Cognitive stylistics

Peter Stockwell

Cognition and style

When stylisticians of literature talk about 'style', they have traditionally referred to the textual patterns that are the result of choices made by writers. The creativity of the author has largely not been a direct concern; instead, authorial creativity has been regarded simply as the motivating force that produced the text. And it is the text itself that has been the focus of analysis and interest. At the same time, stylisticians have traditionally focused on the text as the location for meaning and aesthetic form, with the observing reader being regarded merely as the place where the effects of meaning, emotion, or evaluation happened. The creativity of the reader has not really been a direct matter for analysis either.

This text focus has been extremely productive and valuable for stylistics, serving as an antidote, on the one hand, to the sort of biographical speculation that has passed for literary criticism in the past and, on the other, against an approach that treats the reader simply as a psychological case study to be explained. Biographical criticism treats the literary text often simply as a fossilised historical artefact – as the fully formed product of artistic genius; psycho-criticism treats the reader as if on the couch, or it shades into a full social science of the process of reading in general. In both cases, the literary text itself, and the act of creation that is a collaborative process between author and reader, have often been neglected. Creativity itself has either been assumed to be an ineffable intuition of the author or a general human faculty that is common to all texts. In spite of the denials of a new historicism, pinning the literary work to its originating culture and authorial life effectively closes a range of readerly interpretations and leaves literature as a form of archaeology. Deconstructive approaches that emphasise a free play of meaning or meaninglessness are a travesty of linguistic description. And approaches that set out to explore psychological universals tend to lose sight of the uniqueness and singularity of the literary work. Creativity itself has been underexplored in all of these traditions.

My characterisation here is partly cartoonish, although I would insist that there is an element of truth in it. The argument is that creativity has not been directly addressed by a literary criticism that has mainly been concerned with the history of writing and the particular archival example of the literary work. It has not been addressed by a social science of reading that aims at an account of the psychology of reading in general. Even in stylistics, the focus on textual patterns has traditionally diminished attention paid to authorial and readerly creativity. For stylistics, this perhaps has its roots still in the twin prohibitions of Wimsatt and Beardsley (1954a, 1954b) against the 'intentional fallacy', on the one hand, and the 'affective fallacy', on the other: do not imagine that you have access to author's thoughts, and do not treat readers as case studies for reading in general.

These injunctions have served stylistics well for a long time. More recently, though, we have been able to develop better tools for understanding mind and language to the point at which we can face down these twin prohibitions directly. This better toolkit comes from the application of cognitive science and literary-linguistic analysis in the form of a *cognitive stylistics*, which forms part of a wider cognitive literary studies. The emphasis over the last couple of decades has been towards a rigorous account of reading and readerly effects; more recently, and surprisingly, we have been able to develop a similarly systematic account of what authorial creativity really involves.

The spread of cognitive poetics

Although it could be argued that the tradition of applying our latest best understanding of language and mind to literature has its origins in ancient classical rhetoric, the current manifestation of the phenomenon has its origins in Tsur's *cognitive poetics* of the 1970s. Tsur (1987, 1992) pioneered an account of literary meaning and effect that treated linguistic patterns as correlates of human cognition, and drew on neuropsychology, as well as stylistics and literary theory. A fortuitous collision of other advances immediately following this can also be discerned with hindsight. The field of stylistics was discovering new capacities arising from innovations in pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis in the 1980s. All of these disciplines offered a systematic means of exploring apparent intention, non-literal meaning, inference and implication, ideology and cultural setting, and a rigorous account of context. Crucially, it became obvious that literary meaning and aesthetic effects in language could be properly addressed only by considering whole texts, and involving the dispositions and knowledge that readers brought to the experience. Stylistics began to draw on empirical studies in psychology and social science in general, in order to explore readers and reading. (See Carter & Stockwell, 2008, for a historical survey.)

