



ISSN: 1994-4217 (Print) 2518-5586(online)

Journal of College of Education

Available online at: <https://eduj.uowasit.edu.iq>

Assis. Lect. Khalil S.  
Alsayyid

College of Basic  
Education, University  
of Salahaddin, Erbil

Dr. Lanja A. Dabbagh

College of Languages,  
University of Salahaddin,

Email:

[Khalil.hasan@su.edu.krd](mailto:Khalil.hasan@su.edu.krd)  
[lanja.dabbagh@su.edu.krd](mailto:lanja.dabbagh@su.edu.krd)

**Keywords:**

mind style ,world view,  
fiction , social minds ,  
reading



#### Article info

##### Article history:

Received 10.Dec.2024

Accepted 30.Dec.2024

Published 10.Nov.2025



## Rethinking Mind Style and Related Foundational Concepts: A Theoretical Perspective

### A B S T R A C T

Human beings experience the world themselves but are more eager to learn how others experience and see it as well. Our social tendency and cognitive aptitude, in fact, naturally compel us to know what is going on in other people's minds and reading fiction could fall into serving this end. The abundance of concurrent linguistic stylistic patterns consistently conveyed in a literary text will then provide readers with a new perspective captured by the fictional mind; i.e. mind style will be forged. This paper aims to investigate mind style as a core concept and trace back the key scholars who have laid its theoretical foundation. In doing so, other concepts closely linked to the notion will be compared and eventually scrutinised. A host of studies are highlighted underpinning the core principles and assumptions concerning mind style. This paper, therefore, maps out the full theoretical landscape of the notion to better understand the concept. Two of the most general conclusions arrived at are: the first one is both mind style and social minds touch upon the representation of cognitive viewpoints in literature. The second one concerns mind style to be essentially a particular expression of the broader narrative concept, 'point of view', which frames the way a story is conveyed.

© 2022 EDUJ, College of Education for Human Science, Wasit University

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31185/eduj.Vol61.Iss1.4194>

## إعادة النظر في الأسلوب الذهني والمفاهيم الأساسية ذات الصلة: دراسة نظرية مقارنة

م.م. خليل صالح حسن السيد

أ.م.د. لنجة عبد الرزاق الدباغ

جامعة صلاح الدين - أربيل - كلية التربية الأساسية

جامعة صلاح الدين - أربيل - كلية اللغات

## الملخص

إن البشر يرون العالم بأنفسهم ولكنهم أكثر توقاً لمعرفة كيف يختبره الآخرون ويرونه أيضاً. تدفعنا ميولنا الاجتماعية وقدرتنا المعرفية في الواقع بشكل طبيعي إلى معرفة ما يجري في عقول الآخرين، وقد تقع قراءة القصص الخيالية في خدمة هذا الأمر. إن وفرة الأنماط الأسلوبية اللغوية المتزامنة في نص أدبي ستوفر للقراء منظوراً جديداً يلتقطه العقل الخيالي في الرواية؛ أي ستتم صياغة ما يعرف بالأسلوب الذهني. الهدف من البحث هو التحقيق في الأسلوب الذهني كمفهوم أساسي وتقفي آثار العلماء الذين وضعوا أساسه النظري. لتحقيق ذلك ستتم مقارنة المفاهيم الأخرى المرتبطة ارتباطاً وثيقاً بالمفهوم ودراساتها. ثم يتم تسليط الضوء على مجموعة من الدراسات التي تدعم المبادئ والافتراضات الأساسية المتعلقة بالأسلوب الذهني. لذلك، يرسم هذا البحث المشهد النظري الكامل للمفهوم لتبسيطه بشكل أفضل. ومن أهم استنتاجين والتي تم التوصل إليها هي: الأول هو أن كل من الأسلوب الذهني والأسلوب الاجتماعي يدرسان تمثيل وجهات النظر المعرفية في الأدب. أما الثاني فيتعلق بالأسلوب الذهني باعتباره في الأساس تعبيراً خاصاً عن مفهوم السرد الأوسع، وهو "وجهة النظر"، والذي يوظف الطريقة التي يتم بها سرد القصة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأسلوب الذهني ، الرؤية الكونية ، القصة ، العقل الاجتماعي ، القراءة.

## 1. Introduction

Language and world view representation in fiction are central to the study of mind style in literary texts. The multi-layered notion of mind style has ever since taken centre stage in formalist studies, psychology, narratology, pragmatics, cognitive stylistics as well as corpus stylistics. Perhaps the aforesaid ordering of fields could be reflective of the chronological developments that mind style has witnessed across the lengthy history of stylistic approaches to fictional minds (Lugea & Walker, 2023).

Mind style, in fact, draws upon different analytical frameworks and models pertaining to the fields to account for the systematic linguistic patterns and recurrent discourse structure that can bring about a distinct 'mental self' in narrative. The analyst, however, deems fit to first trace back the origin of the notion at its first inception then to delineate the scope of the term and the assumptions made about it to account for the various approaches conducted to underscore the term in its totality. This paper, therefore explores the theoretical landscape of the notion in relation to other stylistic and narratological terms. First, it will highlight the basis of the term subsumed under the world view notion and how fiction reading propels experiencing the world from a new perspective. Having a tight correlation with social minds and voice, mind style will be investigated to underpin the areas where the three concepts converge or depart. Finally, world view and point of view will be addressed vis-à-vis mind style to throw light on the overlapping aspects where mind style stands as an effective analytical tool in investigating characters' mind styles.

## 2. Reading Fiction and World View

Human beings experience the world themselves but are more eager to learn how others experience and see it as well. Our social tendency and cognitive aptitude, in fact, naturally compel us to know what is going on in other people's minds and reading fiction could fall into serving this end.

