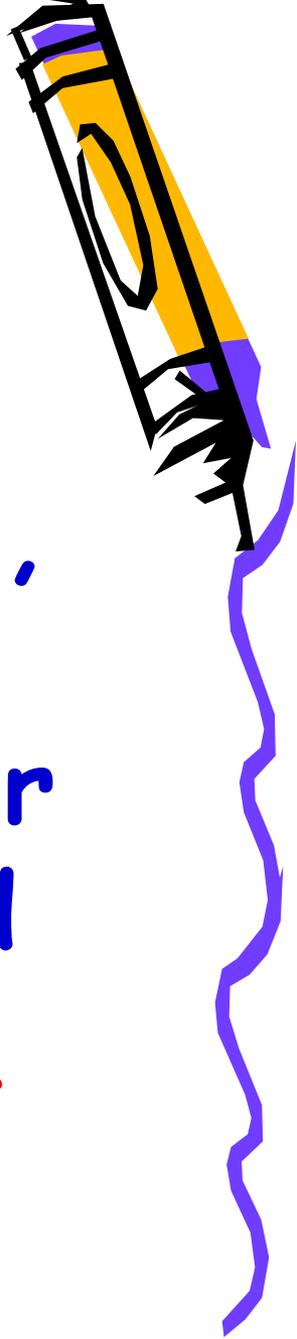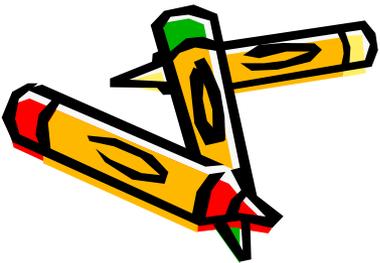
Stylistic devices
(tropes, figures of speech)
unlike expressive means are not
language phenomena. They are
formed in speech and most of
them do not exist out of
context. According to principles
of their formation, stylistic
devices are grouped into
phonetic, lexico-semantic and
syntactic types.
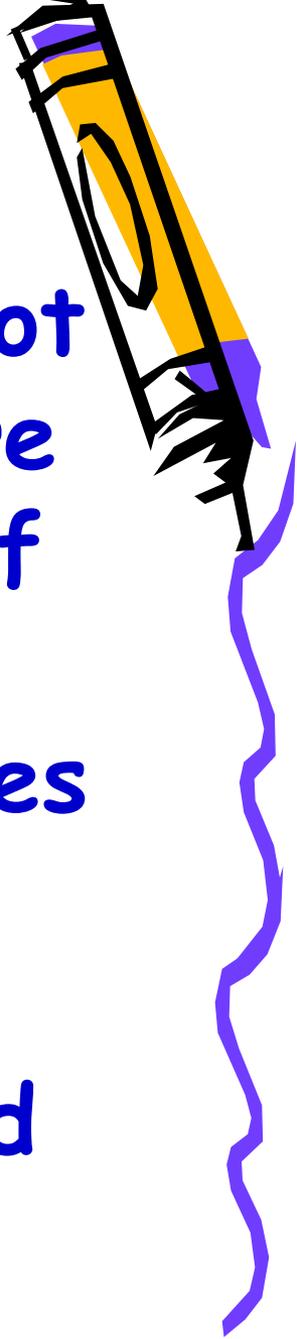
All stylistic devices are the result of revaluation of neutral words, word-combinations and syntactic structures. Revaluation makes language units obtain connotations and stylistic value. A stylistic device is the subject matter of stylistic semasiology.
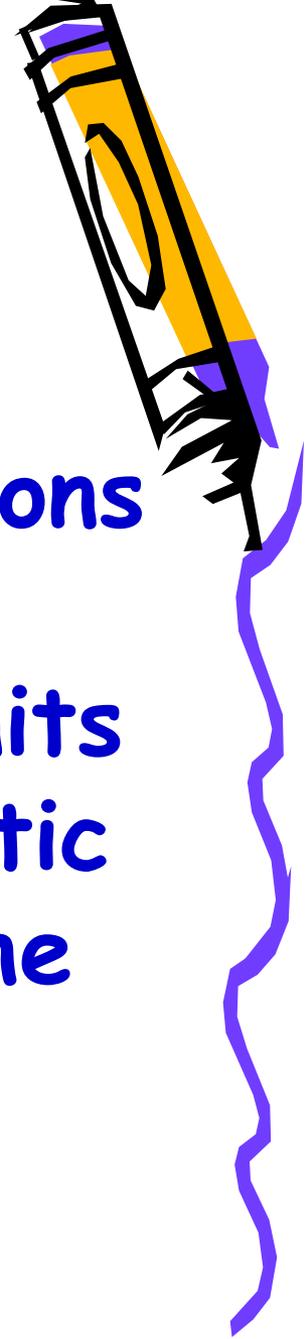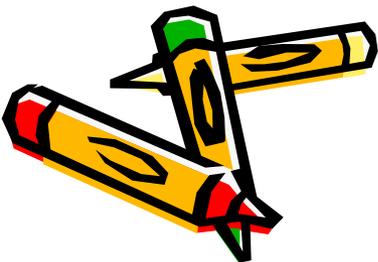
# THANK YOU
# FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
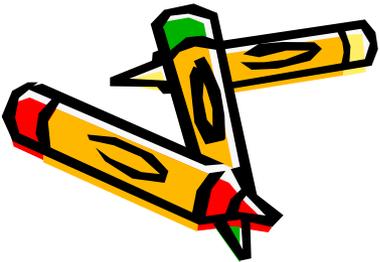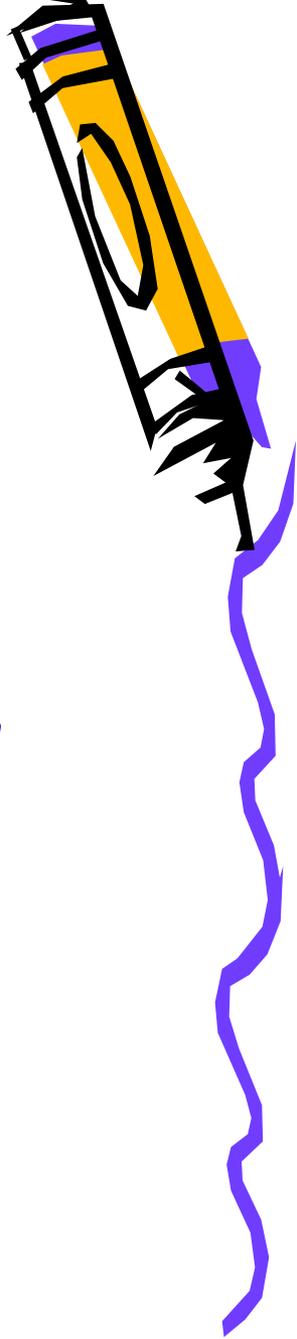
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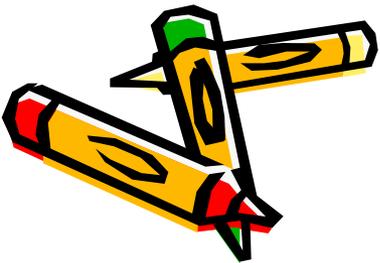
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