At the same time, a parallel movement within theoretical linguistics was emerging, with a similar dissatisfaction for formalist approaches to language. The efforts in the 1970s to develop artificial intelligence and machine language had directed researchers towards the understanding that schematic knowledge and idealised models of the world needed to be part of a linguistic account. A computer program needed to have a contextual experience of its world in order to be able to produce and understand utterances that had not been programmed in literally – which revelation brought creativity to the fore. Different models for understanding this readerly knowledge were developed, as scenarios, scripts, schemas, macrostructures, and frames – all essentially trying to describe the same observed phenomenon. Also within language study, a cognitive linguistics was emerging that aimed at describing language with the language-user in context as the focus of the account. Influential work connecting linguistic form and mental faculty appeared in the study of metaphor (Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

By the turn of the century, there was a large body of work that could be gathered together as a broadly common cognitive scientific approach to literary description. Generally, this has been called 'cognitive poetics', widening Tsur's original coinage to include schematic and cognitive linguistic developments (Gavins & Steen, 2003; Stockwell, 2002). Where there has been a particularly text-based focus in the analysis, the approach has more often been called 'cognitive stylistics' (Semino & Culpeper, 2002). Where there has been less textual focus and more thematic concerns, a broad 'cognitive literary studies' can be discerned (Jaén & Simon, 2012; Zunshine, 2010, 2015). What all of these associated approaches have in common is a concern to account for literature as a natural human capacity, and for reading as an activity that can be understood and explained in a disciplined way.

For cognitive stylistics researchers, style is the creative choice of an author, drawing upon the capacities that language affords and constrains. Drawing on those same language capacities, and sharing what might broadly be called their human condition, readers also engage in creative reconstruction and imaginative construction when reading literature. Cognitive stylistics or cognitive poetics (I will use the terms interchangeably) is thus centrally and inherently a discipline that explores literary creativity in all its aspects.

Key areas in cognitive stylistics

The fundamental principles of cognitive stylistics are largely drawn from the cognitive sciences in general. They can be summarised as follows.

- Language is not a separate part of human experience, but is fundamental to it. Language is therefore natural in origin, rather than artificial, or technological, or part of culture; these aspects emerged interconnectedly and later.
- Language is embodied in the sense that much of it is dependent on the fact that we all basically share the same human shape, condition, and experience. So it is not surprising when we see common metaphors or other language structures across the world's languages.
- Language is built on, and adapts, our other perceptual faculties, such as sight, sound, touch, taste, smell, and our sense of physical space and movement. There is no separate 'language module' in the brain. Patterns in language are thus continuous with these other aspects of experience.
- Language includes cognition, perception, memory, anticipation, speculative modelling, social relationships, meanings, and emotions, and so a disciplined account of it should encompass these matters as well.
- Language description must include an account not only of the constraints and habitual patterns of the system, but also of the creative flexibility and imaginative innovation at the centre of language practice.

These broad principles can easily be applied to literary reading. In this section, I can very briefly sketch some of the different aspects of the field. It is important to remember, though, that almost every literary text and reading can be analysed along every one of these dimensions. In essence, everything connects with everything else. It will become apparent that creativity is a basic design feature in all of these concepts.

Figure and ground

A fundamental human capacity is our ability to distinguish different objects in our perception, and to pay attention to one or a single group of them with more care and intensity than other, backgrounded objects. This capacity is clearly evident in the visual field, but also in our ability to filter in and out different sounds, tastes, smells, and physical textures We can delineate objects from their backgrounds, discern nearness and distance, observe and predict spatial movement, conceptualise one thing being hidden by another thing, and understand agency when an object acts on another. There are textual equivalences for all of these *figure and ground* relationships.

The ability to foreground a textual element and background the others is, of course, a matter of the patterning of the text, but it happens in the mind of a reader only with the

involvement of the reader. The process can be automatic and habituated, whereby a particular reader simply makes sense of the text and does not notice certain elements being placed into the foreground of attention. Alternatively, the process of foregrounding can be increasingly active and self-aware, as readers notice certain aspects of the text, or are aware of their own reading process. This can reach its ultimate expression in a case in which a reader deliberately pays more attention to parts of the text that appear not to have been stylistically foregrounded by the author. This sort of resistant, or dispreferred, reading is an important part of the range of responses available to literary readers.

