

PHONOSEMANTIC AND PHONOSTYLISTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH NOVELS OF 19TH CENTURY

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The paper is focused on some of the phonosemantic and phonostylistic features typical of the 19th-century English novels. It is considered that the authors made use of sound-related elements not only to convey meanings but also to create a distinctive literary style that resonated with the themes and emotions of the time. It is revealed that in the 19th-century English novels, phonosemantic and phonostylistic devices were quite a notable feature that contributed to the overall richness and aesthetic quality of the literary works. During that period the authors strategically employed sound-related elements to evoke emotions and enhance the artistic expression of the meanings.

Key words: *phonosemantic, phonostylistic features, novels, rhythm, melody, dialogue patterns, alliteration, assonance.*

Phonosemantics and phonostylistics explore the relationship between the sound and meaning in language. While it's challenging to provide a full and complete analysis of all 19th-century English novels, we will make an attempt to identify some general trends and characteristics in terms of phonosemantic and phonostylistic elements' application in the novels of that period. We will outline some of these features in the present paper.

Word Choice and Sound Symbolism. In the novels of the 19th century, particularly during the Romantic and Victorian periods, the word choice and sound symbolism played a significant role in shaping the narrative and enhancing the emotional impact of the stories. Authors in the 19th century often employed words with sounds that mirrored their meanings, for instance, imitating sounds of nature or using onomatopoeic words to create a more vivid and sensory experience. Authors often employed words that imitated the sounds they described, adding a sensory and immersive dimensions to the writing. For instance, the words like *whisper*, *murmur*, or *rustle* were used to evoke specific sounds within the narrative. Ch. Dickens, for example, was known for making use of the names that captured the essence of the characters, contributing to the overall phonosemantic effect of the novel.

Rhythm and Meter. Many novels of the 19th century were written with a careful consideration of rhythm and meter. The prose often acquired a poetic melodic quality as the authors employed varied sentence structures to create a specific cadence. A variety of sentence structures also served to create a rhythmic flow in the prose. This could include the use of short, punchy sentences for the emphasis or

longer, more complex sentences for descriptive passages. Many novelists aimed for a melodic quality in their writing, utilising a combination of long and short sentences to create a pleasing rhythm. The melodic organisation of the prose contributed to its overall readability and aesthetic appeal of the narrative.

Dialogue Patterns. The writers were attentive to the phonetic qualities of dialogues to distinguish characters and reflect their social status, education, or the regional background. Dialects and accents were sometimes represented phonetically in the dialogue to emphasise character traits and cultural differences. Authors aimed for realistic and naturalistic dialogue, seeking to capture the way people spoke in everyday life. This approach was especially prevalent in novels that focused on social realism and detailed character portrayals. Dialogues were often used to convey social class distinctions. Characters from different social classes would speak in distinct ways, with variations in their vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. This added authenticity to the portrayal of diverse characters and settings. Politeness and formality were important aspects of the 19th-century social interactions, and those were reflected in the dialogues. Characters often used formal language, titles, and expressions of courtesy in their conversations, particularly in social settings.

Alliteration and Assonance. Authors frequently employed alliteration and assonance for aesthetic purposes, contributing to the musicality of the language. That was especially evident in poetic prose and descriptive passages. They frequently used alliteration to create the text rhythmic and poetic effect. It added musicality to the prose, making it more engaging for readers. Charles Dickens, in particular, was known for his masterful use of alliteration. In “Bleak House”, for instance, he writes: “*Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping.*” (Ch. Dickens). Similarly to alliteration, assonance was employed to create a pleasing and harmonious quality of the writing. It often contributed to the overall musicality of the prose. Thomas Hardy, in “Tess of the d'Urbervilles”, uses assonance to evoke a sense of melancholy: “*The season developed and matured. Another year's installment of flowers, leaves, nightingales, thrushes, finches, and such ephemeral creatures, took up their positions where only a year ago others had stood in their place...*” (Hardy Th.).

Symbolic Names and Titles. Titles of novels and characters' names were often chosen with phonosemantic considerations, aligning with the themes or characteristics of the story. Some novels featured titles that were allegorical or descriptive, providing clues about the themes or messages conveyed in the story. Ch. Dickens, in his “Bleak House”, conveys a sense of the legal and societal decay through the title and various character names. The authors frequently used names and titles with references to

mythology or biblical stories, adding layers of meaning to their narratives. This practice connected the novel to the larger cultural and religious themes.

Sound Devices for the Emotional Effect. The authors used phonostylistic elements such as repetition, consonance, or dissonance to evoke specific emotions in the readers. This was particularly important in the scenes of heightened tension or emotional significance. The choice of words and the overall tone of the writing contributed to the emotional impact of the text. The writers selected the words with particular connotative meanings and hues to shape the readers' emotional response. Metaphors and similes often included sound-related elements, connecting sensory experiences to emotions. These figurative language devices enhanced the descriptive power of the text and intensified its emotional effects. The use of dialogue, with attention to rhythm, tempo, and expressive language, contributed significantly to the emotional resonance of a narrative. Dialogue patterns conveyed the characters' emotions, relationships, and conflicts.

Influence of Poetry. The 19th century witnessed a strong influence of Romantic poetry, and thus the novelists often borrowed poetic techniques such as euphony (pleasant sounding) or cacophony (harsh sounding) to enhance the emotional impact of their narratives. The emphasis on emotional intensity and subjective experience, characteristic of the Romantic poetry, permeated the 19th-century novels. Writers explored characters' inner thoughts and emotions in a way that mirrored the introspective nature of the poetry. Poetic influence contributed to the use of the elevated and eloquent language means in the 19th-century prose. Authors often sought to convey complex emotions and ideas through the carefully chosen words, reflecting the influence of poetry's expressive power.

Mimicry of Speech Patterns. The authors of that time often attempted to capture the natural intonation of the spoken language, including dialects and colloquialisms, in order to make their characters and settings more authentic.

It is important to note that the outlined phonosemantic and phonostylistic trends can vary among different authors and literary movements within the 19th century. There is no doubt that each writer had a unique style, and the use of phonosemantic and phonostylistic elements was influenced by a number of factors such as individual preferences, the literary movement of the time, and the thematic focus of the novel.

References

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