

## 4 Stylistic Features of Language

Speech communication employs a host of expressive means ranging from linguistic to paralinguistic and extralinguistic features. It is the natural language, however, whose systematic variation on all levels of its structure (phonology, morphology, lexicology and syntax) offers the widest possibilities of suiting its use to fit communicative functions of discourses in various contexts. Thus linguistic expressive means, which are systematically identified and categorized by **linguistic stylistics** (*stylolinguistics*), lie at the core of stylistic variation. However, it should be noted that as stylistically relevant are considered those linguistic variations which perform similar or alternative communicative functions and which are, in fact, competitors within a particular paradigm or category. From this perspective, there are language units which occur in all types of texts due to their neutral stylistic value (hence **stylistically neutral units**, e.g., notional words, -s plural marker). On the other hand, other language units bear a stylistic marker already before they are actually used, and so they tend to occur only in some types of texts (hence **stylistically marked units**, e.g., terms, some foreign plural nouns, vulgarisms, participial constructions; these 'bearers' of stylistic information which may come from any linguistic plane are also called *stylemes*, *štylémy*, cf. Mistrík 1993). Further, not all levels of language system offer equal possibilities of choice: the most differentiated level is the wordstock (synonymy and polysemy), and the fewest possibilities of selection are on the phonological plane (phonemic variations). The possibilities of stylistic variations are not unlimited and some authors maintain that the importance of style is often overestimated (cf. Čermák 2001).

### 4.1 Phonetics/Phonology

The analysis of connected speech identifies the constructional units on the phonetic/phonological plane which are either segmental - *phones* (realizations of abstract *phonemes*) and *syllables* (basic rhythmical units), and suprasegmental (prosodic), which result from three types of sound variation (modulation): temporal (*speed/rate*, *pause*, *rhythm*), force (*loudness*, *stress*, *emphasis*) and tone (*pitch*, *tune*) modulation. Since the majority of the segmental phonological variation is offering no stylistically relevant options (it is primarily engaged in the differentiation of meaning, i.e., phonemes function as minimum functional units capable of distinguishing meaning), it is stylistically neutral.

Certain phonemes and their combinations, however, may be subjectively perceived as **cacophonic** (disagreeable to the ear, dissonant, harsh, e.g., words having the /sl-/ cluster: *sloppy*, *slime*, or the nonsense word *slithy* by Lewis Carroll) or **euphonic** (pleasing to the ear, harmonious, e.g., lateral consonant /l/, as in *lovely*). The **sound symbolism** (i.e., a nonarbitrary connection between phonetic features of linguistic items and their meanings) is exploited also in non-poetic language (e.g., occurrence of close vowels in words denoting smallness: *petite*, *teeny-weeny*, open vowels in words denoting largeness: *large*, *vast*). Several **poetic devices** are based on the sound instrumentation of text and are, besides poetry, often utilized in discourse which is concerned with exploiting this language potential and connoting a certain atmosphere or mood, for example, public speeches, punning, jokes, children's rhymes, commercials, product names, slogans, etc. (see Poetic f., 3.4): **alliteration**, **assonance**, **consonance**, (direct and indirect) **onomatopoeia**, (perfect, half, eye, masculine, feminine, triple, internal, end/terminal, etc.) **rhyme**, **paronomasia**, **mimesis** and **synesthesia**. These phonetic and phonological features used for expressive purposes are studied by *phonostylistics*.

Some **suprasegmental** phonemes, besides having a grammatical function (segmentation of syntactic units, signalling their pragmatic function), are open to stylistic exploitation, e.g., **melody** (tune, intonation), **stress** (prominence) and **pause**, while others have mainly stylistic function - **rhythm**, **tempo** (rate, speed), **voice intensity** (loudness) and **timbre** (voice quality: rich, soft, harsh, hoarse). When combined, they impress a distinguishing mark upon users of language by which, together with their physiological traits (face, posture), humans are recognized as individuals (i.e., 'voice signature' which serves as an important recognizable to identify a phone caller, see also Individuality, 3.2.2). Also, an '*accent*' (i.e., a particular way of pronunciation, emphasis pattern and intonation characteristic of the speech of a particular person, group, or locality) identifies one as belonging to a particular region (e.g., *Southern accent*), social class (e.g., *Cockney*) or whether one is a native speaker or a foreigner (e.g., *to speak with an accent*) (9.3).

