Phonostylistics and styles

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Problems of phonostylistics

- Functional style – a set of language means used in a particular situation.

- Phonostylistics is the study of the way phonetic units, both segmental (sounds) and suprasegmental (intonation), are used in a particular extralinguistic situation.

Extralinguistic situation

All the components of extralinguistic situation influence the choice of linguistic means

3 components:

1) the purpose;

- subject matters

- individual and socio-cultural features: the social status, social group or class the speaker belongs to.

2) Participants

- the character of participant relationship: formal/ informal, friendly/ unfriendly

- social roles of the speakers

3) scene/ setting

Scene/ setting

- physical orientations of the participants (the distance between people, proximics studies it)

- public/ non-public, formal/ informal, monoloquing/ poliloguing, dialoguing.

- the channel of communication: face to face, public presentation, telephone, mass media.

Style-modifying factors:

The aim of communication is the main strategy of the speaker. We may want: to inform, to instruct, to convince, to entertain, to advertise.

- In each case we choose intonation which will serve our purpose and make our speech effective.

- It basically determines the choice of intonation means, thus it forms the style (style-forming).

Speaker's attitude

Any oral communication reflects a variety of attitudes and emotions, concerning the listener, the subject matter and etc.

- Intonation varieties are as numerous as varieties of attitudes and emotions are. The speaker can be involved/ indifferent, friendly/ hostile and so on.

- It's both emotions and attitudes we should take into consideration.

The form of communication

Monologuing (are usually more extended, better organized)

Dialoguing

Polyloguing

The Classification of Phonetic Styles:

Gaiduchic (correlates with functional styles of language)

- solemn (торжественный)

- scientific business (научно-деловой)

- official business (официально-деловой)

- everyday (бытовой)

- familiar (непринуждённый)

Dubovsky (degrees of formality)

- informal ordinary
- formal neutral
- formal official
- informal familiar
- declamatory

Informational Style

usage: Mass Media, business communication, classroom teaching.

The aim is to convey information. There's little personal involvement. The speaker is detached.

The typical intonation patterns are: Falling/ Mid-level Head + Low Fall/ Low Rise/ Mid-level tone.

The pitch level is generally medium or low and the pitch range is from medium to narrow. The tempo is not greatly varied. *Hesitation pauses*.

Table 3

The Invariant of Phonostylistic Characteristics of Informational Educational Descriptive Texts Reading

Timbre		impartial, dispassionate, reserved, resonant
Delimitation		phonopassages — phrases — intonational groups; pauses are mostly at syntactical junctures, normally of medium length but for the end of the passage
Style-marking prosodic features	Loudness	normal (piano) throughout the text, varied at the phonopassage boundaries
	Levels and ranges	decrease of levels and ranges within the passage
	Rate	normal (moderate) or slow, not variable
	Pauses	mostly syntactical of normal length, occasional emphatic ones for the semantic accentuation
	Rhythm	systematic, properly organized isochronic, decentralized accentuation
Accentuation of semantic centres	Terminal tones	common use of final categoric falls; in non-final segments mid-level and low rising tones are often used
	Pre-nuclear patterns	common use of falling and level heads or several falls within one interpausal unit
	Contrast between accented and unaccented segments	not great

Table 5

The Opposition of Phonostylistic Invariant Characteristics of Informational Descriptive Monologue

Phonostylistic characteristics		Varieties of the language	
		Reading	Speaking
1		2	3
Timber		impartial, dispassionate, reserved resonant	dispassionate, businesslike, reserved, occasionally interested
Delimitation		phonopassages — phrases — intonation groups; pauses are mostly at syntactical junctures normally of medium length, but for the end of the passage	phonopassages — phrases — intonation groups; a number of hesitation and breath-taking pauses (filled and non-filled) breaks phrases into a great number of intonation groups, destroying their syntactical structure
Other style-marking prosodic features	Loudness	normal (piano) throughout the text, varied at the phonopassage boundaries	normal (piano), contrastive at the boundaries, decrease towards the end of the passage; increase on semantic centres
	Levels and ranges	decrease of levels and ranges within the passage	decrease of levels and ranges within the passage; various ranges and levels bind together several sequences into a larger unit
	Rate	normal (moderate) or slow, not variable	variable; allegro on interpolations, lento on emphatic centres
	Pauses	not greatly varied, mostly syntactical, occasionally emphatic	varied; the length depends on the syntactical and semantic value of the segment, the maximum length being at the passage boundaries
	Rhythm	systematic, properly organized, isochronic, decentralized accentuation	non-systematic, subjective isochrony, centralized stress distribution, the rhythmicality within the passage is achieved by the alternation of all prosodic features

