The oceanic mind: a study of emotion in literary reading
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Chapter 6

Style

6.0  Introduction
This chapter will deal with style, the last of my affective inputs in literary reading. Of all the ones treated in this section, style can be considered to be the most sign-fled of all. I will begin with a short history of style and its links to emotion. I will then discuss a number a possibilities of how style can generate emotion from a sign-fled perspective. This will include short discussions on emotion in linguistics, stylistics and rhythm. It will be recalled how unexpectedly prevalent the secondary thematic notion of ‘distance’ was in the previous chapter. In order to explore this further I will also introduce a selection of what might be termed more distal aspects of sign-fled stylistic emotion. I will then conduct my own stylistic analysis followed by a reader response experiment on style and emotion. In that experiment I search for three things: (i) a general consensus that literary style can evoke and channel emotion; (ii) evidence of the distal style/grammar elements that I describe, and (iii) fragmentary evidence as to what extent and under what circumstances certain aspects of style can be viewed as initially mind-fled. This last discussion on such ‘figures of the mind’ aims to show how in the affective meaning-making confluence of literary reading, highly skeletal echoes of previous styles, structures and rhythms that have affected a reader in the past can be subconsciously channelled and brought to bear on concrete sign-fled, textual aspects of style. This is a kind of affective anticipation of what has gone before that operates prior to light stimuli from the page striking the retina of the reader. This notion of ‘style in the mind’ will then be discussed at some length against the background of some of the cognitive scientific theories discussed in the first part of this thesis.

6.1  A brief history of style
As the eighteenth-century theorist and professor of rhetoric Hugh Blair noted in his Lectures on Rhetoric, it is not easy to give a precise idea of what is meant by style (29). Even today, we think we know what it means, but when we actually try to spell it out it becomes difficult. Blair’s lectures are largely based on Aristotle’s system and it is in antiquity where style has its roots, in the domain of classical rhetoric.¹ In the ancient Greek world style was known as lexis or phrases. Later, when the Romans installed their system of the five canons of rhetoric, style, as the third of those canons, became known as elocutio. By and large, the ancient Greek rhetoricians focused more on the invention and strategic arrangement of their arguments, which were the first and second canons of rhetoric, rather on the stylisation of those arguments.² Having said this, Aristotle did write about style in his Art of Rhetoric (c.333BC) where he dealt with such concepts as clarity, purity, property, amplitude, frigidity, rhythm, syntax, wit, vividness, simile and

¹ The word style derives etymologically from stilus (L) which was an ancient writing implement.

² The Greeks called the first canon heurisis; it was concerned with the ‘discovery’ or ‘invention’ of arguments in support of a particular standpoint. The second, taxis, involved finding the most appropriate order for those arguments to be arranged in. The fourth and fifth canons, which were mainly fleshed out in the Roman world of rhetoric, were known as mnémē (memory) and hypokrisis (delivery). The Latin terms for these four canons were (1) inventio, (2) dispositio, (4) memoria, and (5) pronuntiatio.
metaphor. Other Greeks wrote on style too. One such work is Demetrius’s aptly named *On Style.* Theophrastus, Aristotle’s successor at the Lyceum, also produced influential stylistic works, which are lost to us. In addition to these theoreticians of rhetoric and style there were the practicing rhetoricians: the lawyers and politicians such as Isocrates, Lysias and Demosthenes, whose surviving works provide excellent examples of the rhetorical-style practice that was preached in the numerous schools of rhetoric in fourth century BC Athens, such as the one Isocrates himself had.

Above, I mention Theophrastus’s lost stylistic works. We know they existed because they are cited by the Roman rhetoricians. One of the first references appeared in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (c.82BC) an enchiridion once credited to Cicero but now thought certain not to have been written by him. In this rhetorical treatise in four sections, style is thoroughly discussed in Book Four under the three headings of taste, artistic composition and distinction. The section on taste deals with clarity and correct grammar, the one on artistic composition with the arrangement of words, while the distinction section sets out and discusses a whole raft of style figures (IV. xii. 269). Marcus Tullius Cicero himself made an important contribution to the study of style in his works *De Inventione* (c.87BC) and in the later *Brutus* (46BC). This reaches its pinnacle in *De Oratore* (c.55BC) written in three books, where in Book III he allows his mouthpiece, Crassus, to set out four essentials of good style pertaining to: (i) diction and composition, (ii) amplification, (iii) prose rhythm, and (iv) embellishment. Working in the Isocratean-Ciceronian rhetorical-pedagogical tradition the 1st century AD holder of the chair of rhetoric in Rome, Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (Quintilian) also made a major contribution to the study of style. His *Institutio Oratoria* (c.88AD) in twelve books contains two books that focus centrally on style. Book VIII discusses four properties of good style, namely (i) grammatical correctness, (ii) clarity, (iii) ornament, and (iv) propriety/decorum, while Book IX, expanding on these, deals with style figures. Quintilian’s seminal work was lost for about a thousand years but a complete copy was rediscovered in the library of a Swiss monastery in St. Gall in the early fifteenth century. This event helped to jump start the study of style within the framework of rhetoric among the Renaissance Humanists. A major figure in this period was Erasmus of Rotterdam. Although Erasmus did not produce a treatise on rhetoric, his work *De Copia* on the expansion of style and vocabulary for schoolboys was written in the pedagogical tradition of Quintilian. Not to be outdone, a century or so later the fellow Dutch rhetorician Vossius made a contribution to the study of style in rhetoric while working in Leiden and at the newly established *Atheneum Illustrae* in Amsterdam. At about the same time in England philosopher and essayist, Sir Francis Bacon and later the writers John Dryden and Jonathon Swift were all contributing significantly to the study of style. This tradition was continued in the Regency period by the aforementioned professor of rhetoric at Edinburgh University, Hugh Blair, whose ‘lectures on style’ I have mentioned at the outset of this section. After the late eighteenth-century the next upsurge of style did not occur until the early 1900s with the rise of stylistics, which has continued in slightly mutating forms to the present day.

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3 It is now thought that Demetrius of Phalereus, the tyrant/governor of Athens 317-307 BC, might not be the author of the work and that it may have been written much later, sometime between 100 BC and 100 AD (Corbett and Connors 494).

4 In Greek rhetoric there were three different genres and thus three different registers: deliberative (political), forensic (judicial) and epideictic (display). All these could employ differing measures of logos, pathos and ethos.

5 See King and Rix’s work on Erasmus and his ‘copia of words’ method.

6 The *Atheneum Illustrae* was later to become the University of Amsterdam.
Let us now return to the idea we started with: the notion that style is a difficult concept to define. What might the reasons for this be? Blair, who made this observation, said style is “the peculiar manner in which a man expresses his conceptions by means of language” (29). Before him Jonathan Swift had said that style is “proper words in their proper places”. And sometime after them both, the poet Matthew Arnold noted with some exasperation that “people think I can teach them style. What stuff it all is”! His advice to his students was simple yet elusive: “have something to say and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret of style”. While all these seem appropriate they do not get us any closer to knowing what style is. One of the reasons for this lies in an important debate that has been ongoing since the very beginnings of the study of style. Its crux is whether style is an integral and inseparable part of meaning or whether it is a kind of ornament or embellishment that one can add later for special effect. Most contemporary views, including mine, claim that form and meaning are inseparable. One might also be surprised to learn that traces of this can be seen in the ancient Greek world where the aforementioned word used for style, lexis, always carried the triple notion of “thought, word and speaking” (Corbett and Connors 337). Here we see how in the domain of style, cognition and language are inextricably linked. Similarly, the above mentioned rhetoricians of the ancient past did not view style as merely the icing on the cake of cognitive processing as we might think. As Corbett and Connors state:

It is difficult to determine just which school of rhetoric gave currency to the notion that style was ornament or embellishment, like the tinsel draped over the bare branches of Christmas tree, but it is certain that none of the classical rhetoricians—Isocrates, Aristotle, Demetrius, Longinus, Cicero, Quintilian—ever preached such a doctrine. All of these taught that there is an integral and reciprocal relationship between matter and form (338).

Style, it would therefore seem, is not an optional extra in linguistic communication, but part of its essence.

Another grey area concerns the notion of authorial choice or ‘motivated’ choice. This was evident already in Aristotle’s Art of Rhetoric, which states that “it is not sufficient to have a grasp of what one should say, but one must also say these things in the way that one should” (216). Style in language is thus often about the choices a writer or speaker makes in order to persuade and emote readers or hearers. These may be primarily motivated, for example in the case of the trained orator or writer, but they may be largely subconscious too: either learned and then ‘forgotten’ or not even learned at all. In effect this is the nature-nurture debate that Cicero engaged in primarily in the first two books of his aforementioned De Oratore and it has been at the heart of many discussions since: are orators born or can they be made? Indeed, this debate is alive and well today in one of the offshoot areas of rhetoric and stylistics, namely the creative-writing classroom. In all these matters it is best to conclude, as both Cicero and Quintilian did, that both nature and nurture play a role and that a blend of both, together with lots of practice on the job, is best.

Two other areas that warrant mentioning pertain to the levels of style and style figures set out in the antiquity. With regard to the first, a basic tripartite division was made early in the study of style between (i) low or plain or Attic style, (ii) middle style, and (iii) high or grand or Asiatic/Rhodian style. These styles were often equated with specific purposes: for example, the low style was used to instruct, the middle to please and the high to move. The author of the

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1 From “Letter to a Young Gentleman Lately Entered into Holy Orders” (January 9, 1720)

2 In G. W. E. Russell Collections and Recollections (1898, Ch. 13)

3 A subtler four-part division is made by Demetrius in On Style: (i) plain, (ii) grand, (iii) elegant, and (iv) forceful.
Rhetorica ad Herennium makes a similar division, adding that the grand style consists of “a smooth and ornate arrangement of words”, the middle style of “a lower class of words”, while the simple style involves “even the most current idiom of standard speech” (IV. viii. 253). Style was also categorised according to its ‘virtues’. One of the aforementioned lost works of Theophrastus, for example, highlighted purity, clarity, decorum and ornament. This basic division was so useful that it was still being employed by the Scottish rhetorician Blair in his Lectures on Rhetoric some two-thousand years later.

