A PLATONIC DIALECTIC: CAN LINGUISTICS ENHANCE LITERARY CRITICISM?

By

AGNES ALLISON DAVIS

Bachelor of Science
Phillips University
Enid, Oklahoma
1965

Master of Arts
University of Tulsa
Tulsa, Oklahoma
1969

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Thesis Approved:

David S. Berkeley
Thesis Adviser

Robert L. Radford

L. Wilson Gilbert

Richard S. Forsyth

Norman N. Durham
Dean of the Graduate College

PREFACE

This study is concerned with a deep structure analysis of syntax in English sentence structure based on the generative transformational theory and generative transformational grammar developed by Noam Chomsky of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The primary objective was to acquire data about various types of transformations used by prose writers of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries and to apply those data in a critical evaluation of samples of literary works from those three centuries. A further purpose was to explore through the application of those data to literary works the possible contributions of syntax to literary style.

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CHAPTER I

THE RATIONALE

The slightly contentious tone of the title of this dissertation, "A Platonic Dialectic: Can Linguistics Enhance Literary Criticism?" is not designed to provoke controversy but, instead, is intended to focus the attention of scholars on some linguistic insights which possibly have literary significance, gained from the comparatively recent development of syntactic analysis. To the reader who is oriented primarily to traditional literary pursuits rather than to recent linguistic research falls the task, then, of judging the validity of the argument that linguistics in this particular sense can enhance literary criticism.

Appropriately, such a reader may question the possibility of any connections whatever existing between linguistics with its distinctly twentieth-century scientific cast, literary criticsm with its scholastic and Aristotelian lineage, and the Platonic dialectic of the fourth century B.C. A reservation of this nature is most likely to occur to those who have concentrated their own studies in only one of the three disciplines indicated by the title and herein to be united: linguistics, literary criticism, and philosophy.

While there have been many studies in the past twenty years which emphasized the relevance of linguistics to literary criticism, most of these efforts centered on the phonological and morphological aspects of literary works. In addition, these studies almost always took poetry

rather than prose as their province. The third component of language, syntax, has only recently emerged as a valid and perhaps crucial part of language study, and, hence, an important consideration in literary criticism. Since syntax is a system which relates morphemes and meaning in the form of grammatical sentences, it is better studied in prose than in poetry. Consequently, syntactical analysis of prose is a comparatively recent development, and studies in this linguistic direction are meager. An attempt will be made in this dissertation to bring together through a syntactic analysis of prose the first two disciplines of the triad, linguistics and literary criticism, by means of the third, philosophy. Success in presenting the evidence will rest chiefly on the fluid nature of a philosophical intermediary, such as the Platonic dialectic.

For the purposes of this dissertation, two things are old: the Platonic dialectic and literary criticism. They have in common the oldest of the old, language. The twentieth century brought with it a new way of looking at language--through the lens of linguistics, the scientific study of language. When one intermixes the linguistically new with the linguistically old, he stands a chance of bringing about a linguistic evolution. To explain further, the science of linguistics certainly will not effect a wholly new discipline of literary criticism; rather, in character with evolutionary processes which are always gradual, the greatest contribution of linguistics may be to give literary criticism simply a different cast, one which is less subjective and impressionistic than its customery mien.

At this point it seems expedient, first, to give a general definition of the term dialectics; second, to render a definition in

particular of Platonic dialectics; and third, to relate Platonic dialectics to the substance of this dissertation. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language describes dialectics as "any method of argument or exposition that systematically weighs contradictory facts or ideas with a view to the resolution of their real or apparent contradictions."[1] The Columbia Encyclopedia elaborates upon the historical and philosophical dimensions of the term dialectic:

> dialectic: in philosophy, a term originally applied to the method of philosophizing by means of question and answer employed by certain ancient philosophers, notably Socrates. For Plato the term came to apply more strictly to logical method and meant the reduction of what is multiple in our experience of phenomena to the unity of systematically organized concepts of ideas.[2] [Italics mine.]

In considering the term Platonic dialectics, the reader will realize the necessity for this identification when he remembers that there are several types of "dialectics" characterized by the names of the philosophers who interpreted the term in their own ways to fit their particular philosophical systems; thus, besides Platonic dialectics, he finds such appellations as Kantian dialectics, Hegelian dialectics, and Marxian dialectics. Therefore, a further description of dialectics in the Platonic sense is necessary if this type is to shape the effort in this dissertation to demonstrate the relativity of linguistics to literary criticism.

"Plato himself made no formal division of his philosophy," according to The Columbia Encyclopedia, "but from ancient times his thought has been discussed under the headings of dialectic, physics, and ethics. He used the term dialectic to describe all logical thinking. For Plato the process of thinking is twofold: the establishment of general ideas by induction and their classification by general division."[3]

In a later portion of this dissertation there is presented a sequence of twenty-four tables classifying "by logical division" certain "general ideas" about sentence structure established "by induction."

Plato believed that dialectics had the power, unmatched by any other type of inquiry, to lead those experienced in certain studies to knowledge. In Book VII of The Republic he describes "the way in which the power of dialectic works, what its parts are, and what paths it follows."

> No one will dispute with us when we say that dialectic is a different study which attempts to apprehend methodically, with regard to each thing, what each really is. All the other crafts are concerned with the opinions of men and their passions, or with the process of generation and composition, or the care of plants and composite things. The remainder which we said grasp at reality to some extent, namely geometry and those which follow it, we see as dreaming about reality, unable to have a waking view of it so long as they make use of hypotheses and leave them undisturbed and cannot give a reasoned account of them. What begins with an unknown has its conclusion and the steps in between put together from the unknown, so how could any agreed conclusion it come to ever become knowledge? -- It cannot.
>
> Now dialectic is the only subject which travels this road, doing away with hypotheses and proceeding to the first principle where it will find certainty.[4]

Earlier in Book VI Plato linked the intelligible with reason and dialectic: "Understand also that by the other section of the intelligible I mean that which reason itself grasps by the power of dialectic. It does not consider its hypotheses as first principles, but as hypotheses in the true sense of stepping stones and starting points, in order to reach that which is beyond hypothesis, the first principle of all that exists. Having reached this and keeping hold of what follows from it, it does come down to a conclusion without making use of anything visible at all. . . ."[5]

Even more meaningful in an attempt to find some kind of unity in

linguistic and literary multiplicities is the interpretation of dialectics as Plato practiced the art, here repeated: "For Plato the term [dialectics] . . . meant the reduction of what is multiple in our experience of phenomena to the unity of systematically organized concepts or ideas."[6] What is important in Platonic dialectics to the form and content of this dissertation is the suggestion that the manifold qualities of all human experience, linguistic phenomena in this particular instance, can be structured for comprehension as concepts or theories, or, at least, hypotheses.

Most twentieth-century scientists recognize the necessity for a theoretical basis for their investigations of phenomena whatever their character. Some now are realizing also that interdisciplinary studies can contribute to the evaluation of their particular theories and concepts. In special need of such interdisciplinary insights are those aspects of human activity that involve the use of language, and to the credit of those who lead the way in literary studies, linguistics, philosophy, and psychology, interdisciplinary studies have become the norm rather than the exception. In Language and Mind , Noam Chomsky views this interdisciplinary movement in the humanities through its historical perspective and emphasizes the necessity for its continuance:

> In an age that was less self-conscious and less compartmentalized than ours, the nature of language, the respects in which language mirrors human mental processes or shapes the flow and character of thought--these were topics for study and speculation by scholars and gifted amateurs with a wide variety of interests, points of view, and intellectual backgrounds. And in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as linguistics, philosophy, and psychology have uneasily tried to go their separate ways, the classical problems of language and mind have inevitably reappeared and have served to link these diverging fields and to give direction and significance to their efforts. There have been signs in the

past decade that the rather artificial separation of disciplines may be coming to an end. It is no longer a point of honor for each to demonstrate its absolute independence of the other.[7]

ENDNOTES

[1]"Dialectic," The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, ed. William Morris (Boston: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc. and Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969), p. 364.

[2]"Dialectic," The Columbia Encyclopedia, 2nd ed., ed. William Bridgwater and Elizabeth J. Sherwood (Morningside Heights, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 536.

[3]"Plato," The Columbia Encyclopedia, 2nd ed., ed. William Bridgwater and Elizabeth J. Sherwood (Morningside Heights, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 1559.

[4]Plato, Plato: The Republic, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1973), p. 184.

[5]Plato, The Republic, p. 165.

[6]"Dialectic," The Columbia Encyclopedia, p. 536.

[7]Noam Chomsky, Language and Mind (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), p. 1.

CHAPTER II

LINGUISTICS AND THE LITERARY CRITIC

No knowledgeable person today will gainsay the fact that the science of linguistics, beginning in the nineteenth century, has reduced "what is multiple" in linguistic phenomena to "systematically organized concepts." One of the most influential of these concepts is generative transformational theory supported by its formal presentation in generative transformational grammar. This concept and grammar presents a systematized account of the function of syntax in language use, regarding it as a crucial intermediary which unites sound and meaning to produce a sentence. However, the much older discipline of literary criticism has not been able yet to develop any such systematically organized concept to provide objective and valid criteria for appraising literary works. While numerous theories of literary criticism have evolved in the last seventy-five years, such as "Marxist criticism," "psychoanalytic criticism," "linguistic and stylistic criticism," "a new organistic formalism," "myth criticism," and "a new philosophical criticism inspired by existentialism and kindred world views,"[1] none of these is systematically organized. In a later chapter of this dissertation it will be suggested that a linguistic concept systematically organized as generative transformational theory and grammar may, in part, supplement this deficiency of literary criticism.

The importance of literary criticism to belles-lettres was fully

recognized by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In fact, these centuries have been called "the age of criticism."[2] With its rise to prominence, however, literary criticism itself began to receive a great deal of criticism. The complaints were numerous and variant; the antidotes were few and generalized. This state of affairs existed without amelioration of any qualitative value well into the twentieth century when language study began to assume the rigor and objectivity accorded the scientific disciplines.

Poetry was the first genre to which critics applied some of the scientific methods and much of the data of linguistics, especially data accumulated about phonology. Roman Jakobson early in the century began work on phonology in poetry and its relationship to stress and juncture. Later in the twentieth century his interests had expanded to include grammar. In his closing statement to the interdisciplinary Conference on Style at Indiana University in the spring of 1958, he said: "The selection and hierarchic stratification of valid categories is a factor of primary importance for poetics both on the phonological and on the grammatical level."[3] Jakobson, who has written extensively on poetics and linguistics for many years, was among the first to recognize that there are underlying structures both in the phonological and grammatical systems of all languages, which are not apparent to those using the languages. Not only did he realize that what appeared on the surface only partially resembled that which lay at the deeper and really meaningful level, but he also saw that the elements of these systems could be classified and that the systems themselves were organized according to the level of importance of each classification as it functioned within the total system.

Another of Jakobson's contributions to linguistic understanding, especially helpful to the non-professional, is his definition of poetics that seems to include prose as well as poetry, and his clarification of the relationship between linguistics and poetics.

> Poetics deals primarily with the question, What makes a verbal message a work of art? Because the main subject of poetics is the differentia specifica of verbal art in relation to other arts and in relation to other kinds of verbal behavior, poetics is entitled to the leading place in literary studies.
>
> Poetics deals with problems of verbal structure, just as the analysis of painting is concerned with pictorial structure. Since linguistics is the global science of verbal structure, poetics may be regarded as an integral part of linguistics.[4]

I. A. Richards in "Poetic Process and Literary Analysis" asks, "What sorts of evidence are really available for the presence or absence of X (whatever it may be) in the poem?" He considers this to be "the central question, as important as it is difficult to answer," in literary criticism. He hopes that others will agree with him "that the best, if not the only, sorts of evidence are fundamentally linguistic--have to do with relations of words and phrases to one another--and furthermore . . . that evidence from a poet's alleged biography or psychology is seldom competent in any honest court."[5]

In "Linguistics and the Study of Poetic Language," Edward Stankiewicz makes an even stronger statement than Richards about the relevancy of linguistics to poetry when he says that "the linguist . . . of all the specialists, is best qualified to . . . reveal the essence of poetic language." He believes "that the study of verbal art is intimately connected with, and must be based on, the study of language--the linguist's discipline." In his essay he attempts to demonstrate that "poetic language takes full cognizance of the rules of the linguistic

system." Most important of all to the argument put forth in this dissertation, he thinks that "the linguist who has managed to bring objectivity and precision of statement into his own field of inquiry may provide the literary scholar with theoretical insights and a rigorous methodology."[6]

Since linguists worldwide have collected and are collecting volumes of data about language, it seems logical to assume that some of these data can be turned to good account in finding solutions for a few of the more vexing problems of literary criticism: one of them is the extreme subjectivity of the critics' evaluations of literary works. Linguistic data are factual. If impressionism and intuition, so long the mainstays of literary criticism, can be bolstered by linguistic facts of various kinds, one of the most common complaints against literary critics may be softened. This type of linguistic endeavor, called applied linguistics, requires a different approach to language study than that used by the collector of linguistic data per se or by the theoretician.

The most rewarding linguistic research for literary criticism occurs when individuals with interdisciplinary interests selectively choose from available linguistic data certain concepts and/or facts to use in specific instances of literary analyses. In applied linguistics the researcher begins with the theoretical but moves toward the pragmatic, the latter being considered that for which the former was created. The processes in applied linguistics are those of extrapolation, application, and interpretation. In Chapter III of this dissertation, the reader will find "extrapolations" of pertinent parts of Noam Chomsky's generative transformational theory. In Chapter VI he will find "applications" of the relevant portion of his generative

transformational grammar and in Chapter VII "interpretations" of the data extrapolated.

At the present time any attempt to integrate linguistics and literary criticism will be necessarily heuristic. Nevertheless, the incentive is strong to explore the limits to which linguistic expertise can be used effectively. An additional motivation is the expressed desire for more knowledge about man's use of language from prominent literary critics who are considered to be traditionalists. For instance, T. S. Eliot, one of the foremost literary men of the twentieth century, believed in the importance of factual data for literary criticism, something that linguistics can supply. In an essay, "The Function of Criticism," he says that "any book, any essay, any note in Notes and Queries, which produces a fact even of the lowest order about a work of art is a better piece of work than nine-tenths of the most pretentious critical journalism, in journals or in books."[7]

The fact that there is dissatisfaction among the critics with the condition of literary criticism is evident in reviewing a few of their writings about their profession. René Wellek suggests one improvement, a sound theoretical foundation. In "The Main Trends of Twentieth-Century Criticism" he writes: "I do not think that either myth criticism or existentialism offers a solution to the problems of literary theory." Going on to speak of poetry and art, he points out the aesthetic direction he thinks literary criticism should take and, more relevant to the dialectics of this dissertation, acknowledges a new factor that must be included in any theory of literary criticism propounded today, the science of linguistics.

> It still seems to me that formalistic, organistic, symbolistic aesthetics, rooted as it is in the great tradition of German aesthetics from Kant to Hegel, restated and justified in French symbolism . . . has a firmer grasp on the nature of poetry and art [than myth criticism or existentialism]. Today it would need a closer collaboration with linguistics and stylistics, a clear analysis of the stratification of the work of poetry, to become a coherent literary theory capable of further development and refinement, but it would hardly need a radical revision.[8]

However, the theoretical problems of literary criticism may not be as straightforward and simple of solution as Wellek suggests. F. E. Sparshott, another literary critic who may have considered the matter more penetratingly than Wellek, questions whether there can be "a general theory of criticism, or even of literary criticism." He argues that "the function of theory is to explain, and to explain is necessarily to explain something <u>about</u> something. Without some prima-facie problem that calls for an explanation, explanation cannot begin. Consequently, a theory's scope cannot be determined by its subject matter [e.g., literary criticism] . . .; it must be determined by its purpose, by its logographical setting in which the phenomena are placed--by the discipline to which the theory belongs, by the problems to which it offers a solution; and, to the extent that theory is the correlate of practice, by the undertaking to which it is complementary."[9]

Perhaps Sparshott has analyzed forthrightly the nature of the problem in literary criticism, the falsity of its premise. Sparshott denies that there can be "a coherent literary theory capable of further development and refinement" in literary criticism, as Wellek hopes, because a theory must be addressed to some "prima-facie problem that calls for an explanation"; further, a theory, according to Sparshott, is circumscribed by an evident purpose, specific phenomena, and a

restrictive methodology. The literary critic will find these circumscriptions are basic to generative transformational theory and its formalization in generative transformational grammar. Moreover, it is probable that he will also find this linguistic approach peculiarly suited to the explanation of "prima-facie problems" which, in toto, actually compose the discipline of literary criticism.