Zunshine (2012) attributes the notion of reading fiction to the fact that people want to know what it is like to conceptualise the world lived and perceived by others. Accordingly, reading fiction can give us access to '[...] live in other people's heads: avidly, reluctantly, consciously, unawares, mistakenly, inescapably' (Zunshine, 2012, p. 9). As a result, reading fiction, Semino (2007) argues, is like putting oneself in someone else's shoes giving us 'a convincing and involving impression of what it is like to be somebody else – to do, feel and think things that are not part of our own personal experience' (Semino, 2007, p. 155). It is worth noting, nonetheless, that accessing both fictional and non-fictional minds utilising the same cognitive processes does not entail that there are no particular or noticeable disparities between the texture that fiction and non-fictional narratives exhibit (Herman, 2011, p. 9; Vincent, 2015, p. 217).

Reading fiction is, therefore, appealing because not only do we just take pleasure in reading, but it also provides us access to viewing the world anew, charging our cognition with a refreshing experience by delving deeper into minds, albeit fictional, which can aid in reformulating our perception of the world from a whole new perspective. This would suggest having these minds, i.e. characters' minds in particular, embedded in language via representing their world views, behaviours, or even cognitive habits through the language fabric and textual cues used in fiction. The textual traits which a heterodiegetic third-person omniscient narrator ascribes to a particular character can then serve as our access key to "listen in" to a fictional mind's thoughts experiencing what they may feel or think (Semino, 2007, p. 155, emphasis in original).

From a narratological perspective, Palmer in his seminal paper *Universal Minds* likens reading fiction to reading minds (Palmer, 2007, p. 217). Looked at from a cognitive stylistic and readerly standpoint, the cognitive processes we utilise to construe real-life experiences are said to be akin to the cognitive processes activated when one is engaged with texts and fictional worlds. This proposal can then provide deeper insights into accounting for how readers interact with fiction (Stockwell, 2002, 2009). This view could consequently bridge the gap between the empirical study of minds and the interpretive approach to literature (Mason, 2019). Elsewhere, Palmer (2004) advances that reading fiction is proportionate to constructing fictional minds (see also Lugea & Walker, 2023, p. 214). He, however, bases this capacity not only on character's speech, but also on their cognitive behaviour in portraying minds, noting that 'the reader infers the workings of fictional minds and sees these *minds in action* from observation of characters' behavior and speech (Palmer, 2004, p. 11, my emphasis).

In other words, one of the intricacies of reading fiction and the pleasure it brings about in our minds as readers is the experience of probing into fictional characters' minds 'leaning on' the textual makeup that the author/writer triggers in narrative. This sort of seeing the world via

the angle of vision of the fictional character further provides readers with a fresh perspectivation creating a unique world view ascribable to the fictional character.

Drawing upon the theory of mind (henceforth ToM), Zunshine (2006) caters for this notion by employing the metaphor ‘trying on’ different mental selves stating that ‘our enjoyment of fiction is predicated - at least in part- upon our *awareness* of our ‘trying-on’ mental states *potentially available* to us but at a given moment *differing* from our own’ (Zunshine, 2006, p. 17, emphasis in original).

Viewing the fictional world from the character’s point of view via accessing their ‘mental states’, i.e. their minds, available to us by the linguistic choices, i.e. style, provided by the writer can be defined as a ‘mind style. The term ‘mind style’ was first introduced by the influential scholar Roger Fowler in his seminal book *Linguistics and the Novel* in reference to ‘any distinctive linguistic representation of an individual mental self’ (Fowler 1977, p. 103). In his discussion of ‘point of view’ and attitudes, Fowler (1977) notes that the world view is closely related to the way language is used in fiction and how certain perspectives par excellence can be embedded in linguistic patterns based on ‘the individual’s habitual perspectives on ‘reality’’ (Fowler, 1977, p. 77).

Looked at from this angle, this new slant on the fictional world available to us via the patterned linguistic choices made on the part of the author ‘slants the presentation of content’ which could bring about a ‘cumulative effect’ resulting in ‘an impression of a world view’ discernible by the reader (p.76). Consequently, Fowler (1977) necessitates the ubiquity of recurrent distinct linguistic choices, albeit presented unconsciously, as a prerequisite that could amount to a pattern which incrementally and collectively yield a particular mind style. In this respect, he maintains that ‘cumulatively, consistent structural options, agreeing in cutting the presented world to one pattern or another, give rise to an impression of a world-view, what I shall call a ‘mind style’ (Fowler, 1977, p. 76).

Summing up the discussion above, while the metaphors, such as ‘listen in’, ‘trying on’, and ‘reading fiction is reading minds’ (Palmer, 2007; Semino, 2007; Zunshine, 2006) provide valuable insights into the reader’s engagement with fiction, they fall short in directly tackling the nuances of language patterns and choices that Fowler highlights. These metaphors do not fully encapsulate the intimate relationship between language and the formation of a ‘mind style’.

The adoption of the phrase ‘leaning on’ the linguistic choices to signify the reliance on specific language system or patterns aligns more closely with Fowler’s (1977) definition of mind style. It is, in fact, these patterned linguistic choices that truly form the narrative’s delivery of a character’s worldview and, ultimately, lead to the reader’s conceptualisation of the fictional reality. Therefore, ‘leaning on’ serves as a more accurate metaphor, directly linking the reader’s experience to the structural language patterns that are foundational to understanding mind style as per Fowler’s seminal explanation.

### **3. Mind Style: Scope and Assumptions**

When Roger Fowler (1977, 1996) first introduced his major exposition on mind style, he stated that the term is akin to ‘point of view on the ideological plane’ and that both can be used interchangeably and the only reason he was inclined to choose ‘mind style’ over

'ideological point of view' is attributable to the fact that the latter term is rather a 'cumbersome' notion to use (Fowler, 1996, p. 217). Couched deeply in Halliday's (1971) systemic functional grammar approach to language, Fowler stresses on the 'ideational function' of the text which the concept 'mind style' hinges on to construct 'the world view of an author, a narrator, or a character' (Fowler, 1996; Halliday, 1971). Fowler, nonetheless, earlier confines mind style's scope to encompass the character's world view and mental life based on the different discourse structures provided in the novel that could indicate characters' mental events, their conscious thoughts, as well as their world views and values (Fowler, 1977, p. 103).