Academic Style:

is used in lecturing talk and conferences, academic discussion.

The aim is to convey information and to instruct (volitional function). *A pragmatic aim.*

Falling Head/ High Head + High Fall/ Fall-Rise(=referring).

Compound: Rise-Fall. The levels are high or medium. The ranger

Short intonation groups predominate. The tempo is greatly varied. Emphatic pauses are often used. Loudness is rather high.

Table 9

The Invariant of Phonostylistic Characteristics of an Academic Style Reading

Timbre		authoritative, imposing, edifying, instructive, self-assured
Delimitation		phonopassages — phrases — intonational groups
Style-marking prosodic features	Loudness	increased, sometimes to forte
	Levels and ranges	remarkably varied with the passage segments; gradual decrease within the supraphrasal unity
	Rate	normal, slow on the most important parts of the lecture (rules, conclusions, examples); rate is as flexible as the lecturer wishes it to be
	Pauses	rather long, especially between the phonopassages; a large proportion of pauses serving to bring out communicatively important parts of utterances; occasional use of breath-taking pauses
	Rhythm	properly organized, especially while giving the rules, reading the laws, drawing conclusions, etc.
Accentuation of semantic centres	Terminal tones	high proportion of compound terminal tones (High Fall + Low Rise; Fall-Rise, Rise-Fall-Rise); a great number of high categoric falls
	Pre-nuclear patterns	frequent use of stepping and falling heads; alternation of descending and ascending heads, especially in enumerations
	The contrast between the accented and unaccented segments	not great

Table 8

Academic Style Suggested Spheres of Communication

Written variety of the language			Spoken variety of the language											
Monologue		Dialogue	Monologue				Dialogue				Polylogue			
Public		Public	Public		Non-public		Public		Non-public		Public		Non-public	
Prep.	Spont.	Prep.	Prep.	Spont.	Prep.	Spont.	Prep.	Spont.	Prep.	Spont.	Prep.	Spont.	Prep.	Spont.
the reading of lectures or scientific reports in public, over the radio or television	the reading of examples in answers at conferences or in interviews	—	scientific talks and explanations at seminars and classes	explanations at seminars, answers in the interviews, at conferences	answers at examinations	answers at examinations	interviews in TV studios	interviews, talks at scientific conferences, congresses	talks at examinations, at scientific conferences	interviews, talks at examinations, at conferences, meetings	discussions over the radio and TV discussions at conferences, at seminars	discussions at conferences, congresses, seminars, in TV studios	—	discussions at congresses, conferences

Table 10

Publicistic style

- political speech, sermons, debates.

- **volitional and desiderative**

- never spontaneous

- The use of prosodic contrasts makes the speaker sometimes go to extremes and become needlessly dramatic.

The Invariant of Phonostylistic Characteristics of Publicistic Oratorial Speeches

