

"IDIOTSTYLE AND IDIOLECT: BORDERS AND INTERSECTIONS OF THE CONCEPTS"

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Abstract

This article highlights the challenges of studying idiostyle, as it's closely tied to the author's personality, making it difficult to generalize or abstract its features. Traditionally, idiostyle has been used in literary studies to capture an author's distinctive style or the unique stylistic qualities of their work. Some scholars see idiostyle and idiolect as inseparable, highlighting how an author's preferences for themes, genres, and stylistic techniques come together to create texts that convey both information and emotional depth.

Key words

idiostyle, idiolect, author's language, individual characteristics, literary text, linguistic personality

In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in the focus of literary and linguistic research, moving from broader concerns with the type and genre of literary texts to a more nuanced exploration of idiostyle. This term, which captures the unique linguistic and stylistic fingerprint of an author, has sparked considerable debate among scholars. Researchers today offer varied interpretations of idiostyle, reflecting its complexity and the diverse lenses through which it can be analyzed. Modern linguistics not only provides numerous definitions for idiostyle but also introduces a range of related terms, underscoring the multifaceted nature of this concept.

At its core, idiostyle is closely tied to the broader concept of "idiolect," although the two are not identical. According to the Stylistic Encyclopedic Dictionary, idiostyle (also referred to as individual style or idiolect) is defined as "a set of linguistic and stylistic-textual features characteristic of the speech of a writer, scholar, publicist, or individual speakers of a given language." This definition highlights the distinctiveness of an author's language, capturing the stylistic choices that set their voice apart.

The dictionary further clarifies the distinction between idiostyle and idiolect. While an idiolect refers to the structural, stable features inherent in an individual's

speech, idiostyle encompasses a broader spectrum, including linguistic and textual characteristics shaped by the unique personality of the writer or speaker. Importantly, idiostyle is influenced by various extralinguistic factors, such as functional-stylistic norms, genre conventions, and individual stylistic preferences. These external elements interact with the author's internal creative vision to shape their idiostyle, making it a dynamic and context-sensitive phenomenon.

One of the challenges in studying idiostyle lies in its deeply individual nature. Unlike linguistic phenomena that lend themselves to broad generalizations, idiostyle resists abstraction, as it is inherently tied to the specificities of the individual. This makes it both a fascinating and intricate area of study, requiring a balance between detailed textual analysis and an understanding of broader cultural and historical contexts.

Traditionally, the concept of idiostyle has been employed in the analysis of literary styles, serving as a tool to identify the distinctive voice of a particular writer or the stylistic nuances of a specific work. By examining idiostyle, researchers can uncover how a writer's linguistic choices contribute to the creation of meaning, mood, and artistic identity within their texts. This approach not only enriches our understanding of individual authors but also sheds light on the evolving possibilities of language and style in literature as a whole.

Thus, the study of idiostyle offers a window into the interplay between language, creativity, and identity, making it an invaluable framework for exploring the unique ways in which authors express their vision of the world.

E.G. Fomenko, in his article dedicated to analyzing James Joyce's idiostyle, outlines several approaches to understanding idiostyle in contemporary linguistics. Drawing on the foundational ideas of L.A. Bulakhovsky, V.V. Vinogradov, A.A. Shakhmatov, and P.A. Budagov—who explored the role of language and style in shaping the legacy of major writers—Fomenko highlights the diversity of scholarly perspectives on the concepts of idiolect and idiostyle.

For some researchers, idiostyle and idiolect are seen as inseparable, deeply intertwined aspects of an author's linguistic identity. V.V. Ledeneva, for instance, posits that idiostyle is a manifestation of the text-generating and aesthetic activities of a linguistic personality. It emerges from the integration of preferred themes, genres, techniques, and stylistic methods that an author employs to construct texts. These tools serve both informational and expressive purposes, helping to communicate ideas while conveying emotional and artistic nuance. According to Ledeneva, the subjective category of preference—a writer's inherent tendency to favor particular linguistic and stylistic choices—defines the uniqueness of an

idiostyle and sets it apart from others. She describes idiolect as an "individualized version of the common language," emphasizing how features like stylistically marked vocabulary, inventive word creation, and the formation of new concepts contribute to the distinctiveness of a writer's idiostyle.

Other scholars, however, view idiolect as the foundation upon which idiostyle is built, framing the latter as an individual's unique way of using language. In this view, idiostyle is shaped by a writer's personal linguistic habits, preferences, and creativity. D. Crystal and D. Davy, in their influential work on stylistic text analysis, differentiate between two related but distinct concepts: "individual manner" and "authorial originality." They argue that individual manner—akin to idiolect—is relatively stable, consistent, and often subconscious, arising from ingrained linguistic patterns and non-linguistic influences. In contrast, authorial originality refers to a more deliberate and temporary set of linguistic choices that reflect the writer's intentional stylistic innovation. Originality is marked by unconventional and experimental uses of language, while individuality reflects the deeper, habitual elements of an author's linguistic identity.