Fowler (1977, 1996) then implies that 'style' being used as a head word in the notion of 'mind style' per se views literature as instances of discourse that is a distinct written form (see also Cook, 1994). By using the word 'style', Fowler (1996) comments that mind style arises out of the linguistic patterns that cumulatively form a world view discernible by the reader. This is supported by key scholars such as Leech and Short when they comment that 'when we talk of 'a style' or a style of X' we refer to what is pervasive or recurrent in a text' (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 45). This explanation is also in line with what style refers to being the 'property of the text that results from linguistic choices, as well as an understanding arrived at by the reader' (Lugea & Walker, 2023, p. 10). The only distinction that could possibly be drawn between 'mind style' and 'style' is 'the reader's attribution of these linguistic patterns to an individual mind' (Nuttall, 2018, p. 19).

Another point which Fowler (1977, 1996) points out is the consistency of the systematic linguistic structures which could run through the whole, or part of, the literary text. He, in fact, necessitates the use of regularly recurrent linguistic choices which could amount to a patterned and distinctive mind. The basic assumption is, therefore, that mind style is realised only if 'the techniques by which it is brought into being must be deployed consistently' (McIntyre & Archer, 2010, p. 169).

This is closely linked to the notion that mind style is the result of the 'cumulative effect' throughout, parts of, or the whole text due to the repeated marked linguistic patterns. It is worth noting that cumulative effects consider the text as a whole, while local effects are about specific, isolated instances in a text.

Consistency, in this view, suggests that marked linguistic choices in parts of or the whole text should be recurrent, salient, and ubiquitous in order to project a 'cumulative' textual effect that could 'build up a continuous, pervasive, representation of the world', i.e. a mind style (Fowler, 1996, p. 213). Nevertheless, Fowler (1996) obfuscates the notion of the local effect on the sentence level at a specific point in a text and claims that the ideational processes pertaining to it are inconsequential as regards forming a mind style.

This view is discredited by some scholars claiming that the local effect of an individual, non-recurrent sentence or a short stretch of discourse could contribute to forming a distinct mind because 'mind style can be associated with quite local stylistic effects, for example the description of a character or a landscape' and 'even a single sentence [...] might be said to

encapsulate a mind style' (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 151). In other words, local effects can also contribute to the immediate understanding of perspective or emotional responses whereas cumulative effects encompass the maintained development of thematic narratives and characters.

Semino (2014) also concurrently supports the notion of local effect to be essential in forming a mind style. She, nonetheless, suggests that consistency is not part and parcel of forming a mind style in a text. Even a few instances of deviation arising from the linguistic choices can be adequate to establish a character's world view 'even though that character does not exhibit that behaviour consistently' (Semino, 2014, p. 155, emphasis in original).

The views above revolve around the SFL notion in terms of the ideational processes consistently involved locally or cumulatively to have a marked textual effect of a literary text. Perhaps a single instance of a word, phrase, or a construction can indicate the presence of a particular discourse pattern (Fairclough, 2003). However, identifying whether the discourse representation on a small scale of a sentence or phrase is just unconsciously spontaneous, or representative of a larger linguistic pattern requires a context (van Dijk, 1997). Underpinning a wealth of recurrent discourse constructions can then aid us in discerning a cumulative effect (Fowler, 1996), where the frequent use of certain language choices results in constructing a world view and demands interpreting them as a mind style by readers.

Furthermore, accounting for the role of the reader here considering lexical priming suggests that, as readers, our prior knowledge with lexical items can incorporate into assigning meaning to them and interpreting the effect in related contexts (McKoon & Ratcliff, 1992). This notion perhaps holds a paramount relevance to stylistic inquiry since it indicates that our understanding of a particular text may be predisposed by our prior experiences with parallel lexical and semantic patterns that can be foregrounded against our general background of the assigned meaning (Leech & Short, 2007). Local effects then involve looking closely at the specifics of language and style in confined text segments on the one hand; analysing cumulative effects entails a holistic approach on the other, considering how different parts of the text interact and build upon each other to shape a character's world view.

Another constraint arises here as regards investigating mind style is which parameter could be fit to measure consistency. Do qualitative analyses suffice to identify consistent linguistic instances as pervasive and then measure and analyse them accordingly? Should quantitative measuring be supplemented in this regard?

From a quantified perspective, McIntyre and Archer (2010) tackle consistency and its significance vis-à-vis mind style stating that the previous mind style research which was of mainly pure qualitative nature tended to overlook consistency as an essential part in investigating mind style and would consequently pose a 'thorny problem' (p.169). They then claim that only relying on such qualitative analyses for measuring consistency which could form a mind style are then problematic and unfounded.

They instead highlight the necessity to follow a more objective and empirical approach to accounting for the consistency of the linguistic choices and narrative techniques in projecting a mind style. In doing so, they propose to statistically scrutinise mind style via using Wmatrix (see Rayson, 2003) which is a corpus tool that could help identify the parts of the text and

thus measure their consistency in order to conduct a more robust analysis of mind style. They, as a result, advocate for the inclusion of quantitative methods as they lend empiricism to the study of the linguistic features suggestive of mind style, highlighting that such approaches complement the existing qualitative research by providing a more rigorous framework for analysing mind styles and how they are linguistically constructed in literature.

Nuttall (2018), on the other hand, sees the issue from a different angle and considers consistency to be intimately related to the concept of foregrounding. She subscribes to Semino's (2014) view that consistency can be 'one source of the foregrounding which gives rise to the recognition of a mind style' (Nuttall, 2018, p. 22). She also observes that the single locally-confined marked choices result in foregrounding, and in turn a mind style. The effect here, cumulatively or locally in narrative is restricted based on the parts of texts that are *foregrounded and reader-provoking* (Nuttall, 2018, p. 22, italics mine).