I will return to the notion of resistant reading below, but here we must notice that figuring and grounding seem to be fundamental to language itself. Many forms of *cognitive grammar* distinguish between the different prominence given to named objects in a textual field. It is possible, for example, to regard the agent of a clause typically as having figural prominence and the other referents in the sentence (such as direct and indirect objects, other circumstances, instruments, and patients and beneficiaries of the verb, for example) as being relatively backgrounded. Action and agency are thus matters of figure and ground relationships, and although the text provides the framework for generating these relationships, the imagination of them happens in the creating mind of the reader.

Figure and ground are not simply crucial matters of clausal grammar that enable cognitive stylisticians to explore prominence, significance, agency, ambience, and texture in literary works (see Harrison et al., 2014). The human capacity for attending to one thing in preference to another operates at every level of cognition. So certain characters have more prominence or significance than others; certain objects in a described room, or aspects of an imagined landscape, or certain striking descriptions in themselves will offer themselves for readerly figuration. In short, the entire texture of feeling across a literary reading can be explored and analysed based on figure and ground descriptions (see Stockwell, 2009).

Prototypicality

The emphasis on figure and ground might look at first like a simple binary pattern of the sort that informed much of the literary criticism arising from early structuralism. However, it is important to remember that figure and ground are attentional phenomena: a figure is a thing, but a ground is simply not-a-thing – that is, you cannot look at, imagine, picture, point at, or be aware of the ground, because as soon as you do that, it ceases being backgrounded and becomes a figure in your attention. Figure and ground are therefore not binary objects, but instead operate along a scale of attentiveness. The process of reading is online and dynamic, so a figure at one moment in a text can quickly be occluded by another and the first object can fade from attention to form part of the background.

Such a scaling of attention draws on the cognitive linguistic notion of *prototypicality* (see Lakoff, 1987). Simply, this claims that human categorisation does not operate in terms of absolute category-membership, but rather in terms of a sort of 'best fit' example. In other words, a poodle is not simply a type of dog, but is a good example of a dog. For many people, other dogs are more 'doggy' than a poodle, and so are better examples of a dog: a terrier, collie, or Labrador, perhaps. Some people think that big dogs are better examples of dogs than lapdogs. Most people will act as if an Old English Sheepdog is a better example of a dog than a Louisiana Catahoula Leopard Dog. In this sense, a cat is not simply 'not-a-dog'; it is simply a very bad example of a dog. If this sounds strange, simply consider that a spider, or a pencil, or the notion of liberty are even worse examples of dogs, compared with a cat – that is, 'dogness' is scalable. Prototypicality says that every concept is scalable.

The reason that prototypicality is crucial to human creativity is because this scalability is not absolutely shared identically by all people. Our notions of prototypicality are situated in the particular circumstances in which they occur and are experientially based. So your own sense of the best examples of dogs will depend on your own life experience of dogs and on the situation at hand. Isolated on an ice lake in the Arctic with a sled, a Siberian Husky is a better example of a dog than a Yorkshire Terrier. Dining in an exclusive Parisian bistro, a Pekingese is a better example of a dog than a St Bernard. It is this flexibility and adaptability in categorisation that allows us to imagine personification, for example: the dog that talks, wears clothes, has emotions, expresses a consciousness, has memory and ethics. Think of the different readerly scaling of dogs involved in imagining Snowy (*Tintin*), Jip (*David Copperfield*), Argos (*The Odyssey*), Buck (*The Call of the Wild*), White Fang (*White Fang*), Toto (*The Wizard of Oz*), or Mr Bones (*Timbuktu*). Our emotional proximity to or distance from a character can depend on how good an example of a person that character is. He or she might be fully and richly realised, or merely a type or token. Across this scale, different readers will have different relationships with fictional people.