The second area I referred to pertains to style figures. As we saw, one third of the discussion on style in the Rhetorica ad Herennium was devoted to this phenomenon, as was part of Book VIII and the whole of Book IX of Quintilian’s Institutio Oratoria. Style figures usually divide into the categories of schemes or tropes. This division, however, is not absolute and there is often confusion as to what belongs where. Quintilian commented on this back in the 1st century AD, noting that “an endless battle has raged among grammarians and philosophers as to the genera, species, number and classification of tropes” (VIII. vi. 425). Both schemes and tropes involve some kind of deviation and transference. Schemes are concerned with deviations in structure; a transference of order, while tropes constitute deviation in semantics; a transference of meaning. Schemes can be categorised in different ways, in terms of balance, inverted word order, omission, repetition, etc. Similarly, tropes can be grouped by metaphor-type figures, puns or word-plays. Other more general groupings can be made, for instance pertaining to brevity, description, emotional appeals.10 In addition to these figures of language there are also figures of thought. Although not always clearly differentiated from those of speech, these involve a structuring in the relationship of speaker to audience or speaker to content (Habinek 105).11 In a more linguistic parlance, as Katie Wales has noted, figures of thought have a pragmatic function at the level of the text in the presentation of the argument to the audience: in this sense they have speech-act functions (153). Examples of tropes include metaphor (a kind of implied comparison between two things where properties from the one get mapped onto the other); erotema (where effective persuasion is produced by posing either a negative or positive rhetorical question), paronomasia (the punning use of words alike in sound but different in meaning), etc. Schemes include isocolon (a kind of strict parallelism where linguistic elements are alike in both structure and length); antithesis (the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas often in parallel structure), alliteration (the repetition of initial or medial consonants in two or more adjacent words), etc. Figures of thought include apostrophe (addressing an absent person or god); aporia (true or feigned doubt or deliberation about an issue), aposiopesis (stopping suddenly in midcourse, leaving a statement unfinished). With regard to this last uncommon figure, the author of the Rhetorica ad Herennium notes that the thing that is unexpressed “becomes more telling than a detailed explanation would have been” (IV. xxx. 331). It also falls under the category of ‘emphasis’ in the sense that there is “more to be suspected than has been actually asserted” (IV. liii. 401). Similarly, Quintilian says of this sense of emphasis that it “offers a meaning that is deeper than that which the words declare in themselves” (VIII. iii. 387). On aposiopesis itself Quintilian says that it displays emotion (IX. ii. 65).

Thus style is not merely ‘the dress of thought’.12 Nor is it purely ‘rational’ or formal as the importance of both pathos and ethos in rhetoric shows. Indeed Corbett and Connors argue that style “is part of the expressive system of language” (356). In the words of the Dutch rhetorician

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10 See Richard Lanham (117-129).

11 Harry Caplan also observes how the distinction between figures of thought and figures of diction is vague (275. footnote c).

12 A view expressed by Samuel Wesley in his “Epistle to a Friend Concerning Poetry” (1700).
Vossius, the aim of style is to reveal the emotions of the speaker and arouse those of the hearer.\textsuperscript{13} In order to substantiate some of these claims I will now take a brief look at the role that emotion plays in a number of language-related domains.\textsuperscript{14}

6.2 Some sign-fed aspects of emotion in style

I shall take the concept of emotion as it has emerged in my discussion on style, and go in search of evidence in three related domains: linguistics, stylistics and rhythm. Thereafter I devote a section to a small number of linguistic-stylistic elements partially drawn from the mentioned style figures, which can evoke emotion in the engaged and committed reader. In light of the reader response feedback in the previous chapter, which suggested that the notion of distance in literary reading was perhaps a primary affective theme rather than a secondary one, I will select a number of linguistic-rhetorical phenomena that can be viewed as somewhat ‘distal’. I will suggest that in certain contexts such prompts can lead to heightened or more intense emotion in a reader because of their remote nature. Particular words in particular literary contexts can channel emotions in readers. This link between words and emotion is clear and long standing, as Edmund Burke noted in \textit{A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and the Beautiful}:

\begin{quote}
Now, as words affect, not by any original power, but by representation, it might be supposed, that their influence over the passions should be but light; yet it is quite otherwise; for we find by experience that eloquence and poetry are as capable, nay indeed more capable of making deep and lively impressions than any other arts, and even of nature itself in very many cases (196).\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

6.2.1 Emotion in linguistics

Emotion has figured prominently in a number of recent linguistic theories. In systemic functional linguistics, for example, emotion, in the guise of feeling, plays a role in the mental category of Michael Halliday’s grammar of experience, together with thinking and seeing (108). It also plays a part in his discussion of the ideational metafunction of language.\textsuperscript{16} Similarly, emotion is viewed in discourse analysis as a key communicative concept. The expression of feeling and attitudes is deemed to be a significant component in both verbal and written communication, especially within a framework of subjectivity and interpersonal discourse functions. One such component is intensity markers, which can be defined as affective linguistic devices. Randolph S. Quirk et al. list these words in three groups: ‘hedges’ (e.g. rather, perhaps, etc.), ‘emphasisers’ (e.g. primarily, certainly, etc.), and ‘amplifiers’ (e.g. extremely and absolutely). Intensity markers can include verbs, adjectives and adverbs that encode the speaker’s emotions, feelings, moods and general dispositions.\textsuperscript{17} In addition to intensity markers there is the phenomenon of involvement strategies

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Rhetorices Contractae, sive Partitiorum Oratoriarum} (1621). Paraphrased from his discussion on exordia and perorations (261) from the 1627 Leiden edition and cited (in English) in Thomas Conely’s \textit{Rhetoric in the European Tradition} (160-1). For an overview and discussion of Vossius’ most significant works see C. S. M. Rademaker’s \textit{Leven en Werk van Gerardus Johannes Vossius 1577-1649}.

\textsuperscript{14} For a more in-depth overview of several of these issues see “Rhetoric and Persuasion” (Burke 2008).

\textsuperscript{15} From Sect. VIII “How Words Influence the Passions”.

\textsuperscript{16} Halliday (179). See also Wales (195).

\textsuperscript{17} For an integrated discussion see Alexandra Georgakopoulou and Dionysis Goutsos (138).
too, initially developed by Wallace Chafe in his work on discourse types. Chafe lists a number of categories that show how speakers/writers can enthrall their listeners/readers by affecting their inner states. These strategies include ‘detail and imagery’, ‘first and second person pronouns’, ‘action and agents’, ‘hedges’, ‘direct speech’ and ‘aggravated signals’. Chafe’s work on emotions has since been developed and expanded by Deborah Tannen in *Talking Voices*, which makes a distinction in involvement strategies: the first based on sound; the second on linguistic interaction with an audience. Sound involves rhythmic voice patterns based on repetition. Such repetition helps to create a shared discourse world between the speaker/writer and his/her audience. Moreover, it contributes to the emotional experience of connectedness between the discourse participants.¹⁸ Tannen’s second category, linguistics interaction with the audience, consists of four aspects: ‘imagery and detail’, ‘constructed dialogue’ (i.e. the representation of characters’ speech as direct quotation), ‘ellipsis’ and ‘tropes’. The four tropes she highlights are metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony. In addition to involvement features/strategies there is also the notion of *performance features* set out by N. Wolfson, which includes ‘expressive sounds’, ‘motions and gestures’, ‘repetition’, ‘direct speech’, ‘the historic present’ and ‘asides’, as well as L. Polanyi’s *evaluation devices*, which include ‘negation’, ‘repetition’, ‘character speech’ and ‘the mental and emotive states of characters’. Other important discourse analytic concepts are Claudia Caffi and Richard Janney’s work on *affective keys* (1994) and Douglas Biber and Edward Finnegan’s notion of *affective stance* (1988; 1989). This latter concept refers to the use of language to convey all kinds of personal feelings and judgements with regard to the particular proposition that is being expressed at that moment. Looking at syntactic and lexical markers across different registers, Biber and Finnegan placed fiction, and in particular romance fiction, in the category of ‘emphatic expression of affect’.¹⁹

Furthermore, emotion plays an increasingly important role in cognitive linguistics. At the very beginning of his influential work *Concept, Image, and Symbol*, the cognitive grammarian Ronald Langacker argues that meaning is conceptualisation. He adds that “conceptualization is interpreted quite broadly: it encompasses novel conceptions as well as fixed concepts; sensory, kinaesthetic, and emotive experience; recognition of the immediate context (social, physical, and linguistic); and so on.” (2). Here, at the very centre of cognitive grammar and linguistic-semantics, we find the realisation that meaning is equal to conceptualisation and that both rely heavily on the immediate physical and cerebral context of human emotion. Later in this introductory section Langacker reinforces this idea by discussing the basic categories in conceptual hierarchies. He mentions our understanding of time, space, colour, perception and temperature, adding that “emotive domains must also be assumed.” (4). Clearly, then, emotion is an important contributory factor to cognitive linguistics.

Emotion is becoming increasingly significant in George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s work on cognitive metaphors as well. In *Philosophy in the Flesh* they frequently mention of the role that emotion plays in cognition. The groundwork for this is arguably set out on the very first page, where they state that “thought is mostly unconscious” (3). As I have discussed in chapter two, it is unlikely that unconscious thought is grounded exclusively in explicit belief-based, cognitive appraisal systems; it must rather be based on something less tangible and, in all likelihood, more affective. Lakoff and Johnson say further that “reason is not dispassionate, but emotionally engaged” (4), adding that “the mind is not merely corporeal but also passionate, desiring and social” (565). Zoltán Kövecses is another cognitive linguist whose work has primarily focused on emotion. One of the central claims of his *Metaphor and Emotion* is that emotions are to a large extent constructed by embodied experience and by different cultural

¹⁸ See also Georgakopoulou and Goutos (135).

¹⁹ See also Wales (366).
settings rather than merely by biology. He convincingly shows how different languages represent emotions and how those emotion concepts can correspond to relatively broad patterns of thought. Referring to Len Talmy’s 1988 cognitive work on force dynamics, Kövecses highlights a single ‘master metaphor’, namely EMOTIONS ARE FORCES, which, he says, organises much of our thinking about emotion (xiv). Two such forces are what we might term internal and external pressure. Kövecses deals with the first of these chiefly in relation to ‘anger’: a force that builds up inside our container-like bodies until the pressure becomes too much and it spills out.20 The second one he chiefly discusses in relation to the concept of love, which, like natural external forces such as wind, water, floods and waves, can sweep us away (87-113). In sum, he illustrates how cultural, biological and metaphorical-linguistic aspects of emotions are all crucial parts of a single integrated system. In doing so he rejects the absolutist claims of both biological reductionism and social constructionism. A somewhat similar claim has been made in general linguistics by Anna Wierzbicka. In Emotions Across Languages and Cultures she sets out to identify the universals of human emotions in different social environments, by combining psychological and anthropological insights with linguistic ones, to help us understand how emotions are expressed and experienced in different cultures. Here, as with Kövecses, we see the importance of local culture in local emotive linguistic universals. In effect, what we have is a blend of the universal and the particular; of nature and nurture.

With regard to literary discourse, the narratologist and cultural analyst Mieke Bal has highlighted the potentially emotive nature of linguistic structures in literary fiction (44-52). In her Narratology she shows how certain linguistic units at the level of character speech, such as ‘declarative sentences’, ‘declarative verbs’, ‘verbless sentences’ (43-4), might lead to emotion in a reader. She also makes a distinction between emotion types occurring in language exchanged between a speaker and hearer (I/you), and language about others (he/she/they). Thereafter, she divides these into ‘personal’ and ‘impersonal’ language situations, specifying language forms that best fit into these categories (47-8). In the personal section of her table of emotive textual signals, she includes ‘1st and 2nd personal pronouns’, ‘(proximal) deixis’, ‘emotive words’, ‘conatives’, modal verbs and ‘adverbs that indicate uncertainty in the speaker (e.g. ‘perhaps’).’ She then sets out an impersonal column, which includes ‘3rd person forms (pronouns, etc)’, ‘all past tenses’, and ‘a more distal sense of deixis’.