This view, Nuttall (2018) comments, involves analysing how marked and foregrounded linguistic choices within a text, whether they are restricted to specific scenes or designate broader patterns discernible by the reader, contribute to forming a unique perspective or world view. This aspect is highlighted by the significance of systematic patterns formed by the linguistic choices and their motivation on how readers can process the text. Identification and analysis of these patterns can reveal a distinct 'mind style' distinctive of the text. Mind style can also be realised through the linguistic traits provided by the author and by examining real readers' responses to these linguistic patterns and their effects (Nuttall, 2018). This exposition aligns with Stockwell's (2009) of texture which proposes that the linguistic patterns are the sole drive to creating 'the combined experiential quality of the reader's feelings occasioned by the patterning in the text itself', thereby highlighting the active role of the reader in discerning a distinct mind style (Stockwell, 2010, p. 424).

In conclusion, it can be noticed that mind style hinges on both the local and cumulative effects of the text. Not only should the recurrent linguistic cues be recurrent, but they must also be consistent to the extent they can create a felt effect enough to be discernible by the reader. Another trait that mind style involves is that it should be ascribable to a character. The next section will address the host of existing notions regarding researching deviant mind styles, and whether or not studying normal ones is a purposeful endeavour.

#### **4. Mind Style: Normal or Deviant?**

In addition to the close link between mind style and point of view, the latter being a hypernym of the former, another question arises about mind style is the extent to which mind style is applicable to types of texts that are viewed as normal or linguistically typical. Based on Fowler's (1977, p. 72) view of fiction as discourse which is an 'active utterance' loaded with 'ideological commitment' at its core, mind style can be applied to all sorts of texts since any stretch of discourse can possess an ideological point of view.

In this respect, Fowler (1977) appropriates the language of fiction to discourse which 'approximates to what is known as ideological 'point of view in the criticism of fiction' (p. 72). In this regard, it is improbable for a discourse not to have an ideological standpoint (Wales, 2011). This view is supported by Leech and Short (2007) who state that the writer

shapes an orientation embedded in his/her narrative that forces us to see the events from a discernible world view 'even in apparently normal pieces of writing' (p.151).

Mind styles can then attain a normative quality in fiction when readers adopt a world view which is less likely at variance with how we perceive the real world. A deviant mind style, nonetheless, can provide readers with a glimpse of a world that could be in stark contrast to the normal monotonous view of the outer world around us due to the fact that 'there is no absolute realism, so there is no absolute photographic objectivity in the conceptualisation of a fictional world' (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 158).

Based on this non-objectivist view, Leech and Short (2007) further note that mind style projection can encapsulate both normative and deviant world views from 'those natural and uncontrived [...] to those which clearly impose an unorthodox conception of the fictional world' (p. 151). Put simply, as reading literary texts presupposes a perceiving mind through which fictional reality is conceptualised, then mind style can exist in any text given the non-objective reality represented, and consequently, becomes 'an inherent property of all texts whether they exhibit transparent or opaque styles' (Nuttall, 2018, p. 19; Semino & Swindlehurst, 1996, p. 145).

Despite overlooking the felt effect recognised by, and attributed to, readers, Boase-Beier (2003) also take this notion a bit further and claims that whatever style is perceived or discerned in any sort of text can amount to a mind style so long as it projects or shapes a cognitive state out of a consistent pattern provided that 'style is the result of choice, and choice is the result of cognitive state, then it could be argued that all style is in a sense mind style' (Boase-Beier, 2003, p. 263).

Pillièrè (2013), on the other hand, critiques the narrow focus on abnormal or deviant mind styles in existing research, suggesting that this has restricted the broader application and scope of the concept. She comments that mind style is not only pertinent to cases of abnormal thought processes but is a central aspect of all textual analysis, highlighting the interaction between an individual's cognitive state, socio-cultural context, and the perceived audience. In this respect, a more comprehensive approach to mind style that takes these elements into account should also be the focus of existing research, surpassing the focus only on deviance to understand how language constructs and reflects varied mind styles (Pillièrè, 2013).

In other words, she advocates for expanding the scope of mind style analysis beyond abnormal or deviant cognitive states to include a wider range of textual representations of thought. Her explanation, therefore, recognises the complexity of mind style as a product of individual, cultural, and interactive factors which can provide deeper insights into how texts construct and communicate distinct viewpoints.

By doing so, mind style, Pillièrè (2013) argues, can retain closer relevance and value in literary studies and beyond, providing a more workable tool to account for the interconnectedness between language, thought, and context. Nuttall (2018) also critiques the approach that only stresses on studying abnormal deviant mind style. She takes a rather holistic view stating that mind style in its totality, be it normal or deviant, is the result of readers interacting with the textuality of novels and the notion holistically indicates linguistic patterns projecting a fictional mind that is perceived by the reading mind (Nuttall, 2018).

Advocating for the view that calls for a broader application of mind style, not restricting it to studying only deviant mind styles, Nuttall observes:

While agreeing with the basic need for both conceptual and linguistic deviation in the recognition of a mind style (or the need that the mind be ‘individual’ and expressed through linguistic patterns that are ‘distinctive’ [...]), restricted application to just those minds we are able to define or diagnose in psychological terms risks losing some of the critical value and attractiveness of the original model. (Nuttall 2018, p. 20, emphasis in original)

Hoover (2016) takes a different approach stating that the realisation of linguistic deviance in a text does not necessarily call for forming a deviant mind style that could be discernible by the reader, asserting a discontinuity between the language pattern adopted and how a world view is apprehended in fiction. He, conversely, goes on to claim that at times even *normal* language organisation in a text can reflect a *deviant* mind style since ‘an abnormal mind-style can be described rather than reflected in the language’ (p. 339).

In other words, the narrator could characterise directly and describe explicitly the character as mentally challenged without encoding his/her cognitive limitations in his/her language, such as lexis and grammar. Commenting on estrangement provided by the linguistic deviance in Burgess’s (1962) *A Clockwork Orange* novel, he notes that ‘[l]inguistic deviance need not suggest mind style’ and the motivation behind it ‘is important mainly as a way of estranging us from an imagined distant future’ (Burgess, 1962; Hoover, 1999, 2016, p. 339).

