STYLISTIC LOAD OF PROSODIC FEATURES IN ENGLISH

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The object of this paper is to consider the effects brought about by modifications of the prosodic text structures and, ultimately, to present some evidence on the stylistic load of prosodic features in English.

Procedure of the experiment

Obtained by way of instrumental analysis, the prosodic features for four verbally identical but stylistically different English text types were synthesized - conversational informal (CI) and formal (CF) monologues, a public speech at a relatively big indoor meeting (PI) and a public speech at a very big gathering of people in the open air (PO). Each prosodic text structure was transformed so that it contained a) either tone, tempo or intensity features of one of the remaining three texts, b) three parameters from three different texts, thus forming complexes like a) tone CI + tempo CI + intensity CF, or b) tone CI + tempo CF + intensity PI. Forty listeners were instructed to state whether a text, recorded in a random sequence, was acceptable for English and if so, to give it some stylistic label.

Conclusion

The prosodic text structures have different degrees of tolerance to modifications to preserve their stylistic individuality. The behaviour of a prosodic parameter in the text is stylistically determined, with various correlations between text types and prosodic features.

The distinctive stylistic semantics of the text is created, on the prosodic level, by at least two prosodic parameters, the greatest functional load among which is carried by tone features.