6.2.2 Emotion in stylistics
In Stylistics Peter Verdonk describes the discipline as “the study of style in language, i.e. the analysis of distinctive linguistic expression and the description of its purpose and effect” (121).21 As I have shown earlier in this chapter, stylistics is the descendant of classical rhetoric, stemming from the third canon, elocutio. Moreover, it spans the divide between language studies and literary studies, and for this reason is also known as ‘literary linguistics’.22 A significant part of stylistics concerns foregrounding, that is, deviation on the one hand and repetition and parallelism on the other. These are essentially macro-level figurative schemes of structure. Foregrounding can be internal, relating to the immediate linguistic environment or it can be external, relating to all kinds of contextual and intertextual phenomena. One of the core functions of foregrounding in

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20 Lakoff and Turner (1989) also discuss the ‘body is a container’ theme in the context of “life is fluid in the body” and “death is the loss of fluid” (19-20).

21 For a concise and contemporary overview of the discipline see Burke “Stylistics”.

22 Stylistics can also be taught for language proficiency ends (see Clark and Zygier 2003) and even for more specific pedagogical purposes such as teaching methods in cognitive stylistics (Burke 2004).
literary environments is to bring about emotions in readers. These emotions do not emerge from the apprehension of new textual phenomena, i.e. we do not perceive something totally new; rather, readers apprehend something seemingly novel yet subconsciously recognisable from interactions with similar stylistic structures from comparable past reading experiences. Stylistic analysis itself seeks to bring to light such foregrounded phenomena and then describe their effects within a linguistically-grounded literary criticism. Such an analysis should seek to take into consideration all of the levels of language and discourse, which include phonology (sounds, rhythm, rhyme, etc.), graphology (typological features), morphology (the construction of words), lexis (vocabulary), syntax/grammar (sentence structure, the use of tenses, etc.) semantics (considerations of textual meaning) and pragmatics/discourse (features of external context and the communicative situation). Foregrounding, the making and breaking of textual patterns, is an affective phenomenon. Thus according to Barbara Herrnstein Smith, “every disruption in our expectations causes some kind of emotion” (14). Such unexpected twists and turns she suggests “is a major source of our excitement — that is, our pleasure in literature” (14). In this view, to which I subscribe, rhetoric and stylistics are inextricably about emotion: both the prediction and reception thereof.

The roots of stylistics-related affective criticism can be traced back to classical times. Aristotle’s earlier-mentioned theory of catharsis in On the Art of Poetry, which refers to the ‘purging’ or ‘cleansing’ of emotion from the body, was one of the first physiological, reception-based accounts of narrative emotion. The modern history of emotion in stylistic-orientated criticism, however, emerged in the 1940s and 50s. In this period, the New Critics opposed subjective approaches to literary criticism. In their theory of the ‘affective fallacy’ discussed in The Verbal Icon William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley highlighted what they saw as the inappropriateness of evaluating literature by its emotive effect on readers. The New Critics essentially espoused an objectivist view towards literary interpretation and reception, which, by its very nature, had to exclude emotion as a factor in reception. Such anti-subjective views are questioned today, owing to what is now known about the crucial role that mind-fed processing plays in reading procedures and the embodied nature of the human mind.

Certain aspects of text-based formalism, set out in work of the New Critics, were continued by Roman Jakobson in the 1960s by relying on formal linguistic criteria in identifying stylistic patterns in texts. His famous ‘speech event’, for example, included six categories, none of which concerned emotion. However, in addition to describing those six constituents of communication, he also identified six corresponding functions, one of which was ‘the emotive function’. This emotive capacity, often called ‘the expressive function’, referred to the emotive role of language that communicates the addressee’s emotions and attitudes. Thus Jakobson did not entirely deny that emotion was a relevant factor in human communication, though his account of emotive discourse is concerned solely with production. This changed in the 1970s and early 1980s, when emotion became an important factor in stylistics-oriented criticism, especially in some of the reader-response theories of the time. Not the emotion produced by writers but that experienced by readers became the object of study in stylistics, even if these ‘readers’ initially were almost always theoretically constructed ones rather than real ones. A main figure in this period was Stanley Fish, who was interested not only in the physiological aspects of emotive response, such as those that classical catharsis professes, but also in the mental or cognitive aspects of such responses in stylistics. The main tenets of Fish’s ‘affective stylistics’, as it was called, involved a rejection of the pure Jakobsonian author-based textualism in favour of reader involvement. It viewed stylistic effects as being in the reader rather than in the text. His approach therefore involved a theoretical account of interpretative processes, assumptions and expectations in the reader. However, for all the advantages of Fish’s affective stylistics, it was not primarily concerned with either real emotion or real affect in reading; rather, it focused on the role that context in general plays in literary interpretation.
For quite a while after Fish’s affective stylistics, emotion played a less prominent role in stylistic analysis. This is somewhat surprising, given that the study of emotion and affective language was gaining increasing popularity in functional linguistics and discourse analysis, two areas from which stylistics traditionally took its cues. More recently, however, emotion has once again started to take on an increasingly important role in a developing field that has become known as ‘cognitive stylistics’, which attempts to look not just at sign-fed textual phenomena in literary reading situations but at mind-fed cognitive-emotive inputs too.\(^{23}\) This move from literary to cognitive stylistics is a natural development in the ever-expanding study of context in stylistic study.\(^{24}\) Some recent affective studies in cognitive stylistics concern: ‘narrative comprehension’ with regard to character empathy and foregrounding (Emmott 1997); ‘a poetic theory of emotion’ (van Peer 1997); ‘iconicity and emotion’ (Burke 2001), ‘the feeling of reading’ (Stockwell 2002); and ‘reading for pleasure’ (Emmott 2003).\(^{25}\) Thus in stylistics, as in linguistics, emotion has played a role, especially over the past thirty years, as the reader has become acknowledged as an important aspect in the meaning-making matrix. It has also started to play a significant role with the advent of cognitive stylistics.\(^{26}\)

In the following section I will start to look more specifically at a small number of ‘distal’ sign-fed phenomena that can evoke emotion in the engaged reader. My first and most detailed discussion will be on the elusive notion of prose rhythm. I will outline the domains of rhythm in prose and in everyday language and explore the idea of embodied rhythm.

\[6.2.3\] Emotion in rhythm

Linguistically and etymologically rhythm is a fluvial phenomenon.\(^{27}\) In addition, it is an important aspect of style and a potent emotive concept: as Corbett and Connors suggest “the euphony and rhythm of sentences undoubtedly play a part in the communicative and persuasive process—especially in producing emotional effects” (363). They allude further to the distal character of rhythm: “the rhythms of our sentences … exert an influence on the emotions that is no less real for being all but unnoticeable” (290). Before embarking on this discussion of rhythm in literary discourse we should first stop and briefly consider rhythm in everyday spoken language.

At a basic level, features of pitch, speed, loudness and silence combine to produce the effect known as rhythm. Our sense of rhythm is based on the perception that there are noticeable or prominent units that occur at regular intervals of time. According to phonologist and cognitive psychologist Peter Roach, the English language is rhythmical (120). In phonology and prosody rhythm usually finds form in perceptual patterns of stressed or unstressed syllables, sometimes referred to as ‘accented’ or ‘unaccented’. The English language is commonly known as a ‘stress-timed’ language, so called because stressed syllables tend to come at equal intervals. One must not, however, think of the English language as being rhythmic in an absolute sense; rather, as Quirk et al. note, the natural rhythm of English has a regular beat, though not an absolutely

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\(^{23}\) The term ‘cognitive stylistics’ is sometimes used interchangeably with ‘cognitive poetics’. For a short discussion on this see “Cognitive Stylistics” (Burke 2006a).

\(^{24}\) See Burke 2005 and 2007 to observe how cognition can augment a stylistic analysis.

\(^{25}\) See also van Peer’s earlier 1994 work on the emotional functions of reading literature.

\(^{26}\) For a more detailed overview see “Emotion in Stylistics” (Burke 2006b).

\(^{27}\) Rhythm derives from the Greek word *rhythmós* meaning ‘to flow’.
Rhythm also helps in the comprehension process in oral production, since it allows listeners to project forward and anticipate stressed syllables. Intonation in rhythm appears to assist this as well. David Crystal lists several functions of intonation: emotional, grammatical, informational, textual, psychological and indexical (249). Several of these help in identifying, processing and even predicting rhythm. It seems reasonable to postulate that what holds for rhythm in speech should also hold for the memory of speech in silent literary reading procedures.

Rhythm and metre are obviously an integral part of poetic language and subsequent meaning-making. However, in the words of Mick Short “rhythm is not special to poetry” (125). For instance, rhythm is essential to the persuasive discourses of advertising, political speeches, and legal discourses, and many style figures, especially schemes, are constructed with this in mind. This was something that the rhetoricians knew all too well. Aristotle and Quintilian both emphasised the importance of rhythm, as did Hugh Blair. Aristotle, referring to his native ancient Greek language, thought that diction should be neither fully metrical nor completely without rhythm, while speeches should produce loftiness which will lead to a sense of elevation in an audience (Rhetoric 230-i). Arguably, much the same can be said about modern English. In his Institutio Oratoria Quintilian said that rhythm pervades the whole area of every text and that it is especially prominent at the close of a discourse. He further stressed the embodied aspects of rhythm saying that while metre was a matter of words, rhythm included body movements (IX. vi. 189 and 195). Mirroring much of the pedagogy of Quintilian, Hugh Blair devoted a whole chapter of his Lectures on Rhetoric to the ‘harmony of sentence structure’, in which he drew clear links between rhetoric and music. This was quite logical. Approximately one hundred years earlier, the Baroque composers were experimenting with musical composition based on classical rhetorical structure. Indeed, “beginning in the 17th century, analogies between rhetoric and music permeated every level of musical thought”. In his illuminating discussion on ‘rhetoric and music’ John Neubauer deals with a number of examples which show “that music helps language to persuade and to transport the listener into the desired emotional state” (31).

Rhythm is also important for prose fiction. Unlike poetry, with its patterns of regular stresses, prose is dependent on more subtle variations. This is the view of literary scholar Marjorie Boulton who suggests that what differentiates good prose from mediocre prose is that the former must have fine rhythm (49). Wales supports the idea that rhythm is crucial to prose by suggesting that prose works possess an undeniable regularity of rhythm that can be used by novelists to foreground expressive or iconic effects (348). Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short agree, claiming in Style in Fiction that written prose “has an implicit ‘unspoken’ intonation of which punctuation marks are written indicators” (215). In that same discussion they skilfully show how rhythm in graphic units can heighten tension. Rhythm is thus important to prose. Moreover, since the final lines of any artistic piece are in a highly foregrounded position, prose rhythm at the close of a novel may, as Quintilian noted above, be able to produce even stronger emotive effects in a reader.