To summarize, the sketch Sparshott has drawn of a productive theory is epitomized in linguistics. Furthermore, the linguistic theory can be particularized to fit the needs of literary criticism. In two aspects, at least, Eliot has developed the sketch in this direction. First, he established a fundamental characteristic for the individual critic: ". . . The most important qualification which I have been able to find, which accounts for the peculiar importance of the criticism of practitioners [critics who practiced . . . the art of which they wrote], is that a critic must have a very highly developed sense of fact. . . . The sense of fact is something very slow to develop, and its complete development means perhaps the very pinnacle of civilisation. For there are so many spheres of fact to be mastered. . . . At every level of criticism I find the same necessity regnant."[10] Although Eliot has been called "the last major literary critic almost wholly innocent of a training or interest in modern linguistics,"[11] his criterion for a literary critic is analogous to the basic requirement of linguistic science--the mastering of "many spheres of fact."

Secondly, he describes the "tools" which he believes the critic must use in evaluating a literary work:

> Comparison and analysis, I have said before, and Remy de Gourmont has said before me . . . are the chief tools of the critic. It is obvious indeed that they are tools,

> to be handled with care, and not employed in an inquiry into the number of times giraffes are mentioned in the English novel. . . . You must know what to compare and what to analyse.[12]

Although the literary critic must use such "tools" to gather the all-important facts, neither comparison and analysis nor the facts discovered should be his ultimate aim. According to Eliot, the interpretation of the facts accumulated by judicious comparison and analysis is the true province of the literary critic: "Comparison and analysis need only the cadavers on the table; but interpretation is always producing parts of the body from its pockets, and fixing them in place."[13]

In sum, then, the writer of this dissertation intends to base a piece of literary criticism on a linguistic theory of syntactic analysis rather than on one of the aforementioned "theories" of literary criticism in the belief that "a 'theory of' something, if it is to be a theory at all, can only be a theory about certain of its characteristic features which for the temporary purposes of the investigators are the ones that matter."[14] The "characteristic features" under investigation pertain to the types of transformations used by six representative essayists to produce in their sentences what is called "their styles" of writing. The essayists are all English and are chosen from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. By comparison and analysis, facts about their syntactic choices will be uncovered and tabulated. From these data the writer hopes to present at least a partial explanation of a "prima-facie problem" in literary criticism: what is style? A summary of the linguistic theory and the means by which it is implemented follows in the next chapter.

ENDNOTES

[1]René Wellek, "The Main Trends of Twentieth-Century Criticism," in Concepts of Criticism, ed. Stephen G. Nichols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), pp. 345-46.

[2]Wellek, p. 344.

[3]Roman Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," in Style in Language, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1960), p. 374.

[4]Jakobson, p. 350.

[5]I. A. Richards, "Poetic Process and Literary Analysis," in Style in Language, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1960), pp. 16-17.

[6]Edward Stankiewicz, "Linguistics and the Study of Poetic Language," in Style in Language, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969), pp. 69-70.

[7]T. S. Eliot, "The Function of Criticism," in Selected Essays, 3rd. enl. ed. (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1951), p. 33.

[8]Wellek, pp. 363-64.

[9]F. E. Sparshott, The Concept of Criticism: An Essay (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 2.

[10]Eliot, pp. 31-32.

[11]George Steiner, "Linguistics and Poetics," in Extra-Territorial: Papers on Literature and the Language Revolution (New York: Atheneum, 1971), p. 144.

[12]Eliot, p. 32.

[13]Eliot, p. 33.

[14]Sparshott, pp. 2-3.

CHAPTER III

THE LINGUISTIC THEORY AND ITS FORMALIZATION

The theory of a generative grammar evolved from "the idea that a language is based on a system of rules determining the interpretation of its infinitely many sentences."[1] This system, generative transformational grammar, recognizes the trait of language as species-specific (peculiar to Homo sapiens), posits an innate competence (a predisposition for language) in human beings which allows language acquisition at a very early age, and attempts a formal description of the intuitive use of language by native speakers of any language.

By "species-specific" Noam Chomsky, originator of generative transformational theory and grammar, merely means that even the most stupid and idiotic of men can structure words into sentences while other animals cannot. By "innate competence" he means that "a person who has learned a language has acquired a system of rules that relate sound and meaning in a certain specific way. He has . . . acquired a certain competence that he puts to use in producing speech."[2] It is the "system of rules" which the native speaker has internalized that Chomsky seeks to describe in his generative transformational grammar--his formal description of the intuitive use of language by all normal human beings.

Chomsky divides this system of rules among three components which together comprise his generative grammar. They are a syntactic component which "specifies an infinite set of abstract formal objects,

each of which incorporates all information relevant to a single interpretation of a particular sentence . . ."; a phonological component which "determines the phonetic form of a sentence generated by the syntactic rules"; and a semantic component which "determines the semantic interpretation of a sentence." According to Chomsky, "Both the phonological and semantic components are . . . purely interpretive."

> Each utilizes information provided by the syntactic component concerning formatives [lexical items such as sincerity, boy and grammatical items such as perfect, possessive, etc.], their inherent properties, and their interrelations in a given sentence. Consequently, the syntactic component of a grammar must specify, for each sentence, a deep structure that determines its semantic interpretation and a surface structure that determines its phonetic interpretation.[3]

What makes generative transformational grammar promising for literary criticism is the concept of deep and surface structures for every sentence. The possibilities for contributions to literary criticism through syntactic analysis are evident in Chomsky's further explanation:

> It might be supposed that surface structure and deep structure will always be identical. . . . The central idea of transformational grammar is that they are, in general, distinct and that the surface structure is determined by repeated application of certain formal operations called "grammatical transformations" to objects of a more elementary sort. If this is true (as I assume, henceforth), then the syntactic component must generate deep and surface structures for each sentence, and must interrelate them.[4]

A revolution in the study of language occurred when Chomsky shifted the emphasis from the form and meaning of words to syntax, the relationships between the words. Until the publication of Chomsky's Syntactic Structures in 1957, there was little formal investigation of this now recognizably crucial syntactic component of language, although several philosophers and philologists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

had expressed an interest in the function of syntax in the use of language. One of these who had a delayed but decisive effect on modern linguistic study was Wilhelm von Humboldt, a statesman and philologist of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In Cartesian Linguistics Chomsky acknowledges the influence of the ideas of von Humboldt upon his own generative theory of language: "In developing the notion of 'form of language' as a generative principle, fixed and unchanging, determining the scope and providing the means for the unbounded set of individual 'creative' acts that constitute normal language use, Humboldt makes an original and significant contribution to linguistic theory--a contribution that unfortunately remained unrecognized and unexploited until fairly recently." As Chomsky describes von Humboldt's view of "syntax," one can see his further indebtedness to von Humboldt's ideas: "For Humboldt, a language is not to be regarded as a mass of isolated phenomena--words, sounds, individual speech production, etc.--but rather as an 'organism' in which all parts are interconnected and the role of each element is determined by its relation to the generative processes that constitute the underlying form."[5]

Even before Chomsky's resurrection of von Humboldt's concept of "syntax," two other linguists, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, seem to have developed their linguistic relativity hypothesis from the same source. Joseph Greenberg definitely links this hypothesis in American linguistics to "a European tradition, particularly strong in the German-speaking world, which can be traced back at least as far as [Johann Gottfried von] Herder in the latter part of the eighteenth century, but which first assumed central importance in the writing of

von Humboldt."[6] Sapir stated in his essay "Language," published in 1933, that "language is heuristic . . . in the . . . far-reaching sense that its forms predetermine for us certain modes of observation and interpretation. . . . The point is that no matter how sophisticated our modes of interpretation become, we never really get beyond the projection and continuous transfer of relations suggested by the forms of our speech."[7]

Whorf, who successfully combined careers in linguistics and chemical engineering, joined forces with Sapir to study the relationship between thought and the structures of languages. From his intense and prolonged investigation of languages and cultures, especially those of the American Indian, Whorf came to the following conclusion about the relationship he felt must exist between a language and the culture that produced it: "We are thus introduced to a new principle of relativity, which holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated."[8]

The Whorfian hypothesis, as it is known in linguistics, has been presented more clearly and with its ramifications by Peter Woolfson: "In essence, the hypothesis suggests that a given language, especially in its grammar, provides its speakers with habitual grooves of expression which predispose these speakers to see the world in ready-made patterns. Since grammars vary from language to language, it is likely that the habitual patterns of thought vary from language to language. If so, the world view of a speaker of a particular language will be different from the world view of a speaker of a different language."[9]

While those first attempts to explain syntax were important and

necessary steps to a better understanding of its functions as a component of language along with phonology and morphology, any penetrating study of syntax had to wait until a theoretical basis could be conceived.

Robert D. King, an authority on historical linguistics, takes note of this fact and deplores the neglect of research on syntax in contemporary linguistics. He believes it is because there has been no "adequate theoretical basis for describing syntax." When research is conducted in the absence of a theory, the results are merely "the collection and crude organization of data." However, King observes that the hiatus has been recently bridged: "A major deterrent to the progress of diachronic syntax has been removed with the development of more adequate theories of syntax, particularly transformational theory, which permits us to write grammars that go well beyond the level of observational adequacy."[10] Although King does not mention Chomsky, he undoubtedly had him in mind as the originator of generative transformational theory and the writer of a transformational grammar that is yet to be superseded.

Roman Jakobson is more direct in pointing out Chomsky's contributions to linguistics. He commended both Chomsky's philosophical stance and his technical achievements when he was asked in an interview to give his opinion:

> Philosophically, I think his most important contribution is his answer to the behaviorist, physicalist, mechanist approach to language, and this is of value to linguistics. Technically, his most important contribution has been his work on syntax. Before Chomsky, linguists did not sufficiently take into account the way in which we select one syntactic structure over another. . . . Chomsky revived and developed the notion of hierarchy in syntax and reopened the problem of creative language use.[11]

The creativity of language, in the Chomskian sense of the human ability to create myriad novel sentences, should be the bedrock of literary criticism because it has its primary source in the intuitive ability of every human being to make changes (transformations) in a finite number of deep structures (kernel sentences) to produce (generate) an infinite number of surface structures (novel sentences that all people use in speech and writing). According to Morris Halle, Chomsky's colleague, "the man on the street" uses these intricate linguistic processes without being aware of their existence. The problem is, "How does he manage to speak so fluently while he understands so poorly? Chomsky's answer is that his ability depends on an innate structure."[12]

Chomsky's generative transformational grammar or system of rules has been reviewed first in the belief that the subject of sentences is the more concrete of the two subjects to be discussed in this chapter on linguistic theory and its formalization. Halle has brought attention back to generative transformational theory with his use of the theoretical term, "innate structure."

The reader may find it easier to understand why generative transformational grammar shows promise for literary criticism if he understands the theory of which the grammar is the exponent. Generative transformational theory rests on the philosophical concept of an innate structure present in the mind at birth which predisposes a child to acquire a language in an amazingly short time merely by being exposed to it. Through investigation of the way a child acquires language, Chomsky and others believe it will be possible eventually to relate syntactical processes to the structure of the mind. What has been lacking in literary criticism from its beginnings as well as in

linguistics since its inception is a theory of language acquisition and usage which is rich enough to support a universal explanation of the creative aspect of language, i.e., the ability of all human beings to use sentences they have never heard before and to understand such sentences when they hear them spoken by others.

According to Chomsky, one of two requirements of such a theory is "descriptive adequacy." In Chomsky's terms, "a linguistic theory is descriptively adequate if it makes a descriptively adequate grammar available for each natural language," that is, "if it correctly describes the intrinsic competence of the idealized native speaker." In addition, a theory of language must also have "explanatory adequacy [which] is essentially the problem of constructing a theory of language acquisition, an account of the specific innate abilities that make this achievement possible."[13]

Chomsky unites two disciplines, philosophy and linguistics, in order to meet these two requirements. Philosophically, he adopts a position that he maintains is paramount to an adequate theory of language acquisition. Speaking at the Innate Symposium of the American Philosophical Association and the Boston Colloquium for the Philosophy of Science held in Boston in 1966, he said: "What I would like to suggest is that contemporary research supports a theory of psychological a priori principles that bears a striking resemblance to the doctrine of innate ideas."[14]

A few years later in an interview published in a popular periodical, he explicitly related the form of language to the form of the mind: "One is not merely interested in the data of English," he explained, "but in what it tells us about the structure of the mind. The mind is

arranged in terms of principles . . . basic rules which determine systems of grammatical relations and the way to organize . . . deep structures into surface structures."[15]

The relationship between thought and the expression of thought has been argued intermittently and with varying degrees of ardor in philosophy for centuries and in psychology for half a century. Chomsky's pronouncement of an inextricable union between thought processes and the grammatical systems of language has revived the old controversy as the subject of heated debate not only in philosophy and psychology but also in the comparatively new discipline of linguistics. Whatever may be the physiological basis, if any is ever proved, for Chomsky's claim of innate structures in the mind, his concept would seem to be immensely attractive to those linguists and literary critics who are interested in the problem of literary style. It may appear jejune in a dissertation based on twentieth-century linguistics to recall Buffon's hackneyed aphorism, "Le style, c'est l'homme meme" (Discours sur le style, 1753). However, Chomsky's line of thought brings one back full circle to "The style is the man" in the sense of Buffon's probable meaning: what he thinks about "is external to the man, and would exist whether he existed or not . . . ; the style is so much of the man as exists in the ordering of his thoughts."[16]

One can find more recent agreement with Chomsky's thesis than that attributed above to an eighteenth-century academician and naturalist. George Steiner, a rare combination of writer, literary critic, and linguist estimates the importance of Chomsky's so-called revolution in language study: "Today, any thinking about the nature of language and the relations of language to mind will have to take up either the whole

of transformational generative linguistics or, at least, those sections of the model nearest its own concerns." He also considers Chomsky's works to be "of great elegance and intellectual fascination. . . . They are already, and decidedly, a classic part of the history of linguistic investigation."[17]

In view of these accolades from a knowledgeable contemporary of Chomsky, the literary critic interested in an answer to the question, "What is style?" would do well to investigate the problem through application of information gained from recent linguistic research. A brief review of some of the more commonly held opinions about literary style presented at the beginning of Chapter IV may reveal by contrast some of the advantages of a linguistic analysis, even though it be confined to the language component Chomsky labels syntax.

ENDNOTES

[1]Noam Chomsky, Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1965), p. v.

[2]Noam Chomsky, "Remarks on Nominalization," in Readings in English Transformational Grammar, ed. Roderick A. Jacobs and Peter Rosenbaum (Waltham, Mass.: Ginn and Co., 1970), p. 184.

[3]Chomsky, Aspects of the Theory of Syntax, p. 16.

[4]Chomsky, Aspects of the Theory of Syntax, pp. 16-17.

[5]Noam Chomsky, Cartesian Linguistics: A Chapter in the History of Rationalist Thought (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 22, 26.

[6]Joseph Greenberg, "Concerning Inferences from Linguistic to Non-Linguistic Data," in Language in Culture, ed. Harry Hoijer (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1954), p. 3.

[7]Edward Sapir, "Language," in Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality, ed. David G. Mandelbaum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), pp. 10-11.

[8]Stuart Chase, "Foreword," in Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf, ed. John B. Carroll (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1956), p. v.

[9]Peter Woolfson, "Language Thought, and Culture," in Language: Introductory Readings, ed. Virginia P. Clark et al. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1972), p. 3.

[10]Robert D. King, Historical Linguistics and Generative Grammar (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 141.

[11]Ved Mehta, "Onward and Upward with the Arts: 'John is easy to please.'" The New Yorker, 8 May 1971, p. 79.

[12]Israel Shenker, "Men of Ideas: 'Chomsky is difficult to please.' 'Chomsky is easy to please.' 'Chomsky is certain to please.'" Horizon, 13, No. 2 (Spring 1971), 109.

[13]Chomsky, Aspects of the Theory of Syntax, pp. 24, 27.

[14]Noam Chomsky, "Recent Contributions to the Theory of Innate Ideas," in Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, ed. Robert S. Cohen and M. Wartofsky (Dordrecht-Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1968), III, 81.

[15]Shenker, p. 107.

[16]Lane Cooper, Theories of Style (New York, 1907), p. 179; as quoted in Louis T. Milic, "Rhetorical Choice and Stylistic Option: The Conscious and Unconscious Poles," in Literary Style: A Symposium, ed. Seymour Chatman (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 78.

