REVISITING THE ISSUE OF PHONOSTYLES

I. Usachenko, Lecturer
Mykolaiv National University named after V.O. Suhomlinsky, Ukraine

The article actualizes different approaches to phonostylistic studies and analyses the problem of phonostyles differentiation.

Keywords: phonostylistics, language style, speech style, phonostyle.

Conference participant

http://dx.doi.org/10.18007/gisap:ps.v0i9.1252

At the current stage of the linguistic science development, special attention is paid to the issues of language functioning in the process of communication, study of various factors directing the language process and affecting the implementation of language means, structural linguistic features of styles and patterns of their implementation.

Phonostylistics is a relatively new branch of linguistics, one of the main objectives of which is to identify different phonetic modifications under the influence of extralinguistic factors, although the references to the role of phonetic means in utterances styling can be found in numerous studies.

Traditionally the linguistic science divides phonostylistics into segmental and suprasegmental depending on the aspect under study, i.e. sounds or speech prosody accordingly. Phonetic studies of segment set are much more numerous and this section is more developed. Thus, the study of sound symbolism begins with Plato and Aristotle [7].

Analyzing the segment (phonemic) level of the linguistic structure, phoneticians-experimentalists increasingly turn to the study of the phonetic ambiguity, i.e. sounds that cannot be unambiguously interpreted at the phonemic level. With acoustic and auditory analysis of such issues as the correlation of complete and incomplete elements of the pronunciation type in the speech signal, the degree of quantitative and structural deformation of segment units under the influence of intra- and extralinguistic factors and, therefore, “resistance” of vocalic and consonant segments of various kinds of influences they are exposed to in every speech act, are examined [2; 5; 13 et al.].

Linguistic science operates with such concepts as the language style and the speech style. Language styles are different sets of language means depending on the limitations of their composition and varying concentrations, as well as the intenseness of each particular style by the language means typical only for it. Speech styles differ not only with the language means composition and the concentration specific to them, but also with the varying degrees of language means implementation, their repeatability and particular sequence of their use in a particular field of communication [3, P. 9]. Thus, the speech stylistics is aimed at examining the aspects of variability of pronunciation, i.e. studying the stylistic forms of a word developed by the variability of phonemes.

Phonostyles cannot stand separately from functional styles. In the stylistic differentiation of speech phonetic means can be basic ones, but they can also correlate with lexical and grammatical means. It is assumed that there is a connection between stylistic devices of different levels of the language system: phonetic, lexical, syntactic, and morphological.

Different authors use several terms, namely: “pronunciation type”, “speech style”, “language style”, “phonetic style”. Our work will deal with the term “phonetic style” or “phonostyle”, which refers to a kind of phonetic means combination of all levels of the language phonetic system, peculiar to a statement in a particular form in a certain speech situation [4, P. 7].

The main aspects of phonostylistic studies are the search of patterns of language phonetic means functioning in different forms and types of oral speech, as well as the study of sound variability. Works on the typology of oral speech utterances have made it possible to determine the extralinguistic factors affecting the choice of language phonetic means in styling of a particular utterance more accurately. Linguistic science differentiates external and internal extralinguistic factors. External factors contribute to generation of stylistic features which are the set of functional style qualitative features that should be obtained by a language for the effective implementation of specific goals of communication in a certain field of speech communication.

Many style features are natural for not just one, but several styles, and in all of them the same features have their own specificity, their functional and stylistic quality. This fact is determined by the differences of language means and the ways of their implementation, differences in target and functional focus, as well as the specificity of the styles [5].

Y.M. Serebnev names the situation-based nature of the speech act (official or not, solemn or casual, etc.), relation of the speaker to the speech recipient, i.e. the degree of intimacy between the speaker and the listener, understanding of communicative goals of the speech – business, scientific explanation and transfer of the speaker’s emotional attitude to the object of speech among the factors influencing the selection of linguistic means by a speaker [14].

Y.O. Dubovskiy provides another division: objective factors of a language situation that are independent of interlocutors, namely the form of speech (monologue, dialogue – unilateral, bilateral, multilateral), the type of speech (speaking, reading, citations), the method of communication (direct contact or by technical means), the external conditions of communication (in front of a large audience or a small group of people), stylistic orientation of the speech act (official – unofficial), etc. Other factors depend on the speaker or interlocutor, being identified by them: their age, social status, territorial identity, speaker’s degree of readiness (spontaneous,
quas spontaneous or prepared speech),

the speaker’s profession [8, P. 15].

M.O. Sokolova believes that these

factors are divided into two groups: those

forming the style and those modifying it.

The first group expresses the speaker’s

strategy and includes the goal and topic

of an utterance. Each option provides the

selection of different phonetic means to

implement an effective communication.

The second group includes such

extralinguistic factors as the speaker’s

relation to the communicative situation,

to what he/she says or hears; the form

of communication (monologue, dialogue

or polylogue); the formality degree of

the situation and discourse (formal/

informal). There are also such important

additional factors as the social status of

the speakers and the type of publicity

(public/non-public speech), the degree

of preparedness (prepared/spontaneous

speech) [15, pp. 21]. The role of these

factors in the production of texts is
different: some of them, such as the
degree of preparedness, play a crucial
role, others (e.g. number of recipients)
– a minor one. We proceed from the
idea that all factors forming a style are
interrelated, and only their combination
builds a phonostyle.