Rhythm can affect literary readers in other cognitive ways too. In Art Objects the writer and critic Jeanette Winterson speaks of words “in rhythmic motion in and out, preoccupying, echoing, leaving a trail across the mind” (94). Winterson is not only speaking here of rhythm in her own work only, but also of that in the works of other writers. For example, she says that in Virginia Woolf’s writing “rhythm underpins her thought” (76). This echoes Coleridge’s earlier

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28 See the entry on “Rhetoric and Music” in the Grove Encyclopaedia (Sadie and Tyrell, Eds.)

29 In that same work Neubauer also discusses issues related to rhetoric and music such as ‘music and language’, ‘affect theory’ and ‘musical mimesis’.
poetic claim that there is “rhythm in all thought”. From what has been described here, it would seem that experienced writers can often ‘feel’ the music and rhythm of the text they wish to write even before they consider the words that are to fill those syllabic slots. But what about readers? Consider the following. If you regard yourself to be an avid reader, you may have experienced that you can vaguely remember the rhythms of a text before you can recall the words. This is probably most prevalent in poetry but it is possible in prose as well; perhaps especially at the end of a short story or novella. To use a musical analogy again, it is as though you had a grasp of the melody but not the lyrics. If this is recognisable to you, as it is to me, then you may ask what is happening here? I believe that what Winterson describes from the perspective of the author is not too different from the experience of the engaged, literary reader. This process must find form in some kind of subconscious automatic channelling of highly schematic lines of prose from memory prior to the actual physical interface with the text. What this may be is something I will explain later in this chapter.

In addition to there being rhythm in prose and everyday language there is embodied rhythm too in our very being. The literary critic and poet William Empson noted that the direct effect of rhythm appears to be a matter of physiology (30). Similarly, in her aforementioned discussion Boulton says that such is the unconscious nature of prose rhythm that great prose probably came to writers by some inner, unbidden, barely felt pressure (68). She goes on to relate these processes to physical sensations associated with strong emotions: “the rate of breathing, the heartbeat, the frantic, eager or apathetic movements of the body” (69). To my mind these embodied phenomena that a writer experiences cannot be too dissimilar to those that affect the engaged reader. 31 This general idea of literary rhythm and embodied affective cognition has been dealt with more recently within a stylistic framework in Richard Cureton’s observation that “rhythmic cognition is one of our most basic mental capacities” (71). It seems that we do not simply feel rhythm, nor do we merely produce it; rather, in many senses, we ‘are’ rhythm. Applied linguist Guy Cook appears to agree with this in Language Play and Learning when he points out that in addition to rhythm being important for music, dance and verse, it is also “an intrinsic part of our internal and external lives. It is with us pre-natally in the regularity of our mothers’ heartbeats, and immediately post-natally in the rhythms of sucking and rocking” (22). He adds that “in later life, it continues in the rhythms of heartbeat, breathing, sexual climax, and giving birth (all rhythms which indicate or originate life)” (22), and he concludes by saying that such intrinsic rhythms seem to have been exploited to evolutionary advantage. In light of the above it seems obvious, in the words of Short, that “rhythm is a fundamental human ability” (125). This ‘embodied’ comment concludes this part of the chapter. Below is a table in which the affective linguistic categories of several of the scholars mentioned in this section are set out for ease of comparison.

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30 From “The Eolian Harp” (1796, 1.26).

31 There is, of course, no question of an exact one-to-one relationship, as alluded to by T. S. Eliot in his theory of ‘the objective correlative’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensity Markers (Quirk et al.)</th>
<th>Involvement features (Chafe)</th>
<th>Involvement strategies (Tannen)</th>
<th>Performance Features (Wolfson)</th>
<th>Evaluation Devices (Polanyi)</th>
<th>Emotive levels of narration (Bal)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hedges</td>
<td>Hedges</td>
<td>Rhythmic voice patterns (repetition)</td>
<td>Expressive sounds</td>
<td>Mental &amp; emotive character states</td>
<td>Declarative sentences / verbs &amp; verbless sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasisers</td>
<td>1st/2nd person pronouns</td>
<td>Constructed dialogue</td>
<td>Motions and gestures</td>
<td>Character speech</td>
<td>Modal verbs &amp; 1st / 2nd pers. Pronouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amplifiers</td>
<td>Action and agents</td>
<td>Ellipsis</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Deixis (proximal),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(emotive) Verbs</td>
<td>Detail and imagery</td>
<td>Detail and imagery</td>
<td>The historic present</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
<td>Emotive words, &amp; Conatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(emotive) Adjectives</td>
<td>Direct speech</td>
<td>Tropes: e.g. metaphor, irony, metonymy, synecdoche</td>
<td>Direct speech</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
<td>Adverbs (indicating uncertainty, e.g. perhaps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(emotive) Adverbs</td>
<td>Aggravated signals</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
<td>Asides</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
<td>Distal deixis, 3rd pers. pronouns, Past tenses (distal)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10 Emotive markers in everyday and literary discourse (Quirk et al., Chafe, Tannen, Wolfson, Polanyi & Bal)

6.3 Some distal/incommunicable affective style features in literary language

It will be recalled from the previous chapter that the notion of distance proved to be an affective theme in literary reading. It is now time to test this at the level of language with a number of style phenomena. This is not an exhaustive list, as embarking on establishing one would be as fallacious as superfluous. Instead, I will just consider a number of seldom highlighted stylistic properties as means of exemplification. In particular, I will look at the distal grammatical categories of (i) mood (the subjunctive), (ii) deixis (distal, 2nd person), (iii) style figures (aposiopesis, erotema), (iv) punctuation (ellipsis marks), (v) style (plain), (vi) adverbs (perhaps, maybe), (vii) rhythm, (viii) repetition, (ix) asides (insert stories), and (x) gesture (stretching out). All of these were either listed above as prominent style markers by some of the ancient rhetoricians, in particular Aristotle, Quintilian and the writer of the Rhetorica ad Herennium. Others have been taken from lists of affective markers in the above table or have come from my previous discussion on affective themes. Below I conduct a short discussion with the aid of literary examples of what can be viewed as ‘distal affective style features in literary discourse processing’ (DASF for short). The table below shows the similarities with other theories from the above chart.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Distal affective style features in literary discourse processing</strong> (DASF)</th>
<th><strong>Some corresponding existing emotive style features</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical mood (the subjunctive, modal auxiliaries)</td>
<td>Bal (modal verbs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deixis (distal 2nd person)</td>
<td>Bal (distal deixis 3rd person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style figures (aposiopesis, erotema)</td>
<td>Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation (ellipsis marks, dashes)</td>
<td>Tannen (ellipsis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style (plain)</td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs/hypotheticals (e.g. if, maybe, perhaps)</td>
<td>Bal (adverbs indicating uncertainty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Tannen (Rhythmic voice patterns based on repetition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Polanyi, Wolfson (repetition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asides (e.g. insert stories)</td>
<td>Wolfson (asides)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesture (e.g. stretching out: manual, visual or cognitive)</td>
<td>Wolfson (motions and gestures)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these ten DASF categories I shall now exemplify some. The others I will deal with in the longer analysis that follows. The remaining distal affect style features will be included in the analysis that I conduct in the next section.

One of the distal affect style figures is mood. In its grammatical sense mood is the name given to represent the subjective attitude of the speaker towards the state of affairs described by the utterance. Distinctions of mood appear to be linguistically universal and they are variously expressed, for example, by verbal forms or by the use of special grammatical items such as modal auxiliaries.32 My focus here will be on the subjunctive, as I believe that this distal aspect of grammatical mood can trigger affect in a literary reader because it expresses a sense of desirability and remoteness, which seems to be not just a matter of grammar, but also one of cognition and emotion. Such grammatical aspects of distance, particularly when combined with the notion of desire, can form a powerful concoction. Consider the emotive force of the italicised subjunctive forms, modal verbs and hypotheticals in the following closing lines to Thomas Wolfe’s autobiographical novel *Look Homeward Angel* (1929). Note as well the direct references to two of the emotive themes I discussed in the previous chapter, distance and home, as well as a visual sense of ‘stretching out’.

And the angels on Gant’s porch were frozen in hard marble silence, and at a distance life awoke, and there was a rattle of lean wheels, a slow clanging of shod hoofs. And he heard the whistle wail along the river. Yet, as he stood for the last time by the angels of his father’s porch, it seemed as if the Square already were far and lost; or, *should* I say, he was like a man who stands upon a hill above the town he has left, yet does not say “The town is near,” but turns his eyes upon the distant soaring ranges.

Numerous tropes and figures other than the ones I have listed are also capable of prompting or channelling emotion in hearers and reader. In the text above we can observe the oxymoronic

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32 In English the basic mood, the indicative or declarative, is used to express what the speaker believes to be a fact, e.g. ‘She takes the train to work’. As this example shows, the indicative has no overtly marked verb forms. It is contrasted with the subjunctive mood of non-fact, expressing the remote, the hypothetical or the desirable, etc., e.g. ‘I wish I *were* somewhere else’; ‘He asked that they *be* removed’. The italicised distinctive verbal forms in these examples usually occur in formal varieties of British English and in North American speech. As a rule, modern English expresses the subjunctive by using the unmarked base forms of the verb, e.g. ‘I suggest she *takes* the train to work’, or by means of a modal auxiliary, e.g. ‘I suggest she *should* take the train to work’. 

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141
‘hard marble silence’, the auditory-vivid ‘rattling lean wheels’ and the alliterative ‘wailing whistle’. The fact that style figures produce emotional effects in listeners and readers is something that has been consistently shown by rhetoric throughout history and therefore needs no further elucidation here. I would, however, like to focus on what I believe to be potentially some of the more affective tropes and figures that can occur in literary reading contexts particularly because of their distal nature. One of these is the aforementioned apophasis. According to Demetrius “in certain cases conciseness, and especially apophasis, produce elevation, since some things seem to be more significant when not expressed but only hinted at.” 33 Aposiopesis, I suggest, does not only produce elevation, but it is capable of bringing into existence the most powerful of affective-contemplative emotions. In formal terms, as we saw earlier, apophasis is the sudden breaking off of a piece of discourse by failing to provide the final words of a clause or sentence. One might see it as ‘the rhetoric of silence’. 34 Thomas O. Sloane says such a figure “can simulate the impression of a person so overwhelmed by emotions that he or she is unable to continue speaking” (29). Similarly, Wales notes that “in the normal flow of literary discourse aposiopesis is rare, but marked when it appears” (27). To my mind, apophasis is a powerful affect-channelling rhetorical tool in literature, and especially when it occurs at literary closure, as it makes clear its verbal intent through its paradoxical rhetoric of silence. In formal terms this figure is often alluded to by punctuation and in particular by ellipsis marks. Work done on ellipsis marks appears to point to the affective capabilities of punctuation in literature. 35 Consider the following example from the closing lines of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s This Side of Paradise (1920) to see how apophasis can work to great affective ends at closure in literature.

