



# Stylistics of the English Language 9

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# Task Stylistic Analysis

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April Seventh, 1928.

Through the fence, between the curling flower spaces, I could see them hitting. They were coming toward where the flag was and I went along the fence. Luster was hunting in the grass by the flower tree. They took the flag out, and they were hitting. Then they put the flag back and they went to the table, and he hit and the other hit. Then they went on, and I went along the fence. Luster came away from the flower tree and we went along the fence and they stopped and we stopped and I looked through the fence while Luster was hunting in the grass.

"Here, caddie." He hit. They went away across the pasture. I held to the fence and watched them going away.

"Listen at you, now." Luster said. "Aint you something, thirty three years old, going on that way. After I done went all the way to town to buy you that cake. Hush up that moaning. Aint you going to help me find that quarter so I can go to the show tonight."

They were hitting little, across the pasture. I went back along the fence to where the flag was. It flapped on the bright grass and the trees.

"Come on." Luster said. "We done looked there. They aint no more coming right now. Let's go down to the branch and find that quarter before them niggers finds it."

It was red, flapping on the pasture. Then there was a bird slanting and tilting on it. Luster threw. The flag flapped on the bright grass and the trees. I held to the fence. [William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*]

# Task Stylistic Analysis Key

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## Lexis

- Out of 186 words there are no words of more than two syllables - mostly monosyllabic
- 34 nouns are concrete
- 4 adjectives (curling, bright, red, bright) - primarily visual – Benji's world appears to be a simple and concrete one dominated by the sense of sight
- A lot of lexical repetition (hit (5), go (8)) – a restricted world
- caddie - a golf term (an attendant who carries clubs, etc., for a player) and a name of the sister Benji loves – Caddy – the reason to watch the game intently

# Task Stylistic Analysis Key

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## **Morphological and syntactical patterns**

- 10 – simple sentences, 7 – compound, 2 – complex
- Benji shows the tendency common in the writing of young children to string sentences of coordinated main clauses together – descriptive style
- The tendency towards coordination and away from subordination – doesn't distinguish major from minor information
- Naivety of the mind style – primitive – few verb forms apart from past simple
- No adverbials, only of place
- The use of transitive verbs (without naming the object) demonstrates that he sees no purpose in the golfers' actions.

# Task 5 Stylistic Analysis Key

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## **Context**

- “the flag flapped on the bright grass and the trees” – (NO “in the breeze” ) suggests two-dimensionality of Benji’s world horizontal (on the grass) and vertical (the trees)
- As if Benji just gives direct sensory impressions without any analysis or thought to deliver it to somebody – inability to synthesize information reasonably for the reader’s benefit
- Primacy is given to the VISUAL field in which objects reside rather than to the objects themselves – the golfers come not towards the flag, but towards “where the flag was”
- The extract illustrates what a mentally disabled person can think about the world

# Syntactical Stylistic Means Outline

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- Simple Vs Complex sentences
- Major principles at work on the sentence level:
  - Inversion
  - Repetition
  - Omission
  - Interaction
- Syntactical “transposition”
- Convergence

# Simple Sentences

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- descriptive element of narration
- succession of events of equal importance
- naïve narrative style:

“Once upon a time there was a poor miller. He lived in a small house. The miller worked at the mill, and his three sons helped him. The miller had no horse. He used his donkey to bring wheat from the fields. The years went by. The miller grew old and died.”

[*Puss in Boots* by Charles Perrault]

# Simple Sentences

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- highlight particular ideas in the narrative:  
“What had happened just a year ago today seemed already to belong in a different age. One would have thought the horrors of the present would have swallowed it up like a drop of water. It was not so.”  
[Malcolm Lowry, *Under the Volcano*, ch.2]
- occasionally mark the climactic point in the narrative:  
“She saw there an object. That object was the gallows. She was afraid of the gallows.”  
[Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent*, ch.12]



# Complex Sentences

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“The complex form gives and withholds information, subordinates some ideas to others more important, coordinates those of equal weight, and ties into a neat package as many suggestions, modifiers, and asides as the mind can attend to in one stretch.”