This distinction is particularly valuable for understanding the nuanced relationship between an author's spontaneous linguistic tendencies and their conscious artistic efforts. While idiostyle represents the unique stylistic signature of an author, idiolect provides the linguistic foundation upon which that style is constructed. Together, they reveal the intricate interplay between a writer's habitual language use and their deliberate creative expression, offering a comprehensive lens for analyzing literary and stylistic phenomena.

By examining these varying perspectives, Fomenko underscores the complexity of idiostyle as a concept. It is not merely a static set of linguistic features but a dynamic and multi-dimensional phenomenon shaped by both personal and artistic factors, making it a rich area for further exploration in literary and linguistic studies.

M. A. Fedotova, in her article exploring the distinctions between the concepts of idiostyle and idiolect, sheds light on their nuanced differences. She defines idiolect as "a set of formal and stylistic features characteristic of the speech of an individual speaker of a given language." In contrast, idiostyle is described as "an individual manner or method by which a specific speech act or work, including a literary or artistic one, is executed." Idiostyle emphasizes the unique selection and combination of linguistic elements, showcasing the author's creative and stylistic decisions.

The distinction between these two terms lies not only in their definitions but also in their application within linguistic and literary research. Fedotova notes that

the choice of focusing on idiolect or idiostyle largely depends on the research objectives. For instance, N. K. Onipenko observes that linguopoetic studies often center on describing the idiolect of a writer, delving into the personal and structural features of their language use. In contrast, semiotic studies may examine textual idiolect in relation to its genre and the historical context of its creation, connecting it to broader cultural and temporal frameworks.

Given the complexity of idiostyle as a concept, analyzing an author's style requires a multi-dimensional and layered approach. While it is possible to study idiolect and idiostyle independently, their interconnection is undeniable. Every linguistic personality possesses an idiolect, which serves as the foundation for their idiostyle. The idiostyle, however, extends beyond the idiolect by interacting with the structures and norms of the national language. It is shaped by the writer's linguistic and communicative competence, their conscious choices in selecting communicative tools, and their linguistic intuition and aesthetic sensibilities.

In this sense, the writer's idiostyle can be understood as "an individually established system of relationships to various ways of authorial representation through the means of the idiolect." It is the artistic embodiment of a writer's linguistic personality, reflecting not only their unique worldview but also their ability to creatively manipulate language to convey meaning, emotion, and aesthetic beauty.

Researcher E.V. Starkova further contributes to the discourse by identifying five distinct approaches to analyzing idiostyle in her article "Problems of Understanding the Phenomenon of Idiostyle in Linguistic Studies." These approaches provide valuable frameworks for exploring idiostyle as a multifaceted phenomenon, encompassing the linguistic, stylistic, and extralinguistic dimensions that define a writer's individuality.

Through this layered analysis, the study of idiostyle offers profound insights into the creative process, the evolution of literary norms, and the intricate ways in which language can reflect both personal and cultural identities.

The concept of idiostyle has been explored through various approaches, each offering unique insights into the intricate relationship between a writer's use of language and their individuality. These perspectives highlight how authors transform linguistic tools into a medium of personal and artistic expression.

In the semantic-stylistic approach, idiostyle is understood as a system of "individual-aesthetic use of linguistic means characteristic of a particular period in the development of literary art." This means that an author's unique style is shaped not only by their personal preferences but also by the cultural and linguistic norms of their time. V. V. Vinogradov, a prominent scholar in this field, emphasized the

role of historical and social contexts in shaping idiostyle. Within this framework, researchers often compile dictionaries of writers' language, meticulously cataloging the specific words, phrases, and stylistic devices that define their literary identity. These dictionaries serve as valuable tools for understanding how authors both adapt to and innovate within the linguistic landscape of their era.

The linguopoetic approach takes a slightly different perspective, focusing on how idiostyle functions as "a complex system of interdependent linguistic techniques involved in constructing the poetic world." Essentially, this approach investigates how writers use language to create vivid, immersive artistic realities. By identifying patterns in word usage, scholars reveal the linguistic strategies that underpin a writer's creative vision. Central to this approach is the idea of lexicocentrism, or the emphasis on the role of words in shaping meaning and aesthetic impact. Through this lens, idiostyle becomes a window into the poetic essence of a text, showcasing how language choices bring a writer's world to life.