In line with Nuttall (2018), Pillière (2013) posits that investigating only instances of mind styles that exhibit deviant or anomalous cognitive tendencies would overly narrow the scope and the potential application of the notion as first proposed by the scholar who coined it. Put simply, only focusing on mind styles that project cognitive limitations would risk this analytical tool to become more restricted potentially detracting from its broader purpose and applicability. Consequently, she further explores two *critical hypotheses* that emerge from the limited focus on deviant mind styles, suggesting a reappraisal of how mind style is approached within literary analysis. She states that studying deviant mind styles focuses on one type of deviance, which, in turn, limits the scope of the framework (Pillière, 2013, p. 70).

The notion of deviation, therefore, has been challenged as it entails a standard or norm from which to deviate. The question then arises: what is this norm? An initial response was ‘the language as a whole’ (Bloch, 1953, p. 40); however, the endeavor to measure the occurrence of features across the entirety of a language has proven to be not just impractical but arguably ludicrous (Leech, 2008, p. 166).

In her book *Deviance in Contemporary Crime Fiction* published in 2007, Gregoriou (2007) expands on the notion of deviance to encompass both *linguistic* and *social* deviance. She has utilised the terms ‘deviance’ and ‘deviation’ synonymously. She proposes that both can encompass the crime fiction language as well as criminals’ social behaviour. She also uses ‘deviation’ as a ‘departure from linguistic norms’, whilst ‘deviance’ to refer to ‘departure from social ones’ (Gregoriou, 2020, p. 386). Nuttall (2018, p. 19), on the other hand, refers to them as ‘stylistic choices which deviate from intra- or extratextual norm’.

She first concedes that criminals’ mind styles could linguistically be the outcome of a deviant linguistic pattern that is originated from a ‘narrative viewpoint that *deviates* from a

commonsense version of reality' (Gregoriou, 2007, p. 21, original emphasis). She, on the other hand, states that mind style, a criminal one in particular, can be discerned as unusual or abnormal not because of the *deviant* linguistic patterns, but because of the social deviant traits which criminal minds retain, that are captured by the readers (Gregoriou, 2003, p. 52). Central to her generic view of attributing abnormal mind styles to criminals, she notes that '[a]bnormals (that is, criminals) are expected to conceptualise the world abnormally (Gregoriou, 2007, p. 25, original emphasis).

On the other hand, a wealth of research has amply focused on investigating deviant mind styles (Halliday, 1971; Bockting, 1994, 1995; Semino & Swindlehurst, 1996; Semino, 2002; McIntyre, 2005; Semino, 2007; McIntyre & Archer, 2010; Semino, 2014; Nuttall, 2018; Demjén & Semino, 2021). The common rationale for opting to conduct a great deal of research into deviant and idiosyncratic mind styles, some scholars ascertain, is ascribable to the notion of foregrounded stylistic choices. It is claimed that these choices which project prominence in texts are more striking to readers and, therefore, hold primacy in the stylistic inquiry because they exhibit 'interpretative' value (Nuttall 2018), i.e. an effect usually referred to as foregrounding which is a chief concern for stylistic analysis (Leech, 2008; Leech & Short, 2007, p. 41).

In favour of investigating abnormal mind styles, it is argued that mind style loses its appeal at the normal end of the cline and the 'the more normal the choices become, *the* less force the mind-style concept tends to have' (Short, 1994, p. 2505), and, hence, studying deviant mind styles seem to be the trend of recent studies in this field. This is attributable to the fact that marked linguistic choices show prominence which are far easily noticeable by readers (Lugea & Walker, 2023). In addition, Semino and Swindlehurst (1996) state the usefulness of investigating deviant mind styles highlighting the practical utility of the concept which lies in studying minds which perceive the world from a unique, idiosyncratic way:

although in theory mind style applies to all texts, in practice its relevance is limited to cases where a text's view of reality is perceived by the reader to suggest a particularly striking, idiosyncratic, or deviant understanding of the world. In such cases, an analysis of mind style provides a useful way to understand the workings of the text and to explain its effects. (Semino & Swindlehurst, 1996, p. 145)

Lugea and Walker (2023) argue that since style is a genuine trait of every text, it remains unmarked until it is conceptualised by a mind which lends markedness to it and 'the presence of a perceiving mind becomes all the more marked-and interesting- the more idiosyncratic that style' (p. 208).

The view is supported by the researchers because employing unusual, non-normative linguistic patterns in literature to form an unusual world view, i.e. unusual mind style, is commonsensical. In other words, using unusual language is the [usual] way of portraying an unusual mind style and this is the very endeavour that stylistics as a discipline tries to account for, i.e. underpinning foregrounding whether it is achieved through parallelism or deviation.

A notable example can be found in *The Sound and the Fury* by William Faulkner (Faulkner, 1929). Through the fragmented and opaque style, especially in the section focalised by Benjy, a mentally challenged character, Faulkner employs linguistic deviation to represent Benjy's

conceptualisation of the world. This approach not only challenges readers' expectations to piece together the narrative and assign it to the perceiving mind but also deeply immerses them in Benjy's distinct cognitive limitation of the world he is describing, the golf game event (see Bockting, 1994, 1995). Therefore, the various ways in which literature employs non-normative linguistic patterns to project deviant mind styles highlight the significant relevance of these approaches within stylistic analysis. The linguistic choices, whether normative or deviant, can offer insightful demonstration of the characters' cognitive thoughts and the world views they project.

All in all, both Nuttall (2018) and Pillière (2013), based on the seminal introductory explanation of Fowler (1977, p. 103), highlight the tentative predilection in analysing mind styles. In other words, they call for a balance between its wide-reaching applicability to all texts and the practical focus on texts that show particularly deviant or unique cognitive viewpoints. Whilst recognising the significance of investigating abnormal or deviant cognitive representations that amount to salient literary effects, as Semino and Swindlehurst (1996) comment, it is also vital to recognise the broader application of mind style.

### **5. Mind Style: Voice and Social Minds**

The notion of mind style (Fowler 1977, 1996) is seen to have an intimate link with Alan Palmer's concept of social minds as well as Gregoriou's narrative voice in analysing criminal minds (Gregoriou, 2007, 2014; Palmer, 2004, 2007, 2010). While the three scholars' approaches offer operable principles in the stylistic analysis of consciousness within cognitive and narrative theory, their approaches prove distinct providing insightful contributions into how minds are realised in literature and how readers could discern a fictional mind in its totality.

