

Part 1

On the Notions of 'Style' and 'Stylistics'

In different situations of communication people use different manners of expressing their thoughts, which, in the Russian linguistic tradition, are usually called **styles** or **functional styles** (**функциональные стили**), and in the linguistic tradition abroad — **registers of speech** (**регистры речи**). Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that studies the various functional styles of speech and also the various **expressive means and devices** (**экспрессивные средства и приемы**) of language. Apart from that, some linguists apply the term 'stylistics' to the study of various stylistic peculiarities of the language of works of fiction (**стилистика художественной речи**).

The distinction between a lofty style and a low style of speech (**высокий и низкий стили**) was put forward as far back as in the 18th century by Michail Lomonosov. However, stylistics as a special branch of linguistics was singled out only towards the middle of the 20th century. Academician V.V. Vinogradov was among the first linguists to describe the different styles of speech in respect to their functions (= aims). He distinguished, in particular:

- 1) the colloquial style, which has the function of communicating (**функция общения**);
- 2) the official and scientific styles, which have the function of informing (**функция сообщения**);
- 3) the publicist (**публицистический**) and belle-lettres (**художественно-беллетристический**) styles, which have the function of producing an emotional impact (**функция эмоционального воздействия**) on the listeners.

This classification undoubtedly reflects certain differences between speech styles, although its criteria for the opposition of functions are rather confusing. Thus, for example, the functions of informing and communicating are present in any

style (colloquial, official, scientific, publicist, belles-lettres), as speech always contains some information and is used for communicating. Therefore it would probably be more precise to say that the colloquial style is characteristic of the situation of **direct communication** (when the listener/interlocutor is present during speech), while the other, more bookish styles (official, scientific, publicist) are used in situations of **indirect communication** (without any listener/interlocutor present during speech).

Moreover, production of emotional impact on the listener/reader is not so much the aim of a special style of speech, but rather the aim of publicist or fiction (belles-lettres) works, which represent particular literary genres (*жанры*). It goes without saying that such works (texts) have also the function of informing. One more point to mention here is that the study of the language of various works of fiction constitutes a special branch in both linguistics and also in literature theory (*литературоведение*), and that fiction works themselves generally comprise samples (*образцы*) of both colloquial style (the speech of the characters) and of bookish style (the speech of the author).

Two Types of Stylistic Information

Every style of speech brings about with it some additional information about the conditions and peculiarities of communication. The choice of style may depend 1) on particular relations between the participants of communication (interlocutors) and 2) on a particular attitude of the speaker to what he says. These two types of stylistic information will be used below as the basis for the classification of styles.

From this point of view, functional styles express the first type of information, i.e. the relations between the interlocutors. In some situations these relations may be unrestrained (*непринужденные*), friendly, easy-going or intimate, and in that case the speaker chooses the so called **informal** style of speech, viz.

the colloquial style, which is a 'lower' (*сниженный*) style of speech, characteristic of oral communication. In other situations the relations between the interlocutors may be restrained (*сдержанные*), strictly official, etc., and then the interlocutors try to be deliberately polite (*подчеркнуто вежливыми*), and they choose the so called **formal** style (the lofty, bookish style), which is generally characteristic of written language. The formal style is used in the genres of official or business documents, of scientific or publicist works. These genres, in their turn, may be further subdivided into more particular varieties of genres; for example, official documents may represent an order, instruction, resolution, proceedings of a meeting (*протокол заседания*), report, application (*заявление*), etc.

It is natural for speakers to try to avoid any confusion of formal and informal styles within one text, as such a confusion might give the wrong idea of the relations between the interlocutors: e.g. a letter to a person of higher authority cannot begin with words like '*Hi, how are you doing?*', which would bear a sense of familiarity. But at the same time it is well worth mentioning that there may be samples of speech (oral or written) which are not clearly marked by features of any particular style, and which can therefore be regarded as a "neutral" style, suitable for any communicative situations.

Besides the formal and informal functional styles mentioned above (which reflect the relations between interlocutors), there are also stylistic characteristics of speech that reflect the attitude of the speaker to the content of his speech. This second type of stylistic information concerns the emotional character of speech, viz. the presence or absence of emotional or evaluative (*оценочный*) elements. In this respect we can distinguish:

- 1) an emotionally coloured style of speech
- 2) a deliberately unemotional (*подчеркнуто безэмоциональный*), or "cold" style of speech
- 3) a neutral style of speech

Emotionally coloured speech may be characterized, on the one hand, by a lofty emotional colouring (*приподнятая эмоциональная окраска*), such as solemn (*торжественная*), passionate (*памятическая*), ironic, wrathful (*гневная*), sarcastic (*саркастическая*), etc., or, on the other hand, by a lower colouring (*сниженная окраска*), such as jocular/humorous (*шутливая*), derogatory (*уничижительная*), rude (*грубая*), disapproving (*неодобрительная*), endearing (*ласковая*), etc.