The the three types of speech modulation (generally also called intonation) are important sources of stylistic variation:

4.1.1 *Temporal Modulation*. As to the temporal modulation, of significant stylistic relevance is the **manner of pronunciation** of sounds, e.g., *free* vs. *lazy* movement of articulatory organs which produces clear vs. mumbled speech, or *careful (slow)* vs. *careless (rapid)* speech which is manifested, on the one hand, by clear enunciation of words (e.g., in theatre performances, pathetic or elevated public speeches) or, on the other hand, by reduction, assimilation, slurring (e.g., in casual, relaxed atmosphere: *Sapning? = What's happening?* or dialectal (*Pittsburghese*) *A: Jeet jet? B: No. Jew? = A: Did you eat yet? B: No. Did you?*). Overly precise articulation which sounds stilted, affected and artificial contrasted with excessive assimilation bordering on intelligibility are the two extremes between which the majority of verbal encounters occur (but note the cases where precise and careful articulation is vital, as in air traffic control; cf. Noise, 3.1.3). The **rate** of one's speech varies with the speaker's type of personality, momentary emotional state, situation (casual vs. solemn), the addressee, the type of speech activity (sports commentary vs. saying a prayer) and the subject. **Pause** (along with stress, and tune) performs an important grammatical function of delimiting the syntactic (phrasal, clausal, sentential) units (*silent pause*), but also is a very effective speaking tool (a meaningful pause offers the listener time to assimilate the message; Myers et al. (1988) identifies as many as 11 types of silence). *Filled pauses* (hesitators: *er, ehm*), as a common feature of dysfluency in conversation, help the speaker plan what will follow or indicate incompleteness of his/her turn (see 4.2.1, 8.1).

According to J.D.O'Connor, there are four **pronunciation styles** in English - *declamatory, formal colloquial, colloquial, and familiar* (cf. Urbanová and Chamonikolasová 2000). Deliberate and functional changes in tempo (*agogics* - slowing down or speeding up) of the speech may be skillfully used by speakers to increase effectiveness of their speeches.

4.1.2 *Force Modulation* is characterized by the presence of (word and/or sentence) **stress** which is often accompanied by paralanguage. The phenomenon of *New English Gradation* along with the tendency towards *isochronicity*, shape the marked rhythmical character of the English language. Of significant stylistic value is the stress pattern exploited in such instances of language use where it conforms to the accepted *metrical rules* (metre) and structure (poetry, advertising slogans, chants, jingles, etc.). Variation in **loudness** (amplitude) level is used to emphasize an idea.

4.1.3 *Tone Modulation* is reflected in changing **pitch** (relative height of speech sounds); the basic unit of intonation is the *tone unit* (or *breath group intonation contour* which is marked by pitch change and pause). Pitch is to a certain degree a physiological feature (e.g., women speak with a higher pitch), but its range may be functionally varied as to its a) *height* (higher than normal suggests solemnity, expressiveness, as in public speeches while lower height may indicate sadness), b) *range* (greater range in conversations or in emotionally charged utterances, lower range in official political talks, monotonous pitch level may signal speaker's inhibitions, variation in pitch is effectively used by skilled orators), c) *movement*, or different types of tone, such as *fall* (signals completeness, determination and assurance), *rise* (signals questioning, hesitancy, doubt, incompleteness, surprise), *level* (has linking function), *fall+rise* (signals limited agreement, response with reservations), *rise+fall* (strong approval or disapproval, surprise, but also irony, sarcasm and subtle meanings). Falling tune is an important signal of the end of the turn constructional unit in dialogue (8.1). Tone fluctuation (intonation) performs attitudinal, accentual, grammatical and discourse functions (cf. Štekauer 1993).

It should be noted that, in the flow of speech, the prosodic features are exploited simultaneously to produce a synergistic effect; for example, in expressing emotions (anger, fear), all three systems of modulation, such as speed, loudness, tone variation, voice quality along with paralinguistic means (facial expressions, gestures and posture) interact. Also, prosody correlates with the situational variables; for example, the level of loudness (*whisper, soft voice, low volume, slight loudness, full voice*) is a function of interpersonal distance (*intimate, personal, social, official*), audience size (*dyad, small group, small audience, large audience*), message type (*secret, confidential, personal, non-personal, public*) and style (*intimate, personal, conversational, public conversational, public elevated*) (cf. Ross 1989).

## 4.2 *Graphetics/Graphology*

Verbal communication proceeds through two primary media, **spoken and written**, which differ in channel, circumstances, purposes, format, and in many linguistic aspects (4.2.1-3). Written text emerges by the application of the graphic substance of writing onto a surface. Analogously to the phone/phoneme and phonetics/phonology dichotomies in the spoken language, we differentiate between *graphemes* as abstract units of graphological plane capable of distinguishing meaning, and *graphs* as their realizations in concrete (handwritten, typed, scratched, etc.) writing. The former are systematically studied by *graphology*, the latter by *graphetics* (e.g., the direction of writing, writing implements and types of surface) (cf. Crystal 1987). It should be realized that writing (i.e., using an *alphabet* as a system of characters representing the sounds of a language) holds a central place among other modes (pictorial and schematic) of graphic expression in this visual medium.