Palmer offers an external perspective regarding defining fictional 'minds' by stating that using the term 'mind' to be inclusive which encompasses 'all aspects of our inner life: not just cognition and perception, but also dispositions, feelings, beliefs, and emotions' (Palmer, 2004, p. 19). Contrary to Semino's (2002, p.97) explanatory notion of mind style who states that it concerns with 'those aspects of world views that are primarily personal and cognitive in origin', Palmer (2004, 2007, 2010) captures the notion of the mind to include intertwined minds in action that are shared, distributed, or influenced by the interactions between characters. In this regard, narratives often depict not isolated, individual minds but interconnected social minds. This view highlights the collective, joint, and dialogic nature of thought and the way characters' mental processes are embedded within their social interactions and relationships. Based on the external perspective, he proposes his seminal observations regarding social minds to 'our capacity for *intermental* thought. Such thinking is joint, group, shared, or collective, as opposed to *intramental*, or individual or private thought (Palmer, 2015, p. 137, original emphasis).

Gregoriou (2007, 2014), on the other hand, depicts the notion of mind style through a narratological lens underscoring how narrative voice as a literary quality and the marked linguistic patterns connected to it can trigger readers' perceptions of characters alongside their mental states. She portrays mind style in the light of 'voice' to depict 'language as a projection of individuals' mental functioning rather than their actual voice [...] providing

access to ‘fictional others’ thoughts that literature invites readers to adopt different ways of seeing the world’ (Gregoriou, 2014, p. 165). In doing so, identifying narrative voice entails not only a specific character *who* speaks in a text but also *how* they speak, probing into the stylistic choices that give rise to the formation of character’s identity and world view. Gregoriou (2007, 2014) here explicates the close relevance of voice to navigating readers’ interpretations assisting their comprehension of the psychological aspects of fictional minds. Therefore, Gregoriou posits that the distinction between the terms, ‘voice’ and ‘point of view’ are hardly recognised and they could be used synonymously in studying mind style (see also Nuttall, 2018; Stockwell, 2009).

To recap, both mind style and social minds touch upon the representation of cognitive viewpoints in literature. While mind style hinges on the individual’s linguistic choices that portray a character’s cognitive perspective, i.e. intramental functioning in Palmer’s locution, Palmer’s social minds expand on this to include how these minds are shared, influenced, and manifested within social networks. On the other hand, Gregoriou’s emphasis on voice contributes to the concept of mind style’ by highlighting the role of narrative voice and stylistic patterns in shaping readers’ realisation of characters’ mental states and social interactions. Both approaches recognise the significance of how ideas are linguistically encoded in constructing fictional minds and their social dynamics. Mind style, social minds, and voice, as a result, acknowledge the active role of the reader in interpreting and engaging with the cognitive and social aspects of narrative. They emphasise how the textual representation of minds, be they individual or social, and the stylistic choices associated with narrative voice, shape readers’ perceptions and emotional responses. In summary, these approaches offer an interdisciplinary framework for analysing the intricate relationship between individual cognition, social interaction, and narrative technique in literature which offers an operable principle of analysing narratives and their constructing and projecting their characters’ mind styles, compelling readers to engage interpretatively with the psychological texture of literary texts.

## **6. Mind Style, Point of View, and World View**

When first coined by Fowler (1977, 1996), mind style as a concept was used as synonymous to the ideological point of view. Fowler (1996) specifically states that he preferred the term ‘mind style’ to ‘point of view on the ideological plane’ to refer to ‘the set of values, or belief system communicated by the language of the text’ (p.165). The latter term which he borrowed from the Russian semiotician Boris Uspenskij (1973), he comments, sounded rather ‘cumbersome’ (p. 214). He also proposed that both mind style and world view are used as totally equivalent terms stating that mind style is ‘the world view of an author, or a narrator, or a character’ (Fowler, 1996, p. 214).

Leech and Short (2007) also subscribe to Fowler’s (1977, 1996) view indicating that mind style is in fact ‘a realisation of narrative point of view’ (p. 151). Fowler, in fact, bases his argument on the distinction made by narrative theoreticians to distinguish between the content of the story, i.e. ‘story’, and how it is told, i.e. ‘narration or discourse’ (Genette, 1980; Uspenskij, 1973). The latter indicates ‘the point of view from which the story is narrated’ which is ‘suffused with various ideological colourings’ that could equally amount to a ‘mind style’ (Fowler 1996, p. 160-1; the French narratologist Genette (1980) distinguishes between

*histoire* and *discours*; and the Russian formalist Uspenskij (1973) names them *fabula* and *sjuzhet*). Of pertinence to mind style, Fowler (1996) posits that our language and experience determines how we conceptualise the world, an understanding he defines as a world view (see also McIntyre, 2006, p. 42).

Stemming from Genette's (1980) view for differentiating between who says, i.e. the narrative *voice* and who sees, namely the *vision*, narratologists have long scrutinised this idea, investigating crucial issues related to point of view. A pivotal point of discussion here is Genette's distinction and what credible basis this differentiation is built upon. Although Genette (1980) further proposes that 'focalisation' (which is akin to the Anglo-American notion of 'point of view') is used specifically to denote the latter, this separation has been questioned for its logical validity (McIntyre, 2006). Wales (2011), consequently, maps out this understanding as merged notions to include 'not only the presence of a conceptualising character or focaliser, but also a particular way of conceptualising: a world-view or ideology' (p. 327). As narration inherently involves the narrator witnessing and then depicting events, separating voice and viewpoint might, therefore, be implausible (Nuttall, 2018).