[17]George Steiner, "Foreword," in Extra-Territorial: Papers on Literature and the Language Revolution (New York: Atheneum, 1971), p. ix.

CHAPTER IV

APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM OF LITERARY STYLE

Theoretically, Noam Chomsky has proposed a psychological concept, the similarity between the structures of the mind and grammatical structures, that eventually may help to illuminate one of the major controversies in literary criticism: is it possible to find objective criteria by which all writers' styles can be evaluated? Criteria, of course, cannot be discovered or developed unless they are preceded by a theory, Chomsky's or some other. And as Richard Ohmann tactfully remarks, the subject of style "has been remarkably unencumbered by theoretical insights."[1] The result has been a jumble of idiosyncratic explanations of the notion of style.

For example, is style "a shell surrounding a pre-existing core of thought or expression"? Stendhal appears to have thought of style in this way: "Style consists in adding to a given thought all the circumstances calculated to produce the whole effect that the thought ought to produce." Or is style "the choice between alternative expressions," as Charles W. Hockett thinks? "Roughly speaking, two utterances in the same language which convey approximately the same information, but which are different in their linguistic structure, can be said to differ in style." Perhaps style is best thought of "as a set of individual characteristics." Rémy de Gourmont's definition supports this interpretation: "Having a style means that in the midst of the language

shared with others one speaks a particular, unique and inimitable dialect, which is at the same time everybody's language and the language of a single individual." Closely related to Gourmont's definition is the view that style is composed of "deviations from a norm." According to Bernard Block, "The style of a discourse is the message carried by the frequency distributions and transitional probabilities of its linguistic features, especially as they differ from those of the same features in the language as a whole."[2]

It may be that George Steiner has analyzed more closely the problem of style than the other critics quoted in differentiating between literature and language rather than in attempting an individualistic definition which views style as inherent in language. He says, "All literature--oral or written, lyric or prosaic, archaic or modern--is language in a condition of special use. Every literary form--the incantation of the Bushman or a nouveau roman, a rhyming doggerel on the lavatory wall or St. John of the Cross's 'Songs of the soul in rapture at having arrived at the height of perfection, which is union with God, by the road of spiritual negation,' King Lear or The Mousetrap--is no more and no less than a language act, a combination of syntactic units." He acknowledges that a problem arises in determining what is that condition of "special use" that sets literature apart from other forms of language. "When literature is most itself," he suggests, "the sum of truth and information which is inherent in it cannot be abstracted, cannot--or can only very imperfectly--be paraphrased. The particular truth and information are indivisible from the exact combination of formal expressive devices . . . of the given ode, sonnet, drama, or fiction." However, in language as common speech, "neighboring or roughly analogous counters can be substituted and little will be lost."[3]

Another way of coming to grips with the problem of style is by practicing stylistics, an emerging aspect of twentieth-century literary criticism which concentrates on the response to form and pattern in literary works. At this time stylistics seems to be the best avenue open to securing objective criteria for describing literary style. Braj Kachru and Herbert Stahlke, linguists at the University of Illinois, have defined stylistics specifically and also as it is being used in this dissertation:

> The term stylistics is used for that area of linguistics which presents a theory and methodology for a formal analysis of a literary text. In such a theory (or theories) the focus is on the language features of a literary text. The linguistic exponents are then "structured" at various levels to contextualize the text; the contextualization and the categorization depending on the focus of the investigator. It is generally claimed that in linguistic terms, literary style implies selection and ordering of various patterns. These may be phonological, syntactic or lexical. These patterns may be abstracted as style features of a particular text, author or genre.[4]

The patterns under survey as a style feature in this analysis of seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth-century prose are syntactic; they pertain to four embedding transformations used by six English essayists in combining the limited number of kernel sentences, or deep structures, in English to produce the individualistic surface structures which make up the sample text taken from the writings of each. This analysis, therefore, is for the purpose of elucidating the contributions that sentence structure, or syntax, may make to the style of a text, the style of an author, or the style of a genre.

It is well to remember that in Chomsky's concept of generative transformational grammar deep structures account for meaning while surface structures with their infinite variety convey that meaning by

giving it form. For the most part, people do not use deep structures in their speaking and writing, but in some way they must have access to them before they can shape their thoughts into surface structures. There seems to be a two-way traffic between deep and surface structures; in using language people can find the deep structures through the surface structures they are using, or they can consciously begin with deep structures and contrive all kinds of surface structures if this ability is pointed out to them. How people accomplish this mental feat is not yet known, but there have been some guesses. For example, D. Terence Langendoen suggests: "In all likelihood they do not use the rules of grammar themselves, but rather a set of processes which are based on those rules."[5]

To give a complete account of a writer's syntactic style as well as of his meaning, the literary critic also should consider the fact that the syntactic component of language permits a variety of syntactic devices which carry with them a particular "EMOTIVE or 'expressive' function," that is, the "expression of the speaker's attitude toward what he is speaking about." In addition, the syntactic component performs a "CONATIVE function," that is, it expresses the writer's "orientation toward the ADDRESSEE [which] finds its purest grammatical expression in the vocative and imperative."[6]

In this stylistic analysis of prose style the methodology will be that of generative transformational grammar. The theory, the first of the two requirements Kachru and Stahlke suggested were necessary for a stylistic analysis of a literary text, has been discussed previously in Chapter III. A résumé of the grammar begins with Chomsky's reminder that a generative grammar is "simply a system of rules that in some

explicit and well-defined way assigns structural descriptions to sentences. Obviously, every speaker of a language has mastered and internalized a generative grammar that expresses his knowledge of his language."[7] The rules of generative transformational grammar are divided into three categories: the phrase structure rules or those rules that operate in deep structures ("the highly restrictive schema to which any human language must conform"[8]); the various transformational rules that may be applied to deep structures to produce surface structures; and the semantic rules which "assign to each paired deep and surface structure generated by the syntax a semantic interpretation, presumably, in a universal semantics, concerning which little is known in any detail."[9]

At the present time the transformational rules of the grammar would seem to contribute most to literary criticism. The phrase structure rules are of little value in a syntactic analysis of style because they are obligatory. Undoubtedly, the semantic rules would be of great importance in the evaluation and interpretation of literary works if they were known. However, scientific study in semantics has just begun, and so far no theory has yet evolved, not to mention a methodology.

On the other hand, the transformational category has yielded some interesting information about the styles of various writers as to characteristic syntactic patterning. An early classic statement of the problem of style is Richard Ohmann's "Generative Grammars and the Concept of Style." In this benchmark for the consideration of stylistic questions from a transformational point of view, he says that there are three important characteristics of transformational rules that capture the attention of the style analyst. First, many times the application

of a transformational rule is optional in that a writer has alternative ways of putting his thought into surface structures. Also important in the detection of syntactic patterning is the fact that he is likely to adopt patterns that become characteristic of his style.[10]

A second characteristic valuable to style analysis noted by Ohmann is that not everything in the transformed structure is new. Transformations retain some of the old structure which native speakers can specifically identify as belonging to the old. According to Ohmann, such a relationship "seems intuitively to underlie the notion of style." Furthermore, only in a transformational grammar can the analyst discover "a final analogue" for such a relationship.[11]

Ohmann's third characteristic is that the transformational rules have the power to explain the complexity of sentences. Two types of transformations, embedding and conjoining, combine short, simple sentences to make one sentence in which there may be a variety of transformations. The analyst in stylistics can determine the complexity of a sentence by reducing it to its simple sentences and then by analyzing the number and types, as well as sub-types, of transformations used to produce the complicated sentence. Every surface structure has a transformational history which can be read by the linguist trained to do so. What is at stake in literary criticism is the value of these readings in judging a writer's style. Ohmann believes there are "deep grammatical possibilities in a language [which] may well be exploited differently from writer to writer, and if so, the differences will certainly be of stylistic interest."[12]

The linguists join the literary critics in seeking ways to supplement "the critic's naked intuition, fortified against the winds of

ignorance only by literary sophistication and the tattered garments of traditional grammar." Ohmann finds "especially damaging" the "lack of a theory" because without it the critic is unable "to take into account the deeper structural features of language, precisely those which should enter most revealingly into a stylistic description." He believes "that recent developments in generative grammar, particularly on the transformational model, promise, first, to clear away a good deal of the mist from stylistic theory, and second, to make possible corresponding refinement in the practice of stylistic analysis."[13]

ENDNOTES

[1]Richard Ohmann, "Generative Grammars and the Concept of Literary Style," in Readings in Applied Transformational Grammar, ed. Mark Lester (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), p. 119.

[2]Nils Enkvist, "On Defining Style," in Modern Essays on Writing and Style, 2nd ed., ed. Paul C. Wermuth (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), pp. 21-33.

[3]George Steiner, "Linguistics and Poetics," in Extra-Territorial: Papers on Literature and the Language Revolution (New York: Atheneum, 1971), pp. 126, 128.

[4]Braj B. Kachru and Herbert F. W. Stahlke, "Introduction," in Current Trends in Stylistics, ed. Braj B. Kachru and Herbert F. W. Stahlke (Edmonton, Alberta: Linguistic Research, Inc., 1972), pp. vii-viii.

[5]D. Terence Langendoen, The Study of Syntax: The Generative-Transformational Approach to the Structure of American English (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), p. 140.

[6]Roman Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," in Style in Language, ed. T. A. Sebeok (New York: The Technology Press of M.I.T. and John Wiley & Sons, 1960), pp. 354-55.

[7]Noam Chomsky, Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1965), p. 8.

[8]Noam Chomsky, Language and Mind, enl. ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), p. 63.

[9]Noam Chomsky, "Remarks on Nominalization," in Readings in English Transformational Grammar, ed. Roderick A. Jacobs and Peter S. Rosenbaum (Waltham, Mass.: Ginn and Company, 1970), p. 185.

[10]Ohmann, pp. 125, 128.

[11]Ohmann, p. 126.

[12]Ohmann, pp. 126-27.

[13]Ohmann, p. 123.

CHAPTER V

THE CRITERIA FOR SELECTING THE LITERARY CORPUS

In making diachronic studies of any kind, it is necessary first to set chronological boundaries. The average person does not realize that there was a decisive period in history for the evolution of the modern English syntax that comes "trippingly on the tongue" of the speaker of English today. Nevertheless, such a period did occur during the seventeenth century in the development of the English language, concurrent with changes in the cultural and intellectual milieu. According to Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke, literary historians, "There is a very special sense in which, to us, the seventeenth century appears as the 'age of transition' par excellence, for ours is the world which that era made the transition to. Western Europe was, as Douglas Bush has justly remarked, more than half medieval in its attitudes in 1600, more than half modern in 1700."[1]

The twentieth century is indeed indebted to the seventeenth century for political foundations, for ideas of commerce and finance, for concepts of international law and diplomacy, for origins of modern mathematics and science, for a theory of comprehensive education, and for various philosophies and theologies. Not often, however, does one find included in an account of this spendid heritage the legacy of modern prose.

The development in the seventeenth century of these foundations of

today's society did not proceed smoothly or easily, however. In that century the old understanding of man's relationship to his world collapsed before the advance of science; consequently, there was Sturm und Drang in every aspect of life. The Weltanschauung of the seventeenth century emanated from the cultural vacuum left when men could no longer reconcile traditional concepts of religion, morality, authority, the nature of society, and the very nature of man himself with the facts exposed before their eyes. Even the language men spoke was not immune from controversy.

Since language is a social institution reflecting the structure of society, it is no surprise to find Sturm und Drang in the literary world also. Prominent wirters took sides, some supporting the time-honored Latinate prose and others demanding that a new prose style be created. "The most striking feature of seventeenth-century prose is its variety," according to Alexander Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke, literary historians. "Nowhere in English literature do we find a wider range of mood, attitude, and emphasis; style is the man, and the men of the seventeenth century were remarkable for nothing if not for their individuality--an individuality largely uncramped by any prescriptive conception of what a prose style might or might not be allowed to do."[2] The very variety of seventeenth-century prose style caused consternation among both scientists and writers.[3]

The syntactic analysis to be dealt with in this paper is concerned with those English writers who were at the forefront in developing the new style of prose so necessary to articulate the phenomena being exposed by seventeenth-century scientists. Furthermore, the literary texts for possible analysis are limited to those works of such writers

as were written originally in English. Information about native English sentence structure is the aim of this attempt at syntactic analysis.[4] Modern English has evolved into an analytic language, and it is precisely these structural changes that one wishes to identify as they began in the seventeenth century and as they may have continued through the nineteenth century.

One of the most forceful, consistent, and effective influences upon streamlining English syntax was the Royal Society for Improving Natural Knowledge. Its establishment in 1660 "represented the culmination of the investigating trend encouraged by [Francis] Bacon's The Advancement of Learning, a trend which in its own field was as important as the Elizabethan voyages of exploration, while it marked even more directly than the fifteenth-sixteenth century Revival of Learning the birth of the modern mind."[5] The Royal Society, "the very center of Baconian thought,"[6] became a powerful and enduring force not only in scientific endeavors but also in linguistic change. Fortunately for modern prose style, the Society enrolled both scientists and writers at its founding and for some years later. Abraham Cowley was one of the founders of the Royal Society, and John Evelyn and John Dryden became members along with many other well-known writers.

Francis Bacon has two claims to first place in the selection of writers whose prose is relevant to the purposes of this dissertation; he was the foremost spokesman not only for modern scientific methodology, as mentioned above, but also he was the first literary figure of importance in England to see the necessity of a new language in which men could adequately describe the new realities that seventeenth-century science was discovering.[7] However, he was almost alone in this respect

for the early seventeenth-century writers both in England and throughout Europe thought "to impress by a difficult style." Not until the middle of the century was it "ousted from one stronghold after another by a perfectly opposite spirit, that of neatness, lucidity, the intelligible and the simple. . . . [To] the historian of thought . . . the new tendency is only another expression of what he has seen working in the history of science and learning. . . . For the new methods which they applied to thought the scientists demanded improvements in language. The old rambling complexities of sixteenth-century prose would not serve their turn."[8] In reviewing the vital contributions of the seventeenth century to the present era, one inevitably becomes aware that Bacon was "the seer who first formulated the vision of our time and who, perhaps more than any other man set us consciously upon the road to modern science."[9]

Thus far in this chapter the emphasis has been on Bacon "as the philosopher of science who did more than any other man to lay the foundations for the triumph of the scientific attitude in seventeenth-century England." He has also been recognized as an "important symbol of Elizabethan intellectual greatness"; he is said to have possessed "one of the finest legal minds of his day." Furthermore, his reputation as a "statesman" has remained unchallenged.[10] However, it is Bacon's interest in the English language and his efforts to modernize it, intertwined as they were with his insistence on a scientific attitude in the investigation of all phenomena, that are of concern in this dissertation.

In the new world that Bacon saw opening up to men through the power and authority of inductive reasoning, there existed subtle

distinctions and involved relationships which could not readily be described by the Ciceronian sentence: "The classical Latin sentence, with its subordination (hypotaxis) of clauses, its massive but controlled length, its delayed verb, its sense not completed till the last word had been written, its skilful intricacy and artful, rhythmical devices was a challenge to renaissance virtuosity . . ."[1] but it was a verbal dinosaur standing in the way of seventeenth-century men with new thoughts and beliefs to express. The times demanded a pliant prose.