English makes use of the Latin alphabet; due to the historical development of the language, one phoneme may have more than one grapheme and, conversely, one grapheme may represent more than one phoneme. There are tendencies toward simplification of English writing, i.e., towards establishing the simple grapheme-phoneme correspondence.

In written texts, the following features are relevant for the study of stylistic variation (enormous possibilities of their 'orchestration' yield particular 'atmosphere' of text): a) **handwriting** - *graphology* (the study of handwriting, esp. when regarded as an expression of the writer's character and personality) is interested in the features like page size and layout, line direction, regularity, angle, space design, etc., including features of calligraphy); **printing** (*typography*) studies the general features or appearance of printed (written, pictorial and

schematic) matter (14), b) **direction of writing**, conventional left-to-right or marked top-to-bottom (in advertisements, neon signs), c) **direction of reading/viewing** – linear (novel) or non-linear (dictionary entries, interactive computer programmes, computer hypertexts with links in both directions, printed advertisements, newspaper articles in esp. popular types of press), d) **surface types** – sheets of paper, building walls (graffiti), computer monitor screens, etc., e) **writing implements** (the technology of writing) – chalk, pencil, ink, spray, laser, electronic signal in word processing, etc., f) the **layout** of the text on the page - spatial organization (title, subtitle, overline, marginal notes, references, etc.) reflects the topical and logical (rhetorical) considerations (cf. also in the tradition of concrete poetry), g) **shape, size and type of font** have direct impact upon readability, which is of major concern in journalism, h) **capitalization** draws attention to the words denoting unique objects (proper names) or important words among others (titles), also conveys loudness, **boldface** (thick lines used for emphasis), **italics** (letters sloping to the right to separate different kinds of information, to emphasize it or express loudness), **repetition** of letters (carries hesitancy in speech representation), **underlining**, i) **paragraphing** signals thematically relatively independent units of text, introduced by an indentation, **spacing and columnar organization** (narrow newspaper columns increase readability), j) **tables, graphs, schemes** are specific genres with their specific features, grammar, lexis, k) **photographs, charts, illustrations**, l) **special symbols** (logograms, asterisk, superscript numbers), m) **abbreviations, acronyms**, n) **colour** is an important symbolic system with a high communicative value; note the symbolism of individual colours in social communication (*white vs. black*) and existing crosscultural differences. *Synaesthesia* is a sensation produced in one modality when a stimulus is applied to another modality, e.g., the hearing of a certain sound brings about the visualization of a certain color, a colour (red) incites certain sensations (warmth), o) **geometrical patterns and forms** (square, triangle, circle) choreograph all the (sub)components of a message in creating a text as a multilayered structure. **Graphic symbolism** (similar to sound symbolism) is a purposeful manipulation of graphic resources aimed at achieving an effective transmission of a message or a special effect (wordplay, humour).

It should be noted that readers often unconsciously transfer between several symbolic modes (lexical, social-gestural, iconic, logico-mathematical and musical), yet a message is comprehended as a homogeneous whole (11.1).

4.2.1 *Speech vs. Writing*. It is useful to treat speaking and writing as two principal cultural-social technologies (R. Lakoff) separately, although the existence of a strict line of demarcation between the two has often been denied (cf. intermediary cases like secret messages written on slips of paper passed during classes, or internet chat). Over centuries they have evolved into two complementary media with their own distinct properties, functional justification and independent spheres of operation - in particular situations and for particular purposes either one or the other is preferred. The technology of writing employs graphic expressive means (esp. the *alphabet*, but also some metagraphological means, such as punctuation) as a way of bridging the gap between the time and place of message production and the time and place of message reception.