Resonance and ambience

Together (and as mentioned briefly above), the notions of figure and ground and prototypicality form the basis for a model of cognitive grammar that has been used by cognitive stylisticians to account for a range of literary effects. In Langacker's (2008) approach, clausal elements are understood as items that are profiled in attention, and the predications that verbs typically enact are understood as schematic motion. A clause acts like a sort of action chain, sending energy from the item with agency towards the other participants. This approach to grammatical form encompasses the creative imagination that is required of a reader as an inherent part of the theoretical apparatus. Different readers might construe the same sentence or passage of text in different ways, because their simulation of the meaning is likely to be different: they will pay more or less attention to certain elements, foregrounding some over others, and drawing on their own experience not only for meaning, but also for the feelings associated with the sense.

A cognitive grammatical stylistic analysis can thus begin to account for aspects of literary reading that have traditionally eluded rigorous literary critical analysis because those aspects have been very delicate, subjective, or difficult to articulate. Matters of the perceived atmosphere and tonal qualities of a passage of literature, for example, are especially difficult to describe precisely – and yet this literary *ambience* can be explored in cognitive grammatical terms (see Deggan, 2013; Stockwell, 2014). The strikingness of a literary work, its memorability, how it *resonates* with your own life in either a phrase, or a powerful image, or how the voice of a narrator or character has an emotional impact: all of these common literary experiences can be explored from a cognitive grammatical perspective.

Of course, literary commentators have been able to discuss these sorts of impressions for centuries, but for the most part the discussion has not been very analytical or connected systematically with an overarching theory until recently. A cognitive stylistic approach allows the researcher to understand how resonance and ambience work at a very particular clausal level, but also at a discourse level and all points in between. These discussions, until now, have been purely intuitive and impressionistic, appealing to common experience with shared cultural presumptions. Cognitive stylistics allows a discussion of the variability of readerly creativity, while keeping cultural and personal experience to the forefront of awareness.

Metaphor and framing

Cognitive stylistics has maintained a central interest in *metaphor* from its inception as a discipline. Metaphor in cognitive linguistics is not only the textual realisation of a rhetorical trope, but also is treated as a fundamentally important aspect of human conceptualisation. Behind the linguistic metaphor 'The weight of this sad time we must obey' (*King Lear*) lies a set of conceptual metaphors in which time is concretised, balanced, and personified, for example. Some of this is conventional and some is innovative, and together the effect is to draw the audience into the sense of doom in the last few lines of the play.

Metaphors are thus neither simply linguistic forms nor mere ornamentation in cognitive linguistics, but have been regarded more importantly as textual manifestations of underlying shared, or perhaps even universal, properties of human perception. The cognitive stylistic treatment of conceptual metaphor manages to capture this balance between the particular stylistic uniqueness of the expression and its cultural value and wider resonant power (see Freeman, 1996).

Metaphors, in this approach, activate domains, or *frames*, of knowledge and experience, with the new domain serving creatively to restructure the familiar domain. So the difficult concept of TIME is understood in terms of the familiar experience of SPACE, or ETHICS as BALANCE, or BEAUTY as THE SUN, or LIFE as a JOURNEY, or TIME as MONEY, or IDEAS as BUILDINGS, and so on. These conventional metaphors are often so familiar that we barely notice them as metaphors at all, although they tap into a set of ideas and assumptions that underlie the language of a literary text. Striking and innovative, and deviant and dissonant, metaphors operate with the same mechanism, but they are often noticeable and resonant, and involve a greater demand and engagement of the reader. Such metaphors are often encountered in highly wrought poetic writing: lyricism, surrealism, imagism, for example.

A metaphorical practice can become normalised even with a single text, so that it seems to establish a frame of understanding. For a reader to engage with the text then involves repeated activation of that conceptual metaphor, and the framing discourse comes to seem reasonable and normal. This is a powerful political technique (see Lakoff, 2002, 2006), but it is also the basis for engaging a reader in a fictional world.