[J.Barzun, 1975, 156]

# Complex Sentences

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- make the reader experience events as an articulate and complex whole:

“The tireless resilient voice that had just lobbed this singular remark over the Bella Vista bar window-sill into the square was, though its owner remained unseen, unmistakable and achingly familiar as the spacious flower-boxed balconied hotel itself, and as unreal, Yvonne thought.”

[Malcolm Lowry, *Under the Volcano*, ch.2]

\*\*\*(a sequence of impressions - the “tireless” voice, the attendant circumstances of that perception, then to the impression the voice made (unmistakable, unreal) and finally to the perceiver herself)

# Complex Sentence Structure

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- Main Clause – ...Yvonne thought
- Object Subordinate Clause - The tireless resilient voice that... was unmistakable and achingly familiar...
- Relative Subordinate Clause - ...voice that had just lobbed this singular remark over the Bella Vista bar window-sill into the square...
- Subordinate Clause of Concession - ...though its owner remained unseen...
- Incomplete Subordinate Clause of Comparison – ...[familiar] as the spacious flower-boxed balconied hotel itself...

# Stylistic Syntax: Principles

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- Inversion
- Repetition
- Omission
- Interaction



# Inversion

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violation of the word order of the sentence due to which some elements of the sentence happen to be foregrounded

# Inversion

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- entails the change of the grammatical meaning:

I had known it – Had I known it...

- the change in the expressivity of the utterance:

If I had known it... - Had I known it...

- the change of the register:

The job of which I spoke – the job I spoke of

# Inversion: types

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- inversion of the predicative:

“Beautiful those donkeys were!”

[K.Mansfield, *The Lady's Maid*, from Arnold, 2010, c.222]

- of the direct complement:

“One poem they read over and over;  
Swinburne's “Triumph of Time”...”

[F.Scott Fitzgerald, *This Side of Paradise*]

“Plato he does not read and he disparaged  
Socrates...”

[*English Traits* by Ralph Waldo Emerson]

“Her love letters I returned to the detectives for  
filing.”

[Gr.Green, *End of the Affair*, from Arnold, 2010, c.222]

# Inversion: types

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- of the attributive modifier focuses the attention on the quality conveyed:

“In some places there are odd yellow tulips, slender, spiky, and Chinese-looking.”

[D.H.Lawrence, from Arnold, 2010, c.222]

“...and Amory at quarter-back, exhorting in wild despair, making impossible tackles, calling signals in a voice that had diminished to a hoarse, furious whisper, yet found time to revel in the blood-stained bandage around his head...”

[F.Scott Fitzgerald, This Side of Paradise]



# Inversion: types

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- of the adverbial modifier - renders the narrative dynamic or puts emphasis on a particular idea:

“up you go”, “off they sped”

“There was not a moment to be lost:  
away went Alice like the wind.”

[L.Carroll, Alice in Wonderland, from Arnold, 2010, c.221]

“I’ve got a crazy streak,’ – she faltered, -  
‘twice before I’ve done things like  
that.”

[F.Scott Fitzgerald, This Side of Paradise]

# Repetition

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- reiteration of a word or structure
- deviation from the syntactically neutral norm
- conveys the connotations of emotionality, expressivity and stylization

# IF by R.Kipling

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If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too;  
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,  
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise...

# Repetition

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- **sounds** (alliteration; assonance)
- **morphemes** (polyp'toton)
- **words** (chiasmus, anadiplosis)
- **phrases** (anaphora, epiphora)
- **syntactical arrangement** of the utterance (parallelism)
- **meaning** (e.g., pleonasm, through synonyms, parallel constructions)

# Task 1 Repetition: Quotes

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“Time is precious, so waste it wisely.”

[K.Bromberg, writer]

“Take time today to appreciate someone who does something you take for granted.”

[the author unknown]

“The bad news is time flies.

The good news is you are the pilot.”

[Michael Altshuler, motivational speaker]

# Chiasmus

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a rhetorical device in which two or more clauses are balanced against each other by the reversal of their structures in order to produce an artistic effect:

‘Either you run the day, or the day runs  
you.’ (J.Rhon, motivational speaker)

‘Bad men live that they may eat and  
drink, whereas good men eat and  
drink that they may live.’ [Socrates]

# Anadiplosis

(reduplication/chain repetition/catch repetition)

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the repetition of a word or words in successive clauses in such a way that the second clause starts with the same word which marks the end of the previous clause:

“Fear leads to **anger**. **Anger** leads to **hate**.  
**Hate** leads to suffering.”