In the course of human history various systems of writing have been designed (e.g., pictographic, ideographic, logographic, syllabic, alphabetic); however, none of them has managed to attain a perfect correspondence between the spoken (phoneme) and the written (grapheme) form of language. Further, writing provides only a poor system of means for expressing emotional or volitional aspects of a message. The system of conventional **punctuation** marks (*apostrophe, colon, exclamation mark, semicolon, comma, dash, hyphen, parentheses, period, question mark, quotation marks*) is used to represent suprasegmental

features like intonation, tempo, timbre, stress, intensity, and to signal the pragmatic meaning of utterances (e.g., interrogation, exclamation). As a graphic means of signalling the suprasegmental features of language, punctuation is primarily the matter of grammar - one of the properties of a 'good style' is a certain minimum of punctuation which is necessary to secure the intelligibility of writing (cf. Macpherson 1996). Secondly, punctuation is also a concern of stylistics since, for example, the degree of presence of punctuation (dashes) is the function of emotional/personal involvement. *Orthography* as a prescriptive area of study is concerned with the rules (applied to all levels of language structure) of transferring speech into writing (proper capitalization, spelling and punctuation) according to the rules of accepted usage. The level of mastering the written medium of language in a literate society is associated with social prestige and/or stigmatization. The permanence of writing enables it to perform some specific cultural functions (esthetic function in literature, historical records, contracts, sacred writings, etc.).

The essential differences between speaking and writing caused by the conditions in which communication takes place (see 3.1.3) may be presented in the form of several dichotomies (cf. Crystal 1987, Urbanová and Billingham 1986, Hoffmannová 1987, Brown and Yule 1983, M.A.K. Halliday 1989): a) physical contact: immediate vs. non-immediate, b) substance: phonic vs. graphic, c) channel: oral-auditory vs. visual, d) manner of production: on-line, under immediate pressure vs. not immediate pressure, process vs. product, e) system: phonological (segmental, suprasegmental and paralinguistic features) vs. graphological (graphemes, punctuation, typography), f) temporal status: transient vs. permanent, g) number of participants: two and/or more (dialogue, trilogy, polylogue) vs. one, h) character of interaction: dynamic vs. static, i) purpose: interactional (establishing and maintaining social contact, see Phatic function, 3.4) vs. transactional (conveying messages), j) communicative function: all, esp. directive, expressive and phatic vs. all but directive, expressive and phatic functions suppressed, k) format: dialogical vs. monological, l) level of formality (see Tenor, 9.2): informality vs. formality, m) type of feedback: immediate vs. not immediate, delayed (or minimum), n) (native language) acquisition: spontaneous vs. learned via instruction, o) contextualization: contextualized vs. decontextualized, implicit (vague) vs. explicit (definite), p) redundancy: higher vs. lower, q) nature of complexity: dynamic and intricate vs. static and dense, r) degree of preparedness: spontaneous, unprepared vs. planned, prepared, s) topic: orientation towards social relationships vs. towards content, t) time orientation: prospectiveness vs. retrospectiveness, u) variety: vernacular vs. standard.

However useful, these dichotomies are simplifying the complicated relationship between the two media since the boundary between them is rather imaginary and also because they are often transgressed; for example, a lecture on stylistics delivered for an auditorium of students (i.e., 'spoken writing') may be recorded and published (i.e., 'written speaking'). Also, as a lecture is an instance of transactional use of spoken language, it is expected that students write down their notes and keep the written record for their future reference. For the same reason (i.e., the transience of speech), radio and/or TV newscasters tend to repeat the headlines of news stories. Consequently, it is of greater use to talk about a **continuum** between speech and writing rather than about their polarity and to identify their more or less typical examples (Leech et al. 1982:140): *conversation in a pub, seminar, telephone conversation, personal letter, job interview, radio discussion, television advertisement, lecture, sermon, script of a play, television news, newspaper, business letter, this book.*

An attempt to cope with the not entirely satisfactory speech vs. writing dichotomy is the notion of **mode** which includes a complex of linguistic features associated with either one of the two media (cf. McCarthy and Carter 1994). For example, a lecture read before a class is

obviously of spoken medium but of written mode (as it contains a host of features of written language). Conversely, casual e-mail correspondence or internet chat is produced in the written medium, but its mode is spoken (cf. Ferencik 2000). The advantage of this approach is that while medium offers the either/or choice, mode provides a scale of continuous gradation (cline). The following is a list of some common linguistic characteristics of speech and writing.