Timbre		dignified, self-assured, concerned and personally involved; a variety of attitudinal and modal expressions in the voice
Delimitation		phonopassages — phrases — intonation groups
Style-marking prosodic features	Loudness	enormously increased, ranging from forte to fortissimo; sometimes instances of diminished loudness are observed to bring out words and phrases of paramount importance and produce certain psychological effect
	Ranges and levels	greatly varied; the predominant use of wide ranges within the phonopassage; a very high level of the start of the initial intonation groups
	Rate	moderately slow; the public speaker slows down to bring out communicatively important centres; less important information entails acceleration of speed
	Pauses	definitely long between the passages; a great number of breath-taking pauses; pausation is commonly explicable in semantic and syntactic terms; interpausal segments are rather short, thus phrases may be overloaded by pauses of different length; another characteristic feature of this register is a rather frequent stop of phonation before the emphatic semantic centre; it serves as a means of bringing out words and phrases; voiceless hesitation pauses occur to produce the effect of apparent spontaneity, "rhetorical silence" is often used to exert influence on the public
	Rhythm	properly organized; within the speech segments rhythmic groups have recurrent alternation, which produces the acoustic effect of strict rhythmicality
The accentuation of semantic centres	Terminal tones	mostly emphatic, especially on emotionally underlined semantic centres; in non-final intonational groups falling-rising tones are frequent; terminal tones are contrasted to distinguish between the formal segments of speech and less formal ones (illustrations, examples, jokes, and so on)
	Pre-nuclear patterns	common use of the descending sequence of stressed syllables; a large proportion of falling and stepping heads, frequently broken by accidental rises to increase the emphasis; another common "rhetorical trick" is the tonal subordination when semantically and communicatively important intonation groups contrast with their neighbours by all prosodic features; so the high level head may be alternated with the low level head, especially in enumerations
	The contrast between accented and unaccented segments	not great
	Paralinguistic features	a great number of paralinguistic effects, kinesic components — facial expressions, bodily movements, gestures — subjected to the main purpose of the publicistic discourse: to influence the audience, involve it into the talk and to exert the expected response from it

Declamatory style

- on the stage, reciting literary texts.
- "artistic, acquired or stage"
- highly emotional and expressive
- attitudinal, volitional and intellectual functions of intonation are of primary importance here
- it is always a written form of the language read aloud or recited.

- On the prosodic level the markers of the declamatory style reading are:

- Slow tempo, caused by the lento rate of utterances and prolonged pauses, especially at the passage boundaries.

- Stable rhythmicality.

- The use of the falling terminal tones in initial intonation groups, the increase of their range with the emphasis.

Conversational style

- – everyday communication.

- entire range of prosodic effects.

- intonation groups are rather short, their potentially lengthy tone units tend to be broken

- 1. inexplicitness of the language—"incompleteness" of many utterances as the context makes it clear what was meant by the speaker,

- 2. conversations are characterized by the lack of planning and the randomness of subject matter. They are very often unpredictable, not guided to an overall theme as, for example, in our first conversation.

- 3. a high proportion of "errors" involving hesitation phenomena, slips of the tongue and all sorts of overlapping and simultaneous speech. The distribution of hesitancy is very significant, it is strongly influenced by creative thinking and produces a cyclic pattern. They are of primary significance, the avoidance of hesitation devices and "errors" may produce a wrong effect and lead to a different type of speech style.

- decentralized stress and sudden jumps down on communicative centers
- heads are usually level, or rarely, falling. Falling heads occur only in groups consisting of several stressed syllables.
- simple falling and rising tones in nuclei are common
- emphatic tones occur in highly emotional contexts.
- the tempo of colloquial speech is very varied (fast natural speed + the impression of "slowness" because of a great number of hesitation pauses: hesitant drawls)
- no pauses between their parts, very often people speak simultaneously, interrupt each other.
- frequency of silence for purposes of contrastive pause as opposed to its being required simply for breath-taking
- tempo is very flexible in this style: it is uneven with and between utterances.
- pauses may occur randomly, not just at places of grammatical junctions

Slang:

● very informal or colloquial vocabulary

e.g. My companion is exceedingly fatigued.

= My friend is extremely tired.

= My mate is bloody knackered.

REGISTERS

Kinds of language that reflect the subject being talked or written about are known as REGISTERS.

The language or register of medicine, for example, contains words such as:

- **appendectomy, clavicle** *and* **rubella.**

The register of law includes words such as:

- **tort, hereinafter** *and* **felony.**

The register of football consists of words such as:

- **midfield, one-two** *and* **corner.**

And the register of car mechanics has words such as:

- **torque, tappets** *and* **clutch.**