In Book I of The Advancement of Learning Bacon goes to great lengths to point out the ineptness of early seventeenth-century prose which he considers to have developed from preoccupation with "delicate learning," one of the "three vanities in studies, whereby learning hath been traduced." (The other two "vanities" are "fantastical learning" and contentious learning.") "Delicate learning," which began with the reading of "ancient authors, both in divinity and in humanity, which had long time slept in libraries," fostered imitation of prose styles inappropriate in seventeenth-century writing. Bacom complains that

> . . . men began to hunt more after words than matter; and more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clean falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment.[12]

Although Bacon was an outspoken critic of writers who attempted to imitate Latin sentence structures in their seventeenth-century English sentences, he wrote his own most ambitious works, such as Novum Organum, in Latin rather than in English. Only The Advancement of Learning, "written in a stately processional English with great nobility of movement," The New Atlantis, "burdened and weakened by an excess of

picturesque trappings and ceremonial mumbo-jumbo," and the Essays, "compressed and severe," were composed in English. A. C. Ward, the literary historian, regards all of Bacon's work as aesthetically "subsidiary to his Essays, which contain more wisdom than any other writer has concentrated in so small a compass with so much strength and grace of style."[13] Ward also might have mentioned that Bacon's Essays of Counsels, Civill and Morall represent a new genre in English literature which was adaptable to a "speech-based prose that finally triumphed in the third quarter of the seventeenth century."[14]

This speech-based prose that "remained dominant" in English literature for "the hundred years between 1660-1760"[15] did not emerge fully developed in the Essays of Bacon, but its hallmark was established by Bacon's "primary intention in the essays": he wished "to try out his thoughts on particular topics." In other words, Bacon deemed it possible "to think in the act of writing."[16] Perhaps Bacon's intention could be paraphrased as conversing with oneself and immediately writing down the conversation. Also, this might be a description of the way an essay is written. Thus, the essay is probably as close as one can get in a literary genre to the natural processes that go on in the human mind when people use sentences in speech. Such an assumption was one reason for choosing the essay as the genre to be examined in this dissertation. Oral communication is really the subject matter of linguistics; theories and grammars are conceived on the basis of speech acts, not the written word. It was therefore desirable in a linguistic analysis concerned with syntactic mental processes to work with a literary vehicle as close to speech as possible and thus to avoid artifice.

Some consideration has been given in this chapter to the characteristics of the seventeenth century and to the qualities of one of its outstanding men, Francis Bacon, in order to justify the selection of a special time and a particular writer with whom to begin a linguistic analysis of the development of modern prose style. Once these have been demarked, all else which is to be selected falls naturally into place. Forces once set in motion, whether they be political, intellectual, artistic, or, especially, as in this case, a combination of all three, tend to gather momentum until there is reached some sort of culmination from which a new movement evolves, bringing with it another climax and new key figures.

Literary historians Witherspoon and Warnke have identified very clearly such a culmination in English literature: "For prose, as for almost every other aspect of thought and art in seventeenth-century England, 1660, the year of the restoration of Charles II, constitutes an absolute watershed. If totality of statement serves as the common defining feature of Baroque prose, specialization and the rigid exclusion of the seemingly irrelevant define Augustan prose. Abraham Cowley's Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy (1661) shows the marks of the new sensibility as clearly in its reserved and conversational manner of expression as in its advocacy of the experimental method in learning. And the personality which emerges from the same writer's Essays (1668) is . . . notably less complex and passionate." Cowley's prose style is representative of that of most of the major English writers who came after him. All are indebted to the same source which Witherspoon and Warnke specifically identify: "It is a commonplace of intellectual history to attribute the change in the English

temper around 1660 to the definitive triumph of the scientific spirit, as symbolized in the establishment of the Royal Society (1662). Few commonplaces have a more absolute validity."[17] Therefore the choice of Cowley as a second essayist of the seventeenth-century is not a random one.[18]

In an analysis and comparison of English prose style at the beginning of the seventeenth century with English prose style after 1660, the writer of this dissertation was almost obliged to choose Bacon and Cowley, respectively, as the writers whose works were to be studied. They had in common scientific interests; they both insisted upon and practiced a new prose style which they thought better suited to their own historical times than those styles of writing that preceded them; and they both are most valued today in English literature for their essays.

There are four other choices of writers to be discussed in this study of prose style, but it seems expedient before going on to them to summarize the other reasons besides the Baconian one already given for choosing the essay for syntactic analysis. In the first place, some basis for comparison must be adopted. The choice of the essay as the common genre followed closely upon the selection of Bacon as the literary figure most prominent in advocating a new prose style and in showing the way toward achieving it in his essays. Bacon used the new prose style, called "the Senecan movement in English," in his first ten essays published in 1597. According to Ian Gordon, "The Latin of Seneca . . . was a jerky prose which tended to avoid subordination. . . . The new prose of short statements, to which fresh ideas could be immediately added by parataxis or simple coordination, allowed a writer

. . . to think in the act of writing." The translation of a few Senecan lines shows these characteristics:

> (To list all the ways of fate is tedious. This one thing I know: all the works of mortals are condemned to mortality; we live among things perishable).[19]

In his later essays Bacon "lengthened the Senecan movement and frequently led up to a Tacitean 'strong line'":

> Be not too sensible, or too remembering, of thy Place, in Conversation, and private Answers to Suitors; but let it rather be said; <u>When he sits in Place, he is another Man</u>.
>
> [Of Great Place, 1625]

Bacon's use of the "shorter-winded epigrammatic Silver Latin prose of Tacitus and Seneca" at the beginning of the seventeenth century was catalytic because it released writers from bondage to the Ciceronian sentence structure in which the "increasingly sceptical mind of seventeenth-century England could not think," while at the same time it preserved the respect that the literary world still held for Latin models. As Ian Gordon says, "Once it was accepted that good 'classical' English prose need not be Ciceronian but could consist of a series of short main statements set side by side, or, at the most lightly linked by coordinating conjunctions, the way was open for the next phase."[20]

Undoubtedly, part of the success in English prose of the Senecan movement, which spread in popularity "from the written essays . . . to the spoken sermon where it linked with native speech-rhythms to produce . . . striking prose,"[21] can be attributed to its similarity to native English speech patterns going as far back as Old English. Gordon believes that sentence structure is a "continuing feature of English prose. . . . Certain of the most-used sentence-structures of modern English go back as far as the English language can be traced. . . . The

structures embedded in word-order, the bones of the language, make their appearance early." He goes on to say that "if a foreign element . . . is to be viable, it must conform rapidly to English speech habits" which are based on "the segmented English sentence, stressed in word-groups, each word-group separated from its neighbour by a boundary marker, the major stress of each group falling on the semantically important word in the group, the groups occurring in a relatively fixed order, the words in each group generally falling in a precisely fixed order."[22]

If Bacon is chosen as the progenitor of modern prose, the sample text from his writings to be used in this syntactic analysis must be from his essays because of the facts mentioned above. No such restriction holds for Cowley, of course. But the requirements of experimental research dictate the selection of a sample text from Cowley's essays also. In such a research project, some constants must be established beforehand or the variables to be identified lack even a semblance of validity. Thus the essay becomes the one and only genre to be considered in the analysis.

A second reason for choosing essays for analysis is their continuity as a speech-based prose which, emerging from Bacon's first essays, developed through the writing of "diaries, private letters and memoirs, accounts of travel, popular journalism, manuals of instructions and the like . . . to the prose of more obvious literary pretentions." Gordon says that speech-based prose "transformed the Senecan staccato into a prose of discourse. . . . The middle years of the seventeenth century took a cold look at what passed for scientific writing and moved quietly on to the empiricism of the Royal Society. . . ."[23]

The Society's influence on the development of a simplified prose

style is undeniable. For example, in a work published in 1664, Joseph Glanvill, wishing to become a member of the Royal Society, specifically addressed the Society with an apology for "the musick and curiosity of fine Metaphors and dancing periods" in his writing when it should have exhibited "manly sense, flowing in a natural and unaffected Eloquence." He asked "a pardon from the ingenious, for faults committed in an immaturity of Age and Judgment."[24]

Indeed, in view of Glanvill's desire, he had reason to apologize for his writing style. In today's terms, the Royal Society had a "style manual" incorporated in its statutes (Chapter V, Article IV):

> In all Reports of Experiments to be brought into the Society, the matter of Fact shall be barely stated, without any Prefaces, Apologies, or Rhetorical Flourishes, and entered so into the Register-Book, by order of the Society.[25]

This official directive was elaborated by Thomas Sprat, the Society's historian, to the point that there did evolve a virtual seventeenth-century style manual. In his most concise presentation of the Society's stylistic requirements, Sprat says that writers are "to reject all amplifications, disgressions, and swellings of style: to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, when men deliver'd so many things, almost in an equal number of words. They [the Society] have exacted from all their members, a close, naked natural way of speaking; positive expressions; clear sense; a native easiness: bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness, as they can: and preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants, before that, of Wits, or Scholars."[26]

A third reason for the choice of essays as sample texts is related to subject matter. The more things that can be held constant in research the more valid will be the data discovered about the variables

set up for the project. For the purposes of this syntactic analysis, therefore, a common subject was necessary. It proved possible to find one subject, death, on which all six essayists wrote, whereas it would have been quite unlikely to find six writers all writing on the same subject in any other genre. In addition, the subject of death provided an emotive factor which could be used as a guideline in selecting passages for analysis. In other words, passages were selected that indicated the writers' philosophical views of man's mortality. Another guideline was mechanical: there would be only four sentences selected to represent each writer--the four sentences that best reflected the personal philosophy of each writer, regardless of their length. Four things, then, emerge as constants: genre, subject, philosophical view, and number of sentences. The variables, or things to be compared, all pertain to sentence structure. They are type and number of rhetorical transformations, type and number of embedding transformations, levels of embedding, and amount of deletion in each sentence. One of the main purposes of this syntactic analysis is to discover if there is any measurable difference in these variables between writers in each century and between centuries. If such differences become evident, it may be possible to give them an interpretation of interest to literary criticism.

In the eighteenth century three styles of writing were developing which "have remained the basis for virtually all later writers." The speech-based prose continued as "the central tradition." A second prose style, originating with Dr. Samuel Johnson and called "neo-Quintilian rhetoric," was the model for academic exposition. The third style became known as "romantic prose" and "is marked by the continuous use of

syntactical and metaphoric devices designed to excite an affective response."[27] The essays of Joseph Addison are the most outstanding exemplification of speech-based prose, and for this reason he was selected to represent this stylistic code as it existed in the eighteenth century. Oliver Goldsmith, writing in the later half of the eighteenth century, was selected as representative of the initial stages of romantic prose. These are the two prose styles that show development through the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth century and that will be the focus of this analysis. A minor reason for choosing Addison and Goldsmith is that, chronologically, they are roughly analogous to Bacon and Cowley, the first of each pair writing at the beginning of his century and the latter two writing in the second half of their centuries.

While William Hazlitt and Charles Lamb were contemporaries in the nineteenth century, they, too, represent the two stylistic codes in their further development in that century. Hazlitt pursued the norm, or speech-based prose, but Lamb wrote in the vein of romantic prose. Also, they were selected to represent the nineteenth century because they were among those who developed a new essay form and with it pushed the essay as a genre to its zenith. The nineteenth-century essay was much longer than the essay of the eighteenth century, and, in addition, it allowed a far wider range of subjects. Furthermore, the new type of essay permitted the writer to express his individuality. No longer was he required to adopt the mask of a fictitious character in order to hide his own personality.

Even in a cursory reading of the six sample texts that follow, the reader is more than likely to see evidence of some of the characteristics

of seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth-century essay styles as they have been discussed in this chapter. The material presented in the next chapter is an attempt to provide some objective syntactic criteria as an explanation of these characteristics.

Sample Texts From the Seventeenth Century

Francis Bacon: "Of Death"

> Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly, the contemplation of death as the wages of sin, and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition. You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification that a man should think with himself what the pain is if he have but his finger's end pressed or tortured, and thereby imagine what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted and dissolved; when many times death passeth with less pain than the torture of a limb; for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense.[28]

Abraham Cowley, Esq.: "The Shortness of Life, and the Uncertainty or Riches"

> If you should see a man, who were to cross from Dover to Calais, run about very busy and solicitous, and trouble himself many weeks before in making provisions for his voyage, would you commend him for a cautious and discreet person, or laugh at him for a timorous and impertinent coxcomb? A man, who is excessive in his pains and diligence, and who consumes the greatest part of his time in furnishing the remainder with all conveniences and even superfluities, is to the angels and wise men no less ridiculous; he does as little consider the shortness of his passage, that he might proportion his cares accordingly. It is, alas, so narrow a streight betwixt the womb and the grave, that it might be called the Pas de Vie, as well as that the Pas de Calais. We are all ἐφήμεροι, as Pindar calls us, creatures of a day, and therefore our Saviour bounds our desires to that little space; as if it were very probable that every day should be our last, we are taught to demand even bread for no longer time.[29]

Sample Texts From the Eighteenth Century

Joseph Addison: "Westminster Abbey"

> I know that entertainments of this nature [walking in Westminster Abbey] are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds and gloomy imaginations; but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy; and can therefore take a view of nature in her deep and solemn scenes, with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones. By this means I can improve myself with those objects, which others consider with terror. When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow. When I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind.[30]

Oliver Goldsmith: "A Visit to Westminster Abbey"

> Think, then, what were my sensations at being introduced to such a scene [Westminster Abbey]. I stood in the midst of the temple and threw my eyes round on the walls, filled with the statues, the inscriptions, and the monuments of the dead. Alas! I said to myself, how does pride attend the puny child of dust even to the grave! Even humble as I am, I possess more consequence in the present scene than the greatest hero of them all; they have toiled for an hour to gain a transient immortality, and are at length retired to the grave where they have no attendant but the worm, none to flatter but the epitaph.[31]

Sample Texts From the Nineteenth Century

Charles Lamb: "New Year's Eve"

> Such who profess an indifference to life hail the end of their existence as a port of refuge; and speak of the grave as of some soft arms, in which they may slumber as on a pillow. Some have wooed death--but out upon thee, I say, thou foul, ugly phantom! I detest, abhor, execrate, and (with Friar John) give thee to six score thousand devils, as in no instance to be excused or tolerated, but shunned as an

> universal viper; to be branded, proscribed, and spoken evil of! In no way can I be brought to digest thee, thou thin, melancholy Privation, or more frightful and confounding Positive![32]

William Hazlitt: "On the Fear of Death"

> We eye the farthest verge of the horizon, and think what a way we shall have to look back upon, ere we arrive at our journey's end; and without our in the least suspecting it, the mists are at our feet, and the shadows of age encompass us. The two divisions of our lives have melted into each other: the extreme points close and meet with none of that romantic interval stretching out between them that we had reckoned upon; and for the rich, melancholy, solemn hues of age, "the sear, the yellow leaf," the deepening shadows of an autumnal evening, we only feel a dank, cold mist, encircling all objects after the spirit of youth is fled. There is no inducement to look forward; and what is worse, little interest in looking back to what has become so trite and common. The pleasures of our existence have worn themselves out, are "gone into the wastes of time," or have turned their indifferent side to us: the pains by their repeated blows have worn us out, and have left us neither spirit nor inclination to encounter them again in retrospect.[33]

ENDNOTES

[1]Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke, eds., Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry, 2nd ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), p. 3.

[2]Witherspoon and Warnke, p. 3. Individuality defines as nothing else does the prose of the seventeenth century. This feature "is intimately related to the opportunities, revelations, and frustrations of the age which produced it. . . ."

[3]A discussion of the various seventeenth-century English prose styles, such as fall under the two general classifications Ciceronian and anti-Ciceronian (the latter often designated as "Attic," "Senecan," or "Baroque") would be enlightening as to the prose styles of many influential writers of the century.

[4]Those texts that English writers originally wrote in Latin are excluded from the corpus. Literary works first written in Latin, even by English authors, and then translated into English often retain a great deal of their Latinate structure. Unlike English, Latin is an inflectional language.

[5]A. C. Ward, English Literature: Chaucer to Bernard Shaw (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1958), p. 236.

[6]Joseph Anthony Mazzeo, Renaissance & Revolution: Backgrounds to Seventeenth-Century English Literature (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 216.

[7]F. P. Wilson neatly sums up these new realities when he says that this was "a century in which man revised his conception of the external universe and of his relation to it, revised also his conception of himself and of the powers of his own mind; it is the century of Galileo, Harvey, and Newton, of Descartes, Hobbes, and Locke" (Seventeenth Century Prose [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960], p. 12).

[8]Sir George Clark, The Seventeenth Century, 2nd. ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 334-35.

[9]Loren Eiseley, Francis Bacon and the Modern Dilemma (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1962), p. 9.

[10]Witherspoon and Warnke, p. 38.

[11]Ian A. Gordon, The Movement of English Prose (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), p. 77.

[12]Francis Bacon, Excerpt from The Advancement of Learning, in Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry, 2nd ed., ed. Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), p. 51.

[13]Ward, pp. 329, 241.

[14]Gordon, p. 133.

[15]Gordon, p. 133.

[16]Ward, p. 240.

[17]Witherspoon and Warnke, pp. 14-15.

[18]When tracing the development of a particular aspect of literature (syntax in prose in this dissertation), one chooses as exemplars the work of those who stand at the "watershed" of literary change, not the work of "the best" writers. These latter writers usually represent the highest refinement of a movement, not the innovations which set the trend in motion.

[19]Gordon, pp. 109-10.

[20]Gordon, pp. 105-13.