4.2.2 *Speech*: frequent occurrence of the means of exophoric reference (demonstrative pronouns) and expressions of temporal and spatial deixis (due to the situational boundedness of speech), looser structure, repetition, rephrasing, filler phrases (*you know*), hesitations, repairs, reformulations, self corrections, filled (fillers: *erm, mhm*) or unfilled pauses, units of language marked off by intonation and pause, incomplete (chunks of) phrasal and clausal structural units, ellipsis, *coordination* (parataxis) prevails over subordination, active voice prevails, rare (*if-, wh-*) clefting, *juxtaposition* (placing units close together or side by side), *polysyndeton* (using conjunctions in close succession, esp. *and, but, then*), *asyndeton* (omission of conjunctions), incomplete structures – *aposiopesis* (sudden halt in the midst of an utterance for emotional reasons), *anacoluthon* (a break in grammatical sequence, syntactic blend), *ellipsis* (omissions enabled by redundancy or availability of missing information in the situation, background knowledge), a tendency to structure information according to the pattern '*topic – comment*', marked word order, lower information density, lexical sparsity, generalized vocabulary (*great, stuff like that*), slang, colloquialisms, qualifying expressions (*sort of, kind of*), expletives - taboo and swear words (*good grief*), prop words (non-specific words substituting specific words: *whatsisname, whatsit*), interjections (*wow*), stereotypical ritualized formulae (greetings, introductions, etc.), address terms, etc.

4.2.3 *Writing*: more carefully organized (layout), often elaborate organization (metalingual/discourse markers like *first, next, finally*, cf. Metalingual function, 3.4), complex syntactic structures, greater compactness, more 'polished', clear sentence boundaries (punctuation) and greater surveyability of text (layout, typeface gradation, paragraphing), frequent subordination (hypotaxis) explicitly signalling semantic relations (logical connectors), great variety of subordinating conjunctions, frequent pre- and postmodification esp. within noun phrases, the '*subject-predicate*' as an unmarked syntactic pattern, complete structures, elaborate grammatical and lexical cohesion, higher information density, rich and varied vocabulary,

Certain features of grammar and lexical items are more common in one or the other medium, e.g., the means of complex condensation (participial constructions) are more common in writing (unless they are used in public speeches), complex chemical compounds are never spoken (e.g., a 1,913-letter-long protein, Lederer 1989). There are spoken genres without written counterparts: radio/TV commentaries of sports events, (partly) taboo and swear words; written genres with no spoken counterparts include statute books, timetables, charts. Modern technological devices further blur the difference between speech and writing: talking across distances via a (mobile, satellite) phone, greeting cards for various occasions (phatic function), leaving messages on phone-answering machines, exchanging audio tapes instead of letters, conserving samples of speech in electronic storage systems, audio books, 'conversing' by exchanging short text messages, e-mailing, internet chatting, etc.

### 4.3 Semantics

In communication, interlocutors most typically engage themselves in the exchange of (factual, social) meaning; hence, they expect that messages are 'about something', that they refer to something. By **reference** we mean the relationship between words and the things, actions, events, and qualities (i.e., referents) of the real or fictitious world they stand for (cf. Richards et al., 1985). The main referential carriers in language are lexemes whose system (*word stock, lexicon, lexis, vocabulary*) and meanings are studied by lexicology and lexicography. Although being an integral part of linguistics, it is an interdisciplinary area studied by semasiology, onomasiology, semantics, semiotics, and pragmatics.

From the viewpoint of its stylistic potential, lexis offers enormous possibilities of selection - stylistic variation is then to a very large degree a matter of the words used. Of primary importance then are the ways lexical items are organized in the word stock. There are several types of paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships existing within the lexicon.

For stylistic purposes, Galperin (1977) presents the system of **stylistic classification of English vocabulary** which consists of three overlapping layers:

1. (unmarked) **neutral** layer – being the most stable level it forms the bulk of English vocabulary, its 'common core', includes field-nonspecific words, is the source of polysemy and synonymy and renders itself for the word-formation processes,
2. (marked) **literary layer** consisting of a) *common literary words* (used esp. in writing and polished speech), and b) *special literary words*, which include *terms and learned words* (terminology of sciences), *poetic words* (highly elevated vocabulary), *archaic words* (obsolescent, obsolete, archaic proper), *barbarisms and foreign words* (foreignisms), *literary/terminological coinages* (including nonce-words),
3. (marked) **colloquial layer** contains words which have lively spoken character: a) *common colloquial words*, b) *special colloquial words* which include *slang* (e.g., college slang, rap slang, military slang), *jargonisms, professional words* (e.g., journalese), *dialectal words, vulgar words, colloquial coinages* (nonce-words).

