Lexis

Journal in English Lexicology

5 | 2010

Lexicology & Stylistics

Introduction

Manuel Jobert and Nathalie Vincent-Arnaud

Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/lexis/448>

DOI: 10.4000/lexis.448

ISSN: 1951-6215

Publisher

Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3

Electronic reference

Manuel Jobert and Nathalie Vincent-Arnaud, « Introduction », *Lexis* [Online], 5 | 2010, Online since 15 October 2010, connection on 24 September 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/lexis/448> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/lexis.448>

Lexis is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

Introduction

The relationship between lexicology and stylistics has always been, quite understandably, somewhat ambivalent. While lexicologists are mainly concerned with meaning and word-formation, stylisticians endeavour to reach beyond linguistic analysis to the various connotations and shades of meaning produced. Lexicologists are sometimes prone, however, to tackle stylistic issues just as stylisticians are not always averse to coming to grips with lexical matters. Despite their apparently different modes of investigation and aims, these two domains do meet on common ground.

The various lexical prospects opened up by interpretative semantics range from the study of “mots themes” to the exploration of lexical networks and isotopies in a given corpus. From a lexicological viewpoint, etymological as well as derivational and compositional parameters can indeed provide ready-to-use material for stylistic analysis. The different modes of syntactic arrangement of lexical units are also major interpretative criteria. In addition to these semantic and morphological considerations, a number of lexis-dependent acoustic phenomena are, more often than not, highly relevant. All these issues, as well as others, are discussed in the following papers.

The chief aim of this issue of *Lexis* has been to trigger dialogue between stylisticians and lexicologists by enabling them to confront their approaches in order to lay definite emphasis on words. This dialogue has taken place and has been extremely fruitful as this collection of papers will make abundantly clear.

This collection opens, quite aptly, with **Philippe Rapatel**’s meticulous analysis of a passage from D. H. Lawrence’s *England, My England* entitled “Petit voyage en tram ou quand le lexique et le style se véhiculent”. The author shows that stylistics and lexicology are intrinsically linked and his micro-analysis of the Lawrence passage alone would be sufficient to justify the title of this special issue of *Lexis*. In “Une exploitation stylistique du processus de composition nominale en anglais contemporain”, **Elise Mignot** compares the structure of compound nouns with that of compound adjectives (and their respective lengths), which enables her to shed light on the properties of nouns and adjectives at large. Although the starting point is lexical and grammatical, the stylistic dimension is always present, if only in the creation of new compounds. Conversely, the starting point of **Geneviève Lheureux**’s study of *King Lear* in “Polysémie du verbe aimer dans *Le Roi Lear*” is clearly a literary one. The author explores the several shades of meaning associated with certain keywords of the play, starting with ‘love’, and shows the importance of lexical semantics in literary interpretation. Yet another approach is offered by **Cynthia L. Hallen** and **Tracy B. Spackman** in “Biblical Citations as a Stylistic Standard in Johnson’s and Webster’s Dictionaries”. They show that both Johnson and Webster used biblical citations generously in order to offer examples of sound expressions, pointing towards stylistic perfection. The contrastive approach enables the authors to highlight the common points as well as the differences between two famous lexicographers. With **Kate James**, stylistic variation is apprehended through the differences between *aim at* and *aim to*. In “A corpus-based case study in prepositional *at/to*- infinitive alternation using the lemma AIM”, the author offers an in-depth study of the possible motivations for choosing one form rather than the other. **Catherine Paulin**, with “Entre sémantique lexicale et sémantique textuelle: une analyse lexicale et stylistique de *Before I Say Goodbye* de Ruth Picardie” studies lexical phenomena at the interface between language and discourse. Finally, **Beatrix Busse**, **Dan McIntyre**,

Nina Nørgaard and **Michael Toolan** present a thorough study of three short stories by John McGahern in which crucial notions such as negativity, speech and thought presentation and keyness are used in conjunction, to unveil the art of the Irish short story writer and novelist, arguing for a close relationship between rigorous lexicological analysis and literary interpretation via the study of stylistic and narratological features.

Manuel Jobert
Nathalie Vincent-Arnaud