[21]Gordon, p. 110.

[22]Gordon, pp. 24, 31.

[23]Gordon, p. 120.

[24]Richard Foster Jones, "Science and English Prose Style in the Third Quarter of the Seventeenth Century," in The Seventeenth Century: Studies in the History of English Thought and Literature from Bacon to Pope by Richard Foster Jones and Others Writing in His Honor, ed. The Editorial Committee of the Modern Language Association (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1951), pp. 89-90.

[25]Jones, p. 84.

[26]Thomas Sprat, History of the Royal Society (1667), p. 113; as quoted in Richard Foster Jones, "Science and English Prose Style in the Third Quarter of the Seventeenth Century," The Seventeenth Century: Studies in the History of English Thought and Literature from Bacon to Pope by Richard Foster Jones and Others Writing in His Honor, ed. The Editorial Committee of the Modern Language Association (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1951), pp. 86-87.

[27]Gordon, pp. 151-52.

[28]Francis Bacon, "Of Death," in Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry, 2nd ed., ed. Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), p. 41.

[29]Abraham Cowley, Esq., Prose Works of Abraham Cowley, Esq. (London: William Pickering, Chancery Lane, 1826), n. pag. Printed by D. S. Maurice, Fenchurch Street.

[30]Joseph Addison, "Westminster Abbey," Spectator, No. 26. Friday, March 30, 1711, Periodical Essays of the Eighteenth Century, ed. George Carver (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1930), pp. 30-31.

[31]Oliver Goldsmith, "A Visit to Westminster Abbey," Citizen of the World. Letter XIII, Periodical Essays of the Eighteenth Century, ed. George Carver (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1930), pp. 256-57.

[32]Charles Lamb, "New Year's Eve," in Charles Lamb in Essays and Letters, ed. Maurice Garland Fulton (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 310.

[33]William Hazlitt, "On the Fear of Death," in Selected Essays of William Hazlitt, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London: The Nonesuch Press, 1948), p. 164.

CHAPTER VI

COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS: THE TOOLS OF THE CRITIC

George Steiner, a literary critic as well as a philosopher interested in the relationship between language and man, states that Noam Chomsky has performed "a feat of great logical force and elegance" in demonstrating in Aspects of the Theory of Syntax that "the unbounded variety of sentences human beings grasp and make use of at every occasion in their lives can be derived from a limited set of formal counters and from a body of rules, also presumably limited, for the manipulation and rearrangement of these counters."[1]

In the analyses in this chapter of twenty-four sentences selected from the seventeenth-century essays of Francis Bacon and Abraham Cowley, from the eighteenth-century essays of Joseph Addison and Oliver Goldsmith, and from the nineteenth-century essays of Charles Lanb and William Hazlitt, the writer of this dissertation will attempt to exemplify Steiner's generalization of Chomsky's theory and grammar, restricting "the manipulation and rearrangements [transformations] of the counters [deep structures]" to three types of transformations which seem to affect most of all the style of a writer: simple, or rhetorical, transformations; deletion transformations; and sentence embedding transformations.

In the table devised to show how these transformations operate to

produce the sentences found in the essayists' texts (surface structures), the reader will find in the first column the matrix sentence, traditionally called the independent clause, into which one or more additional sentences ultimately may be embedded. In this use of the linguistic term matrix sentence a certain order is indicated in the alignment of the constituents of a sentence, according to the phrase structure rules of Chomsky's generative transformational grammar which produce the deep structures of sentences. The order is as follows: conjunction, vocative, subject, auxiliary, verb, direct object, indirect object, adverbial of circumstance, adverbial of place, and adverbial of time. The last constituent may be followed by one or more additional sentences, either complete or partial, ordered in the same way.[2] However, if this occurs, the full sentence is no longer a matrix sentence but, instead, becomes a surface structure. It is necessary to point out this particular ordering of constituents in the deep structure of sentences because, otherwise, one could not justify in the grammar some of the rhetorical transformations, such as the passive, the adverbial switch and reordering.

In the second column of the table, "Textual Complements," the reader will find the text that is being analyzed; sometimes this text will show in parenthesis what constituents of the sentence the writer has deleted. When such an insertion has been put into the essayist's text, it is done to clarify for the reader the reason for assigning a certain transformation to a particular sentence or segment of a sentence. The horizontal lines running across the page from the textual complements are intended to call attention to the various ways in which embedded, or constituent sentences, may come to the surface.

The third column is titled "Constituent Sentences." Here the reader will find what are presumed to be the deep structures underlying the surface structures (sentences) in the text, with the exception of the matrix sentences which have already been identified in the first column. These constituent sentences "are active (rather than passive), statements (rather than questions), affirmative (rather than negative), and neutral (rather than containing commands or any special emphasis). . . . All known languages . . . have just one basic set of rules that generate [such] active, affirmative, neutral statements." In generative transformational grammar these are the phrase structure rules. "These sentences can then be turned into passives, questions, negative statements, or commands by making some variation in the form of the underlying statement. This variation may be achieved by adding or deleting a word or phrase, or by rearranging some of the words of the basic sentence. . . . In transformational terms, passives, questions, negative statements, commands, and emphatic statements are produced by applying certain transformational operations to the basic underlying sentence."[3] These transformations are called simple transformations because they do not combine sentences in any way. Their effect is primarily rhetorical; they therefore are of interest stylistically. When simple, or rhetorical, transformations appear in the sentences being analyzed, they are noted in the first column immediately after the matrix sentences. If the simple transformation applies to a sentence other than the matrix, it is set off by broken lines approximately horizontal with the textual complement to which it applies.

The fourth column in the table records deletions of various kinds of sentence constituents. Sometimes the deletion transformation is

obligatory as in identical noun phrase and identical verb phrase deletion. At other times it is optional as in the reduction of an adjectival clause to an adjectival phrase or appositive. Both obligatory and optional deletions have been recorded in these analyses of the twenty-four essayists' sentences because in either case the intuitiveness of the reader must provide the missing constituents or the meaning of the sentence is not clear.

The next section of the table is labeled "Types of Embedding." Under this heading four ways in which sentences may be embedded in other sentences are classified. Within these four categories sub-types are identified when they occur in the text undergoing analysis. In the first category, "Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement," embedded sentences may be identified as noun clause sentences, question word sentences, or tenseless sentences (varieties of infinitive and participial phrases). "Noun Modification," the second category of embedding, includes embedded sentences that appear in the text as relative clauses, adjectival phrases, adjectives, appositives, and prepositional phrases of place. In the category "Adverbial Clause," it is assumed that a sentence is embedded in a subordinating adverb. "Nominalization," the fourth category, includes those sentences in the deep structure which have been transformed into noun phrases and then embedded in other sentences in noun positions. A nominalization may come to the surface in a variety of ways.[4]

The last column of the table, "Level of Embedding," indicates the depth of the embedded sentence within the overall sentence structure, i.e., its position in the hierarchy of syntactic structures that produce (Chomsky would say "generate") the textual sentence or surface structure.

As noted earlier in this paper (Chapter III), Roman Jakobson considered Chomsky's revival and development of "the notion of hierarchy in syntax" to be one of his major contributions to the study "of creative language use." Francis Christensen, a professor of English who has written extensively on "the rhetoric of the sentence," also believes that "the best grammar is the grammar that displays the layers of structure of the English sentence." In speaking of style in the sense of the texture of a sentence and in describing how various writers use layers of structure to achieve richly textured prose, Christensen emphasizes the power of recursive rules in language: "There is no theoretical limit to the number of structural layers or levels, each at a lower level of generality, any or all of them compounded, that a speaker or writer may use."[5] However, there are psychological factors, memory for instance, that limit the number of structures embedded one within another that can be comprehended. Sometimes the level of embedding contributes to what is commonly called a difficult or complex style.

There are two methods of combining sentences. One way is to use the four kinds of embedding transformations summarized above. The other method is to combine sentences by joining rules which can be classified under three types of transformations: coordination, in which one of the coordinating conjunctions is inserted between two independent sentences; conjunction, in which "two independent sentences are joined together by a conjunctive adverb"; and comparison, in which "two sentences are joined together by -er than, as . . . as, or some other comparative expression."[6] These joining rules do not preclude the later application of deletion transformations, which accounts for sentences with compound subjects and predicates.

While the combination of sentences by the joining rules of coordination, conjunction, and comparison has been taken into account in the analyses of the twenty-four sentences, it is the combination of sentences by the embedding rules that is of primary interest in this linguistic analysis of style. In using language, human beings engage in four mental processes: addition, subtraction, substitution, and permutation. The addition process, of course, includes both the joining rules, which do not subordinate syntactic structures, and the embedding rules, which do subordinate them. The sentence analysis depicted in the contents of the table previously described emphasizes the subordinating embedding rules; they not only provide a writer with a greater variety of stylistic choices syntactically than the joining rules, but they also allow a writer to interrelate a number of ideas in a single sentence. Furthermore, some of the embedding rules permit a writer to assign syntactic structures to the various ideas incorporated in his sentence in accordance with their importance to his total statement. Another stylistic advantage of the embedding rules is that they often give the writer a choice in positioning a particular syntactic structure in his sentence, and thus, in an additional way, they allow him either to emphasize or to subordinate the idea he wishes to express.

When the reader carefully analyzes the essayists' prose resulting from the use of embedding rules, found in the table under "Textual Complements," he will realize that all four of the mental processes involved in using language, addition, subtraction, substitution, and permutation, have been evoked. On the other hand, addition and subtraction are usually the only mental processes required when a writer combines sentences by the joining rules of coordination, conjunction, or

comparison. May it not be said, then, that the embedding rules are of more interest than the joining rules to the style analyst who works upon the Chomskian principle that there is an inextricable relationship between syntax and the structure of the mind?

According to Roderick Jacobs and Peter Rosenbaum, two of the first linguists to interpret Chomsky's generative transformational theory and to apply its grammar to the English language, "sentence recursion" is the principle that enables people to produce an infinite number of novel sentences: "This possibility of sentences recurring inside various constituents of other sentences . . . is one of the two explanations for the infinite number of possible sentences in a human language. The second source of recursion is the conjunction of sentences [use of joining rules]."[7] Owen Thomas describes one type of sentence recursion as "the most powerful rule in English, the rule which gives the language its infinite variety. In English," he says, a constituent sentence of some sort can be embedded after any noun in a matrix sentence. This fact . . . has far-reaching implications. . . . This embedding process is, in transformational grammar, the source of all adjective modifiers and subordinate clauses in English."[8] In reviewing the tables that follow, the reader should bear in mind that the complexity of a sentence is in direct ratio to the number of embedded sentences it contains.

ENDNOTES

[1]George Steiner, "Tongues of Men," in Extra-Territorial: Papers on Literature and the Language Revolution (New York: Atheneum, 1971), p. 111.

[2]John Battle, "English 4023: Structure of the English Language--Deep Structure Analysis Procedure," Mimeograph, p. 6.

[3]Mark Lester, Introductory Transformational Grammar (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), pp. 127-28.

[4]Lester, "Appendix I," pp. 309-13. This material has been adapted from Lester's "Summary of Rules."

[5]Francis Christensen, "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence," Contemporary Essays on Style: Rhetoric, Linguistics and Criticism, ed. Glen A. Love and Michael Payne (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1969), pp. 28, 30.

[6]Lester, pp. 314-15.

[7]Roderick A. Jacobs and Peter S. Rosenbaum, English Transformational Grammar (Waltham, Mass.: Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1968), p. 163.

[8]Owen Thomas, Transformational Grammar and the Teacher of English (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), pp. 90-91.

TABLE I

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: FRANCIS BACON, SENTENCE NO. 1
TYPE, TWO CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a and b)

Textual Sentence: Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) Men fear death.	Men fear death		
	as children fear	Children fear.	
	to go in the dark;	Children go in the dark.	x
(b) The other is so. Reordering Transformation			
Adverbial Switch Transformation Passive Transformation	and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other.	Tales increase that fear.	
		That fear is natural.	x
		That fear is in children.	x

TABLE I (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				2
		x		1
	Adjective			2
	Prep. Phrase of Place			2

TABLE II

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: FRANCIS BACON, SENTENCE NO. 2
TYPE, THREE CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c)

Textual Sentence: Certainly, the contemplation of death as the wages of sin, and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) The contemplation of death is holy certainly.	Certainly, the contemplation of death as the wages of sin, and (as) passage to another world, is holy		
Adverbial Switch Transformation		Death is the wages of sin.	x
Adverbial Switch Transformation		Death is passage to another world.	x
Adverbial Switch Transformation			
(b) (The contemplation of death is) religious.	and religious;		x
(c) The fear of it is weak.	but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak.	Death is a tribute.	x
Adverbial Switch Transformation		A tribute is due unto nature.	x

TABLE II (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
		x		1
		x		1
	Adjective			2

TABLE III

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: FRANCIS BACON, SENTENCE NO. 3

TYPE, ONE SENTENCE

(Sentence a)

Textual Sentence: Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) A mixture of vanity and of superstition is in meditations sometimes.			
Expletive Transformation: Prejoins there Adverbial Switch Transformation Adverbial Switch Transformation	Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition.	Meditations are religious.	x

TABLE III (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Adjective			1

TABLE IV

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: FRANCIS BACON, SENTENCE NO. 4
TYPE, FIVE CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c, d, e)

Textual Sentence: You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification that a man should think with himself what the pain is if he have but his finger's end pressed or tortured, and thereby imagine what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted and dissolved; when many times death passeth with less pain than the torture of a limb; for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) You shall read in some of the books of mortification.			
	You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification	The friars have books of mortification.	x
	that a man should think with himself	A man should think with himself.	
	what the pain is	The pain is something.	
	if he have but his finger's end pressed	He has but his finger pressed.	
		His finger has an end.	x
	or (if he have but his finger's end) tortured,	He has but his finger tortured.	x
		His finger has an end.	x

TABLE IV (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
			Genitive of Possession	1
Noun Clauses				1
Question Words				2
		x		3
			Genitive of Possession	4
		x		3
			Genitive of Possession	4

TABLE IV (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(b) (A man may) imagine thereby. Adverbial Switch Transformation	and thereby imagine		x
	what the pains of death are	The pains of death are something.	
Passive Transformation	when the whole body is corrupted (by something)		
		The body is whole.	x
		Something corrupts the body.	
Passive Transformation	and (when the body is) dissolved;	Something dissolves the body.	x
(c) Many times death passeth with less pain.	when* many times death passeth with less pain		
(d) The torture of a limb (is painful).	than the torture of a limb;		x
(e) The most parts are not the quickest of sense.	for* the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense.	The parts are vital.	x

*According to Ian A. Gordon, "Much of what appears to be subordination [in seventeenth-century usage] is really coordination by a link no longer current. . . . 'For' in seventeenth-century usage seldom adds a reason for a previous statement. Like 'nor', it is often simply a variant of 'and'" (The Movement of English Prose [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966], p. 115).

TABLE IV (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Clause	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
Question Word S				1
		x		2
	Adjective			3
		x		2
	Adjective			1

TABLE V

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS, ABRAHAM COWLEY, SENTENCE NO. 1
TYPE, TWO CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a and b)

Textual Sentence: If you should see a man, who were to cross from Dover to Calais, run about very busy and solicitous, and trouble himself many weeks before in making provisions for his voyage, would you commend him for a cautious and discreet person, or laugh at him for a timorous and impertinent coxcomb?

