

Scientific Style

Functions:

- provides information
- presents exact and relatively **complete** scientific knowledge
- addresses a relatively small group of professionals well acquainted with the subject

Forms:

- primarily **written**: essays, articles, textbooks, scientific studies
- spoken: presentations, discussions, conferences
- monologue: no feedback, no situational context, no paralinguistic features

Substyles:

- the style of exact science: more impersonal
- the style of humanities: closer to the publicistic style, also shares features with the literary style

General Characteristics:

- matter-of-fact, clear, explicit; unambiguous, precise; concise, brief
- **stereotypical** in terms of both lexicology and syntax
- impersonal, objective, suppresses the personality of the author
- logical **hierarchy** within the text: introduction, argument, conclusion and résumé
- quotations and references to other texts
- highly nominal character
- diagrams, charts, sketches, illustrations

Morphological Features:

- present tense: timeless validity of the proposition

Syntactical Features:

- **neutral** word-order, no marked word-order
- mostly declarative sentences
- sentence **condensers** /participles, infinitives, gerunds/ and semi-clausal structures
- no ellipsis, no omission of 'that' and 'which' in relative clauses
- theme /topic/ > rheme /focus/:
 - **'there'** constructions /*'there is, seems, appears, stands, lives, lies'*/
 - **clefts** for any constituents but verbal ones /*'it is ... that'*/
 - pseudoclefts for verbal constituents /*'what is ...'*/
 - rheme marked by indefinite article or null article with plural, abstracts, uncountable nouns
 - theme marked by definite article, pronouns, anaphoric reference by *'such, similar, one – the other'*
- impersonal **passive** constructions /*'it should be pointed out that...; it has been found out that...; it has previously been shown that...'*/
- active construction with the authorial pronoun 'we' /*'we deduce, observe, define, obtain, assume, note'*/
- **causative** constructions:
 - 'make/render N ADJ' /*'this makes the problem easy; this renders the metal hard'*/
 - 'enable, allow, permit, cause, make INF' /*'safety valves allow the metal to cool slowly'*/
- formulas:
 - **'it is ADJ to...'** /*'it is possible, necessary, essential to do sth'*/
 - **'it is ADV that...'** /*'it is likely, evident, obvious that...'*/
 - *'it is/has been/can be/will be/should be proved/shown/realised'*
- semantic condensers:
 - **noun groups** /*'starving children government funds'*/
 - condensed titles /*'the search-and-rescue laser'*/
- **connectors**:
 - conjunctions 'thus, however, therefore' /also *'furthermore, nevertheless, consequently, etc.'*/
 - phrases /*'in fact, in short, in general, in this way, in other words, as we have just seen'*/
- subordinating conjunctions, referential pronouns, demonstrative pronouns /hierarchy/

- **modals** /must, should, ought, can, may, might/:
 - little semantic meaning, esp. when followed by verbs *'to note, notice, remark, observe, mention'*
 - expression of objective propositional modality *'it might be remarked that...'*
 - **'should'** preferred to **'must'** *'safety precautions should be observed at all times'*
- the verb **'would'** for repeated action *'the instrument would give readings every ten minutes'*
- the verbs *'will, to be, to let'* will little semantic and more modal meaning *'it is also to be noted that...; it will be noticed that...; let it be mentioned that...'*
- the verbs **'to seem, to appear'** for understatement for the sake of objectivity

Lexical Features:

- most frequent word categories: nouns and adjectives
- **terminology** = words with clearly defined fixed meaning in a particular scientific discipline
- half-terms shared by all sciences *'process, effect, feature; to function, operate, modify'*
- **bookish** words *'negligible, obviate, propagate'*
- proper names, numbers, figures
- **neutral** expressions
- no words outside the standard language variety; no dialect, no slang
- no emotional words, no interjections, no phraseology
- x but: some terms emotional for the sake of expressing their **motivation** *'dead space; conductor alive; softlanding; splash-down; hardware; Big Bang'*
- x AmE: emotional words, colloquial words, similes esp. in titles *'saving lasers from suicide; the laser goes to the office'*

Special Nomenclature:

- scientific terminology: hepatitis, hypnosis, arthritic disorders, virus, millimetre; impressionism, rotunda, mezzo soprano; dolomite prairies, gravely soils, limestone, sea level; Milky Way, black hole; Velvet Revolution

Popular Scientific Style

Relations to Other Styles:

- influenced by the **colloquial** style
- shares some features with the publicistic style
- also shares some features with the colloquial style

Functions:

- provides information
- informs about latest developments in various scientific fields
- presents even complicated topics in an interesting way
- popularises the scientific style
- addresses **general public**

General Characteristics:

- scientific style x popular scientific style
- more graphics
- more descriptive

Syntactical Features:

- shorter sentences
- *'to'* infinitive for future *'computer to design lenses; supermarkets to have laser scanners'*

Lexical Features:

- terms explained, demonstrated by an example, paraphrased
- **no specific terminology**
- emotional words, similes, analogy