The lofty emotional colouring is characteristic of the publicist/oratory style, while the lower emotional colouring is typical of colloquial style. The deliberately unemotional character of speech is typical of the formal ('cold') styles, such as scientific, official or business speech, where the speaker tends to make his speech impersonal and avoid any emotional or evaluating elements.

Apart from the two directly opposed styles — the emotionally coloured and the deliberately unemotional — there may also be intermediate, stylistically neutral speech, which is neither emotionally coloured nor deliberately devoid of emotion. Thus, there may be samples of speech that are neutral both with respect to the relations between the interlocutors and with respect to the speaker's attitude toward what he says.

Stylistic differences of any kind can be expressed by various language means: phonetic, lexical or grammatical. One of the most vivid means is, naturally, the choice of vocabulary.

Stylistic Characteristics of English Vocabulary

With respect to the functional styles, vocabulary can be subdivided into bookish (literary), which is typical of formal styles (scientific, official, business, publicist), and colloquial vocabulary which is typical of the lower style (colloquial). In addition, there is always present in the language a stylistically neutral vocabulary, which can be used in all kinds of style. Cf.:

child (neutral) — *kid* (colloq.) — *infant* (e.g. *infant schools* — official, bookish) — *offspring* (also bookish, used in scientific works);

father (neut.) — *daddy* (coll.) — *male parent/ancestor* (formal); *leave/go away* (neut.) — *be off/get out/get away/get lost* (coll., or familiar- colloquial) — *retire/withdraw* (bookish);

continue (neutr.) — *go on, carry on* (coll.) — *proceed* (bookish, formal);

begin/start (neutr.) — *get going/get started/Come on!* (coll.) — *commence* (formal);

Stylistically neutral words usually constitute the main member in a group of synonyms, the so-called **synonymic dominant** (*синонимическая доминанта*): they can be used in any style, they are not emotionally coloured and have no additional evaluating elements; such are the words *child, father, begin, leave/go away, continue* in the examples above.

Unlike neutral words (synonymic dominants), which only denote (*обозначают*) a certain notion and thus have only a denotational meaning (*дениотативное значение, обозначение некоторого понятия*), their stylistic synonyms usually contain some **connotations** (*коннотации*), i.e. additional components of meaning which express some emotional colouring or evaluation (*оценка*) of the object named; these additional components may also be simply signs of a particular functional style of speech. Observe, for example, the following connotations:

an endearing connotation (*ласкam.*) — e.g. in the words *kid, daddy, mummy* (as different from the neutral words *child, father, mother*); derogatory (*презрит. — уничижит.*) connotation — e.g. in *rot, trash, stuff* (as different from the neutral ‘something worthless or silly’); jocular/humourous — e.g. in *comestibles* (= *food*), *beak* (= *nose*), *to kick the bucket* (= *to die*); rude or vulgar, e.g. in *shut up/shut your trap*; ironical or sarcastic — *brain-wash* (= промывка мозгов), *a pretty kettle of fish* (= an embarrassing situation), *notorious* (= пресловутый; *his notorious jokes; he is notorious for his bad behaviour* — “*сла-*

вится", т.е. "печально известен"); approving evaluation (*одобрительная оценка*) — e.g. in the word *renowned* (*a renowned poet* = прославленный; *Edison is renowned for his great inventions*); on the other hand, its synonyms like *well-known*, *famous* are neutral in this respect (have no connotations).

It should be noted that we do not include into the stylistically coloured vocabulary words that directly express some positive or negative evaluation of an object — *хороший, плохой, красивый, некрасивый, прекрасный, уродливый*; *good, bad, pretty, ugly*. Here the evaluation expressed makes up their denotational meaning proper (it represents the notion expressed by the word), but not an additional connotation. Also, it is easy to notice that words like *ugly, awful, beautiful, wonderful, superb* denote a high degree of quality (negative or positive), but this component of degree (of intensity) is again part of their denotational meaning, not a connotation (which is understood as an additional element accompanying the denotational meaning of a word).

As connotation proper (a special colouring), negative evaluation is present e.g. in the word *scary* (*a scary girl* — cf. the Russian *страшненка*; both words have an ironic or derogatory colouring) or *pretty* — when it is used in phrases like *a pretty boy/man* (humorous, ironical or derogatory connotations; cf. also the Russian *красавчик, красомка*), or *a pretty state* (*It's a pretty state of affairs when I can't afford the price of a pint of beer any more!*). *That's a pretty kettle of fish* (= *ну и дела!*); there is ironical connotation in the word *cox-comb* (literally “петушиный хохолок”), like in the corresponding Russian word *щеголь*, or in *a cock of the walk* (*зазнайка*).