But—oh, Roselind! Roselind! …

“It’s all a poor substitute at best,” he said sadly. And he could not tell why the struggle was worth while, why he had determined to use to the utmost himself and his heritage from the personalities he has passed …

He stretched out his arms to the crystalline radiant sky.

“I know myself” he cried. “But that is all.”

Surely, the elliptic dots and exclamation marks are one of the main generators of emotion here. The literary fragment also has a manual ‘stretching out’ gesture at the close of the novel, as opposed to the visual one shown earlier, just as in the Willa Cather example in the previous chapter: “the feelings of that night were so near that I could reach out and touch them with my hand” (My Antonia). Upon reflection, I recall that this appears to happen at the close of several novels. For instance, Mrs. March in Louise May Alcott’s Little Women stretches out her arms at the close of the novel “as if to gather children and grandchildren”, Josef K. in Kafka’s The Trial raises his hands and spreads out his fingers at the end of the book moments before his death, and Stein waves his hand sadly at his butterflies at the close of Joseph Conrad’s Lord Jim. To return to ellipsis marks and aposiopesis, a similar phenomenon in the form of a dash, rather than dots, can be observed at the close of Carson McCullers’s The Member of the Wedding (1946):

33 From On Style Chapter 2. 103-5.

34 Fittingly, apophasis is from the Greek aposiōpan ‘to be silent’.

35 In her work on punctuation and ellipsis (2001), Anne Henry speaks of the “subtlety” and “discretion” of the three dots (153). In this work she shows how trends and influences in dots, dashes and asterisks have changed and evolved throughout literary history.
Francis turned back to the window. It was almost five o’clock and the geranium glow had faded from the sky. The last pale colours were crushed and cold on the horizon. Dark, when it came, would probably come quickly, as it does in wintertime. I’m simply mad about—’. But the sentence was left unfinished for the hush was shattered when, with an instant shock of happiness, she heard the ringing of the bell (190).

Punctuation employed in this fashion, and especially at the close of a novel as here enacts, I believe, a kind of pathos or poignancy. Of course, this is not the only formal emotive function of ellipsis marks, but here in such thematic contexts, it seems to be appropriate.36 In this section I have started to highlight a number of linguistic/stylistic phenomena linked to the notion of distance, which, as we saw in the previous chapter, turned out to be one of the most emotive concepts that the thirty-six readers highlighted. Thus far these have been fragmentary and somewhat ad hoc analyses. In the next section I shall conduct a single analysis of a text fragment at the close of a novel, looking for a greater number of these distal affective style figures as well as a number of theme-based distal affective features that I discussed in the previous chapter.

6.4 A short analysis of the affective role of style and themes
In this analysis I will consider the potential emotive effects of designated stylistic and thematic features on myself as an engaged reader, i.e. this is my stylistic reading. Some other readers might identify either fully or in part with some of my observations, others might not at all. I wish to return to an episode in Walter Benjamin’s mentioned essay, “The Storyteller”, to which he only devoted two short paragraphs. I will elaborate on this short discussion and will highlight the affective themes and language present in it. I want to show how this piece includes key themes such as ‘distance’, ‘closure’ and ‘incommunicability’ and how they might affect other readers the way they do me. I will start to unfold my controversial claim that style may be in the mind as well as on the page.

At one stage in his essay, Benjamin ponders the effect of the final words of Gustav Flaubert’s novel Éducation Sentimentale (99-100).37 The final scene of this novel occurs in chapter seven of part three, which is just four pages long. The scene concerns two boyhood friends, Frédéric and Deslauriers, who are looking back and discussing an incident of their childhood: they picked a bunch of flowers from their garden and took it to a brothel in their home town to present to the patronne. The novel then ends with the two men contemplating that deed:

“That may have been”, said Frédéric, when they had finished, “the finest thing in our lives”. “Yes, you may be right”, said Deslauriers, “that was perhaps the finest thing in our lives”.38

Benjamin appears overwhelmed by this ending and praises its profundity, discussing the meaning of life in the context of such a sudden, yet paradoxically languid, closure. What he does not do

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36 Ellipsis can also be used to great comedic effect as indeed Laurence Sterne masterfully does in Tristram Shandy (1759-67) where he uses many elliptic and iconic graphological effects including asterisks, dashes, diagrams, blank pages, etc.

37 I am using the English language version of Benjamin’s Illuminations (with an introduction by Hannah Arendt). The Flaubert piece discussed by Benjamin is thus based on the English translation that appears there.

38 The original text is:

“C’est là ce que nous avons eu de meilleur!” dit Frédéric.
“Oui, peut-être bien? C’est là ce que nous avons eu de meilleur!” dit Deslauriers.
though is look at the language and themes for clues as to why he is so overwhelmed. That is what I will do. I believe that there is a combination of theme, language and rhythm at work here that might not only make the text appear emotive to readers once they reach the end of the novel, but combine as well to somehow appear to project beyond the text, back onto fresh reading experiences.

With regard to the thematic content of the piece, these two aging men appear to stop time for a moment and reflect on a joint incident of their childhood. This, on its own, is a powerful emotive theme that is often employed in literature to great effect.\(^{39}\) As boys they picked flowers from their garden and took them to a prostitute. If you do not know the story and just read Benjamin’s critical account, you will not be able to tell from this text fragment alone whether the boys know she is a prostitute or whether they think she is just a pretty lady: or even both. Perhaps they have fallen in love with her or perhaps they know what her profession is and have taken pity on her. Any of these alternatives could potentially produce emotive material in a work of fiction. Giving flowers is an act of human compassion by the children toward an adult who has fallen on unfortunate times in her life as a prostitute. It is, as William Wordsworth wrote, one of those “little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love”.\(^{40}\) As we saw, even if this theme of unacknowledged, spontaneous sympathy were to appear on its own, it could elicit reader emotion, since human minds would be drawn into engaging with such a humanistic, empathetic topic. In sum, childhood and the distance of the event are perhaps the two most prominent themes here. Together they can be said to combine to produce poignant nostalgic subject matter.\(^{41}\)

With regard to the rhythm and indeed tone of this text, there seems to me to be a languid, pre-industrial feeling to such a flashback, where time seems to move more slowly than it does nowadays. This appears to find form in two phenomena both of which are based on a kind of mirroring. Let me restructure the English version of the text that I, as a reader, have been exposed to.\(^{42}\)

“That may have been”, said Frédéric, when they had finished, “the finest thing in our lives”.

“Yes, you may be right”, said Deslauriers, “that was perhaps the finest thing in our lives”.

A number of things are immediately noticeable. A first is that both sentences are roughly of equal length, though Deslauriers has slightly more text. Additionally, both spoken parts are split in two by the direct speech markers. The direct speech is mainly iambic in metre.\(^{43}\) Even more noticeable is the literal, linguistic repetition. Here, broken down, we see just how prevalent the mirroring is:

\begin{align*}
\text{may (have) been} & \quad \text{vs.} \quad \text{may be} \\
\text{said Frédéric} & \quad \text{vs.} \quad \text{said Deslauriers} \\
\text{the finest thing} & \quad \text{vs.} \quad (\text{perhaps}) \text{ the finest thing} \\
\text{in our lives} & \quad \text{vs.} \quad \text{in our lives}
\end{align*}

\(^{39}\) Think, for example, of Wordsworth reflecting in the “First Book” of The Prelude on his “act of stealth and troubled pleasure” as he stole away in a rowing boat (lines 361-2).

\(^{40}\) From “Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey” (1798) ll. 34-5 (taken from the Oxford Edition).

\(^{41}\) It will be recalled how childhood and distance were designated as the two most affective themes in the NRQ.

\(^{42}\) Much of the linguistic parallelism is present as well in the original French text.

\(^{43}\) We may recall from my table that character speech was labelled a marker of affect (an ‘evaluation device’) by Polanyi.
This undulating repetition, a distal affective style category I mentioned earlier, can slow down the reading.\textsuperscript{44} When I read these lines they appear to trigger in me an intertextual echo of the close of James Joyce’s story \textit{The Dead}, in particular the chiasmic “faintly falling, falling fainting” style figure he employs to great effect there. It feels too like I have similar memories of such rhetorical structures; as though they have somehow been primed in me by my subconscious and are now on the verge of entering my working memory to meet the incoming text.\textsuperscript{45} Although this is a discursive exchange, the second part of Deslauriers’s response seems to be literary language rather than everyday usage, since a real interlocutor in a real discourse situation would be unlikely to repeat the entire final phrase “(perhaps) the finest thing in our lives” uttered in full by the first interlocutor. It is thus a rhetorical device of echo: a repetitive parallelism. I cannot say how this might affect other readers, but when I read this I experience a number of multi-sensual intertextual echoes. These include a long southern drawl, the heat of a Mississippi summer, a vague semblance of some Huckleberry Finn who is perhaps sitting on a fence or wall, legs dangling as he is exchanging platitudes with an equally opaque Tom Sawyer. These are for me distal yet strong echoes that somehow get projected into my maelstrom of ongoing affective meaning making. Moreover, if I experience emotive mind-based inputs, rather than purely text triggered ones, these will get projected too. And if they impinge on my own experience, or my sense of my own mortality or those of my loved ones, they will have a strong emotive quality. For example, if we return to the main reflection at the close of the story, we can assume that most children go through a stage when they are infatuated with an older person — more often than not, for both boys and girls, with a primary school teacher, somebody who has shown much love and care for them in the temporary absence of parents. These are just some of my own associative echoes that the text has prompted in my memory that will be added to my ongoing interpretation of the last few lines of this text.

To return to the text itself, it is written in a matter-of-fact plain style that uses no florid language. This, perhaps paradoxically, increases the emotion for me. In my discussion of plain style I have explained how its use was not to move or please but to instruct: Quintilian said it was the language of the classroom. However, this need not always be the case. Writing on the works of Horace, Corbett and Connors say that “it is possible to feel an emotion without displaying it extravagantly. In fact there will be times when the more dispassionate the emotion-provoking description is, the more intense will be the emotion aroused” (79). Benjamin’s remarks on the written style of Herodotus seem to confirm this: “his report is the driest”, yet thousands of years later his stories are still capable of arousing astonishment and thoughtfulness in a reader (90).\textsuperscript{46} Such dry reports in a literary context, rather than a narrative-historical one, often pertain to the death of a character; they can be the most emotive of all the passages in the story.

A powerfully emotive linguistic feature in this piece is the use of the demonstrative ‘that’. This distal deictic marker not only sets up the nostalgic reflection but also keeps the event away from the I-speakers.\textsuperscript{47} The event that they appear to so cherish and long to experience again

\textsuperscript{44} Both Wolfson and Polanyi also identified ‘repetition’ as an emotive marker.