[Yoda, Star Wars by George Lucas]

“What I present here is what I remember of the letter, and what I remember of the letter I remember verbatim (including that awful French).”

[V.Nabokov, Lolita]

# Epanalepsis

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the repetition of the initial word (or words) of a clause or sentence at the end of that same clause or sentence:

“Believe not all you can hear, tell not all you believe.”

[Native American proverb]

“A lie begets a lie.”

[English Proverb]

“The king is dead; long live the king.”

[English Saying]



# Framing

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- the repetition of the same element at the beginning and at the end of some narrative structure
- is similar to epanalepsis on the sentence level:

"No wonder his father wanted to know what Bosinney meant, no wonder." (G. Galsworthy)

# Anaphora

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the deliberate repetition of the first part of the sentence in order to achieve an artistic effect:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.”

[Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*]

# Epiphora (epistrophe)

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the deliberate repetition of a word or phrase at the end of successive clauses in order to achieve an artistic effect:

“The time for the healing of the wounds has come. The moment to bridge the chasms that divide us has come.”

[Nelson Mandela]

## Task 2 Anaphora, Epiphora, Chiasmus, Anadiplosis, Epanalepsis, Framing

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- "In times like these, it is helpful to remember that there have always been times like these. " [Paul Harvey]
- "Never let a fool kiss you or a kiss fool you." [Unknown]
- "He retained his virtues amidst all his – misfortunes – misfortunes which no prudence could foresee or prevent." [Francis Bacon]

# Symploce

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using the same words at the start and the same words at the end of successive sentences with a differing middle part:

“When there is talk of hatred, let us stand up and talk against it. When there is talk of violence, let us stand up and talk against it.”

[Bill Clinton]

"The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,  
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes..."

[T.S. Eliot, *Prufrock and Other Observations*, 1917]

# Polyptoton

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the stylistic scheme in which words derived from the same root are repeated:

“Judge not, that ye be not judged”

[ Matthew 7:1 ]

“Absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

[ Lord Acton ]

“Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired.”

[ Robert Frost ]

# Pun

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The **pun**, also sometimes called **paronomasia**, is a form of word play that suggests two or more meanings, by exploiting multiple meanings of words, or of similar-sounding words, for an intended humorous or rhetorical effect:

“Forgive me my nonsense as I also forgive the nonsense of those who think they talk sense.”

[Robert Frost (1874-1963)]

# Polysyndeton

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the use of several conjunctions in close succession, especially where some could otherwise be omitted:

“Mrs. Hurst and her sister allowed it to be so—but still they admired her **and** liked her, **and** pronounced her to be a sweet girl, **and** one whom they would not object to know more of.”

[J.Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*]



## Task 3 Polysyndeton, Pun, Polyptoton, Symploce

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- 'Is life worth living? It depends on the liver.'
- "Camus said that suicide was the only true philosophical question.' 'Apart from ethics and politics and aesthetics and the nature of reality and all the other stuff<?>' [Julian Barnes, *The Sense of an Ending* (2011)]
- "For want of a nail the shoe was lost.  
For want of a shoe the horse was lost.  
For want of a horse the rider was lost.  
For want of a rider the battle was lost.  
For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.  
And all for the want of a horseshoe nail."  
[attributed to Benjamin Franklin and others]

# Tautology and Pleonasm

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a repetitive use of phrases or words which have the same or similar meanings:

“Your acting is **completely devoid** of emotion.” (devoid=“completely empty”)

“Polonius: What do you read, my lord?”

Hamlet: **Words, words, words.**”

[Shakespeare, Hamlet]

# Tautology Functions

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- Derision
- Intentional ambiguity
- Psychological significance
- A device of poetry
- Ineptitude

# Tautology

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'And so what do you think of him?'  
Adrian paused. He took a sip of beer,  
and then said with sudden  
vehemence, 'I *hate* the way the  
English have of not being serious  
about being serious. I *really hate*  
it.'

[Julian Barnes, *The Sense of an Ending* (2011)]



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- Thank you for attention