Simulation and deictic projection

One of the key insights from cognitive science has been that conceptualising an event or experience, and articulating it, or even reading about it, seems to activate the same faculties at second-hand as are exercised during first-hand experience. So the difference between, say, catching a ball and reading about catching a ball is not as great as you otherwise might imagine. This also goes for all activations generated by texts. It seems that we simulate the original perception offered by a text and recreate it in mind in order to experience it again (or virtually for the first time) (see Gibbs, 2006).

Simulation accounts for the counterintuitive phenomenon in which readers of fictional events are moved emotionally by those events and the characters' experiences of them. Literary reading generates a range of emotions, moods, and other effects that are actual emotions and moods: we do not feel *fictional* sadness, or *imaginary* melancholy, or *pretend* laughter during literary experiences.

In cognitive stylistics, we can trace the close textual patterns that allow for such experiences, for example by analysing the deictic aspects of a text. These are all those parts of a text that set out the different positionings of fictional, narratorial, authorial, and readerly minds. So, most obviously, the personal pronouns, and the spatial and temporal aspects of a

text, allow a reader to imagine and locate a particular character's perspective, and also to establish what his or her imagined viewpoint is in relation to that deictic centre-point. This *deictic projection* is the stylistic means by which a reader can populate the imagined scene and keep track of all of the people in it.

However, other aspects of character positioning can also be found. Any element that delineates the interpersonal relationships between characters is an aspect of social deixis that can also be analysed. This includes not only terms of address and styles of speech, but also markers indicating the perception of social relations. Even the word choices that are associated with particular characters can draw a social deictic relationship in the world of a literary text. Of course, those choices are attached to characters, but are imagined to be the mediated words of narrators, and they are also the actually composed words of the author – and by exploring these textual and compositional deictic markers, the cognitive stylistician can trace all of the relationships established in a literary work. These include the author–reader relationship.

For example, in reading *David Copperfield*, I understand the relative positions of all of the characters physically, socially, and emotionally. I also understand the special relationship between the narrating character 'David Copperfield' and the other characters. Furthermore, I know that the narrating mind and the arrangement of the entire novel are part of the creative choices made by Charles Dickens. And I can see, for example, in the character of Mr Dick, an ironic counterpart of Charles Dickens and an in-text parallel commentary on the autobiographical aspects of the story. My picture and experience of all of this has been co-created with Charles Dickens, but the world that represents it finally is created in my readerly head. And it will be both similar to, and different from, your own picture of *David Copperfield* in many ways.

Text worlds

In processing the deictic centres of all of the different entities and characters that make up the minds within the novel *David Copperfield*, as a reader I direct my attention into and out of an imagined world. Across the boundary of that world, I have to keep track of different states of knowledge and experience, and the different properties of the fictional world compared with my own situation. The text itself does not provide enough denotative information to account for the richness of my sense of the fictional world, so I am clearly filling out the sense of the world as an act of my own imaginative creation. My mental representation of the fiction is modelled as a *text world* in cognitive stylistics (Gavins, 2007; Werth, 1999).

The text world that a reader co-creates with an author is not a static representation, but instead is conceived as a working heuristic tool that readers use as a fundamental means of reading. I build a world and use my model to keep track of who is where, who knows what, who remembers what has happened, what else is in the scene, and so on. The framework usefully allows us to discuss aspects of fictionality, plot development, and the landscapes of fictional works in systematic ways. It allows us to understand how we can hold metaphors, negations, flashbacks and flashforwards, speculations, and other unrealised possibilities in our minds as part of the rich texture that we create as readers of literature.

However, text world theory has also been used as a means of analysing the emotional engagement of readers with literary worlds. The spatial metaphor underpinning the idea of motion into and out of a text world has also been shown to work in terms of the emotional closeness and distance between reader and character. When a reader's attention is focused inside a fictional text world, there is a transporting effect whereby a reader can become absorbed in the world of the literature (see Gerrig, 1993). In such reading experiences,

readers report heightened feelings of involvement and emotional investment in the fictional people and worlds that they are experiencing.