\textsuperscript{45} I will expand on this shortly.

\textsuperscript{46} Think, for example of the laconic account of the plight of the earlier-mentioned Lydian King Croesus, who, when placed on the funeral pyre, calls out Solon’s name and in doing so touches Cyrus, his would-be executioner (39-41).

\textsuperscript{47} Deixis, the Greek term for ‘pointing’, as seen in the English word ‘index’, is centrally concerned with orientation. A broad distinction can be made between person deixis (‘I/you’, ‘we/they’), time deixis (‘now/then’, ‘today/tomorrow’) and place deixis (‘here/there’, ‘come/go’ ‘this/that’). It is the change from
will always be a ‘that’ and never a ‘this’. As we saw, Bal pointed to distal deixis as a potential site of linguistic emotion, albeit in the third rather than second person, as I do.\textsuperscript{48} Let me now consider a core aspect of the language of this Flaubert text. I feel that two words dominate the tone here. The ones in question are the two occurrences of the modal auxiliary ‘may’ uttered by Frédéric and Deslauriers, and the adverb ‘perhaps’ uttered by Deslauriers. ‘May’, in the sense of ‘possibility’ is often used interchangeably with ‘might’, though ‘might’ is somewhat more tentative.\textsuperscript{49} Here then we see how Deslauriers’s modal adverbial ‘perhaps’, said after echoing Frédéric’s ‘may’, is close in meaning to ‘may’. The ‘mayness’ and the ‘perhappsness’ of these statements at the end of Flaubert’s story are two of the distal categories I mentioned earlier. These were alluded to as a site of affective language use by Bal (see Figure 10).

The majority of things discussed so far have involved sign-fed stylistic phenomena. However, I have started to introduce the idea of how mind-fed style might operate, especially in my analysis of the Flaubert text. But what does mind-fed style actually mean? Consider the following remark on the act of literary reading by contemporary writer Lynne Sharon Schwartz: “these inky marks ... even give the illusion of containing emotion, while it is we who contribute the emotion. Yet it was there in advance too, in the writer” (133). So, according to Schwartz, emotion is mainly in the author and thereafter in the reader. It is not solely in words, as Edmund Burke appeared to argue in the passage I have quoted. In that same essay, entitled \textit{True Confessions of a Reader}, Schwartz goes on to suggest that, unlike painting and music, literary reading does not rely solely on transference through the inanimate medium of language, rather “intricate neural transactions take place before words find their elusive target” (133, my emphasis). What does this mean? How can the mind have a role in determining style? Later in this chapter I will seek to shed some light on this by suggesting that although writers choose the vocabulary, the syntactic structure, the punctuation, the rhetorical and stylistic devices (whether consciously or subconsciously), it is nonetheless the reader who ultimately makes the meaning in text processing. In hindsight it might be suggested that all of the above-mentioned literary devices act to \textit{channel} rather than just ‘trigger’ meaning and especially the more affective aspects of meaning. They do not, and indeed cannot, ever constitute complete meaning. As I have shown in chapters two and three, text comprehension, especially literary text comprehension, is far more than the semantic decoding of words.

Before engaging in a discussion on the idea that style may be mind-fed in literary meaning making, as well as mainly sign-fed, it is useful to look at some reader responses to style set out in my NRQ to see whether any trace of what I have been suggesting might be found in reflections other than my own. My question did not directly ask subjects if they felt that there is more to affect in style than just language, since this would have been methodologically fallacious. I wanted to have as little influence as possible on the subjects. Instead, I posed a general question about sign-fed style and emotion in language. What I hoped to find in the responses were traces of references to mind-fed aspects of style, even though I had not asked for them. Moreover, I hoped to find fleeting references to the ten distal affective style features I set out.

\textsuperscript{48} Third person deixis might be seen as ‘extra distal’, e.g. here-there-‘yonder’.

\textsuperscript{49} According to Quirk et al., when used in the sense of ‘you may be right’ like in this example it echoes the sense of ‘it is possible that you are right’, i.e. ‘perhaps/possibly you are right’.
6.5 Some reader-response evidence on style
The following question was posed in my NRQ. I predicted that a large majority of the thirty-six subjects (70-80%) would affirm the statement.

NRQ – Q. 10  
*Do you think that a well-structured literary style can alter or affect your emotions?*

**Initial responses**  
Yes = 28  
No = 8

Approximately 77% of the subjects believed that a well-structured literary style can alter or affect a reader’s emotions. Although this tallied roughly with my original prediction, I was still surprised by the large number of subjects who thought that literary style did not have emotive influence on them while reading literature. Plausibly, the result may have been affected by the fact that English was not the mother tongue of most respondents.\(^{50}\) There were twenty-three open responses:

| 1. | I am sure it can but I don’t know exactly how. It might be that if a book is written in a rather ‘loose’ style, and then suddenly you get a very structured style, say at the end, you are sort of distanced from the characters, and you become more serious and you can start to think about what you’ve just read in the novel |
| 2. | I think that it is more psychological |
| 3. | The more in touch I am with a text, the greater the chance is that the text has an emotional impact on me |
| 4. | If an author carefully chose the style of his writing it will evoke emotions even stronger in me because when the style is well structured it’s easier to ‘dive’ into the story. This is also the case at the end of novels I believe because at the end of a novel I read extra carefully and if the author then chooses his literary style carefully that will make it easier to really ‘get into the story’ and feel and see and think the way the characters do |
| 5. | Specific lexical choices and the use of metaphor can enhance the strength of certain emotions in the novel, which affects your own emotions as well |
| 6. | When the language is a bit poetic, but still realistic and well structured, that for me makes the novel blissful to read which affects my emotions. This is for me a sign that I am reading a good novel, so it also has a similar effect at the end of the novel, when it’s well-structured |
| 7. | I think that the right turn of phrase or positioning of information in a sentence can definitely affect emotions. Sometimes it might ‘hit’ you much harder if it has been put in the right place in a sentence, and this is especially true I think for the ending of novels. I am always curious as to what the ending of a novel is going to be like, not just because I want to know how the story ends but also because I want to see how the author has chosen to close his or her novel; what is going to be the last sentence, the very last word. I think an ending written in a bad style can ruin a novel, at least a little bit, and a great ending can definitely enhance any emotion you are feeling when reading the last page of a novel |
| 8. | Yes, if I really don’t like somebody’s literary style, then most likely there are too many adjectives, too many adverbs and too many descriptive relative clauses. Sometimes I don’t bother finishing a book |
| 9. | If metaphors are employed in a very good way, it adds to your emotional reactions to the contents of the story. Punctuation also has a great effect on this for it may cause you to slow down at those moments when a second longer of reflecting may cause you to become emotional about something. I think that |

\(^{50}\) Almost all respondents were non-native English speakers and very few were English majors (fewer than 10%). Some of the subtleties of a non-native style might therefore have got lost on them when either reading or just reflecting on non-native language events. We already saw something similar in response #27 on the subject of themes, namely, “I also think that reading books in a language that you didn’t grow up with makes it more difficult to get childhood memories triggered”. If themes are difficult for some non-native speakers, style may be equally challenging, if not more so.
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<td>10.</td>
<td>To turn the question around, an ill-structure style can be really annoying and distracting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>A well-structured style may keep on surprising you; sometimes you only discover the structure at the end of a novel and sometimes while reading it, then you can actually experience little mini epiphanies every time you are surprised by the book’s set up.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>When a book is written in a rotten style or is ill-structured, it irritates me and affects my emotions.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>I much prefer stylistically well-written novels. If the closing line is crap or insignificant, I’ll definitely be disappointed. If the style is good, it makes me happy, especially if I can spot the grammatical structures that I wasn’t sure about or the words that I know I have seen before but never knew the meaning of. For me, the pleasure of reading English novels lies in understanding and learning English vocabulary, not so much plot or emotions.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>I have cried about things I have read in books, like for example if my favourite character dies at the end. I also won’t be able to forget that quickly.</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>If the sentences are easier to read, I will get more ‘caught’ in the book, and then I am much more susceptible to emotions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>In a book with a ‘mysterious’ atmosphere sentences need to be long and poetic. This way I get more gloomy or romantic. If the style doesn’t correspond with the nature of the story, or if I don’t get the style, I tend to get irritated with the book and stop reading it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Style can guide emotions. If something mundane is mentioned in the text, then it can get more meaning if it is stylized.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>If something is written beautifully, with certain metaphors, etc, it can have an influence on how you experience it and also how you feel about it afterwards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Yes, it can influence my enjoyment of the book. When I like a certain sentence very much, for example, I will re-read it a few times so that I can really enjoy it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Yes, I think too that the end of the book should be the ‘climax’, not only in the story but also in the language. If this is not the case, I would be disappointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>A good novelist can alter mood and manner of reading through stylistic elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Style can affect my feelings. It affects the intensity of how I read something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>If it is especially good, my appreciation for it will be enhanced. If it is bad, then it will annoy and distract me.</td>
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Many responses lent weight to the general claim that style can influence emotion; they included responses 4, 5, 7, 9 and 15. In light of these one might be persuaded to agree with a comment in response 17: “style can guide emotions”. With regard to my distal emotive elements none were directly referred to. Of course, since the question did not ask for them, this was to be expected. Some interesting associative observations were made by the writer of response 9 who wrote that “if metaphors are employed in a very good way, it adds to your emotional reactions to the contents of the story”. He/she went on to add that “punctuation also has a great effect on this, for it may cause you to slow down at those moments when a second longer of reflecting may cause you to become emotional about something”. This seems to be close to what I said earlier about ellipsis marks. The final comment of this person was: “I think that the same thing goes for the closure of a story”. Other responses that made mention of metaphor included 5 and 18. Respondent 5 noted as well the importance of “specific lexical choices” without going into any details. Respondent 8 found too many adjectives and adverbs unbearable. Some thing else that was seen by some of the respondents, especially 16 and 20, is that style is not an ornament but an integral part of meaning. Other interesting responses included number 19, which indicated that re-reading affective well-structured sentences was needed in order to get the full enjoyment out of them. Response number 1 suggested that a sudden change in style at closure might induce emotions. This was echoed to some extent by respondent 4 and 6, who said that they read the end of a novel extra carefully. Another intriguing response was number 7, which, in addition to closure, referred to a kind of epiphanic reading event: “sometimes it might ‘hit’ you much harder
if it has been put in the right place in a sentence”. Response number 11 went further to make a literal reference to experiencing “mini epiphanies”.

All in all the responses confirmed that style is a sign-fed phenomenon. But some seemed to question the claim about the exclusive textual role of style in creating or guiding reader emotion. One interesting comment came from respondent number 2, who indicated “I think it is more psychological”. But what exactly did this respondent mean? How can style be more psychological than linguistic? In addition, respondent 3 said that the more “in touch” he/she was with a text, the greater the chance that the text had of having an emotional impact on him/her. But what does it mean to be ‘in touch’ with a text prior to being exposed to its style? Does it mean in touch somatically or emotionally, perhaps? In a somewhat similar vein, respondent 10 chose not to answer my question, but instead turned it around saying “an ill-structured style can be really annoying and distracting”. Respondent 12 did something similar.