Leech and Short (2007), who support Fowler's (1996) view, further stress on the synonymous link between mind style and world view. They state that the story, i.e. the fictional world, is 'what is apprehended' whereas world view or mind style is 'how that world is apprehended, or conceptualised' (p. 150, emphasis in the original). They, nonetheless, claim that both concepts, fictional world and world view, tackle the same notion, yet from different perspectives because '[any] conceptualisation of a world presupposes both a world to refer to, and a mind through which that world is reflected' (ibid.). This discussion that supports the blurry boundary between these notions is closely linked to 'voice' and 'point of view' that could be conflated in practice, leading to a blending of the terms, particularly in the application of mind style to characters and narrators, an approach adopted by scholars such as Stockwell (2009) and Gregoriou (2014).

In contrast to the views above, some scholars argue that the concepts, mind style, ideological point of view, and world view are distinct. For example, one opinion states that mind style can be subsumed under the broader term which is point of view and the relationship between the two are hyponymic. Mind style is essentially a particular expression of the broader narrative concept, 'point of view', which frames the way a story is conveyed. Put simply, mind style is more specific a concept than point of view, whilst the latter is more generic; mind style is, therefore, 'a specific manifestation of a wider narrative phenomena of *point of view*' (Nuttall, 2018, p. 16, original emphasis).

Semino and Swindlehurst (1996) also point out that another issue arises when mind style is compared proportionately to ideological point of view, stating the relationship is unidirectional with asymmetric implications between these two concepts. In other words, a character's *mind style* becomes discernible to us only when we are sharing their point of view. The relationship, however, is unreciprocated; having access to a character's *point of view* does not habitually entail having access to their mind style (Semino & Swindlehurst, 1996, p. 145).

Semino (2002, p. 96) also contends Fowler's use of the three concepts to explain the same phenomenon and argues that such approach seems impractical and rather unwieldy. In fact, Fowler's own definitions of the concepts; mind style, world view, and ideological point of view, apparently convey a finely distinct meaning to each one compared to the others. She proposes that the term *world view* generally represents the general view of reality of the *actual* world realised in a text, whilst both mind style and ideological point of view capture dissimilar features of the same world view depicted in texts (Ryan, 1991; Semino, 2002, p. 97, my emphasis). On the one hand, an ideological point of view, she argues, has the propensity to refer to the social, cultural, political, or even religious worldviews that could be shared by a group with mutual aforesaid values; whereas mind style is reliant on personal cognitive traits of a person or group that may share the same singular or unique idiosyncrasies on the other. An autistic mind style, for instance, can be attributed to a single person who may, in turn, share this cognitive challenge with like-minded individuals (Semino, 2002, 2005).

McIntyre (2006) also states that using mind style as an equivalent term for both world view and ideological point of view overlooks the minute differences in meaning that emerge from the distinct terms. While concurring generally with Semino's distinctions, McIntyre (2006) proposes some slight adjustments. He first shows a preference to use Chatman's term 'conceptual point of view' to 'ideological point of view' and claims that the former is a more neutral descriptor for a character's metaphorical viewpoint, although he acknowledges this predilection is just a minor terminological detail.

Contrary to Semino's (2002) view, McIntyre (2006, p. 143) also argues that 'conceptual point of view' and 'mind style' should be viewed as tools for heuristic analysis rather than wholly distinct concepts that can be separated in practice. While it could be hard to delineate these concepts from each other completely as it is with 'perceptual point of view', these terms are nonetheless valuable for discussing the specific aspects of viewpoint they represent.

Following Herman's (2009) view of conflating voice and visual perception into one cognitive notion represented by construal, Nuttall (2018, p.16) argues that this holistic approach is most fitting for investigating mind style as both can be integrated through one mind or minds that could conceptualise on their own the whole narrative landscape (Herman, 2009) .

Based on Uspenskij's (1973) categorisation of point of view which was further developed by Fowler (1996), Nuttall (2018) also proposes that both ideological point of view and the psychological one can tackle different dimensions of the same notion. The first, she argues, is viewed as the *what-* beliefs and values embedded in the text, whereas the psychological aspect represents the *who-* the 'vehicle' to which the world view is ascribed (p. 17, see also Fowler 1996 for more detail). These two aspects, she claims, can be amalgamated into one concept which is mind style since these aspects could overlap and are hardly distinguished from one another.

Criminal minds are also central to the way point of view is holistically depicted in the crime genre. The portrayal of a criminal's thoughts impacts how readers morally evaluate their actions and, as a result, shapes their perception of criminals' own moral justifications for their criminal actions. Gregoriou (2003) in her PhD thesis proposes a holistic approach to account

for criminal mind styles. Criminal mind styles, she (2003) argues, depend on tripartite aspects: the type of narration, how limited or unlimited readers have access to the criminal's consciousness and how this consciousness is linguistically encoded in narrative, all of which, she claims, contribute concurrently to forging a criminal mind style (p. 133). Finally, it could be argued that mind style, world view, and point of view are superimposed in some respects, whereas they can distinctively depart from each other if they are seen as heuristic tools that address different aspects of the same discourse.

## **7. Conclusion**

1. Metaphors do not fully encapsulate the intimate relationship between language and the formation of a 'mind style'.
2. The practical focus on studying characters' mind styles with cognitive limitations or disorders should not hinder other approaches which call for applying this analytical tool to normal ones.
3. Whereas mind style and social minds come from different theoretical roots, they, nonetheless, touch upon the representation of cognitive viewpoints in literature.
4. While mind style hinges on the individual's linguistic choices that portray a character's cognitive perspective, i.e. intramental functioning in Palmer's locution, Palmer's social minds expand on this to include how these minds are shared, influenced, and manifested within social networks
5. Mind style is essentially a particular expression of the broader narrative concept, 'point of view', which frames the way a story is conveyed.
6. Criminal minds as part of mind style studies are central to the way point of view is holistically depicted in the crime genre. The portrayal of a criminal's thoughts impacts how readers morally evaluate their actions and, as a result, shapes their perception of criminals' own moral justifications for their criminal actions.
7. Mind style as a product of individual, cultural, and interactive factors can provide deeper insights into how texts construct and communicate distinct viewpoints.