The neutral layer along with the overlapping areas of common literary words and common colloquial words form the **standard English vocabulary**. The relations between the neutral and common colloquial/common literary words is represented by existing **chains of synonyms**; actually, these are not pure synonyms (absolute synonymy is extremely rare as having two words with identical meaning would be inefficient) since there are always certain differences in semantic features (*semes*, analysed by the method of componential analysis in semantics), some stylistic (connotational) differences as well as differences in the level of formality. In principle, this type of synonymy parallels the main historical sources from which Modern English vocabulary has been fed and demonstrates its overall three-tiered character (Lederer 1991, Vachek 1978): a) **Greek/Latin** vocabulary characterized by precision, learnedness, abstractness, dignity, etc. (e.g., *interrogate, defunct, ascend*), also called 'long' or 'big' words, b) **French** vocabulary characterized by grandeur, sonority and courtliness (e.g., *question, deceased, mount*), c) **Anglo-Saxon** vocabulary, the basis of English lexicon; because of its greater concreteness, brevity (hence 'short' words), plainness and directness this layer is characterized by vividness and comparatively stronger emotional appeal (e.g., *ask, dead, rise*).

These large groups of near-synonyms are associated with register shifts (*formal, neutral, informal*); consistency of the once chosen level is of crucial importance, as well as a need to perform a 'translation' between the levels when switching or accommodating the code (see 4.4). Generally speaking, the use of synonyms prevents monotony and stereotypy of expression and,

esp. due to the existence of rows of synonyms, adds vividness to the style (e.g., *peep, peek, glance, glimpse, stare, watch* are all possible alternatives to *look*). Synonymy on the phrase level is called **periphrasis** (a roundabout form of expression, circumlocution, e.g., *father of my children*). Different sentences having the same meaning are **paraphrases** (including the active/passive transformation) which are often used as restatements to render the meaning more clearly, as when talking to foreigners, children, lay people, etc.

Viewed from the onomasiological (meaning-to-form) perspective, other semantic relations are **antonymy** (gradable: *very big/small*, nongradable: *male/female*, converse: *parent/child*), **hyponymy** (*car, bus, train* are co-hyponyms of *vehicle*), **hyperonymy** (*flower/tulip*). All these types of lexical relations are used in texts as a means of their **lexical cohesion** and on the deep (semantic) level they realize their **semantic coherence** (5.1.2).

The sense relations among lexemes seen from the semasiological (form-to-meaning) perspective are **polysemy** (*foot of a leg/the stairs*), **homonymy** (*chase* = to pursue and *chase* = to ornament metal), **homophony** (*no/know*), **homography** (*lead/lead*). Polysemy and homonymy are major sources of lexical ambiguity and an unemptiable supply of material for language **pun** (the art of verbal humour): **malapropism** (after T. Sheridan's Mrs. Malaprop, e.g., *I hope that you remember me, you were interrupter for my cousin*; the intended word = interpreter),  **Spoonerism** (transpositions of sounds, slips of the tongue, e.g., *Is the bean dizzy?*), **pun** based on homophony (*What's black and white and red/read all over? A newspaper./Pravda.*), the **what's the difference between** pun (*What's the difference between an engine-driver and a schoolteacher? One minds the train, the other trains the mind*), **zeugma** (the use of a word to modify two or more words when a) it is appropriate to only one of them, as in *to wage war and peace*, or b) is appropriate to each but in a different way, as in *On his fishing trip, he caught three trout and a cold*), **palindrome** (*Madam in Eden, I'm Adam*), etc. Punning is commonly employed in advertising slogans (e.g., *Children under 14 must be accompanied by money and daddy* written outside an amusement park), in texts of some licence plates (*IEDUC8* = I educate, on a licence plate belonging to a teacher), etc.

Another avenue to approach semantics of lexemes which is relevant for the study of style is differentiating between **denotative** (referential, cognitive, notional, conceptual) and **connotative** (associative, emotive, expressive, social, stylistic) meanings. The former are considered as basic and stylistically neutral; a traditional concern of stylistics has been the latter type of meaning. However, it may be difficult to disassociate these two meanings from each other: it is impossible to imagine absolutely neutral denotative meanings deprived of any associative potential. Moreover, some words have connotations built into their meanings (e.g. *darling, honey, mistress, spinster*, 4-letter words, such as \*\*\*\*). These are exploited esp. in fiction, poetry, but also in journalism, advertising, political propaganda, since connotations are evoked also by rhythm, repetition, sound instrumentalization, etc. A special type of connotative meanings are **figurative** (non-literal) meanings, esp. **metaphorical** meanings. Based on this are some literary or rhetorical devices known as **tropes** (figures of speech, forming the inventory of poetic and rhetorical devices since the Classical times): **simile** (*behave like an ass*), **metaphor** (i.e., understanding of one concept in terms of another; plays an important role in the conceptualization of reality by humans and is by no means restricted to poetry only, e.g., *waste one's time*; dead metaphors: *a field of study*), **metonymy** (*The speaker addressed the chair*) and **synecdoche** (*there wasn't a soul around*).