A question we might pose at this stage is why did these subjects choose to allude to something other than the style as a text-based trigger? Does the engaged literary reader expect something else? If so, might that expectation be based on fragments of affective style that are already being processed and brought into working memory in an engaged reader? Is this why the disappointment is all the more palpable: because the expected sign-fed ‘prompts’ do not live up to the emotive expectations of the fragmentary mind-fed input? Consider as well response 16. This subject says that when sitting down to engage with a book that has a “mysterious atmosphere” the sentences need to be “long and poetic”. Only this way can he/she become more “gloomy or romantic”. The respondent adds that “if the style doesn’t correspond with the nature of the story, then this leads to irritation” and he/she will stop reading the book. Is cognition affecting linguistic form here?

Let us reflect for a moment on the above. For a small number of these readers fragmentary mind-fed aspects of style appear to be brought to bear on the style of the text and if this results in a mismatch, the reading stops. There appear further to be stylistic expectations and anticipations at literary closure. The writer of response 20, for example, says that the end of a book should be a climax, not just story-wise but also style-wise, and if this does not happen then the result will be disappointment. Respondent 23 makes a similar observation. So these readers, it seems, somehow subconsciously project fragments of highly stylised language that has affected them in previous readings onto the text in search of an emotive match. For some engaged readers in certain situations specific aspects of style appear to be in the mind and already in the meaning-making fusion of affective cognition long before eyes meet the style on the page. In light of such responses, I would like to explore further — from a more theoretical perspective — the suggestion that something “more psychological” may be going on when a reader encounters style on the literary page. Schwartz’s earlier claim that intricate neural transactions, based on style fragments of previous affective reading situations, take place before the words on the page find their target seems to be gradually more plausible.

6.6 Mind-fed aspects of style

The linguistic, surface structure of a text plays a dominant role in its processing. This is arguably even more so the case in texts that are written to delight and persuade: the fields of classical rhetoric, stylistics, creative writing and critical discourse analysis all attest to this. Hence, in literary discourse processing, style is most definitely not a question of ‘mind over matter’. This is aptly summed up in Wales’s observation that “stylistic features are basically features of language” (371). This is completely true. However, I am interested too in what Wales is alluding

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51 Both the notion of closure and that of epiphany have proved interesting thus far, and will therefore be tested later in chapter eight.
to with the modifier ‘basically’. I quoted a similar observation by Best in Part I of this thesis. According to him, decoding is ‘largely’ a bottom-up process. What aspect of meaning-making with regard to style is outside the direct domain of processing from the page or screen? I believe that the answer must have something to do with what I have been calling affective cognition. In the final part of this chapter I will explore more closely the idea that style is in the mind as well as on the page. In doing so, I will re-activate a number of views discussed in the first part of this thesis from the domain of cognitive psychology. Let us start though with linguistics.

In her discourse studies Deborah Tannen (1988) has written about “that mysterious moving force that creeps in between the words and in between the lines, sparking ideas, images and emotions that are not contained in any of the words in any one time” (xi). This is akin to Iser’s earlier-mentioned Leerstellen. Consider too the perhaps more relevant remarks of the stylistician Verdonk (2006) that “style is concerned with the mutually creative interplay between perceptible form and intangible content”. Verdonk also speaks of the “deep conceptual significance” and “assumed intrinsic value” of style (197). Perhaps, then, in light of such views, style does not merely persuade, delight, instruct and even deceive us from ‘out there’ in the world waiting to be perceived and processed. Instead, since it is reliant on emotion, and emotion is a mind-fed process, style may rely to some extent on what is brought to bear onto text or discourse. By this I mean an echo of some schematic template, a distant feeling, a lost rhythm, a reverberating line. Such ‘just recognisable’ distal echoes of styles and themes that have affected a reader in the past will, I believe, be subconsciously primed and channelled into the meaning-making current of affective cognition once a reader sits down in an emotive and committed frame of mind to read literature. Form, rhythm, metre and syntax must somehow have a neural as well as linguistic base: a kind of re-usable subconscious imprint that starts to pour down onto a text once a reader ‘discovers’ that he/she is about to engage with literature, i.e. language that is purposely written with the goal of emoting readers as well as stimulating them intellectually. But how is this possible? Where is the hard scientific evidence for such a claim? Let us recall some of the things that were discussed in Part I of my work.

Schank said that expectations are the key to understanding and in a great many instances these expectations are sitting in a particular spot in memory, awaiting the call to action (79-80). Bartlett proposed that readers’ expectations produce powerful interpretations of a text that can override the semantic content, and that those expectations will be based not just on prior experience but on emotions. Kintsch made a similar point: lexis, syntax and semantics are overridden by mind-fed input in retrieval structures, where no sign-fed prompt is even needed nor indeed does information have to be channelled into short-term memory. Let me try and make this more concrete by quoting Schank once more. When we re-read it we should think of ‘style in the mind’ as an apt example of such a mode of memory:

More often we do try to figure out what will happen in a situation we encounter ... In attempting to imagine what will happen next we must construct a model of how things will turn out. (This model can often be quite wrong of course). Sometimes during the construction of the model, we come across memories that embody exactly the same state of affairs that we are constructing; this is an instance of outcome-driven reminding (80).

We can do something similar with Barsalou’s earlier remarks on simulations. Imagine below that when he is speaking of memory he is actually referring to a style fragment. I have inserted parenthetic references to help this process: “As a memory (of a style fragment) is retrieved, it produces a simulation of the earlier (stylistic/rhetorical) event. As the (style) simulation becomes active, it may differ somewhat from the original (linguistic) perception, perhaps because of less bottom-up constraint” (605). Such perceptual simulations operate in working memory. We recall that Kintsch described short term memory as “a dynamically changing stream” awash with “changing patterns of activation” (411). Earlier Barsalou explained that the articulatory loop
simulates language just heard or “about to be spoken”. Similarly, the visual short-term buffer simulates visual experience just seen or “that which is being currently imagined”. The motor short-term buffer simulates movements just performed or “those which are about to be performed”. So not only do these working memory systems operate during perception, movement and problem-solving, they are also operational in simulating these activities off-line (604). In other words, predictions, anticipations and expectations are all real and primary in working memory prior to textual engagement. It seems probable that these kinds of style fragments are subconsciously channelled into the known buffer-zones of working memory.

It might seem excessive to relate style to neurobiology, but this is not as far-fetched as it once seemed. Recently, there have been experiment-led claims made about the neural basis of the rhetorical figure of irony: a figure that Tannen identified earlier in this chapter as an emotive involvement strategy.52 Additionally, there have been studies conducted on neural research into literary metaphor processing and the areas where that processing takes place.53 Hence, I am optimistic that there must be as yet undiscovered areas of the brain that also recognise affective style and can store, in a distributed manner, fragmentary memories of such styles that have affected individuals as literary readers. These could be repetitions, parallelisms, deviations of either a graphological or rhythmic nature. The graphological features will require extensive processing in the visual cortex during subconscious retrieval during recall, while rhythmic ones will require quite some processing in the auditory cortex. In view of the somatic inputs required in text processing, and especially in literary text processing, both will undoubtedly also activate the sensory motor-systems. For me, as an avid, and perhaps competent, reader of literature, these stylistic fragments will include the essences of a number of my favourite lines, rhythms or structures. How does this work? Before I address this head on let us look at some views on how style in the world and style in the mind operate in relation to narrative works of art.

In Cognitive Science, Literature and the Arts Patrick Colm Hogan speaks of “style motifs” in music: a riff or trill in a stretch of music that is recognisable as a hallmark of the artist or a group of artists to the avid listener (19-23). According to Hogan, these style motifs get stored in long term memory and in buffer regions. When triggered, motifs get activated with all the memories and emotions of the previous times they were experienced. Echoing the claims of the mood-congruency effect, once stored again, they are strengthened and reappear in a more elaborate and stable form. Because of their constant reactivation we subconsciously come to understand that there is a pattern at work in art. We can extend this and realise that there are themes and patterns (in all musical pieces) — “thematic phases and variations” as Hogan calls them. The cognitive work is largely done with “procedural schemas” that are employed subconsciously to channel thematic phrases or to map variations onto stored thematic phrases. Here, style motifs are stable, powerful and instantly available for recall. The question is, can this be mapped from style motifs in music to rhetorical textual ones, produced by the parallelism, repetition and deviations of style figure and style fragments? In spite of my earlier discussion on rhythm, there are huge differences between musical composition and rhetorical structure, at least at the level of production rather than reception, so it would seem unlikely. As Neubauer states when paraphrasing Brian Vickers writing on figures of music and figures of rhetoric, “all comparisons of the arts are made at the peril of overlooking their differences” (40). The link therefore seems unlikely, but it would be unwise to conclude at this stage that the cognitive processing of style motifs in music has no structural connection whatsoever with the cognitive processing of style figures in literary reading until we have completed our exploration; not least because reading and music have in common that they are relatively abstract arts, compared to the


full vision of pictorial art, and both have interconnected auditory and visual buffer zones or ‘slave systems’ in working memory.

Consider for example the comments of Barbara Herrnstein Smith, who claims that “our expectations regarding any particular poem will be at least partly determined by our previous experience with poetry” (29). To sum all this up: it seems that style moves through experience from the world of words to the world of the mind. Once stored there, in highly schematic form, it can spontaneously be deployed in future literary reading situations in waves of affective cognition that are subconsciously brought to bear on a literary text. The essence of this meaning-form-meaning claim is not new: it has, for example, been made cogently by scholars of iconicity in language and literature Olga Fischer and Max Nanny.\(^\text{54}\) So the most sign-fed of all the affective inputs that I discussed in this part can function as well sometimes like the others do: in a mind-fed manner. This may also occur when a reader engages with any text that is designed to emote (advertisements, editorials, obituaries, written versions of political or legal speeches, etc.), where a reader, or even listener, has a broad idea of what he/she can expect.

So the styles and themes we have read will shape the style and themes we are yet to read. In short, as Manguel puts it, “reading is cumulative … each new reading builds upon whatever the reader has read before” (19). This happens to me as a reader and I know that it can happen to other expert readers too as I have recently observed.\(^\text{55}\) Indeed it has been suggested that in some literary reading situations it is possible to recall events that have not been memorised at all. Mark Turner, looking at the rhythms that underlie such memory, suggests this in Reading Minds when he speaks of “remembering the unmemorized with regard to literature” (90-1). In this discussion, Turner mentions that we intuitively know what will come next in a poetic text, based on metrical, rhythmic, grammatical and conceptual symmetry. Turner is to some extent correct here, even if a significant amount of prose fiction seeks to challenge and purposely disappoint such expectations. What Turner appears to suggest is that a kind of ‘embodied intuition of symmetry’ exists with regard to literary texts that can give us direct access to appropriate parts of our cognitive unconscious, thus allowing us to ‘recall the unmemorised’.