Mind-modelling

In all of this process, it is clear that readers imagine versions of authorial, narratorial, and character minds, and are able to have relationships with them. This is possible because of our capacity for *mind-modelling* – that is, we imagine other people to have a consciousness like our own, and we fill in further details about their lives, thoughts, and perspectives. This cognitive poetic account of characterisation draws on the notions of 'theory of mind' and simulation from cognitive psychology. Under application to literary and fictional characterisation, our basic human capacity for imputing essential person-ness to other people is extended into a rich model of a fully rounded character (see Zunshine, 2006). We can imagine their beliefs, feelings, emotions, aspirations, goals, and so on, on the basis of the text-driven information that we are given as readers. It should be clear again that any given text cannot possibly provide all of the denotational information sufficient for the richly textured sense of character that the vast majority of readers routinely create in literary reading. Mind-modelling is an active, creative, and productive process that goes beyond the basic information of the text.

Mind-modelling is an everyday process that we use to keep track of our different relationships with every person in our lives. Literary mind-modelling is no different. Of course, readers' mind-model not only fictional characters, but also the imagined authors of those literary works. This means that cognitive poetics has a theoretically grounded and systematic principled means of discussing and analysing authorial intention – not as telepathy, nor as the sort of speculative biographical criticism that I outlined at the start of this chapter, but as part of a stylistic account of language and its creative production.

The practice of cognitive poetics

It should be apparent by now that the discipline of cognitive stylistics or poetics has rapidly developed a rich toolkit for literary analysis. Regarded as an evolution of the field of stylistics, we are in a position to revisit the early prohibitions on contexts such as authorial intention and readerly psychology (Wimsatt & Beardsley, 1954a, 1954b). Regarded as a branch of literary criticism, we are able to address many of the topics that interest literary scholars, but with a renewed sense of principled confidence and cross-disciplinary validity.

It would be impossible to demonstrate an example of the discipline in this short chapter that would be anything other than partial, but perhaps a few illustrative observations will serve instead. Here, for example, is perhaps and arguably one of the most famous poems in the English language… What would a cognitive stylistic account of it look like?

Sonnet XVIII

1   Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
2   Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
3   Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
4   And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
5   Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
6   And often is his gold complexion dimmed,
7   And every fair from fair sometime declines,

8   By chance, or nature's changing course untrimmed:
9   But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
10   Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
11   Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
12   When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st,
13   So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
14   So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

(Shakespeare, 1609)

Although there is a great deal of discussion around the context and circumstances of the sonnet, there is a general critical consensus on its meaning. What has the surface appearance of a love poem praising the appearance and constancy of the addressee also gives the strong sense that this is a literary work about literary art itself, and the power of poetry not only to immortalise human lives and relationships, but also to outlast them. Setting aside historiographic and biographical discussions of the original addressee (whether a woman or a male youth, which then generates both heterosexual and homosexual romantic readings), the vast majority of non-scholarly readings regard this as a straightforward love poem: it is popular as a reading at weddings and baptisms, and on cards produced for Valentine's Day or equivalents around the world. Many online commentaries also note the possible subtext that the poem can equally be read in terms of the author's self-aggrandisement.

Given these readings 'in the wild', how would a cognitive stylistic account find the evidence by which they were created? Note, here, that it is not the primary business of cognitive poetics to generate new meanings – that can happen, but the generation of newly eccentric readings, however interesting, is the remit of literary criticism (or 'litcrit'); rather, cognitive poetics has a more descriptive and analytical purpose. There are several aspects of the poem that lend themselves to a cognitive poetic exploration.