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) You would commend him. Yes-No Question Transformation			
Adverbial Switch Transformation	If you should see a man,	You should see a man.	
	who were to cross from Dover to Calais,	A man does something.	
		A man crosses from Dover to Calais.	x
	(to) run about very busy and solicitous,	A man runs about.	x
		A man is busy.	x
		A man is solicitous.	x
	and (to) trouble himself (for) many weeks before in making provisions for his voyage,	A man troubles himself for many weeks before the voyage.	x
		A man makes provisions for his voyage.	x
	would you commend him		

TABLE V (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
	Rel. Clause			2
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				3
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				2
	Adjective			3
	Adjective			3
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				2
			Gerund	3

TABLE V (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
	for (being) a cautious and discreet person,	Someone is a person.	x
		A person is cautious.	x
		A person is discreet.	x
(b) You would laugh at him. Yes-No Question Transformation	or (would you) laugh at him		x
	for (being) a timorous and impertinent coxcomb?	Someone is a coxcomb.	x
		A coxcomb is timorous.	x
		A coxcomb is impertinent.	x

TABLE V (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
			Gerund	1
	Adjective			2
	Adjective			2
			Gerund	1
	Adjective			2
	Adjective			2

TABLE VI

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: ABRAHAM COWLEY, SENTENCE NO. 2
TYPE, TWO CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a and b)

Textual Sentence: A man, who is excessive in his pains and diligence, and who consumes the greatest part of his time in furnishing the remainder with all conveniences and even superfluities, is to the angels and wise men no less ridiculous; he does as little consider the shortness of his passage, that he might proportion his cares accordingly.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) A man is ridiculous to the angels and men no less. Reordering Transformation Adverbial Switch Transformation	A man, who is excessive in his pains and diligence,	A man is excessive in his pains and diligence.	
Adverbial Switch Transformation	and who consumes the greatest part of his time in furnishing the remainder with all conveniences and even superfluities,	A man consumes part of his time.	
		The part is greatest.	x
		A man furnishes the remainder with all conveniences and superfluities even.	x
	is to the angels and wise men no less ridiculous;	Men are wise.	x

TABLE VI (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Rel. Clause			1
	Rel. Clause			1
	Adjective			2
			Gerund	2
	Adjective			1

TABLE VI (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(b) He does consider (something) as little. Adverbial Switch Transformation	he does as little consider (the fact that his passage is short) the shortness of his passage,	His passage is short.	x
	that* he might proportion his cares accordingly.	He might proportion his cares accordingly.	

*Writers in the middle years of the seventeenth century often used "a kind of quasi-subordination, where the link-word is usually 'as', 'that', 'where', or 'which'. The punctuation, carefully inserted at the link points, follows the syntax of its time, not that of the present day" (Ian A. Gordon, The Movement of English Prose [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966], pp. 114-15).

TABLE VI (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
			The fact that S	1
Noun Clause S				1

TABLE VII

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: ABRAHAM COWLEY, SENTENCE NO. 3
TYPE, ONE SENTENCE
(Sentence a)

Textual Sentence: It is, alas, so narrow a streight betwixt the womb and the grave, that it might be called the Pas de Vie, as well as that the Pas de Calais.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) It is a streight betwixt the womb and the grave.	It is, alas, so* narrow a streight betwixt the womb and the grave,	The streight is narrow.	x
Exclamation Transformation Reordering Transformation	that*it might be called the Pas de Vie,		
	as well as* that (it is called) the Pas de Calais.		x

*So "used with various adjs. and advs. of quantity and number, etc." may be "followed by that." An example of its use in this way by Addison in 1711 is taken from Spectator No. 5, p. 3. "'This strange Dialogue awakened my Curiosity so far, that I immediately bought the Opera" (The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, 1971).

*As well as in the sense of addition to, does not have the conjunctive force of and." (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1969).

TABLE VII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Adjective			1
		x		1
		x		1

TABLE VIII

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: ABRAHAM COWLEY, SENTENCE NO. 4
TYPE, THREE CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c)

Textual Sentence: We are all ἐφήμεροί, as Pindar calls us, creatures of a day, and therefore our Saviour bounds our desires to that little space; as if it were very probable that every day should be our last, we are taught to demand even bread for no longer time.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) We are all ἐφήμεροί.	We are all ἐφήμεροί.		
	as Pindar calls us,	Pindar calls us.	
	creatures of a day,	We are creatures of a day.	x
(b) Our Saviour bounds our desires to that space therefore. Adverbial Switch Transformation	and therefore our Saviour bounds our desires to that little space;	That space is little.	x
(c) Someone teaches us. Passive Transformation			
Adverbial Switch Transformation	as if it were very probable	It is probable.	
	that every day should be our last,	Every day could be our last.	
	we are taught		
Adverbial Switch Transformation	to demand even bread for no longer time.	We demand bread even for a time.	x
		Time is no longer.	x

TABLE VIII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
	Appositive			1
	Adjective			1
		x		1
Noun Clause S				2
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				1
	Adjective			2

TABLE IX

SUMMARY OF DATA FROM TRANSFORMATIONAL ANALYSES FOR FRANCIS BACON AND ABRAHAM COWLEY, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Sentences Combined by Embedding Rules

Bacon		Cowley
4	Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complements	6
6	Sentences Embedded as Noun Modification	15
9	Sentences Embedded in Adverbial Clauses	5
3	Sentences Embedded as Nominalizations	5
22	Total of Embedded Sentences	31

Levels of Embedding

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Bacon:	10	7	3	2
Cowley:	16	11	4	0

Deletions Found in Both Embedded and Conjoined Sentences

Bacon	18
Cowley	23

Rhetorical Transformations

Bacon		Cowley
3	Passive	1
0	Question	2
0	Imperative	0
0	Exclamation	1
1	Expletive	0
1	Reordering	2
8	Adverbial Switch	7
13	Total of Rhetorical Transformations	13

Number of Conjoined Sentences

Bacon	10
Cowley	7

TABLE X

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: JOSEPH ADDISON, SENTENCE NO. 1
TYPE, THREE CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, and c)

Textual Sentence: I know that entertainments of this nature [walking in Westminster Abbey] are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds and gloomy imaginations; but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy; and can therefore take a view of nature in her deep and solemn scenes, with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) I know something.	I know		
	that entertainments of this nature are apt	Entertainments of this nature are apt.	
	to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds and gloomy imaginations;	Entertainments raise thoughts.	x
		Thoughts are dark.	x
		Thoughts are dismal.	x
		Thoughts are in minds.	x
		Minds are timorous.	x
		Thoughts are in imaginations.	x
		Imaginations are gloomy.	x

TABLE X (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
Noun Clause S				1
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				2
	Adjective			3
	Adjective			3
	Prep. Phrase of Place			3
	Adjective			4
	Prep. Phrase of Place			3
	Adjective			4

TABLE X (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(b) For my own part, I do not know something.			
Adverbial Switch Transformation Adverbial Switch Transformation	but for my own part, though I am always serious,	I am serious always.	
	I do not know		
	what it is	It is something.	
	to be melancholy;	Someone is melancholy.	x
(c) (I) can take a view of nature in her scenes therefore. Adverbial Switch Transformation			x
	and can therefore take a view of nature in her deep and solemn scenes,	Scenes are deep.	x
		Scenes are solemn.	x
	with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones.	I take pleasure in her scenes.	x
		Scenes are gay.	x
		Scenes are delightful.	x

TABLE X (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		3
Question Word S				1
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				2
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1
		x		1
	Adjective			2
	Adjective			2

TABLE XI

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: JOSEPH ADDISON, SENTENCE NO. 2
TYPE, ONE SENTENCE
(Sentence a)

Textual Sentence: By this means I can improve myself with those objects, which others consider with terror.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) I can improve myself with those objects by this means. Adverbial Switch Transformation	By this means I can improve myself with those objects,		
	which others consider with terror.	Others consider objects with terror.	

TABLE XI (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Rel. Clause			1

TABLE XII

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: JOSEPH ADDISON, SENTENCE NO. 3
TYPE, FOUR CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c, and d)

Textual Sentence: When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) Every emotion of envy dies in me.			
Adverbial Switch Transformation	When I look upon the tombs of the great,	I look upon the tombs of the great.	
	every emotion of envy dies in me;		
(b) Every desire goes out.			
Adverbial Switch Transformation	when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful,	I read the epitaphs of the beautiful.	
	every inordinate desire goes out;	Desire is inordinate.	x

TABLE XII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
		x		1
	Adjective			1

TABLE XII (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(c) My heart melts with compassion.			
Adverbial Switch Transformation	when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone,	I meet with the grief of parents.	
		The grief of parents is upon a tombstone.	x
	my heart melts with compassion.		
(d) I consider the vanity of grieving for those.			
Adverbial Switch Transformation	when I see the tomb of the parents themselves,	I see the tomb of the parents themselves.	
	I consider the vanity of grieving for those		
Adverbial Switch Transformation	whom we must quickly follow.	We must follow those quickly.	

TABLE XII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
	Prep. Phrase of Place			2
		x		1
	Rel. Clause			1

TABLE XIII

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: JOSEPH ADDISON, SENTENCE NO. 4
TYPE, ONE SENTENCE
(Sentence a)

Textual Sentence: When I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the competitions, factions, and debates of mankind.			
Adverbial Switch Transformation	When I see kings lying by those	I see kings.	
		Kings lie by those.	x
	who deposed them,	Those deposed them.	
Adverbial Switch Transformation	when I consider rival wits	I consider wits.	
		Wits are rival.	x
Passive Transformation	placed side by	Someone places wits side by side.	x
	or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes	The men are holy.	x
		Men divided the world with their contests and disputes.	
	I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind.	Competitions are little.	x

TABLE XIII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
	Adjective (Participle)			2
	Rel. Clause			3
		x		1
	Adjective			2
	Adjective (Past Part.)			2
	Adjective			2
	Rel. Clause			2
	Adjective			1

TABLE XIV

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: OLIVER GOLDSMITH, SENTENCE NO. 1
TYPE, ONE SENTENCE
(Sentence a)

Textual Sentence: Think, then, what were my sensations at being introduced to such a scene [Westminster Abbey].

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) (You) think something, then. Imperative Transformation	Think, then		x
	what were my sensations at being introduced to such a scene.	My sensations were something.	
		I am introduced to such a scene.	x

TABLE XIV (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
Question Word S				1
			Gerund	2

TABLE XV

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: OLIVER GOLDSMITH, SENTENCE NO. 2
TYPE, TWO CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a and b)

Textual Sentence: I stood in the midst of the temple and threw my eyes round on the walls, filled with the statues, the inscriptions, and the monuments of the dead.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) I stood in the midst of the temple.	I stood in the midst of the temple temple.		
(b) (I) threw my eyes round on the walls.	and threw my eyes round on the walls,		x
Passive Transformation Passive Transformation Passive Transformation	filled with the statues, (filled with) the inscriptions, and (filled with) the monuments of the dead.	Statues fill the walls.	x
		Inscriptions fill the walls.	x
		The monuments of the dead fill the walls.	x

TABLE XV (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Adjective (Past Part.)			1
	Adjective (Past Part.)			1
	Adjective (Past Part.)			1

TABLE XVI

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: OLIVER GOLDSMITH, SENTENCE NO. 3
TYPE, TWO CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a and b)

Textual Sentence: Alas! I said to myself, how does pride attend the puny child of dust even to the grave!

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) I said alas to myself. Exclamation Transformation Reordering Transformation	Alas! I said to myself,		
(b) Pride attends the child of dust even to the grave. Exclamation Transformation	how does pride attend the puny child of dust even to the grave!	The child of dust is puny.	x

TABLE XVI (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Adjective			1

TABLE XVII

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: OLIVER GOLDSMITH, SENTENCE NO. 4
TYPE, FIVE CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c, d, and e)

Textual Sentence: Even humble as I am, I possess more consequence in the present scene than the greatest hero of them all; they have toiled for an hour to gain a transient immortality, and are at length retired to the grave where they have no attendant but the worm, none to flatter but the epitaph.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) I possess consequence in the scene.	Even humble as I am, I possess more consequence in the present scene		
Adverbial Switch Transformation		I am humble.	
		The scene is present.	x
(b) The hero of them all (possesses consequence in the scene).	than the greatest hero of them all;		x
		The hero is the greatest.	x
(c) They have toiled for an hour.	they have toiled for an hour		
	to gain a transient immortality,	They gain an immortality.	x
		Immortality is transient.	x
(d) (They) are retired to the grave at length.	and are at length retired to the grave		x
Adverbial Switch Transformation Passive Transformation		Something retires them to the grave at length.	

TABLE XVII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				1
	Adjective			2

TABLE XVII (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(e) They have no attendant but the worm.	where they have no attendant but the worm,		
	none to flatter but the epitaph.		x

TABLE XVII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
Tensless S (Infinitive)				1

TABLE XVIII

SUMMARY OF DATA FROM TRANSFORMATIONAL ANALYSES FOR JOSEPH ADDISON AND OLIVER GOLDSMITH, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Sentences Combined by Embedding Rules

Addison		Goldsmith
4	Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complements	3
21	Sentences Embedded as Noun Modification	7
8	Sentences Embedded in Adverbial Clauses	1
0	Sentences Embedded as Nominalizations	1
33	Total of Embedded Sentences	12

Levels of Embedding

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Addison:	15	10	6	2
Goldsmith:	10	2	0	0

Deletions Found in Both Embedded and Conjoined Sentences

Addison	21
Goldsmith	13

Rhetorical Transformations

Addison		Goldsmith
1	Passive	4
0	Question	0
0	Imperative	1
0	Exclamation	2
0	Expletive	0
0	Reordering	1
11	Adverbial Switch	2
12	Total of Rhetorical Transformations	10

Number of Conjoined Sentences

Addison	7
Goldsmith	9

TABLE XIX

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: CHARLES LAMB, SENTENCE NO. 1
TYPE, TWO CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a and b)

Textual Sentence: Such those who profess an indifference to life hail the end of their existence as a port of refuge; and speak of the grave as of some soft arms, in which they may slumber as on a pillow.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) Such hail the end of their existence.	Such hail the end of their existence.		
	as (if it were) a port of refuge;	The end of their existence is a port of refuge.	x
(b) (Such) speak of the grave.	and speak of the grave		x
	as (if it were) of some soft arms, in which they may slumber	The grave is some arms.	x
		Some arms are soft.	x
		They may slumber in some arms.	
	as (if they slumbered) on a pillow.	They slumbered on a pillow.	x

TABLE XIX (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
		x		1
	Adjective			2
	Rel. Clause			2
		x		3

TABLE XX

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: CHARLES LAMB, SENTENCE NO. 2
TYPE, TWO CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a and b)

Textual Sentence: Some have wooed death--but out upon thee, I say, thou foul, ugly, phantom!

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) Some have wooed death.	Some have wooed death--		
(b) Thou phantom, I say something to thee. Reordering Transformation Imperative Transformation Exclamation Transformation	but out upon* thee, I say, thou foul, ugly, phantom! (I say to thee that thou go out, thou foul, ugly, phantom!)#	Phantom, thou go out.	x
		Phantom is foul.	x
		Phantom is ugly.	x

*Out upon: (Archaic) An imperative exclamation with ellipsis of the intransitive verb (go, come, etc.) (The Oxford Universal Dictionary, 3rd ed.).

#According to data furnished by John Robert Ross, this is a performative sentence which is the name given to the notion that "every declarative sentence . . . will be derived from a deep structure containing as an embedded clause what ends up in surface structure as an independent clause." The qualifications for performative sentences include "first person subjects and usually . . . second person direct or indirect objects in deep structure. They must be affirmative and nonnegative, they must be in the present tense, and their main verb must be one of the large class of true verbs which includes . . . say" and others of the same nature such as command, condemn, order, advise, ask, etc. ("On Declarative Sentences," Readings in Transformational Grammar, ed. Roderick A. Jacobs and Peter S. Rosenbaum [Waltham, Mass.: Ginn & Co., 1970], pp. 222-224).

TABLE XX (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
Noun Clause S				1
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1

On page 222 of his essay, Ross acknowledges his indebtedness to the Oxford philosopher, J. L. Austin (How To Do Things with Words, ed. J. O. Urmson [New York: Oxford University Press, 1962]) for the idea that "there is an important distinction" between constative sentences, those expressing truth values, such as "Prices slumped," and performative sentences in which speaking itself is an act, such as "I pronounce you man and wife."

TABLE XXI

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: CHARLES LAMB, SENTENCE NO. 3
TYPE, TEN CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j)

Textual Sentence: I detest, abhor, execrate, and (with Friar John) give thee to six score thousand devils, as in no instance to be excused or tolerated, but shunned as a universal viper; to be branded, proscribed, and spoken evil of!

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) I detest (thee).	I detest,		x
(b) (I) abhor (thee).	abhor,		x
(c) (I) execrate (thee).	execrate,		x
(d) With Friar John (I) give thee to six score thousand devils.	and (with Friar John) give thee to six score thousand devils,		x
(e) Someone excuses thee in no instance. Passive Transformation Adverbial Switch Transformation	as* in no instance to be excused		x
(f) Someone tolerates thee in no instance Passive Transformation Adverbial Switch Transformation	or tolerated,		x

*As appears to have the force of and in Lamb's use of it here. In view of his use of the archaism in sentence number two, it seems reasonable to assume he has gone back to the seventeenth-century use of as for coordination rather than for subordination. Ian A. Gordon states: "Much of what

TABLE XXI (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding

appears to be subordination is really coordination by a link no longer current: 'as', 'that', 'where' and 'which' introduce clauses which later grammarians insisted on calling adjectival, and so subordinate (The Movement of English Prose, p. 115).

