

word) may be graded on the scale of wordlikeness on the basis of their mobility, to name but one instance.

The remarks on the orthographical word (pp. 53-7) are to the point. Kramsky briefly touches on the inconsistency in the representation of English compounds: *middle class* (two orthographical units), *taxi-driver* (one hyphenated orthographical unit), *bricklayer* (a single orthographical unit). Everyone of these is a single linguistic word on the basis of its inner cohesion and mobility, irrespective of the orthographical representation.

The status of Kramsky's claim that: "It is beyond dispute that the word is, above all, a unit of the lexical plan" (p. 15) is not entirely clear. However, it appears that Kramsky nowhere distinguishes between the word and the lexical item, the latter being a semantic prime. Because of this he indulges in an excursus on theoretical semantics (p. 40 ff.), which I find totally irrelevant. The truly relevant issue, viz. the word as a semantic Gestalt, is glossed over: compounds (*night light*), pseudo compounds (*cranberry*) and derivations (*marriage*) frequently have meanings that are not deducible from the meanings of their parts.

Within transformation grammar, scant attention is paid to the word. However, there are encouraging stirrings in the most recent literature that may now merit a fundamental statement of the position of the word based on a much more solid theoretical foundation than Kramsky's. As a compendium of statements on the word Kramsky's work will undoubtedly remain useful.

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G.W. Turner: *Stylistics*, Pelican, 1973. 256 pp. Paperback 50p.

'Linguistics', writes Mr Turner in the first chapter of his book, 'is the science of describing language and showing how it works; stylistics is that part of linguistics which concentrates on variation in the use of language, often, but not exclusively, with special attention to the most conscious and complex uses of language in literature'. From this

definition it might seem that stylistics is simply a modern re-formulation of what every literary analyst has been doing since I.A. Richards published his *Principles of Literary Criticism* in 1924. Stylistics does, however, offer something more to the analyst than a division of literary texts into the four types of meaning – Sense, Feeling, Tone, and Intention. The stylistician concerns himself with the syntax and vocabulary of a language in its content to a far greater degree than the exponent of Richards' *Prac. Crit. method*. As an example, there is the register of voice or dialect in which a work of literature is presented. The stylistician is particularly conscious of this register, which may fall into a range of technicality, formality, or audibility. Here Mr Turner explains the relevance of these three ranges in governing the register of a statement by first discussing the case of the man 'talking shop' i.e. using the particular language associated with his technical activities. The scientist, the lawyer, and the don employ terms that bear the stamp of their trade:

In some technicalities a protective obscurity is deliberately sought; a reference in the early nineteenth-century underworld to 'three peters cracked and frisked' was not meant to be as lucid to chance overhearers as 'three chests broken and robbed'. In some languages, men and women have different forms of speech, and there are at least traces of this in English.

(p. 169)

The formality of language is part of its social background. Notice the affected phraseology of academics, their conscious air of superiority to the common herd which is reflected in a choice of words and phrases. Living in the rarified atmosphere of the groves of academe, the lecturer chooses his language to signify his position. Mr Turner has quoted an extract from the *Guardian* of August 18th, 1713, to show how a gentleman of that time varied the register of his vocabulary to distinguish between the higher and the lower forms of life:

My lord Froth has been so educated in punctilio, that he governs himself by a ceremonial in all the ordinary occurrences of life... Accordingly he is no sooner came into the room, but casting his eye about, 'My lord such a one, says he, your most humble servant. Sir Richard your humble servant. Your servant

Mr Ironside. Mr Ducker how do you do? Ha! Frank, are you there?’

(p. 185)

Perhaps, as Mr Turner suggests, the formality of language can be designated by the word ‘tone’. But this term reflects a cadence of voice that is difficult to isolate in examining the printed word. Formality is, perhaps, the better label for it involves the choice and positioning of words, the emphasis of syntax, the special use of personal names and subjects. The student of language could, in this context of formality, pay some attention to the problem of intimacy. Just who is a poet admitting to his confidence and why?

The auditory register of language is of particular importance in explaining the significance of words written to be spoken, silently or aloud. One could take, as example, the two registers of voice in Reed’s poem ‘Naming of Parts’, or (to quote Mr Turner’s illustration) those in the lines:

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every nighte and alle
Fire and sleet and candle-lighte
And Christe receive thy soule.

Perhaps the clearest indication of the importance of auditory implications in a text occur when the dialogue of a play is transcribed into living speech. Language, as Mr Turner points out, proceeds through a cooperation of speaker and hearer in a situation:

Even when making no real statement, a hearer is not inert. He acknowledges that he hears and understands by various devices, by saying ‘Yes’, ‘No’, ‘I see’ or ‘M’m’. You can make a list of such devices by listening to the uninteresting end of a telephone conversation and you can convince yourself of their necessity by the simple experiment of withholding all such signals when someone speaks to you on the phone and measuring how soon you get back an anxious ‘Are you there?’

(pp. 194-5)

The question inevitably arises: what is the actual use of stylistics? A reading of Mr Turner’s book suggests that it aims to improve the art of communication. He gives an extract from a student’s

essay on *Sense and Sensibility* as an illustration of poor style and follows this by pointing out the way a study of stylistics could produce a more expressive statement. Here is the extract:

Marianne's strength of emotion is further shown by her non-attempt to eat anything at breakfast, a point which Mrs Jennings fails to note due to Elinors (*sic*) steady hand being able to get Mrs Jennings to devote her attention to Elinor doing it.

And here, with some omissions, is the stylistic commentary on this extract:

The sentence needs recasting. Since Marianne's emotion is already (as we see from the word *further*) the topic of discourse, it need not be mentioned again. The main new statement seems to be that Marianne does not eat breakfast and so we may begin (keeping the student's present tense) 'Marianne eats nothing at breakfast...' We now find that it is not easy to 'correct' a sentence like this, because we must make it more precise, and we have insufficient guidance. 'A point which' requires a conjunction to replace it, either *but* or *though* according to what was meant. Perhaps '...but Mrs Jennings does not notice because Elinor diverts her attention' omits nothing of value in the rest of the student's sentence. What seemed complicated was really a simple statement, capable, if necessary, of further modification.

(p. 232)

The essence of this argument and illustrative example seems to be that stylistics has a corrective rather than an exegetic function, that its use lies in improving what people write through detecting the confusion in their style. As such, it is an important addition to the study of language and Mr Turner's book is recommended reading for anyone concerned with that study.

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