From a systemic-structural perspective, idiostyle is seen as "a specific mode of linguistic construction of worlds." This approach delves into how language operates as a tool for building imaginative realities. According to S. T. Zolyan, idiostyle serves as an "allegorical code" of the creative personality, reflecting the writer's unique cognitive and emotional patterns. These patterns, Zolyan argues, are not merely products of personal choice but are also influenced by genetic predispositions and individual ways of thinking. In this way, idiostyle becomes a bridge between the linguistic structures of a text and the author's inner world, offering insights into how they perceive and interpret reality.

The communicative-activity approach views idiostyle as synonymous with the "author's creative individuality." Rooted in Y. N. Karaulov's concept of the linguistic personality, this perspective highlights the author as an active agent in the creative process. V. V. Ledeneva eloquently describes how every aspect of a literary text reflects the author's role as a linguistic and creative personality. Writers are seen as transformers of language, capable of aesthetically modifying and adapting linguistic tools to express their unique thoughts, emotions, and worldviews. This approach underscores the dynamic interplay between the author's individuality and their use of language, positioning idiostyle as a testament to their creative ingenuity.

The cognitive approach brings a psychological and philosophical dimension to the study of idiostyle. Drawing from cognitive linguistics, it explores how idiostyle serves as a system of expressive means that connects the poet's inner world to the artistic reality of their text. This perspective emphasizes the idea of "possible

worlds," where language becomes a medium through which writers construct alternative realities that reflect their personal experiences and perceptions. A key concept here is the individual-authorial concept, which encapsulates how an author's mental and emotional landscape shapes their artistic output. In this approach, the study of idiostyle centers on the author's primary communicative activity, examining how their creative choices encode meaning, emotion, and perspective into their work.

Each of these approaches provides a distinct lens for understanding idiostyle, highlighting its complexity and richness as a subject of study. Whether viewed through the historical lens of the semantic-stylistic approach, the poetic focus of the linguopoetic approach, the structural emphasis of the systemic-structural perspective, the individual-centered lens of the communicative-activity approach, or the psychological depth of the cognitive approach, idiostyle remains a fascinating intersection of language, individuality, and creativity. Together, these perspectives illuminate how writers transform language into a reflection of their unique voice, leaving an indelible mark on literary art.

The author of the article synthesizes various perspectives on idiostyle and offers a comprehensive definition of the concept. According to E.V. Starkova, idiostyle is described as "a system of principles for modeling the individual-authorial worldview through the formation of the content of the literary text, the selection of linguistic units and figurative means for its expression, based on the characteristics of the linguistic personality's consciousness and their perceptions of reality." This definition encapsulates the idea that idiostyle is not merely a collection of language features but a deliberate construction of meaning, where the writer's worldview and personal perceptions shape the way language is used to convey content and ideas in their literary work.

E.A. Fomenko further refines the understanding of idiostyle by identifying several key features that are characteristic of an author's individual style. He emphasizes that the language of an author's idiostyle possesses a linguistic-typological nature. This means that while it reflects the writer's unique voice, it also shares common characteristics with the broader artistic discourse of its time. In other words, an author's idiostyle cannot be fully understood in isolation – it is part of a larger linguistic and literary tradition that reflects the norms and stylistic trends of the era in which the writer is working.

Fomenko also points out that an author's idiostyle utilizes the full potential of the artistic literary language of their time. This suggests that writers do not simply invent new ways of using language from scratch but engage with the existing linguistic tools and resources available to them. They select and combine these tools

in a way that serves their artistic purposes, pushing the boundaries of what language can express while staying rooted in the norms of the period.

Finally, Fomenko notes that the language of an author's idiosyle represents a uniform variant whose linguistic-typological foundations are characteristic of the literary text of its period. This means that while an author's style may be distinct, it is still shaped by the larger linguistic currents of their time, and their work reflects the broader literary and cultural trends of their era.

The concept of idiosyle has gained significant attention in recent years, and the growing body of research in this area indicates its importance for understanding both individual writers and the development of literary languages as a whole. By studying the idiosyles of writers – whether they are literary classics or contemporary authors – scholars can uncover not only the unique characteristics of individual authors but also the evolving capabilities of language itself. This research also sheds light on how literary norms and conventions change over time, offering a valuable lens through which to examine the broader history of literature.

In this work, the distinction between idiosyle and idiolect will not be made. Instead, idiosyle will be understood as the totality of individual characteristics across various levels of language – encompassing vocabulary, grammar, and stylistic features – that define the speech of a particular writer. This approach allows for a holistic view of how an author's language is shaped by both their personal linguistic choices and the broader literary traditions they are part of.

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