First, there is an obvious metaphorical analysis to be sketched out that, sure enough, produces a primary set of meanings and also a subtext possibility. The primary metaphorical mapping is the YEAR IS A DAY conceptual metaphor. This produces stylistic realisations, such as 'Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May', 'summer's lease hath all too short a date', and 'thy eternal summer shall not fade'. The emphasis within the conceptual domain of the year is on the seasons, the natural scene, and the temperature, so the other metaphors in the poem have particularly apposite qualities primed: the personification of 'death' is followed by 'his shade', while the face is 'fair'. The primary metaphor is linked to the DAY IS A LIFE metaphor throughout. This means that there is a combined implicit metaphor in operation whereby the addressee's life seems simultaneously to be figured as a single day and as a year. This blurring extends across the poem, so that the dawn is spring, noon is the hot summer, and the afternoon ('dimmed') leads to a long tailing evening as the light 'declines'; then, there is a 'fade' and 'shade', until the final four lines combine dark, dimness, poor visibility, and death.

This combination of day to year to life, of course, mirrors the theme of the poem as one referring to an extended period of time beyond the current moment. The metaphor structures also mirror the iconic lengthening in the clausal syntax. Short, completed action chains typify the first four lines. The next four lines (lines 5–8) are less constrained by the line ending, with the trajectory of the agent 'eye of heaven' extending over two lines and lines 7–8 covering a single clause. Lines 9–14 can be regarded as more continuous, with the difference in action-chain patterning signalled by the contrastive 'But'. These lines match the profiling of the long ending of the day that the metaphorical patterning echoes. The heat and brightness of morning, spring/summer, and youth are linguistically realised relatively quickly.

The subtext is contained in a qualitatively different conceptual metaphor of accountancy and commerce that runs through the poem alongside the primary TIME metaphor. This is evident in the metaphorical use of words such as 'lease', 'gold', 'lose possession', 'ow'st', and even 'grow'st' (either as an appreciating investment, or homophonically as 'grossed'). Even the opening act of calm, cogitating comparison is an act of measurement and accountancy. The final phrasing reiterates this precise measurement: 'so long [as this] ... so long lives [that]'.

Aside from the metaphorical domains, there is an interestingly doubled deictic patterning in evidence in the poem. Sonnets are prototypically addressed to the object of love or praise, so the intimate and familiar 'thee/thou/thy' address form of personal deixis is not surprising. The intimacy is echoed in proximal deixis throughout: '*thy* eternal summer' signifies a close possessive (and is iconically followed by the word 'possession'); '*that* fair thou ow'st' is used proximally in this context; and the poem ends most closely with '*this*' and '*this*'. Note, though, that these two final deictics refer to the poem itself. However, the sonnet is also addressed 'outwards' towards the reader: there is always a trace sense of this in second-person texts. This is, of course, not a direct explicit readerly address ('Reader, I married him'), but the poem is, of course, being read by an actual reader living 400 years adrift of the moment of composition. If these eternal lines have lived on through time, then the fact that they are addressed to the modern reader is a self-evident validation of the truthfulness of the poem's final assertion.

There is a final sense, of course, in which a reader could model the authorial mind here as self-promoting and egocentric, and then the second-person address can be taken as a rhetorically circular self-reference: Shakespeare is self-satisfiedly reassuring himself. The reiterated and self-referential 'this' at the end reinforces this sense. Lastly, it is even possible to draw a contrast between the 'thee/thou' address across lines 1–8 (although the addressee really disappears after line 2) and the appearance of 'thy' in line 9. The contrastive 'But' and the metrical stress that falls very heavily on 'thy' suggests a reading that contrasts the lover as 'thee' from a different addressee ('thy') as a rhetoricised Shakespeare himself.