There is a derogatory connotation in the words *to fabricate*, *to concoct* (*сфабриковать, выдумать*), as different from the neutral phrase ‘to create a false story’ (which expresses the negative evaluation by the denotational meanings of the words); there is a negative evaluative connotation in *to slander* (*клеветать*) — as different from emotionally neutral expressions like *to distort facts* (*искажать факты*), which again express the

idea of ‘falsification’ directly. In the sentence *Don’t read this bad book* the negative evaluation is expressed directly (by the denotational meaning of the adjective *bad*), whereas in *Don’t read this trash* the evaluation is expressed by the derogatory colouring of the noun *trash* — in other words, it is present here only as a connotation; thus, words like *trash, rot, stuff* (= “something worthless, bad”) are stylistically marked (*стилистически маркированы, т.е. обладают определенной стилистической окраской*), while the word *bad* is stylistically unmarked (*стилистически немаркировано, нейтрально*).

Apart from that, as was already mentioned above, the stylistic connotation of a word may be just a sign of a certain functional style to which the word belongs, without carrying any emotional or evaluative element. Thus, sentences like *She is cute* (= pretty), *It is cute* (= very good), *It’s cool* (*Это круто*) contain not only a high positive evaluation (in the same way as the stylistically neutral variants *She is pretty/good-looking* or *It is very good*), but also a stylistic connotation which shows that they belong to the familiar-colloquial style (фамильярно-разговорный стиль), or even to slang. Colloquial connotations are also present in the phrases *to fix a watch* (neutral — *to repair a watch*), *to fix an appointment for seven o’clock* (= *to arrange*), *to fix breakfast* (American — *to cook breakfast*). On the other hand, a bookish connotation, or colouring (as a feature of official or scientific style of speech) is present in expressions like *to cause/to inflict bodily injuries* (neutral — *to hit/to beat/to hurt*), *to cause/to inflict damage* (neutr. *to harm/to do harm*), *to impose a tax/a fine* (neutr. *to tax/to fine*), *an impoverished person* (neutr. *a poor person*), *highly improbable* (neutr. *very unlikely*), etc.

A rude (vulgar) connotation is present in vulgarisms, or taboo words, which are not to be used in the speech of educated people and are therefore often replaced by euphemisms (эвфемизмы) — the more ‘gentle’ names of the object. Thus, the word ‘devil’ is, for many people, unacceptable in speech and

may be replaced by phrases like ‘the evil one’, ‘the fallen angel’, ‘the Prince of darkness’, ‘Lucifer’, ‘Mephistopheles’. The same concerns expletives (curse-words, *бранная лексика*): *damn*, *damned* are often replaced by the euphemistic *darn*, *darned*, *dashed*; *bloody* is sometimes replaced by *blooming*, *blasted*, *blessed*, etc.

Some Characteristics of English That Are Close to Stylistic Ones

a) Territorial Varieties of English

With respect to the accepted **literary norm (standard)** of the language, we distinguish **Standard (Received) English** (the variant that is fixed in the written language, in works of fiction, in radio and TV speech, etc.), and **non-standard English** (**не входящий в литературную норму**), which is represented by **dialects and variants** of the language found in the different geographical areas where English is used. To the **dialects** are usually referred the non-standard varieties of English used on the territory of Great Britain, while the word **variants (varieties)** refers to the use of English outside this territory, e.g. the English language of the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc.

English dialects are divided into northern (including the Scottish dialect) and southern (including ‘cockney’, the dialect of the area south of London).

The Scottish dialect comes back to the *Gaelic language* (*гээльский язык*), a language of Celtic origin (*кельтский*) and to the Scottish (Scots) language (one of the Germanic languages): cf. such words used by speakers of English in the area of Scotland as *bairn* (=child), *auld* (=old), *ben* (=mountain), *bonnie* (=beautiful), *canny* (=careful), *brae* (=slope, bank), *haggis* (=pudding), *ilka* (=every), *keek* (=look), *kirk* (=church), *laddie*, *lassie* (=boy, girl), *loch* (=lake). The pronunciation of Scottish dialectal words may also have some peculiarities, e.g. [u:] instead of [au], e.g. [hu:s] (=house), [u:t] (=out), [du:n] (=down); [ai] instead of [ou] — e.g. [stain] (=stone), [bain] (=bone), [raid] (=road), etc.; long [ae] instead of long [a:] in certain

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Приобрести книгу можно
в интернет-магазине
«Электронный универс»
e-Univers.ru