TABLE XXI (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(g) Someone shuns thee. Passive Transformation	but shunned		x
	as (if thou were) a universal viper;	Thou are a viper.	x
		A viper is universal.	x
(h) Someone brands thee. Passive Transformation	to be branded,		x
(i) Someone proscribes thee. Passive Transformation	proscribed,		x
(j) Someone speaks evil of thee. Passive Transformation Exclamation Transformation	and spoken evil of!		x

TABLE XXI (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
		x		1
	Adjective			2

TABLE XXII

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: CHARLES LAMB, SENTENCE NO. 4
TYPE, ONE SENTENCE
(Sentence a)

Textual Sentence: In no way can I be brought to digest thee, thou thin, melancholy Privation, or more frightful and confounding Positive!

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) Thou Privation, or Positive, thou can bring me something in no way. Passive Transformation Reordering Transformation Adverbial Switch Transformation Exclamation Transformation	In no way can I be brought		
	to digest thee, thou thin, melancholy Privation, or more frightful and confounding Positive!	I digest thee.	x
		Privation is thin.	x
		Privation is melancholy.	x
		Positive is frightful.	x
		Positive is confounding.	x

TABLE XXII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				1
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1

TABLE XXIII

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: WILLIAM HAZLITT, SENTENCE NO. 1
TYPE, FOUR CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c, and d)

Textual Sentence: We eye the farthest verge of the horizon, and think what a way we shall have to look back upon, ere we arrive at our journey's end; and without our in the least suspecting it, the mists are at our feet, and the shadows of age encompass us.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) We eye the verge of the horizon.	We eye the farthest verge of the horizon,	The verge is farthest.	x
(b) (We) think something.	and think		x
Reordering Transformation	what a way we shall have	We shall have a way.	
	to look back upon,	We look back upon a way.	x
	ere we arrive at our journey's end;	We arrive at our end.	
		Our journey has an end.	x
(c) The mists are at our feet. Adverbial Switch Transformation	and without our in the least suspecting it, the mists are at our feet,	We do not suspect it in the least.	x
(d) The shadows of age encompass us.	and the shadows of age encompass us.		

TABLE XXIII (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Adjective			1
Question Word S				1
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				2
		x		3
			Genitive of Possession	4
			Gerund	1

TABLE XXIV

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: WILLIAM HAZLITT, SENTENCE NO. 2
TYPE, FOUR CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c, and d)

Textual Sentence: The two divisions of our lives have melted into each other: the extreme points close and meet with none of that romantic interval stretching out between them that we had reckoned upon; and for the rich, melancholy, solemn hues of age, "the sear, the yellow leaf," the deepening shadows of an autumnal evening, we only feel a dank, cold mist, encircling all objects, after the spirit of youth is [has] fled.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) The two divisions of our lives have melted into each other.	The two divisions of our lives have melted into each other:		
(b) The points close.	the extreme points close	The points are extreme.	x
(c) (The points) meet with none of that interval.			x
	and meet with none of that romantic interval	That interval is romantic.	x
	stretching out between them	That interval stretches out between them.	x
	that we had reckoned upon;	We had reckoned on the interval.	

TABLE XXIV (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1
	Adjective (Participle)			1
	Rel. Clause			1

TABLE XXIV (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(d) We feel a mist only. Adverbial Switch Transformation	and for the rich, melancholy, solemn hues of age, "the sear, the yellow leaf," the deepening shadows of an autumnal evening, we only feel a dank, cold mist encircling all objects,	The hues of age are rich.	x
		The hues of age are melancholy.	x
		The hues of age are solemn.	x
		The hues of age are the sear.	x
		The hues of age are the leaf.	x
		The leaf is yellow.	x
		The hues of age are the shadows of an evening.	x
		The shadows are deep.	x
		An evening is autumnal.	x
		A mist is dank.	x
		A mist is cold.	x
		A mist encircles all objects.	x
	after the spirit of youth is [has] fled.	The spirit of youth is has fled.	

TABLE XXIV (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1
	Appositive			1
	Appositive			1
	Adjective			2
	Appositive			1
	Adjective (Participle)			2
	Adjective			2
	Adjective			1
	Adjective			1
	Adjective (Participle)			1
		x		1

TABLE XXV

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: WILLIAM HAZLITT, SENTENCE NO. 3
TYPE, TWO CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a and b)

Textual Sentence: There is no inducement to look forward; and what is worse, little interest in looking back to what has become so trite and common.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) No inducement is [exists]. Expletive Transformation	There is no inducement		
	to look forward;	Someone looks forward.	x
(b) Interest (is) [exists]. Reordering Transformation (Forwarding of relative clause)			x
	and what is worse,	Something is worse.	
	little interest in looking back	Interest is little.	x
		Someone looks back.	x
	to what has become so trite and common.	Something has become so trite.	
		Something has become common.	x

TABLE XXV (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				1
	Rel. Clause			1
	Adjective			1
			Gerund	1
	Rel. Clause			2
	Adjective			2

TABLE XXVI

EMBEDDED SENTENCE ANALYSIS: WILLIAM HAZLITT, SENTENCE NO. 4
TYPE, FIVE CONJOINED SENTENCES
(Sentences a, b, c, d, and e)

Textual Sentence: The pleasures of our existence have worn themselves out, are "gone into the wastes of time," or have turned their indifferent side to us: the pains by their repeated blows have worn us out, and have left us neither spirit nor inclination to encounter them again in retrospect.

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(a) The pleasures of our existence have worn themselves out.	The pleasures of our existence have worn themselves out,		
(b) (The pleasures of our existence) are "gone into the wastes of time."	are "gone into the wastes of time,"		x
(c) (The pleasures of our existence) have turned their side to us.			x
	or have turned their indifferent side to us:	Their side is indifferent.	x
(d) The pains have worn us out by their blows.			
Adverbial Switch Transformation			
Passive Transformation	the pains by their repeated blows have worn us out,	Someone repeats the blows.	x

TABLE XXVI (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
	Adjective			1
	Adjective (Past Part.)			1

TABLE XXVI (Continued)

Matrix Sentences	Textual Complements	Constituent Sentences	Deletion
(e) (The pains) have left us neither spirit nor inclination.	and have left us neither spirit nor inclination		x
Adverbial Switch Transformation	to encounter them again in retrospect.	We encounter them in retrospect again.	x

TABLE XXVI (Continued)

Types of Embedding				
Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complement	Noun Modification	Adverbial Clause	Nominalization	Level of Embedding
Tenseless S (Infinitive)				1

TABLE XXVII

SUMMARY OF DATA FROM TRANSFORMATIONAL ANALYSES FOR CHARLES LAMB AND WILLIAM HAZLITT, NINETEENTH CENTURY

Sentences Combined by Embedding Rules

Lamb		Hazlitt
2	Sentences Embedded in Verb Phrase Complements	4
9	Sentences Embedded as Noun Modification	23
4	Sentences Embedded in Adverbial Clauses	2
0	Sentences Embedded as Nominalizations	3
15	Total of Embedded Sentences	32

Levels of Embedding

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Lamb:	11	3	1	0
Hazlitt:	24	6	1	1

Deletions Found in Both Embedded and Conjoined Sentences

Lamb	25
Hazlitt	32

Rhetorical Transformations

Lamb		Hazlitt
7	Passive	1
0	Question	0
1	Imperative	0
3	Exclamation	0
0	Expletive	1
2	Reordering	2
3	Adverbial Switch	4
16	Total of Rhetorical Transformations	8

Number of Conjoined Sentences

Lamb	14
Hazlitt	15

CHAPTER VII

INTERPRETATIONS

> Comparison and analysis need only the cadavers on the table; but interpretation is always producing parts of the body from its pockets, and fixing them in place.[1]
>
> T. S. Eliot, "The Function of Criticism"

By juxtaposing a few examples of traditional literary criticism of Francis Bacon's prose style and criticism based on data tabulated from the stylistic analysis of syntax presented in the four Baconian tables in the preceding chapter, the writer of this dissertation can best provide a brief but revealing view of what is meant by objective criteria in support of intuitive or impressionistic evaluations of style.

Abraham Cowley, in his ode "To the Royal Society" composed at the request of Thomas Sprat for his history of the Society, poetically "describes" Bacon's prose style in general, although today's critic would be hard put to say exactly what it was that Cowley thought admirable:

> So from all modern follies he
> Has vindicated eloquence and wit.
> His candid style like a clean stream does slide,
> And his bright fancy all the way
> Does, like the sunshine, in it play;
> It does, like Thames, the best of rivers, glide,
> Where the god does not rudely overturn,
> But gently pour the crystal urn,
> And with judicious hand does the whole current guide.
> It has all the beauties nature can impart,
> And all the comely dress without the paint of art.[2]
>
> Ll. 174-184

Writing in the first quarter of the twentieth century, Morris Croll stated that "Bacon's great service to English prose was that he naturalized a style in which ingenious obscurity and acute significance are the appropriate garb of the mysteries of empire. . . ."[3] Toward the middle of the twentieth century, another literary critic, L. C. Knights, connected Bacon's writing style to his philosophy that man's purpose in the world "was simply to observe, to understand and to dominate the world of 'matter.' Almost as much as his explicit philosophy," he continued, "Bacon's prose style is an index of the emergence of the modern world."[4] A literary critic of the early 1960's, Paul H. Kocher, wrote that "there was a poet somewhere in Francis Bacon. His own tremendous visions for the betterment of science and law show plainly that imagination, in a more Coleridgean sense, was one of his strongest qualities. And the sheer magnificance of his style looks in the same direction."[5]

When critics evaluate the style of Bacon's essays per se, they often use such words and phrases as "strength and grace of style," "epigramatic style," or "a concentrated and pungent style." The favorite one-word description is "aphoristic," and perhaps that is the best description so far given if one examines what Bacon himself had to say about aphorisms. In The Advancement of Learning, Book VI, he discusses the two methods of conveying knowledge of the sciences: ". . . these are delivered either in the way of aphorisim or methodically. . . . But that other way of delivery of aphorisms has numerous advantages over the methodical. And first, it gives us a proof of the author's abilities, and shows whether he hath entered deep into his subject or not. Aphorisms are ridiculous things, unless wrought from

the central parts of the sciences; and here all illustration, excursion, variety of examples, deduction, connection, and particular description, is cut off, so that nothing besides an ample stock of observations is left for the matter of aphorisms."[6]

The twentieth century critical opinions all antedated Noam Chomsky's revolutionary work in generative transformational theory and grammar as presented to the linguistic world in 1965 in Aspects of the Theory of Syntax. The effect of Chomsky's emphasis on the importance of syntax in understanding the use of language is plain to see in the 1967 criticism of Bacon's Essays by Phyllis Brown Burke. She stated in "Rhetorical Considerations of Bacon's 'Style'" that "much of Bacon's style as an essayist . . . is reflected by the grammar of his writing." She attributed the neutral and impersonal tone of the Essays primarily to the sentence structures Bacon chose. Moreover, she found in her analyses of the various groups of essays and the revisions they underwent that "the grammar of detachment and objectivity is the same" in all.[7] In the following paragraphs the writer of this dissertation will attempt to show what transformations produced such a "grammar."

According to the tabulated data for the seventeenth century in Chapter VI, Bacon's favorite embedding technique was the adverbial clause transformation which embeds a complete or partial sentence in an adverb thereby subordinating it to a matrix sentence. In the four sentences from his essay, "Of Death," which were analyzed, Bacon chose this type of transformation nine times out of a total of twenty-two embedding transformations. Adverbial constituents of sentences, whether they be words, phrases, or clauses, indicate circumstance, place, or time. Because all of these conditions are facts that usually

can be verified, the use of a number of adverbial constituents in a passage of prose emphasizes the denotative or objective aspect of semantics rather than the connative or subjective.

However, Bacon is not quite as innocent of practicing "art" to influence his readers as some critics think he is. In addition to favoring the embedding adverbial clause transformation, he overwhelmingly chose the adverbial switch rhetorical transformation (eight times out of thirteen rhetorical transformations) to the total exclusion of the question, imperative, and exclamation rhetorical transformations which have a high and overt emotive factor inherent in them. In other words, Bacon reorders or transposes his factual adverbial constituents to more prominent places in his surface structures than they occupy in the deep structures (after all the other sentence constituents). In doing this he heightens the impersonal, neutral, and objective tone of his comments on death. Since Bacon's Essays of Counsels, Civill and Morall were written to be instructive, it does not seem presumptuous to suggest that Bacon had his own indirect syntactic way of influencing his reader to adopt his objective attitude toward death as the most appropriate one.

Although Bacon's desire to and manner of influencing his readers are moot questions, his detachment from any personal response to the thought of death is obvious, especially when contrasted with the subjective attitudes of the five other essayists writing on the topic. It is also noteworthy in this respect that three of the five other rhetorical transformations Bacon used are from the active to the passive voice. Among the several reasons for using the passive voice, one is to preserve distance from a subject: there may be a special reason for not mentioning the active subject. The generality of ". . . when the whole

body is corrupted and dissolved" disappears when the sentence becomes ". . . when death corrupts and dissolves the body."

Further examination of the data accumulated about Bacon's embedded sentences shows that noun modification was favored next as a transformational choice; he used this type of transformation six times out of twenty-two transformational operations. Although noun modification tends to produce subjectivity, Bacon's use of it enhances the objectivity he partially achieved by the use of the adverbial constituents already discussed. The tables for Bacon's sentences show five of these noun modifications coming to the surface of his sentences as simple adjectives which, for the most part, are factual rather than evaluative. Thus, Bacon has carefully controlled even this aspect of his sentence structure, saying no more descriptively than is absolutely necessary to "properly" discuss such a solemn subject as death.

In yet another way, Bacon has achieved his "grammar of detachment and objectivity." In embedding four sentences in verb phrase complements, Bacon chose the question-word sentence transformation twice. This is essentially an indirect question, the nature of which absolves the writer of the personal involvement of asking a direct question. Again, Bacon chose a transformation that preserved anonymity.

Another matter of stylistic interest is the amount of deletion in a writer's sentences. Since the elements of a construction which are deleted must be mentally replaced by the reader or hearer of the sentence if he is to understand it, writers who delete a great deal are more difficult to comprehend than those who provide the fullest possible syntactical information. In the four sentences analyzed, Bacon showed a tendency to avoid deletion transformations since only eighteen deletions

are recorded for the four sentences. This is the lowest number of deletions recorded for any of the essayists whose texts were examined with the exception of Goldsmith who deleted syntactical elements only thirteen times in four sentences. It appears that Bacon's transformational choices were of the kind that permitted the use of complete syntactical structures for the most part and that he opted for full structures rather than deletion when the rules of the English language allowed a choice. In this sense, then, he does not have a complex style.

Nor is his style complex when the total number of embedded sentences is considered. It is generally assumed that a great deal of embedding creates a difficult style. Bacon's four sentences show a total of twenty-two embedded sentences as compared to Cowley's thirty-one. If Bacon's sentences have a degree of complexity, it is probably because he carries his embedding to deeper levels than is usual. The analysis shows that he has two sentences embedded at Level 4, the deepest level to which any of the essayists took their embedded sentences. In evaluating the entire research project in this respect, one comes to the conclusion that language systems function in a compensatory manner. If a writer uses self-embedding beyond the second level, he has to avoid deletion in his sentence structures as much as possible in order for the reader to sort out meaning. If a writer deletes a great deal in his sentences, he will most likely confine his embedding to Levels 1 and 2 for the same reason.