### 6.6.1 Style in the mind: A self-reflection

Let me return to my promise and try to explain how this often works for me as an engaged, committed individual reader. Since reading is an intersubjective activity, in the sense described by Iser, analogous aspects of what I will say about my reading experiences may be recognisable to other readers; other readers may, of course, disagree completely. When reading a novel that I am emotively engaged with and cognitively committed to in a location and at a time of my own choosing, I find that if I stop for a moment near the end of the text and try to reflect on what my mind is doing I notice different projections going on. One type pertains to all kinds of similar

\(^{54}\) In their core definition of iconicity the authors state that during the perception of iconicity in language and literary texts interpretation usually moves from meaning to form (http://home.hum.uva.nl/iconicity/).

\(^{55}\) For more on this see the introductions to their edited works on iconicity: Form Mimicking Meaning (1999) and The Motivated Sign. (2001).

\(^{55}\) An eminent stylistics colleague, Mick Short, admitted recently at the start of a plenary lecture (PALA, Joensuu 2006) that he was unable to read a book of Robert Frost’s poetry without the influence and interference of the spy thriller that he had just finished. It must have been confusing for him to stop by woods on a snowy evening only to watch spies come in from the cold. This, however, should not come as a surprise to us since it is an everyday occurrence that avid readers regularly and repeatedly undergo, and it is the themes and styles of past reading events, and not just the most recent one, that I believe get projected onto current ones.
question-like structures that somehow appear to drift in and out of my working memory. This is the case even if there seems to be nothing similar on the page that might have subconsciously triggered them. As suggested, this happens most frequently when I am at the end of a book. In fact it occurred again very recently when I was reading the closing pages of Haruki Murakami’s *Kafka on the Shore* (2005). These are some of the question-like style fragments I made a note of at the time. I recall Virginia Woolf’s tripartite “What is this terror? What is this ecstasy? What is it that fills me with extraordinary excitement?” from the end of *Mrs Dalloway*. I recalled as well Thackery’s “Which of us is happy in this world?” from *Vanity Fair*, a book I last read some twenty years ago. These philosophical-rhetorical questions that get almost spontaneously projected into my working memory at literary closure are not just limited to prose. I regularly experience what might be termed ‘the essence’ of W.B. Yeats’s enigmatic “How can we know the dancer from the dance”? (‘Among School Children’) and his “Did she put on his knowledge with his power / Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?” (‘Leda and the Swan’). Phillip Larkin’s philosophical pondering are similarly often part of my affective stylistic pre-cognition, especially lines like “Where is the tree gone, that locked sky to earth? What is under my hands that I cannot feel? What loads my hands down?” (‘Going’). Wales says that such juxtaposed questions can lead to heightened emotion (328). I would not disagree.

So what is happening here and how unique is this to me? Let me start by saying that although this experience I describe relates solely to rhetorical/philosophical questions — a kind of erotema category I highlighted in my earlier sign-fed affective stylistic features — it can also pertain to other style and theme elements. For example, I am particularly susceptible to episodes of stretching out at literary closure, manually, physically, visually or cognitively.\(^{56}\) We saw several literary examples of this earlier. These, and indeed many others, are somehow important to me.\(^{57}\) To return to my example, upon reflection I realise that for some reason the suggestive power of these questions appears to always be with me, lightly activated on the background swell of my sense of self. This is especially the case when I choose a comfortable space to engage with a novel. For me, these questions, and many more not recalled here through this conscious method, feel as if they were almost always primed in me, albeit in unconscious and somatic ways, and that they somehow start up in earnest once I start to ponder the idea of reading literature. Hence, when deployed subconsciously in real reading situations such style fragments are never whole or complete or concrete — rather they are skeletal, indistinct and distal. At the same time, however, they are often predictable. What I am trying to describe here is something I have already dealt with above, in the many views on anticipation, expectation and priming. More evidence of this is to be found in Ulric Neisser’s ‘perceptual anticipation hypothesis’, which focuses on pre-visual priming mechanisms and perceptual anticipations. His basic claim is that before perceiving an object a person’s mental imagery gets primed. This ‘imagining’ of what the physical object will be like has the function of speeding up actual processing of the object once it arrives in the visual field. One can see how this would have evolutionary advantages in preparing for a flight or fight response.

Let us try to bring this closer to style and language. In linguistic terms this anticipation would be a bit like an impatient person finishing your sentences for you when he/she knows roughly what you are going to say. What is interesting is that the mental content only becomes really noticeable when there is a mismatch, a bit like my reading of the Murakami novel, where no rhetorical-philosophical questions occurred at the end of the book and therefore I noticed the questions that I had been projecting onto the text. If there is a match or near-match, then the mind-fed input goes largely undetected. In sum, what Neisser proposed for mental imagery in acts

\(^{56}\) This was also listed as a distal affective style feature (DASF).

\(^{57}\) I will explore this in the third section of this thesis.
of visual apprehension, I propose for stylistic and thematic text fragments in literary discourse processing. Some work has in fact already been done on written language, so the leap is not that great. Martha J. Farrah (1985), for example, conducted research with regard to letters of the alphabet that supports the perceptual anticipation hypotheses.58

We can now take this further. Since images and words are processed in broadly similar ways at the level of the visual cortex, as Kosslyn has argued (Image and Brain, 295), and in the sensory motor system through simulation, as was seen in my discussion on mirror neurons in chapter two, the same might be said of linguistic style. This is so since style also very much has a visual aspect to it at many linguistic levels, not just at the graphological one. I claim therefore that style is not only about motivated choice on the part of the writer, but it conscious or subconscious, but on the part of committed literary readers too, especially if they are expert readers, i.e. ones who have a sense of the principles of rhetoric, stylistics or narratology, etc., who are expecting this motivated choice to take place. It is readily acknowledged in discourse psychology that avid readers are in possession of knowledge about the structure/text schemata and even sometimes the content of stories before they start to read. This resembles what van Dijk and Kintsch have called “rhetorical superstructures”. Such knowledge allows readers to form anticipatory schemata; i.e. the textual equivalent of Hogan’s “procedural schemas”.59 Indeed, in chapter four I have already cited from van den Broek et al. In that discussion they mention this pre-processing phenomenon in the context of the literary genre of fairy tales.

Story structure in novels is often far more complex than in fairy tales, but are they really so innovative as to be unrecognisable? Moreover, readers do not only expect such events to unfold, they expect foregrounding to take place as well, which will result in their being emoted and enchanted by lexis, syntax and rhythm. This is especially the case once the reader has made a conscious decision to set aside some time and space in which he/she can sit down in a comfortable, isolated location and affectively engage with a much-longed-for book. In this pre-reading mode of expectation, highly schematic stylistic structures are unconsciously primed, as echoes of affective memories, ready to be channelled into the undertow of the oceanic literary reading mind. Of course, there will be no exact stylistic match between what is channelled down to what flows up, but that is not necessary, and the nature of human memory makes this more or less impossible anyhow; this was cogently argued by Bartlett: “style seems to be one of those factors which are extremely readily responded to but extremely rarely produced with any fidelity” (81). So what we bring cognitively to bear on a certain stylistic feature in a text is only the skeletal echo of some other stylistic feature that has delighted us as readers in our literary reading past. It will have little real resemblance to what it once was or what it is being channelled down to meet on the page. The partial and diffuse nature of such “figures of the mind” is quite natural; as Sanford and Garrod observed earlier: human language processing may often be incomplete. So just as I argued in a previous chapter that LRI are blurred and indistinct, I now say that memories of affective stylistic schemata, and indeed of themes, are indistinct too. In some literary reading situations, dependent on the affective context, style might even be as much construed by the mind as it is given by the text. Style in literature is therefore not always just a linguistic ‘trigger’ to the deep well of the mind, though this is sometimes the case, especially when a reader is surprised by the text. Additionally, style can be represented by mind-fed input first. What style does not do, however, under any circumstances, is to determine affective meaning on its own. Style can never wholly be a sign-fed phenomenon. Affective meaning does not reside in texts but is instead to be found in the embodied minds of individual readers in a socially-constructed, highly dynamic and

58 For an integrated discussion on this work see Ronald A. Finke’s Principles of Mental Imagery (50-2).

59 For similar examples see Rumelhart 1975 and Mandler & Johnson 1977. This is also acknowledged in narratology (see Propp 1968 and Prince 1973).
malleable form. In short, style is of course techné, a skill, an art, a technique, it is about words and clauses and sentences; about choice and also motivated choice, but for an engaged literary reader it is about memory too; the distant subconscious memory of half-forgotten rhythms, half-remembered lines and half-felt syntactic structures.

Writing on reader reception in the 1970s, Wolfgang Iser suggested that the structure of the text acts as a kind of “indicator to the imagination” (9). In the twenty-first century, cognitive stylisticians should also start to think about the ways imagination can be an indicator to the structure of the text as well. Hence, although sign-fed processes are dominant in affective reading it is the coming together of ‘sign and mind’, and the confluent ebbing and flowing of affective memory between them, that is perhaps of most significance. In light of this, explorations of the role of the reader in the twenty-first-century should not be focused solely on the contents on the page; they should, in addition, try to capture what a reader might subconsciously ‘bring’ to a text: cognitively, emotionally, somatically and culturally. In light of my discussion in chapter four on the limitations of methodology in this area, this will not be a simple task. Readers are of paramount importance to interpretation because they infuse embodied affective meaning into a text; they do not merely receive linguistic and stylistic data. From what is known about the embodied human mind, readers do not merely read ‘off’, but also read ‘in’. Hence, it may be advantageous to think of reception study as literary reception and anticipation study along the lines suggested by Jauss in his work on ‘horizon of expectations’. This, in time, will facilitate the real study of affect in stylistics, since anticipation, as Frijda and Mesquita argue, is a real, full emotion. In conclusion, Bakhtin’s theory of intertextuality can be expanded. What most of the cognitive and neurobiological evidence discussed in this chapter suggests is that intertextual echoes of fragmentary themes and styles, and even LRI, are being activated and channelled into the buffers-zones of short-term memory, ready for full deployment into an upcoming literary reading event long before we have commenced reading. Here, it is the fragments of expected and/or desired themes and styles that are primary, not the concrete linguistic prompting.

6.7 Conclusion
In this chapter I suggested three things: that style is important as a sign-fed, affective input; that certain distal sign-fed stylistic phenomena may be more affective than others, and that style may, at times, be a mind-fed phenomenon as well as a sign-fed one. In the next chapter, the last one in this second part, I will seek to bring together the LRI, mood, location, themes and styles of the previous chapters and ground them in a framework of affective cognition that will point forward to the oceanic workings of the affectively engaged literary reading mind.