Other figures of speech used also in non-literary language (esp. in advertising persuasion and political propaganda (cf. Poetic function, 3.4) which are based on the principle of repetition are **anaphora** (sentences or verses begin with the same word), **epiphora** (epistrophe, i.e., the

repetition of a word or words at the end of successive verses), **anadiplosis** (repetition in the first part of a clause or verse of a prominent word from the latter part of the preceding clause or verse), **symploce** (the simultaneous use of anaphora and epiphora), **epanalepsus** (the last word of a sentence is repeated at the beginning of the next: *All for one, one for all*), **epanodos** (identical word used at both ends of sentences, *Boys will be boys*), **epizeuxis** (identical words are sequentially repeated), **paronomasia** (using similar words, recurrence of the same syllable or word: *Amen ... Ah men!*), **polyptoton** (repetition of forms of the same lexeme: *When better automobiles are built, Buick will build them*), **hyperbole** (exaggeration: *to wait an eternity*), **litotes** (understatement: *not bad at all*), **asyndeton**, **apostrophe** (*O Death, where is thy sting?*), **allusion**, **personification**, **paradox**, **catachresis** (a strained use of words occurring either in error or for rhetorical effect, e.g., Shakespeare's *parting is such a sweet sorrow*), **euphemism** (an inoffensive substitute for an 'unpleasant' word: *crisis = war, collateral damage = killing of civilians in a military attack*), **oxymoron** (*Good grief!*), **climax** (gradation), **anticlimax** and **antithesis**.

Syntagmatic relations of lexical units are manifested by their tendency to **collocate** (co-occur). There are predictable (*head over heels in love, fish and chips*) and less predictable collocations (*recording head*); collocates of some words (e.g., *get, take, have*) are totally unpredictable and as fixed collocations they are idiomatic. Different spheres of human activity (esp. sciences, arts, crafts) are linguistically associated with their own collocations (see Field, 9.2).

#### 4.4 Grammar (Morphology and Syntax)

Since language used in verbal communication behaves like a holistic system, a shift made on one level is projected onto other levels as well – a change of style from formal to informal involves, in spoken form, not only a progressive reduction of unstressed syllables and employment of articulatory effort-saving devices (assimilation, assibilation, elision), but it permeates also both lexical and grammatical levels. Compare the following renditions of the 'same' message (Leech and Svartvik 1975): a) *On the decease of his father, Mr. Brown was obliged to seek alternative employment* (very formal, stilted, written medium), b) *After his father's death, Peter had to change his job* (neutral, 'common core'), c) *When his dad died, Pete had to get another job* (casual, spoken medium).

The inventory of 'grammatical stylistics' includes variability in the area of primary and secondary categories (word classes and forms) and syntactical constructions which are, however, approached from the viewpoint of their functional acceptability (which allows for individual creativity; e.g., plural nonce-words *bathtubim, methren, dra*, cf. Lederer 1989) rather than grammatical correctness. The following is a brief list of some common grammatical features belonging to the three contrasting 'levels of usage' based on the criterion of a) medium: *spoken vs. written*, b) formality level: *informal vs. formal*, and c) politeness level: *familiar vs. polite*. The features labelled as spoken, informal and familiar tend to coalesce, as do features marked as written, familiar and polite, although crossrelationships are common (e.g., spoken formal, written informal, spoken polite, etc.) (cf. Leech and Svartvik 1975, constructional principles of grammar of spoken language in Biber et al., 1999, Leech et al., 1982):

1. grammatical features marked as *written, formal* and *polite*: participial and verbless clauses, *-it* cleft sentences, adverbs of 'listing' and 'adding' (*first(ly), next, last(ly), to begin with*), Latin abbreviations (*viz, eg, ie*), 1<sup>st</sup> person pronoun *we* for *I* (*We have demonstrated ...*), *one* as a pronoun of indefinite reference, *despite, notwithstanding* as prepositions of contrast,

singular concord with indefinite expressions of amount (*none of them has arrived*), formulaic subjunctive (elevated or archaic: *God rest ye merry, gentlemen*), modal *may* for permission and invitation, subject-operator inversion (*Not a word did he say*, rhetorical), subject-verb inversion (*Away went the car...*, literary), inversion as a signal of subordination (*Had I known, I would not have come...*), future progressive to indicate 'as a matter of course' futurity (*When will you be coming again?*), formulaic requests (*I would be grateful if...*), passive and introductory *it* as indicators of impersonal style (public notices, administrative and legal texts), elaborate refusals of invitations (*That's very kind of you, but...*, see Preference organization, 8.2), past tense used to indicate tentativeness at present (*Did you want to see me ...? meaning Do you want ...*),