Among his contemporaries Cowley enjoyed a reputation as one of the better poets, but they paid scant attention to the quality of his prose. Today, the opposite is true; his poetry is seldom read, but his essays are praised. One of the few references to his prose in the seventeenth

century was that of Thomas Sprat, his literary executor and biographer:

> The last Pieces that we have from his hands are Discourses, by way of Essays, upon some of the gravest subjects that concern the Contentment of a Virtuous Mind. These he intended as a real character of his own thoughts upon the point of his Retirement. And accordingly you may observe in the Prose of them there is little Curiosity of Ornament, but they are written in a lower and humbler style than the rest, and as an unfeigned Image of his Soul should be drawn without Flattery. I do not speak this to their disadvantage. For the true perfection of Wit is to be plyable to all occasions, to walk, or flye, according to the Nature of every subject.[8]

In the eighteenth century, Dr. Samuel Johnson devoted all of one short paragraph to the essays in a long criticism of Cowley as a metaphysical poet. In it he remarked that Cowley's "thoughts are natural, and his style has a smooth and placid equability, which has never yet obtained its due commendation. Nothing is far-sought or hard-laboured; but all is easy without feebleness, and familiar without grossness."[9]

A twentieth century evaluation of Cowley by Douglas Bush points out his true contribution to English literature. "In real metaphysical poetry wit and feeling were fused by the heat and pressure of inner tension; they remained separate and relatively shallow and narrow in Cowley. . . . The poet was an essayist in more than his essays. . . . Instead of being a poet who wrestled with experience Cowley was a man of letters who produced 'literature' for a social group. In most of his mature work he was both the enfeebled grandson of Donne and the enfeebled grandfather of Dryden."[10]

Although he may have been "enfeebled," still Cowley was the "grandfather of Dryden," and that is the reason he is of interest to the writer of this dissertation. Only sixty years intervened between the time Bacon wished "to try out his thoughts" on the topic of death and

the year Cowley expressed his philosophy on the same subject, not a notably long time in the history of literature. In the two passages the genre is the same; the subject is the same; the number of sentences is the same; the approach to the subject is the same (philosophical). How can the reader's intuition that Cowley's passage belongs to the modern world and Bacon's does not be explained objectively? Part of the answer can be found by noting the differences in the transformational history of the two passages.

Cowley's embedding of fifteen sentences as noun modification in contrast to Bacon's six is the most striking piece of evidence for a key determinant of his "modern" style. It appears that Cowley grasped an important principle of modern prose. According to Francis Christensen, "What you wish to say is found not in the noun but in what you add to qualify the noun. The noun is only a grappling iron to hitch your mind to the reader's. The noun by itself adds nothing to the reader's information; it is the name of something he knows already, and if he does not know it, you cannot do business with him. The noun, the verb, and the main clause serve merely as a base on which the meaning will rise." Christensen then purposes a correlative principle which also is clearly evident in the continuous movement within Cowley's sentences, whereas Bacon's sentences proceed in staccatos (the Senecan amble). Christensen explains that "speech is linear, moving in time, and writing moves in linear space, which is analogous to time. When you add a modifier, whether to the noun, the verb, or the main clause, you must add it either before or after what it is added to. . . . Thus we have the second principle--the principle of <u>direction of modification</u> or <u>direction of movement</u>."[11]

The cadence in his sentences, now forward, now backward, stemming from his generous use of modification, especially of nouns, is one of the reasons that Cowley sounds so much at home with modern writers while Bacon does not. Cadence, or rhythmic movement, has always been an integral part of English sentence structure, even in the Old English period of development. In turning away from the modified Latin structures that passed for "a new language" among Bacon and his contemporaries and adopting the native rhythms of the English sentence as his prose style, Cowley won his reputation as the first writer of modern prose.

Another apparent indication of modernity in Cowley's writing is the increased amount of deletion in his sentences over that of Bacon and the corresponding decrease in embedding at Level 4. Cowley deletes sentence constituents twenty-three times and does not embed at all at Level 4, while Bacon deletes eighteen constituents and embeds two sentences at Level 4. In a diachronic view of deletion transformations over the three centuries examined in this research, one gains the impression that the more modern the writer the more he deletes from his sentences. There is a noticeable trend among the writers surveyed from Bacon to Hazlitt, with the exception of Goldsmith, toward increased deletion accompanied by proportionately less embedding at deep levels. A possible explanation might be that the syntactical component of the English language is responding to the increased complexity of the modern Weltanschauung as it did in the seventeenth century to accommodate its changed world view. In other words, so interlocked are the ideas that have to be expressed if men are to communicate in the modern world that the syntactical component of the language has to develop a kind of

shorthand in which an abbreviated structure stands for the complete structure which would have been used formerly. Participial, infinitive, and gerundive phrases come to mind as examples of such a paring down of structure. In essence, the abbreviated syntactical structure lacks any element of the sentence that can be intuitively replaced by the hearer or reader of the sentence.

One of today's critics has written that "Cowley knows how to make the very shape of a sentence reveal his personality. . . ."[12] The most obvious evidence to support this evaluation can be found in Cowley's choice of rhetorical transformations. While Bacon chose transformations in this category that produced detachment and objectivity, Cowley chose the highly subjective question and exclamation transformations. In displaying his personality in such sentence structures, Cowley was foreshadowing one of the main characteristics of the new essay that developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the expression of individuality.

The new type of essay that appeared in the eighteenth century "was the joint creation of two men, Richard Steele and Joseph Addison, and as such it bore in unmistakable manner the impress of their personalities."[13] For this analysis Addison was chosen as representative of those whose writing skills were turned to developing the literary periodicals through which the essay rose to great popularity.

Dr. Samuel Johnson provides posterity with what seems to be a balanced critique of Addison's prose style: "His prose is the model of the middle style; on grave subjects not formal, on light occasions not grovelling; pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable, and always easy without glowing words or

pointed sentences. Addison never deviates from his track to snatch a grace; he seeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected spendour." Of Addison's sentence structures, Johnson says they "have neither studied amplitude, nor affected brevity; his periods, though not diligently rounded are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."[14]

Although Johnson complains that Addison "sometimes descends too much to the language of conversation,"[15] this characteristic of his prose is more to be praised than denigrated in a research project tracing the development of modern speech-based prose. According to the summary of data from the transformational analyses of Addison's four sentences on the topic of death, he follows Cowley closely in his extensive embedding of sentences which come to the surface as noun modification. He deletes slightly less often than Cowley but embeds a total of eight sentences at Levels 3 and 4, twice Cowley's number. He undoubtedly displays "the middle style . . . exact without elaboration" since the only rhetorical transformations he allows himself beyond the adverbial switch transformation is one passive transformation.

"The value of Addison to his century was that he gave to Englishmen an example of good prose that any writer could imitate without losing his own identity," says James Sutherland. ". . . Addison's prose comes near to being the unhurried conversation of an eighteenth-century gentleman" and as such represents the average prose of the period.[16]

If Addison's prose represents the continued development of the speech-based prose in common use today, Oliver Goldsmith's style shows

traces of that second branch of eighteenth-century prose that developed to its fullest in the nineteenth century as romantic prose. It was a prose "directed toward manipulating the feelings of the reader. . . ." Some of its devices were "the use of evocative imagery and of a sentence made up of short coordinated elements."[17] The summary of data from the analysis of Goldsmith's passage on death shows that these characteristics appear in it. Goldsmith has the lowest number of embedded sentences of any of the six writers in the survey. He has only twelve; his passage certainly does not lean on subordination. His sentences show only thirteen deletions and no embeddings below Level 2. This criteria points to the correctness of the critic's evaluation which described "his manner . . . [as] perfectly suited to his substance [every day affairs] -- in its simple diction and constructions and its conversational tone the direct antithesis of the manner of Johnson."[18] It is rather odd, then, that Johnson should have praised Goldsmith, the writer, very highly as "a man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness. What such an author has told, who would tell again?"[19]

Evidence of Goldsmith's tendency toward romantic prose shows up in the summary of rhetorical transformations he chose to employ. He used the exclamation transformation twice in his four sentences and the imperative once, the only writer besides Charles Lamb to use this evocative structural device. Charles Lamb, of course, was one of those who further developed the romantic prose style in the nineteenth century.

"There is no other English writer whose work it is so impossible to disengage from his own personality and circumstances as Lamb's," according to A. C. Ward. "Everything that is durable in what he wrote was coloured and flavoured by the unique combination of qualities found in him by Crabb Robinson, who reached to the core of Lamb's style and choice of matter in saying that he 'reasons from feelings.'"[20] The first evidence syntactically of the validity of this observation appears in the summary of data for rhetorical transformations for the nineteenth century. Lamb shows a total of sixteen such transformations in his four sentences about death, more than any other writer. Of the sixteen, three are exclamation transformations and one is an imperative. The reader is reminded that rhetorical transformations do not join sentences together but change a single sentence in some way for rhetorical or stylistic reasons.

An unusual aspect of Lamb's syntax is his use of a "performative sentence" in his passage about death. This is a sentence in which the speaker or writer performs an act in producing a sentence ("I pronounce you man and wife"). A fuller explanation of this linguistic phenomenon is given at the bottom of the table in which Lamb's sentence number two is analyzed. The stylistic interest in Lamb's performative sentence follows from the fact that a performative sentence may also be an "illocutionary act which has a certain <u>force</u> in saying something"; and it may at the same time be a "perlocutionary act which is <u>the achieving of</u> certain <u>effects</u> by saying something."[21] In sentence number two Lamb seems to be performing illocutionary and perlocutionary acts at the same time that he is writing the performative sentence. The result is a highly emotional sentence semantically. The unusual use of this type

of sentence in prose is another indication that Lamb belongs with the romantic prose writers of his time. As Ward says of Lamb, "Everything is presented or filtered through the author's own personality and temperament."[22]

William Hazlitt, the last of the six essayists whose texts comprise the corpus for this analysis was also "a thoroughgoing individualist, who never willingly conformed to any convention, literary or social. . . ." In spite of this romantic tendency, "his essays had much the discursive character of talk,"[23] and he therefore belongs in "the middle stream" of speech-based prose. He is, in fact, in direct line of descent from Cowley and Addison. All three depend heavily in their writing styles upon embedding transformations, Cowley using thirty-one, Addison thirty-three, and Hazlitt thirty-two compared to Bacon's eighteen, Goldsmith's twelve, and Lamb's fifteen. In addition, Cowley, Addison, and Hazlitt clearly favor transformations that embed sentences as noun modification. Cowley and Addison use deletion transformations in about the same number, Cowley, twenty-three, Addison, twenty-one. But Hazlitt deletes thirty-two times in his four sentences, although he has approximately the same number of embedded sentences as Cowley and Addison. In the passages of the romantic prose writers, Goldsmith and Lamb, the sentence structures show an almost equal number of rhetorical transformations and embedding transformations. These facts when taken together suggest that embedding transformations contribute most syntactically to the writing style called speech-based prose. Further, it appears that transformations which embed sentences as noun modification have always predominated in English speech-based prose and that as this style of writing developed from Cowley through Addison to Hazlitt, the

increased use of this transformation was a mark of maturity in author and style. (Cowley used fifteen noun modification embeddings; Addison, twenty-one; and Hazlitt, twenty-three.)

In Chapter III of this dissertation, Chomsky was quoted as saying that any linguistic theory must have "explanatory adequacy [which] is essentially the problem of constructing a theory of language acquisition. . . ." By this statement Chomsky means that linguists will learn how adults use language by observing how children acquire language. For some time linguists have been studying the process in children. "For the last thirty years," says Kellogg W. Hunt, "we have known at least three things about the development of language structure. First, as children mature they tend to produce more words on any given subject. They have more to say. Second, as children mature, the sentences they use tend to be longer. Third, as children mature a larger proportion of their clauses are subordinate clauses. . . ." Later in his article, "Recent Measures in Syntactic Development," Hunt "refines" his statement "about subordinate clauses and the index of their frequency." He has found that "there are three common kinds of such clauses: noun, movable adverb, and adjective. . . . Though the total of all three increases with maturity, not all three increase equally. Noun clauses in general are no index of maturity. . . . Movable adverb clauses . . . tell more about mode of discourse and subject matter than maturity. But adjective clauses are different. From the earliest grades to the latest the number of them increases steadily, and among skilled adults the adjective clause is still more frequent than it is with students finishing high school. We see, then, that the subordinate clause index is a team which moves ahead, but it moves ahead because one member [the adjective

clause] does almost all the work."[24]

If the reader of this dissertation even casually examines the tables in which the sentence structures of these six essayists from three different centuries have been analyzed, he will note in those of Addison and Hazlitt these signs of linguistic maturity which Hunt has identified in children, as well as their initial presence in Cowley's sentence structures. The objective data of the tables and the summary sheets for the most part support the views of the critic who said that Cowley "abandons the pregnant sententiousness of Bacon's style for a manner which is almost startling in its modernity" and, further, that "Cowley was the first true master of the form [essay] in England, and from him the line of descent to Hazlitt and Lamb may be clearly traced."[25]

However, the facts tabulated about Lamb's use of embedding transformations versus his use of rhetorical transformations would seem to exclude him as a descendant from Cowley in his essay style, since the data identifies Lamb's style with that of romantic prose rather than with speech-based prose. If this fact held true throughout a greatly expanded analysis of sentence structures in Lamb's essays, then the linguist could indeed say to the literary critic, "Here is objective syntactic evidence that should be given consideration in an evaluation of Lamb's prose style and in a determination of his literary affinities."

Although a historical trend toward embedding and deletion in speech-based prose has been shown in this very limited study, any conclusive statement would have to await a much expanded investigation of embedding transformations and deletion transformations in the prose of these six essayists whose sample texts have been analyzed. A computer

analysis would in all probability yield extremely interesting data whether or not such an analysis supported the findings of this present heuristic study.

ENDNOTES

[1]T. S. Eliot, "The Function of Criticism," in Selected Essays, 3rd enl. ed. (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1951), p. 33.

[2]Abraham Cowley, "To the Royal Society," in Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry, 2nd ed., ed. Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), p. 960.

[3]Morris Croll, "Francis Bacon," in Schelling Anniversary Papers by His Former Students (n.p.: Russell, 1923), p. 143.

[4]L. C. Knights, Explorations: Essays in Criticism Mainly on the Literature of the Seventeenth Century (New York: George W. Stewart, Publisher, Inc., 1947), p. 118.

[5]Paul H. Kocher, "Francis Bacon on the Drama," in Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, ed. Richard Hosley (Columbia, Mo.: University of Columbia Press, 1962), pp. 306-07.

[6]Francis Bacon, Advancement of Learning and Novum Organum (n.p., n.d.), p. 173.

[7]Phyllis Brown Burke, "Rhetorical Considerations of Bacon's 'Style,'" in College Composition and Communication, 18 (1967), 25.

[8]Arthur H. Nethercot, The Reputation of Abraham Cowley (1660-1800) (Philadelphia, 1923), pp. 14-15.

[9]Samuel Johnson, "Abraham Cowley," in Lives of the English Poets (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1925), p. 43.

[10]Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century, 1600-1660 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1945), p. 158.

[11]Francis Christensen and Bonniejean Christensen, A New Rhetoric (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1976), p. 7.

[12]Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke, eds. Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry, 2nd ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), p. 456.

[13]William Frank Bryan and Ronald S. Crane, The English Familiar Essay: Representative Texts (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1916), p. xxiv.

[14]Samuel Johnson, "Joseph Addison," in Lives of the English Poets (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1925), pp. 367-68.

[15]Johnson, "Joseph Addison," p. 368.

[16]James Sutherland, "Some Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Prose," in Essays of the Eighteenth Century Presented to David Michal Smith (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1945), pp. 94-97.

[17]Ian A. Gordon, The Movement of English Prose (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966), p. 148.

[18]Bryan and Crane, p. xl.

[19]Samuel Johnson, "Thomas Parnell," in Lives of the English Poets (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1925), p. 311.

[20]A. C. Ward, English Literature: Chaucer to Bernard Shaw (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1958), p. 572.

[21]J. L. Austin, How to Do Things With Words, ed. J. O. Urmson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 120.

[22]Ward, p. 575.

[23]Bryan and Crane, p. liii.

[24]Kellogg W. Hunt, "Recent Measures in Syntactic Development," in Readings in Applied Transformational Grammar, ed. Mark Lester (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), pp. 189, 192.

[25]Witherspoon and Warnke, p. 456.

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VITA

Agnes Allison Davis

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: A PLATONIC DIALECTIC: CAN LINGUISTICS ENHANCE LITERARY CRITICISM?

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Okeene, Oklahoma, July 1, 1913, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Calkins.

Education: Graduated from Tulsa Central High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, in May, 1931; attended Oklahoma University, 1931-1933; attended University of Wichita in 1933; attended University of Tulsa, 1941-1944; attended Oakland University, 1963-1964; attended Phillips University, 1964-1965; received Bachelor of Science degree in English from Phillips University in 1965; received Master of Arts degree from University of Tulsa in 1969; received Doctor of Philosophy degree at Oklahoma State University in July, 1976.

Professional Experience: English instructor, secondary level, Memorial High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1965-1968; chairman of English Department, 1965-1967; English instructor, secondary level, Booker T. Washington High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1968-1969; English instructor, Department of English, Oklahoma State University, 1969, and at the present time. Member of the Linguistic Society of America and the Mid-America Linguistic Conference.