## References

- Bloch, B. (1953). Linguistic structure and linguistic analysis. In *Report of the Fourth Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistics and Language Study* (pp. 38–50). Georgetown University Press.
- Boase-Beier, J. (2003). Mind Style Translated. *Style*, 37(3), 253–265.
- Bockting, I. (1994). Mind Style as an Interdisciplinary Approach to Characterisation in Faulkner. *Language and Literature*, 3(3), 157–174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/096394709400300301>
- Bockting, I. (1995). *Character and Personality in the Novels of William Faulkner: A Study in Psychostylistics*. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:191021827>
- Burgess, A. (1962). *A Clockwork Orange*. Heinemann.
- Cook, G. (1994). *Discourse and literature: The interplay of form and mind* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Demjén, Z., & Semino, E. (2021). Stylistics: Mind Style in an Autobiographical Account of Schizophrenia. *Analysing Health Communication*. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:236395976>
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Faulkner, W. (1929). *The sound and the fury* (Modern Library ed). Modern Library.
- Fowler, R. (1977). *Linguistics and the novel* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Fowler, R. (1996). *Linguistic criticism* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Genette, G. (1980). *Narrative discourse: An essay in method* (1st ed.). Cornell University Press.
- Gregoriou, C. (2003). *The Poetics of Deviance in Contemporary American Crime Fiction* [PhD]. Nottingham.
- Gregoriou, C. (2007). *Deviance in contemporary crime fiction* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gregoriou, C. (2014). Voice. In *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics* (pp. 165–178). Cambridge University Press.
- Gregoriou, C. (2020). Schematic incongruity, conversational power play and criminal mind style in Thomas Harris' *Silence of the Lambs*. *Language and Literature: International Journal of Stylistics*, 29(4), 373–388. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963947020968663>
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1971). Linguistic function and literary style: An inquiry into the language of William Golding's *The Inheritors*. In *Literary Style: A Symposium* (pp. 330–368). Oxford University Press.
- Herman, D. (2009). *Basic elements of narrative*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Herman, D. (2011). *The emergence of mind: Representations of consciousness in narrative discourse in English*. University of Nebraska Press.
- Hoover, D. L. (1999). *Language and Style in The Inheritors*. University Press of America.
- Hoover, D. L. (2016). Mind-Style. In *The Bloomsbury Companion to Stylistics* (pp. 325–340). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Leech, G. N. (2008). *Language in literature: Style and foregrounding* (1st ed.). Pearson Longman.
- Leech, G. N., & Short, M. (2007). *Style in fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional prose* (2nd ed.). Pearson Longman.

- Lugea, J., & Walker, B. (2023). *Stylistics: Text, cognition and corpora*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mason, J. (2019). *Intertextuality in practice*. John Benjamins Publishing.
- McIntyre, D. (2005). *Logic, Reality and Mind Style in Alan Bennett's The Lady in the Van*.  
<https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:170293653>
- McIntyre, D. (2006). *Point of view in plays: A cognitive stylistic approach to viewpoint in drama and other text-types*. John Benjamins Publishing.
- McIntyre, D., & Archer, D. (2010). A corpus-based approach to mind style. *Jlse*, 39(2), 167–182.  
<https://doi.org/10.1515/jlse.2010.009>
- McKoon, G., & Ratcliff, R. (1992). Inference during reading. *Psychological Review*, 99 3, 440–466.
- Nuttall, L. (2018). *Mind style and cognitive grammar: Language and worldview in speculative fiction*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Palmer, A. (2004). *Fictional minds*. University of Nebraska press.
- Palmer, A. (2007). Universal minds. *Semiotica*, 165. <https://doi.org/10.1515/SEM.2007.040>
- Palmer, A. (2010). *Social minds in the novel*. Ohio State University Press.
- Palmer, A. (2015). “Listen to the stories”: Narrative, cognition, western-and-country music. In *The Oxford handbook of cognitive literary studies* (pp. 136–154). Oxford University Press.
- Pillièrè, L. (2013). Mind Style: Deviance from the Norm? *Etudes de Stylistique Anglaise*, 4, 67–80.  
<https://doi.org/10.4000/esa.1448>
- Rayson, P. (2003). *Wmatrix: A web-based corpus processing environment* [Computer software].  
<http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/wmatrix/>
- Ryan, M.-L. (1991). *Possible worlds, artificial intelligence, and narrative theory*. Indiana university press.
- Semino, E. (2002). A cognitive stylistic approach to mind style in narrative fiction. In *Cognitive stylistics: Language and cognition in text analysis* (pp. 95–122). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Semino, E. (2005). Mind style. In *Encyclopaedia of Language & Linguistics* (pp. 142–148).
- Semino, E. (2007). Mind Style Twenty-five Years On. *Style*, 41(2), 153–172.
- Semino, E. (2014). Pragmatic failure, mind style and characterisation in fiction about autism. *Language and Literature: International Journal of Stylistics*, 23(2), 141–158.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0963947014526312>
- Semino, E., & Swindlehurst, K. (1996). Metaphor and Mind Style in Ken Kesey's “One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.” *Style*, 30(1), 143–166.
- Short, M. (1994). Mind Style. In *Encyclopaedia of Language & Linguistics* (pp. 2504–2505).
- Stockwell, P. (2002). *Cognitive poetics: An introduction*. Routledge.
- Stockwell, P. (2009). *Texture: A cognitive aesthetics of reading*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Stockwell, P. (2010). The eleventh checklist of the apocalypse. In *Language and Style* (pp. 419–432). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Uspenskij, B. (1973). *A poetics of composition: The structure of the artistic text and typology of a compositional form*. University of California press.

van Dijk, T. (1997). *Discourse as structure and process*. Sage publishing.

Vincent, J. K. (2015). Sex on the mind: Queer theory meets cognitive theory. In *The Oxford handbook of cognitive literary studies* (pp. 199–222).

Wales, K. (2011). *A dictionary of stylistics* (3rd ed.). Longman.

Zunshine, L. (2006). *Why we read fiction: Theory of mind and the novel*. Ohio State University Press.

Zunshine, L. (Ed.). (2012). *Getting inside your head: What cognitive science can tell us about popular culture*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.