2. grammatical features marked as *spoken, informal and familiar*: preference for asyndetic coordinations and juxtaposition, contraction of auxiliaries, parenthetical structures, *do* used for emotional emphasis, greetings, vocatives, variety of non-clausal units - *inserts* (interjections, greetings, discourse markers, response elicitors, hesitators, expletives), tripartite structure of utterances: *preface(s), body, tag(s)*, pronouns with indefinite reference (*They say...*), final placement of a preposition, plural concord with indefinite expressions of amount (*none of them have arrived*), omission of *that* in nominal clauses, *get*-passives, phrasal verbs, ellipsis, etc.

The correlation between the primary morphological categories (open/lexical and closed/function word classes) and the type of functional style (register) is indicated by the **lexical density** (cf. Biber et al. 1999): because of the weakened informational aspect of spoken language (conversation), there tend to be fewer lexical words than function words (hence lower lexical density) and inserts express emotional and interactional meanings. Conversely, in written language, lexical words prevail while no inserts are used – hence higher lexical density.

As to the overall distribution of word classes among some types of texts, nouns have a tendency to dominate in written texts - they are primarily engaged in the transmission of factual information; this is structurally reflected in the complex noun phrases containing pre- and post-modification (nouns are commonly accompanied by adjective phrases as their modifiers). Speech which is engaged prevalently in addressing dynamic aspects of reality (events) and because of its primary focus on sharing experience and reinforcing relations (narratives) commonly utilizes verbs (along with adverbs); this is manifested in a higher number of shorter clausal units and generally lower lexical density.

The degree to which word forms (types) are repeated in various texts, the **type-token ratio** (TTR), may be used as another indicator of variability: TTR varies naturally with the length of texts (because of a greater repetition, longer texts have lower TTR) and with medium. In general, speech has lower TTR (lower information density, spontaneous, less advanced planning, repetition) while the TTR of writing is higher.

The **structural variability (complexity)** of grammatical units above the level of word (phrase, clause) can be measured by a) the number of modifiers and clause elements (= *horizontal complexity*), b) the number of subordinate phrases and clauses (= *vertical complexity*, embedding), c) the location of vertical complexity (left vs. right branching). The constructional complexity of phrases and clauses varies according to medium: speech is characterized by simple phrases and shorter clauses, lower degree of embedding and extensive use of non-clausal material, writing is marked by complex phrases, longer clauses with multiple embeddings while non-clausal material is of a different character (headlines, book titles, tables, lists).

Individual functional styles are marked for specific grammatical features; for example, **academic texts** are marked for elaborateness of syntactic structure (structural complexity),

multiplicity of subordination on phrase and clause level, various types of subordinate clauses, explicit logical connectedness, higher TTR, lower redundancy, extensive use of nominal structures and semi-predicative constructions; **administrative texts** are also characterised by condensed syntax with special emphasis on the use of complex noun phrases (*of*-genitive being common postmodification) and impersonal style (passive, generic subject); **public speaking** makes use of constructions directly appealing to the audience (rhetorical questions) and of frequent repetition (anaphora); **advertising** exploits a variety of forms and constructions to secure the desired effect (in this aspect it is close to the language of literature), etc. (for the grammatical features of **conversation** see 4.2.2).

There is an inventory of phenomena belonging to phrase/clause grammar (esp. pronouns, linking devices, ellipsis, functional sentence perspective, word order, discourse markers, inserts, etc.) which participate in the construction of entire texts and which can be systematically explained only on their background (for the factors determining the word order in English see Vachek 1995). These phenomena can be dealt with separately within the rubric of syntax of units of language larger than a single sentence, viz. *hypersyntax*. One of its primary concerns is the relation between a sentence as a systemic (langue) unit and a sentence (utterance) as its textual (parole) realization. Obviously, the employment of abstract sentence patterns in esp. casual spontaneous speech is associated with various irregularities and modifications of underlying clause patterns, e.g., reduction (in elliptical constructions, minor sentences such as *Want some?* are, however, communicatively complete), expansion (insertion of parentheses), detachment, appendage, peripheral elements (prefaces, tags, vocatives, discourse markers), etc.

From hypersyntax there is but a short step to the investigation of the 'text level' of language with the aim of describing the 'grammar of text' (see 5). The multifaceted nature of naturally occurring (spoken or written) language has led to the rise of a number of competing approaches which, by employing various perspectives, pursue the study of how samples of language-in-use are structured, what various factors are involved in their production and interpretation and how these factors are related to form meaningful wholes.