

СТИЛИСТИКА (АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК)

Sound Instrumenting, Graphon. Graphical Means

As it is clear from the title of the chapter, the stylistic use of phonemes and their graphical representation will be viewed here. Dealing with various cases of phonemic and graphemic foregrounding we should not forget the unilateral nature of a phoneme: this language unit helps to differentiate meaningful lexemes but has no meaning of its own. Cf.: while unable to speak about the semantics of [ou], [ju:], we acknowledge their sense-differentiating significance in "sew" [sou] *шить* and "sew" [sju:] *спускать воду*; or [au], [ou] in "bow" *бант, поклон* etc.

Still, devoid of denotational or connotational meaning, a phoneme, according to recent studies, has a strong associative and sound-instrumenting power. Well-known are numerous cases *of onomatopoeia* - the use of words whose sounds imitate those of the signified object or action, such as "hiss", "bowwow", "murmur", "bump", "grumble", "sizzle" and many more.

Imitating the sounds of nature, man, inanimate objects, the acoustic form of the word foregrounds the latter, inevitably emphasizing its meaning too. Thus the phonemic structure of the word proves to be important for the creation of expressive and emotive connotations. A message, containing an onomatopoeic word is not limited to transmitting the logical information only, but also supplies the vivid portrayal of the situation described.

Poetry abounds in some specific types of sound-instrumenting, the leading role belonging to *alliteration* - the repetition of consonants, usually-in the beginning of words, and *assonance* - the repetition of similar vowels, usually in stressed syllables. They both may produce the effect of *euphony* (a sense of ease and comfort in pronouncing or hearing) or *cacophony* (a sense of strain and discomfort in pronouncing or hearing). As an example of the first

may serve the famous lines of E.A. Poe:

...silken sad uncertain
rustling of each purple curtain...

An example of the second is provided by the unspeakable combination of sounds found in R. Browning: Nor soul helps flesh now more than flesh helps soul.

To create additional information in a prose discourse sound-instrumenting is seldom used. In contemporary advertising, mass media and, above all, imaginative prose sound is foregrounded mainly through the change of its accepted graphical representation. This intentional violation of the graphical shape of a word (or word combination) used to reflect its authentic pronunciation is called **graphon**.

Craphons, indicating irregularities or carelessness of pronunciation were occasionally introduced into English novels and journalism as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century and since then have acquired an ever growing frequency of usage, popularity among writers, journalists, advertizers, and a continuously widening scope of functions.

Graphon proved to be an extremely concise but effective means of supplying information about the speaker's origin, social and educational background, physical or emotional condition, etc. So, when the famous Thackeray's character - butler Yellowplush - impresses his listeners with the learned words pronouncing them as "sellybrated" (celebrated), "bennyviolent" (benevolent), "illygitmit" (illegitimate), "jewinile" (juvenile), or when the no less famous Mr. Babbitt uses "peerading" (parading), "Eytalians" (Italians), "peepul" (people) - the reader obtains not only the vivid image and the social, cultural, educational characteristics of the personages, but also both Thackeray's and S. Lewis' sarcastic attitude to them.

On the other hand, "The b-b-b-b-bas-tud - he seen me c--c-c-c-coming" in R. P. Warren's Sugar Boy's speech or "You don't mean to thay that thith ith your firth time" (B.C.) show the physical defects of the speakers - the stuttering

of one and the lisping of the other.

Graphon, thus individualizing the character's speech, adds to his plausibility, vividness, memorability. At the same time, graphon is very good at conveying the atmosphere of authentic live communication, of the informality of the speech act. Some amalgamated forms, which are the result of strong assimilation, became clichés in contemporary prose dialogue: "gimme" (give me), "lemme" (let me), "gonna" (going to), "gotta" (got to), "coupla" (couple of), "mighta" (might have), "willya" (will you), etc.

This flavour of informality and authenticity brought graphon popularity with advertizers. Big and small eating places invite customers to attend their "Pik-kwik store", or "The Donut (doughnut) Place", or the "Rite Bread Shop", or the "Wok-in Fast Food Restaurant", etc. The same is true about newspaper, poster and TV advertizing: "Sooper Class Model" cars, "Knee-hi" socks, "Rite Aid" medicines. A recently published book on Cockney was entitled by the authors "The Muwer Tongue"; on the back flaps of big freight-cars one can read "Folio me", etc. Graphical changes may reflect not only the peculiarities of, pronunciation, but are also used to convey the intensity of the stress, emphasizing and thus foregrounding the stressed words. To such purely **graphical means**, not involving the violations, we should refer all changes of the type (italics, capitalization), spacing of graphemes (hyphenation, multiplication) and of lines. The latter was widely exercised in Russian poetry by V. Mayakovsky, famous for his "steps" in verse lines, or A. Voznesensky. In English the most often referred to "graphical imagist" v/as E. E. Cummings.

According to the frequency of usage, variability of functions, the first place among graphical means of foregrounding is occupied by *italics*. Besides italicizing words, to add to their logical or emotive significance, separate syllables and morphemes may also be emphasized by italics (which is highly characteristic of D. Salinger or T. Capote). Intensity of speech (often in commands) is transmitted through the *multiplication* of a grapheme or *capitalization* of the word, as in Babbitt's shriek "Alllll aboarrrrrd", or in the

desperate appeal in A. Huxley's *Brave New World* - "Help. Help. HELP." Hyphenation of a wofa suggests the rhymed or clipped manner in which it is uttered as in the humiliating comment from Fl. O'Connor's story - "grinning like a chim-pan-zee".

Summing up the informational options of the graphical arrangement of a word (a line, a discourse), one sees their varied application for recreating the individual and social peculiarities of the speaker, the atmosphere of the communication act - all aimed at revealing and emphasizing the author's viewpoint