M.V. Panov in connection with the
discussion of problems of the speech styles

draws a parallel with lexical styles [10].

R.I. Avanesov mentions that speech styles
are closely related to language styles as a
whole, but the correlation of speech styles
with styles of vocabulary is not straightforward
and simple [1]. N.I. Portnova reasonably
believes that functional and phonetic styles
are not identical, but they form a dialectical
unity reflected in the overall scheme of the
social situation [12].

S.M. Haiduchyk notes that phonetic
styles are “the complex of phonetic
means peculiar to a linguistic utterance
in a certain form and situation in a
certain field of communication”
[6]. The framework for the study of
phonetic style was established by
M.V. Lomonosov, who distinguished
three styles of spoken Russian literary
language of the eighteenth century: high,
medium and simple. Academician L.V.
Scherb a clearly defined two poles –
complete style and conversational style
[16, pp. 21-22].

In the course of further development
of the speech style doctrine, linguists
have identified three pronunciation
styles: high, neutral and conversational.
It is believed that different styles of
pronunciation cannot be represented
as closed systems, isolated from one
another; on the contrary, they are very
closely related to each other and are
characterized by interpenetration.

Phonetic variation is determined by
the need to differentiate various styles
and genres of speech. Linguists involved
in phonostylistics, basing on the
L.V. Scherba’s notion as for coexistence
of many styles in accordance with the
wide variety of social conditions of
language, point the ways for future
research in the field of phonostylistic
differentiation of speech. So,
S.M. Haiduchik identifies five phonetic
styles: solemn, scientific, official,
natural and relaxed. The criterion for this
division is a field of their use [6]. There
is another appropriate classification of
phonetic styles, covering all types of
phonetic means of language segment
and suprasegment levels, peculiar
to utterances under the condition of
presence of these extralinguistic factors,
and promoting their use in the process
of phonostylistic aspect description of other
languages. In his turn, E. Nurahmetov
believes that the distinguished phonetic
styles do not cover the variety of phonetic
means at sound and prosodic levels, but
he notes that the allocation of these styles
discovers the way for further studies
of phonetic means of communicative
types and kinds of utterances [9].
O.D. Petrenko identifies three
phonostyles: reciting, and also reading a
report without a microphone in a formal
setting; pronunciation when reading
texts on the radio or reading fiction; calm
business conversation [11, p. 30]. The
scientist notes that the existence of the
norm implies these oppositions: system
– norm – individual speech, literary
language – spoken language – a dialect,
official style – casual style, sociolect –
annolect – sexology – idiolect.

A. Cruttenden uses two contrasts:
formal/informal, rehearsed/spontaneous
[17, pp. 37-40]. D. Jones analyses
five styles: fast familiar, slow spoken,
facing the audience, theater and opera
[3, P. 21]. In the course of oral monologue
utterances study Y.A. Dubovskyi opposes
public (meeting and non-meeting) and
non-public (official and unofficial)
styles. The author makes it clear that
all types of spoken oral text can have
direct or indirect contact implementation
[8, P. 82]. The given classification
demonstrates the fact that the author
distributes phonostyles depending
on the formality degree of relations
between the speakers and the audience.
V. Yakubovych identifies five
phonostyles: formal (dramatic
language, singing of opera singers), full
(characteristic of the political and judicial
speakers), spoken (used during the
interviews, parliament debates, scientific
discussions), informal (practiced among
equal communicators in their social
position and on television and radio, in
classrooms), extremely informal (family,
circle of friends). The author says that
the first two types are characteristics
of monologues; the others are for dialogues
[18, pp. 114-115].

Phonostyles as well as the
functional styles rarely exist in their
pure form. Depending on the purpose
of communication and the communicative
situation in general they can intertwine,
complementing each other. However,
each phonostyle is characterized by a
certain ratio of typological characteristics,
among which the form of speech (verbal/
written), the type of speech (monologue/
dialogue), the degree of preparedness
(prepared/spontaneous), the number of
communicants (public/non-public), the
relationship between participants in the
communicative act (formal/informal)
are chief ones. The study of functional-
stylistic differentiation of oral speech
remains an urgent task of communicative
phonetics and phonostylistics.

References:

1. Avanesov R.I. Russkoe literaturnoe
proiznoshenie [Russian literary
pronunciation]., R.I. Avanesov. – Moskva.,

2. Bondarko L.V. Zvukovoj stroj
sovremennogo russkogo jazyka [Sound
system of the modern Russian language].,

3. Velikaja E.V. Prosodija v stilevoj
differenciacii jazyka [Prosody in the
style differentiation of a language].,

**Литература:**


Information about author:
Irina Usachenko - Lecturer, Mykolayiv National University named after V.O. Suhomlinskyy; address: Ukraine, Mykolayiv city; e-mail: usachenkoiv@yandex.ru