If this begins to seem too tenuous, then there is some support if we consider the text world structure of the poem. Rather than a straightforward text world construction, the poem begins with a swift deflection into a modalised world-switch: 'Shall I … ?' The strong default assumption of such an opening would be for the reader to presume a text world in which a speaking poet asks the question, but the instant deflection supports the idea of an interior monologue rather than an actual public utterance. (The sonnet is the equivalent of a dramatic soliloquy, in this sense.) In that switched text world, the reference even then does not remain stable for long. The metaphors, as set out above, switch the reader's attention around, with further embedded metaphors often of personification ('darling buds', and the agency of 'Rough winds do shake', 'eye of heaven, and 'his gold complexion'). Negations also create a texture of world-switching: comparison, and 'more lovely and more temperate', implies 'less lovely' as well; 'untrimmed', 'not fade', 'declines', 'nor', 'lose'. These grammatical, morphological or lexical semantic negations all – in text world theory – suggest their negative qualities even when they are raised in an overall positive context. Even naturally positive qualities (the warmth of summer) are made negative '(too hot' and 'too short'). Overall, the text world patterning seems to suggest a stable and consistent state on the surface (at the initial matrix text world level), but a subtext of deflection and alternative perception.

Of course, these observations certainly do not exhaust the possibilities that a cognitive stylistic account can bring. For example, there is a schematic analysis of the knowledge structures that different readers bring to the sonnet, conducted by Yang (2005). He explores what the reader's schema of a summer's day and the English seasons look like if that reader

is from Taiwan. Steen and Gibbs (2004) analyse the metaphors in the sonnet for their parallel effects. Steen (2014: 133) also analyses the deliberateness of the metaphorical intention, with reference to Sonnet 18. Freeman (2013) has explored the CONTAINER, SCALE, and PATH metaphors, and their interweaving in the poem. And in an earlier, different analysis, I explored the attention-resonance power of the sonnet (Stockwell, 2009: 30–5). All of these represent a variety of cognitive stylistic frameworks and approaches, but they illustrate the range of possibilities of analysis even over only fourteen lines.

New territories and directions for exploration

Cognitive poetics, or cognitive stylistics, the associated discipline of cognitive narratology, and the broader area of cognitive literary studies are fields still in their infancy, although they have come a long way in a short time. Their future development is tied to two impulses. First, there remains a great deal of work to do to apply what we already know about language and mind to literary writing and reading. As literary linguists, we have now a reasonably good account of how meaning is creatively generated by readers during an encounter with a literary text. We have made good progress in exploring the aesthetic effects, the emotions, feelings, and dispositions, which are created within readers by literature. We have the basis of an understanding of delicate matters of ambience, tone, and voice. We have even begun to engage with questions of readerly and authorial ethics from a cognitive narratological perspective. All of these developments are ongoing, and we can see that they will be further productive, because we already know about the unmined work in cognitive science that will allow this work to progress.

Secondly, there is an impulse from what we do not as yet know. Cognitive stylistics depends on the evolution of cognitive science, and as new insights and methods arise in that broad field, so they will be taken up within cognitive poetics. Furthermore, within cognitive stylistics itself, there has been, and will continue to be, theoretical refinement and innovation, some of which is particular to the literary context and some of which is generalisable back to the field of cognitive science. We have a good understanding of textual mechanics, but it could be better. We have a lot of work on readerly psychology and effects, but there is far more to learn. We have begun to talk rationally about creative authorial choice and the accidents of literary history, but we lack the means properly to do so yet. I am confident, though, that we will be able to explore areas of literary reading that we could not even have imagined, to find answers to the oldest questions about literature and artistic expression, and to discover new questions that, at this moment, we cannot even formulate.

Related topics

language, creativity, and cognition; literariness; literary stylistics and creativity; poetry and poetics

Further reading

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Amy Cook draws on cognitive science to explore textuality and performance in the theatre.

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Barbara Dancygier takes a sweeping overview of the conceptual patterns in narrative.

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> This remains the only textbook in the field and still stands as a good hands-on introduction. A new edition is forthcoming.

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> Mark Turner's book is both an exemplification and a polemic for the value of drawing on cognitive science to explore creativity.

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> Lisa Zunshine develops the notion of mind-reading that readers undertake when they encounter fictional narratives.

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