



# Cognitive Linguistics and its Relation to Stylistics

# DEFINITION

**Cognitive Linguistics (CL)** refers to the branch of linguistics that interprets language in terms of the concepts, sometimes universal, sometimes specific to a particular tongue, which underlie its forms. It is thus closely associated with semantics but is distinct from psycholinguistics, which draws upon empirical findings from cognitive psychology in order to explain the mental processes that underlie the acquisition, storage, production and understanding of speech and writing.

Achievements in the 90 years of XX century, mainly on the basis of cognitive linguistics and political science, political linguistics arises, the object of study of which is political discourse. Approximately at the same time, a new trend in linguoculturology with a philosophical name, axiological linguistics, begins to emerge, and values become the subject of study.

Cognitive linguistics is characterized by adherence to three central positions:

- 1) it denies that there is an *autonomous linguistic faculty* in the mind;
- 2) it understands grammar in terms of *conceptualization*;
- 3) it claims that knowledge of language arises out of *language use*.

# Cognitive Linguistics :

- Philosophy
- Linguistics
- Anthropology
- Neuroscience
- Psychology.

Cognitive linguistics often intersects with other areas of linguistics and stylistics, namely historical linguistics, dialectology, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and many others. All of them are different branches of language study and should be regarded as different tools from the same set and not as rivals.

*The goal of stylistic studies is not simply to describe the formal features of texts for their own sake, but to show their functional significance for the interpretation of the text; or to relate literary effects to linguistic causes where these are felt to be relevant*

# *Cognitive Linguistics in and for stylistics analysis:*

- The focus on the methods of compositional technique ( detailed linguistic analysis) has tended to make stylistics writerly .
- However, what is missing from this approach is the account of the mental processes that inform, and are affected by, the way we read and interpret literary texts. Stylistics has in other words lacked a readerly dimension.
- Stylisticians began to redress (make up for ) the ‘writerly bias’ in stylistics by exploring more systematically the cognitive structures that readers employ when reading texts. In doing so, they borrowed heavily from developments in cognitive linguistics and Artificial Intelligence . This new emphasis in research method saw the emergence of cognitive stylistics or cognitive poetics.



- Cognitive stylistics aims to shift the focus away from models of text and composition towards models that make explicit the links between the human mind and the process of reading.
- A further stimulus to the cognitive turn was provided by the object of analysis itself, literature. With its focus on the process of reading rather than writing, cognitive stylisticians have argued that literature is perhaps better conceptualised as a way of reading than as a way of writing.
- Moving away from theories of discourse, the new orientation was to models which accounted for the stores of knowledge which readers bring into play when they read, and on how these knowledge stores are modified or enriched as reading progresses.



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION**